



Admissions Policy

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Policy statement: This policy is to ensure that Sew Positive fulfils its charitable purpose for the public benefit and that limited course places are offered inclusively, fairly and to participants able to take full benefit of the course, learning at the appropriate level and contributing to a positive group learning experience. The charity aims to provide a transparent and fair process for the selection of participants.

Our commitment

Sew Positive provides a creative environment that is inclusive, offering opportunities to adult participants who are socially excluded or at risk of social exclusion. It is recognised that participation in creative activities will provide some benefits to most individuals.

We run a variety of drop-in, one off workshops and longer courses, and eligibility criteria are applied at the offered level. Anyone is entitled to apply for a place on a Sew Positive workshop or course. While every effort is made to include eligible applicants, and we will be as inclusive as far as possible, there are sometimes circumstances beyond our control.

Where certain courses or programmes have funding restrictions including geographical, age or health related criteria for access priority, this will be made clear on registration forms. We may limit access to participants who seek to attend multiple services if our funding requirements dictate specific criteria.

Your commitment

When people fail to turn up to registered sessions or courses or are late, the delivery of the session is adversely affected for all those attending and engaging, and cancellations/no-shows may affect your place at future services. This is not relevant for drop-in sessions which are clearly promoted as such.

This policy is to help ensure that any cancellations or no shows on courses do not affect other participants accessing services, and to demonstrate we aim to work with participants to help them access our services. By not turning up you (may) have also prevented someone else from attending. As our services are delivered for free this can affect our funding, our cost of material, and your eligibility for future services..

We recognise that things do crop up at the last minute and as such we will listen to any mitigating issues and look favourably at how we implement the policy. Any appeals or special circumstances will be dealt with by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

This policy will apply to all Sew Positive services, workshops and events both online and face to face.

The terms we use

Socially excluded means being excluded from society, or parts of society, as a result of one or more of the following factors: unemployment; financial hardship; age; ill health (physical or mental); substance abuse or dependency including alcohol and drugs; discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, disability, ethnic origin, religion, belief, creed, sexual orientation or gender identity; poor educational or skills attainment; relationship and family breakdown; poor housing (that is housing that does not meet basic habitable standards); crime (either as a victim of crime or as an offender rehabilitating into society). Sew Positive also considers those with an informal caring responsibility as socially excluded.

Eligibility means who can be accepted onto a course.

Return participants are those who have previously completed a Sew Positive course.

New participants are those who have not taken a course within the current academic year.

Eligibility

Applicants are able to self-evidence their situation of social exclusion (verbally or through online sign up forms or alternative modes of assessment e.g. video).

All participants are required to:

- Attend regularly and agree to dates set, and be able to travel to venues for courses
- Comprehend and follow instruction
- Articulate personal responses
- Learn
- Work independently and with others
- Complete and submit creative work
- Complete Monitoring & Evaluation forms required by our funders (e.g. start and end surveys)
- Access essential equipment.

Assessment of eligibility

An informal assessment is made following course sign up submissions. If the assessor feels that a candidate may not be eligible this will be made explicit during further communication. A final decision may be deferred pending further information or specialist input from the course tutor. Consideration of previous good attendance of Sew Positive courses will be a factor in some oversubscribed courses to demonstrate their ability to meet the requirements. If participants are late joining courses, there may be additional requirements. The final decision about participant eligibility rests with the CEO.

Oversubscription

If places for a course are oversubscribed, preference will be given to participants in the following order:

1. People facing any factor of social isolation
2. Those with health challenges (mental or physical) or informal caring responsibilities
3. Those with disclosed financial hardship
4. Previous attendance of Sew Positive services - where there has been non-attendance on previous booked courses (not drop-in services), this can be taken into consideration when offering places
5. Date of application.

Return learners

Sew Positive supports progressive learning and will accept applications from participants who have previously taken a course with Sew Positive, provided they are still in a situation of social exclusion. Learners from a prior academic year applying to a course (not drop-in services), will be considered new participants and the usual admission policy applies, including that they must be in a situation of social exclusion. In the event of oversubscription, new participants may be prioritised over participants within the current academic year.

Appealing a decision

If a place on a course is not offered or is discontinued, a participant has the right to appeal. Appeals should be made within one week through our CEO.

Monitoring, review and evaluation

This policy will be reviewed by the Board every year to ensure Sew Positive's workshops and courses fulfil its charitable purposes for the public benefit, by being limited to those in a situation of social exclusion.