

# **Briefing Paper — St Helena Community College Entry Requirements for Higher Education Courses 2017**

The St Helena Community College board has recommended that there be a set entry requirement for any persons wishing to register for study in the courses offered through the Higher Education division of the St Helena Community College and has given their endorsement to the entry standards outlined below. These entry requirements have been developed with a view to ensuring that individuals registering for these courses have the requisite knowledge and skills to succeed in their studies and that the significant investment of government funds that these courses represent is prudently managed.

## ***Decisions requested***

The Education Committee are asked to consider the proposed requirements for entry to high education courses offered by the St Helena Community College as outlined by the Directorate and approved by the SHCC Board and to give their approval for the implementation of the recommended requirements with effect from 1 November 2017.

## ***Background***

The St Helena Community College has now had higher education courses on offer for just over one year. Overall, this has been a very successful initiative, with 13 individuals undertaking university level courses and 3 other commencing A level courses. In listening to feedback from these students, however, it is clear that in a number of cases, they underestimated the difficulty of these courses and the commitment required to complete them. Many individuals have also cited the challenges they face in relation to the level of academic writing required. In a few cases, individuals have indicated that even where they have been successful in their initial module, their lack of prior preparation has discouraged them from progressing at this time.

With that in mind, the entry requirements below have been developed with a view to ensuring that prospective students have a sufficient level of preparation to enable them to be able to access the courses they undertake, while at the same time providing flexibility and ease of access. The SHCC Board and the Directorate are mindful of the role of the College in facilitating access to learning for adults who may not have previously had or taken advantage of all the learning opportunities now available on St Helena. With that in mind, some care has been taken to ensure that these requirements support their success without unnecessarily restricting access.

## ***Outline of Entry Requirements***

The proposed entry requirement for courses offered by the Higher Education division of the St Helena Community College are as follows:

### **A Levels**

- GCSE English and GCSE Maths, at grades A\* - C, or the equivalent
- Subject specific requirements for individual A levels, based on guidance provided by examination boards (SHCC proposes to adopt the guidance used by Prince Andrew School)

### **Access to Higher Education Diploma**

*The Access to HE qualification was designed for the purpose of entry to higher education in the UK, where it is widely recognised and accepted for university entry. Most Access to HE diplomas can be completed in approximately one year. Access to HE courses are designed to meet the needs of adult learners who may have limited formal qualifications, though some courses may require GCSEs in English and/or maths. For working adults, this is generally a much more accessible route to university preparation than A levels.*

- GCSE English and GCSE Maths at grades A\* - C, or the equivalent
- FS Maths Level 2 may substitute for non-quantitative subject, if the learning provider is willing to accept this

### **Degree Level**

*While the Open University has no formal entry requirements for their courses, the SHCC Board agreed that as SHCC heavily subsidises these courses, in order to ensure a wise use of limited funding it is essential to screen applicants for academic readiness. The usual academic requirement for degree level study is 3 A Level passes, the Access to HE diploma, or the equivalent.*

- GCSE English & Maths (A\*-C)
- Level 3 qualification (this may be any of a wide range of Level 3 courses, including but not limited to an AS or A level pass, an Access to HE diploma, ILM Level 3, a Level 3 certificate or diploma or a professional qualification at this level)
- Successful completion of the Open University free Badged Course in Academic English (requires 24 hours of study)