



# Admissions Policy

## 1. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all applicants seeking entry to Step into learning (hereafter referred to as SIL), for a full-time or part-time programme of study.

This policy does not identify detailed organisational activities but overriding principles that shape how these activities are carried out.

## 2. Definitions

Adults – persons age of 19 and over

## 3. Policy

### 3.1 Statement of key principles

1. SIL and its partners provides a wide range of learning opportunities. It does, however, acknowledge there are some people for whom it is not the appropriate training or education provider.
2. SIL aims to provide a fair and transparent approach for anyone applying for a course or training route. All entry criteria are outlined on our website and in course brochures. If an applicant does not meet the entry criteria, SIL reserves the right to decline an offer of a place a programme.
3. Reasonable adjustments will be made so disabled applicants can access programmes. SIL requires timely cooperation from applicants and any supporting professionals / agencies, to determine what reasonable adjustments should be made.
4. SIL offers a broad range of learning opportunities and ensures that individuals where appropriate, are matched to a programme of study best suited to their ability and future direction.
5. SIL celebrates diversity and challenges discrimination where we find it and welcomes applications from anyone with the potential to succeed. No applicant will be excluded from entry as a result of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion sexual orientation or transgender status. We reserve the right to make decisions relating to appropriateness of admission in connection with the age of any applicant where safeguarding best practice requires SIL to do so.
6. SIL is committed to equality of opportunities for all applicants.
7. All applications to SIL will be treated as confidential and personal information and data is dealt with in line with legislative requirements.
8. SIL staff will work with other agencies such as Careers South West, Social Services, Schools and Employers to transfer information where appropriate and to ensure we are best informed about the most appropriate type of teaching and support.
9. SIL is committed to making information available in a range of formats and through hosting open events that showcase SIL and raise people's awareness of

the range of the courses we offer, so that we help applicants to make well-informed choices about their education and training.

10. For those who are accepted onto and join a course, SIL has high expectations regarding attendance, work completion, appropriateness of behaviour. Failure to meet these expectations, for whatever reason, may result in the learner being withdrawn from the course.

### 3.2 Applications

Applicants will, ordinarily, receive acknowledgement of receipt of their application within 5 working days. During initial screening of applications learners may be offered alternative routes of study, added to a waiting list, advised to approach another organisation or to apply to another institution.

SIL recruits appropriately to age-related provision. To qualify for consideration any learner must have achieved, or be in the process of achieving, the entry requirements for their chosen programme, have their suitability assessed via an interview and/or other process, and have funding in place.

Adults may apply for any of the courses provided by SIL and its partners:

- Every case is considered on an individual basis, taking into account any relevant contextual information.

### 3.3 Entry requirements

1. Each application is considered against the academic and other entry requirements set out on the website and, where appropriate, will also be reviewed in light of any additional information provided by the applicant. Entry requirements may include academic as well as others.
2. Each application will be subject to an initial screening before applicants are invited for an interview (if applicable).
3. Missing information may delay the processing of an application.
4. Each application form asks the learner to identify any additional support requirements he or she might have. The objective of this is for SIL to begin to assess the needs of the learner so that the SIL can agree suitable support and/or reasonable adjustments, therefore full disclosure is strongly advised.

### 3.4 Additional support needs

- I. Learning difficulties/disabilities: Needs will be assessed, recorded and relevant support, wherever possible, will be put in place in time for the learner joining SIL, assuming suitable notice of needs is able to be provided by the Applicant;
- II. Medical condition or disability. Dependent on the type of condition, an applicants' details may be passed to our Learning Support staff.
- III. Where an applicant has declared a serious medical issue that could impact significantly on their programme of study and/or access to SIL facilities, then we may

need to ask for advice and, in some cases, supporting information from professionals concerned. This is to enable SIL and its partners to make an informed assessment as to the suitability of a particular course for the applicant, taking account of our duty to make suitable reasonable adjustments for learners with disabilities.

