



**S T A F F O R D**

14-19 Partnership

# Curriculum Planning Policy

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## CHANGE CONTROL

Date	Issue	Details of Change
4 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	1.0	Initial Approved Version Controlled Document
13/02/2020	1.1	Updated new logo & changed to reflect practice
11/03/2020	1.2	Updated appendix 2 & 3

## Curriculum Planning Policy

The aim of Stafford 14-19 Partnership is to maximise the opportunities for all students in Stafford by ensuring they have access to the broadest possible 16-19 curriculum, while ensuring this represents good value for money.

The Partnership is part of an annual cycle of activity which responds each year to the changing demand from each cohort of applicants.

- (1) In September of each year, the Partnership Executive Group (PEG) assesses the pattern of enrolments, identifying growth areas and ones where there has been decline. Some final adjustments are made to the curriculum offer at this stage.
- (2) Following this, partners are asked to identify issues with the position of their subjects in the blocking system. They are also asked to complete an 'Additional Course Proposal form (appendix 1) if they believe a gap in Partnership provision has been identified. This form requires the partner to provide evidence of demand and progression route information.
- (3) In the first Curriculum Managers Group (CMG) meeting of the academic year the curriculum offer for the following year is discussed. Changes to the blocking system are discussed and agreed. New courses are discussed and agreed, using the criteria specified in the 'Stafford 14-19 Partnership Principles Underpinning Curriculum Design' policy (appendix 2).
- (4) A draft version of the curriculum is circulated by October half term.
- (5) Final offer to be agreed prior to the first Post 16 Evening.
- (6) In conjunction with the last Post 16 Evening, the on-line application process is opened via a Google for accessible from [www.staffordsixthformpartnership.co.uk](http://www.staffordsixthformpartnership.co.uk) or Partner school webpages. The first phase is completed by 31st January.
- (7) After this, Curriculum Group Students (CGS) RAG rate the applications based on student interviews and send to the Partnership Manager for collating.
- (8) CMG meets to consider the admissions and analyse the match between student demand and the curriculum offer. At this stage, groups can be created, merged or closed.
- (9) By March, the final curriculum offer is confirmed.
- (10) The Partnership Manager liaises with PEG, CMG and CGS with regards to the prospectus design for the following year and ensures the changes are implemented and prospectuses are ordered for the following year.



## New Course Proposal Form

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Board: \_\_\_\_\_ QAN: \_\_\_\_\_

Centre: \_\_\_\_\_ Block: \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence of Demand:

Minimum number required for the course to run:

Overview of the course:

Assessment overview:

Course Content:

Assessment Method:

Proposed Staffing:

Requested by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Discussed at CMG: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by PEG: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

All new proposals must be on this form and will be considered at the first CMG meeting of the academic year.

## Appendix 2:

### Stafford 14-19 Partnership Principles for Curriculum Planning

The aim of Stafford 14-19 Partnership is to maximise the opportunities for all students in Stafford by ensuring they have access to the broadest possible 16-19 curriculum, while ensuring this represents good value for money.

#### Principles for Curriculum Planning

- Quality of delivery (evidenced by outcomes and local, honest intelligence from partners)
- Availability of Resources (hardware/rooms/teaching resources/staff)
- Proximity to Learners (inc Consideration of students who live outside the town)
- Demand (compromise where minority subjects are included)
- Collaboration over courses and syllabuses for progression routes and avoid unviable groups
- Consider plugging gaps where need arises (or looking at new subjects where opportunities arise)
- Entry Criteria (appendix 3)

The Partnership is evolving and responds to change, both locally and nationally, in terms of demographics, curriculum reform and other educational changes.

Despite these pressures the Partnership continues to offer an outstanding curriculum offer which is available to students across the Partnership schools. To access the provision students must be enrolled at one of the Partner schools or academies:

- Blessed William Howard Catholic High School
- King Edward VI High School
- Sir Graham Balfour High School
- Stafford Manor High School
- Weston Road Academy

Whilst students are expected to take a course in their base school if it available there, they can take full advantage of the full programme if the subject is not available at their base school or if there is a clash on their timetable.

