

Information for candidates about the College

Aquinas College is one of the largest Catholic sixth form colleges in the country. The college has about 2000 full time 16-19 year old students with about 120 full time equivalent (FTE) teaching staff and 55 FTE support staff. The college has grown to this size from modest beginnings -in 1980 it was opened in the premises of a former high school to provide sixth form education to Stockport's expected 200 Catholic 16-18 year-old students. In 2011 the old building was demolished and the college moved to a purpose-built modern building on the same site.

The college now draws students from its four Catholic partner schools (three in Stockport and one in Buxton) and from many other schools in Stockport and neighbouring areas. It has become one of the most over-subscribed colleges in the country, receiving applications from up to twice as many students as there are places available. Our admissions policy gives priority to Catholic students, others from Catholic schools, and to siblings.

We have refused to become academically selective, welcoming all students for whom we have space and suitable courses. This is fully in keeping with the college's ethos and the importance we place on personal relationships. We believe that it is these aspects of the college which keep its reputation high, rather than our success in league tables and against national criteria. Nevertheless, and in spite of our comprehensive intake policy, the college has always been amongst the highest rated colleges in the country ever since the league tables were first introduced.

Our most recent Ofsted inspection rated the College as "Good" in its overall effectiveness, its leadership and management, and the quality of its provision. The inspectors also commented on the excellent individual support for students together with the college's outstanding response to educational and social inclusion.

About 80% of each year's intake follow AS and A level courses (including Applied A levels) with the remainder undertaking BTEC and other level 3 courses together with some level 2 courses and GCSEs. There is also provision for some level 1 literacy and numeracy, as well as entry level courses in our Pathways department for students with moderate learning difficulties. We offer about 70 subjects at AS/A2 level with all the students undertaking a core skills course including tutorial, ethics and for some students General Studies and Critical Thinking

In addition to the 16-19 year-old students, the college has around 1,000 part time adult students who attend on Monday and Tuesday evenings following a wide range of courses.

In common with other sixth form colleges, the college is centrally funded by the Education Funding Agency. However, as a designated college, the premises remain the property of the Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury. All staff are employed directly by the college. The terms and conditions of employment are, in common with all sixth form colleges, those nationally negotiated by the Sixth Form Colleges' Forum (SFCF). In broad terms salaries and contractual arrangements parallel those in secondary schools.

Concerning the present appointments, applications from practising Catholics would be particularly welcome, although all applications will be considered on their merits. As a college committed to equal opportunities, we positively welcome applications from all sections of the community. Intending applicants who will be Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) should note that it is possible for them to complete their period of induction at Aquinas College.