- IV. We will normally require applicants who have disclosed a recent recurring or serious health problem (mental or physical) to provide an independent medical report on their condition. In some cases, it may be necessary for SIL to be in receipt of supporting documentation and advice from professionals prior to assessing the suitability of a course/SIL for an applicant. Such assessments and judgements will be made by an access panel consisting of relevant SIL staff and, where appropriate, external representatives.
- V. An applicant who anticipates not being sufficiently well enough to fully attend a course, must disclose this prior to enrolling.
- VI. Learners who have a current Education, Health and Care Plan should if possible, ensure SIL has received their application and Plan two months prior to when they wish to commence their learning. Timely provision of such information assists with a range of processes, including the preparation of support, recruitment of staff, liaison with the local authority and/or Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), and any adjustments required to ensure that SIL can make an informed decision on whether admission will be possible, having considered the likely impact of any reasonable adjustments.
- VII. Where an applicant suffers from a medical condition that has or might have a material impact on their learning, or other students, and this was not disclosed on the Application form this could result in the application being reconsidered, if reasonable adjustments are unlikely to enable accessing a course possible.

### 3.5 Other considerations

- i. All applicants must disclose any criminal records or other issues which might reasonably be considered to impact on their suitability to join a course at SIL. When considering applicants with criminal convictions SIL will comply with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 2014. Applicants to some courses may require mandatory DBS checks.
- ii. Some applicants may receive a confidential discussion request. Applicants will receive a form asking for additional information regarding their particular issues;
- iii. Alternative and other educational backgrounds. For applicants with alternative and other educational backgrounds, we may approach the relevant organisation for supplementary information.
- iv. To facilitate the application process, SIL may require information from an applicant and their current provider. This information will be used to inform our information, advice and guidance.
- v. Applicants will be required to provide educational or other references, as requested. In accordance with Government legislation all 16-18 year olds will be expected to follow a Programme of Study, to include English and Maths where a learner does not yet hold a GCSE grade C/4 in these subjects.

### 3.6 Course Offers

- a) All offers are conditional and SIL reserves the right to amend or withdraw any offer on the basis of subsequent information received or becoming evident.
- b) The majority of all interviewees can expect to leave their interview with written confirmation of their offer. Some SIL offers may be conditional upon applicants achieving certain stated grades or providing other evidence of prior learning or achievement, such as the completion of some pre-course assessment.
- c) If SIL chooses not to run a course, learners will be advised of alternative provision, if available but SIL is not obliged to make alternative provision in such circumstances.
- d) Formal acceptance of offers is subject to learners accepting SIL's terms and conditions and completion of any other documentation or expectations that SIL may reasonably request or accept.

## 4. Implementation

To enrol as a learner with SIL, applicants must complete an enrolment form. This is an important contractual stage in the admissions process.

All learners will be expected to provide suitable ID, such as birth certificate or passport including prior qualifications.

## 5. Risk Assessment

SIL reserves the right to decline admission to an applicant who has previously been excluded from this or any other educational institution, following careful consideration.

SIL has a duty to ensure that it spends / invests public funds, with care. It reserves the right not to admit an individual who previously attended SIL but in the view of SIL failed to make sufficient effort or progress towards successfully completing their studies.

In the interest of duty of care, SIL reserves the right not to admit an applicant where there is evidence that they could be a threat or danger to themselves or others.

SIL may choose not to admit an applicant where there are concerns that the learner is not well enough to study or complete the programme, fully, or where there are significant concerns that to undertake the course of study may not be in the best interest of an applicant's health or wellbeing.

SIL may choose not to admit an applicant who has any outstanding debt to SIL.

The vast majority of applicants with spent convictions are admitted to SIL but SIL has a duty of care to all staff and students. SIL, where it deems appropriate, will consult with appropriate supporting agencies when considering the application and will carry out a risk assessment following disclosures of criminal convictions.

## 6. Appeals and Complaints

If a prospective learner wishes to appeal a decision regarding refusal of admission onto a programme of study, they should contact the programme tutor in the first instance. They will seek to explain why the application has been refused admission on to a course. If further information is required or the applicant is not satisfied with the decision then they will be referred to SIL's Head of Adult Education who will respond to the applicant either verbally or in writing within 10 working days.

When the appeal has been decided the outcome of that decision is final.