There is an understanding that core academic subjects would always be made available. These are subjects without which some students would not be able to access courses in higher education.

Experience shows that demand for subjects such as Modern Foreign Languages, Music and Further Maths are often low. Currently there is an agreement between the Partner schools to try to maintain these subjects in the Partnership offer.

There is a genuine desire to enrich the curriculum offer and so Partners may wish to offer additional non-core courses. Any Partner wishing to add a new course to the programme will present their case at the Curriculum Managers Meeting. The discussion will consider whether its inclusion would have a detrimental effect on any other Partner's current offer and would reinforce the responsibility to guarantee quality provision for all learners.

The number of courses included in the curriculum offer also needs to be realistic in relation to the number of students who will be applying for admission to the Partnership. All decisions will ensure a balance of provision across the Town, ensuring that there is a full range of pathways available to students, and taking

into account that the level of provision of courses within each Partner institution helps sustain its post -16 profile and identity.

The recommendations of the Curriculum Managers Group are forwarded to the Partnership Executive Group for approval and this adds a further level of control in ensuring that no decisions are made on the curriculum programme which might disadvantage students or the Partnership. No Partner will develop provision that will reduce the viability of courses without full consideration be the PEG of the implications to other partner schools. All decisions about the curriculum programme will be taken in the context of most cost effective/best value offer.

Once the programme has been agreed it is included in the Prospectus which is produced ready for choices evenings held by the Partners in preparation for the new round of admissions. Information about the courses will be made available to students through the Prospectus and Partner schools websites, from which students will make their choice of courses to study in Year 12. The admissions process will run from November through to March.

On a specified date data from the application process will be extracted so that the Curriculum Managers can see where there is little or no interest in course offered. At this stage it may be that one or more Partners agrees to share a course, or withdraw their offer to allow a Partner's course to be viable. More non-core subjects may be dropped from the curriculum offer if the Partner school offering the course considers it to be unviable. Such decisions are taken in good time for students to make alternative choices.

## **Appendix 3:**

### Entry Criteria September

Within the Stafford Sixth Form Partnership there are different combinations of courses available and a clear set of entry criteria for each programme.

#### A Level Programme

- The standard entry criteria to study in the sixth form is 9-4 or A\*-C in at least seven different subjects, including English and mathematics which would usually be at grade 4 or above.
- To study mathematics you will be required to achieve a grade 6 or above at GCSE.
- To study further mathematics, you will be required to achieve a 7 or above in mathematics at GCSE.
- To study computing, modern foreign languages or music you will be required to achieve a grade 6 or above in that subject at GCSE.
- To study science subjects at A-level (biology, chemistry, physics or psychology), you will be required to achieve at least a 6-6 grade in combined science or have achieved 6 or above in the individual subject area if taken as a separate science.
- For some A-levels with a high mathematical content (particularly computing, chemistry and physics) GCSE at grade 6 in mathematics is also required.
- To study other subjects already taken at GCSE you must achieve at least a grade 5 above in that subject.

#### **Technical and Applied General Programme**

To study the Technical and Applied General Programme, you should have achieved 9-4 or above in at least five different subjects with a grade 4 or above in English Language and mathematics and a 5 in the subject to be studied/related subject to be studied.

You will be able to select a combination of an applied and an A Level course. For the A Level you choose, if the subject was already taken at GCSE, you must achieve at least a grade 5 in that subject.

Whichever pathway you would like to take you will need to discuss this with your Head of Sixth Form who will advise you on your choices.

#### **What if you don't meet these criteria?**

For students who do not meet these criteria, don't panic! Discuss this with your Head of Sixth Form who will look at the options available.

#### **Admissions Panel**

Also students can be referred to the Admissions Panel where an applicant:

- offers alternative qualifications;
- has not met entry criteria but there are known mitigating circumstances;
- wishes to repeat a year of a course.

The panel comprises representatives of heads from partner schools and the Partnership Manager. It meets during the first week of the Autumn Term. Students are required to submit their back up plan for the appeals meeting. The panel reserves the right not to offer a place on a course to students who it believes would not benefit from it.