



**BRIDGWATER
& TAUNTON
COLLEGE**

ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR FE COURSES

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1 Introduction

The guiding principles for the College's approach are:

- To provide accurate and timely information and advice to new applicants to enable them to make the right choices for their future
- To build a college community which celebrates inclusivity, diversity and the contributions of a wide range of students and apprentices
- To operate open, transparent and consistent admissions procedures
- To ensure procedures are guided by a sense of 'fairness', with the aspiration that applicants are placed on the programmes that meet their long term career aims and interests.

2 Aims

- 2.1 This policy applies to all FE applicants including full time, part time and apprenticeship programmes of all ages, who are seeking admission onto a College programme including those who are already at the College and wish to progress from one programme to another.
- 2.2 The College will ensure that applicants receive information and advice from Student Services and / or Curriculum Teams in order to help them decide on the course of study to best suit their needs.
- 2.3 The College will work with other agencies such as Schools, Universities, employers and specialist support services to develop appropriate information sharing and referral processes and ensure that the information and advice provided to potential students and apprentices is accurate.
- 2.4 The College will offer applicants the opportunity to view the College and its facilities prior to the commencement of a course by holding open days, taster events or by arranged visits.
- 2.5 Applicants with additional support needs can access appropriate support from the College's Additional Learning Support team and will be given the opportunity to disclose their support needs at application and enrolment so that their needs can be assessed and responded to from the earliest stages in the Student Journey.

3 Scope

- 3.1 This policy outlines the Further Education Admissions procedures applicable to all applicants from within the European Union (EU).

4 Equality and Diversity

- 4.1 The College's Equality and Diversity Policy demonstrates the College's vision of culture and society where diversity is celebrated routinely, equality of opportunity is advanced, and good relations are fostered between different groups of people. The College strives to eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

5 FE Admissions

- 5.1 The admissions process for FE students is overseen by the Admissions Team who work closely with Curriculum Teams to ensure that each applicant is supported in a timely manner to meet their individual requirements and provide them with experience that supports their admission into the College.

6 Apprenticeship Admissions

- 6.1 All applications relating to College Apprenticeships are facilitated through the Business Development Team (BD Team) and the relevant curriculum area who will undertake initial screening interviews and assist with securing suitable employment opportunities, although it remains the responsibility of the apprentice to secure employment.
- 6.2 The principles outlined in this policy apply to Apprentices. However, admissions processes are designed around the needs of apprentices and employers and so engagement will take place within each workplace on a flexible all year round basis and be led by the BD Team who will undertake skills matching, initial assessment and work placement checks as required.

7 Recruitment, Promotional and Marketing Materials

- 7.1 The College is committed to ensuring that applicants and potential applicants have access to high quality information, opportunities to view facilities and the ability to speak to curriculum teams. This will be facilitated through Open Events, Taster Days, School Visits and other arranged visits.
- 7.2 The College has a Schools Liaison Team and an Information and Advice Team who work in partnership with local schools to ensure that young people understand the wide range of options available to them at Key Stage 5. Supporting school staff responsible for transition and careers is also a key part of this area of work. The College has a Transition Team who will support identified students transitioning from school to College.
- 7.3 The College works to ensure it meets the requirements of the Matrix framework and is committed to providing impartial information, advice and guidance.
- 7.4 The College is committed to ensuring that Course Prospectuses, the College website, and other publicity materials contain accurate, reliable, current and comprehensive information that is designed in a market-appropriate and accessible way.

8 Entry Criteria

- 8.1 The College publishes academic entry criteria for all full time courses in the full time prospectus and on the website. The criteria is guided by a commitment to ensure progression through levels of learning and to ensure that applicants have the academic ability to achieve and succeed on their chosen course.
- 8.2 Exceptions to the stated criteria may be made for applicants who are identified as being home schooled or Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET). In these instances assessment of core competencies displayed at your interview will be used.
- 8.3 Adjustments to the stated criteria may be made:
- For applicants who are assessed as having a disability or learning difficulty
 - For adults who can demonstrate relevant prior learning or experience.
- 8.4 Existing College students applying to undertake a further programme of study or progress onto an apprenticeship are required to fulfil the relevant entry criteria and follow the admissions procedure for internal applicants.

- 8.5 Applicants for whom English is a second language may be asked to complete an assessment of their reading, writing and comprehension as a condition of entry onto non-ESOL courses.

9 Course Interviews

- 9.1 Course Interviews are a two way process to ensure that applicants can find out more about the specifics of the course / programme. The interview is typically held by Telephone or Microsoft Teams. In occasion, there may be an in-person interview arranged. The student is required to attend the interview and may have an accompanying adult present.
- 9.2 All Full-Time applicants (and some Part time applicants) will be invited to an interview to discuss their application and ensure that the course content, assessment, attendance requirements fit with applicants expectations. Distance Learning applicants will be contacted via phone to review their application and ensure that applicants have the ability to achieve and succeed on their chosen course.
- 9.3 Applicants who do not attend their Interview and who do not contact the College, will be given one further opportunity. If the applicant fails to attend on the second date or does not contact the College, their application will be withdrawn and this will be advised via letter and email. The College will endeavour to take opportunities to contact the individual either directly or via their school to ascertain the reasons for withdrawing their application.

10 Internal Progression Applications

- 10.1 Applicants who are progressing internally from courses will be interviewed by the relevant curriculum staff and offered course places (subject to relevant conditions being met) before course places are filled by new applicants who are not progressing from within the College.

11 Initial Assessment of Applicants

- 11.1 Applicants may be asked to complete an initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy prior to the start of their course. The information from this assessment will be used to indicate potential learner support needs.

12. Supporting Applicants with Additional Support Needs

- 12.1 Bridgwater and Taunton College welcomes applications from people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- 12.2 Where an applicant is identified as declaring a disability or a difficulty, which may impact on their learning, the student will be referred to the College's Additional Learning Support team. If an applicant declares a need prior to, or during, the interview, the curriculum team will refer the applicant to ALS for a support interview, where ALS will identify whether support is required on the study programme. If a disability or a difficulty is identified once the student has started their programme, the curriculum team will refer the student to ALS for an assessment for support.
- 12.3 The Additional Learning Support team will provide:
- Support for applicants at interview as required by the applicant
 - An individually designed transition programme where the need is identified
 - Curriculum staff with guidance on appropriate strategies to support individual students through the application and interview process as required.
 - Support to ensure that applicants are able to access all areas of the College as required.

- Due regard will be given the SEND Code of Conduct 2014 to ensure that best endeavours have been made to provide for applicants with SEND.

13 Fitness to study

- 13.1 The College has a duty to ensure all students can consistently and effectively undertake their studies in a way which does not put themselves at risk, or other students and staff at risk of harm.
- 13.2 Concerns about a student's fitness to study may be related to, but not limited to:
- Non-engagement with current or prior learning
 - Mental or physical health issues
 - Health concerns without apparent insight into, or management of, these concerns
 - Substance misuse
 - Inappropriate behaviour towards others
 - Aggressive, violent or threatening behaviour
 - An attitude towards the College that may put its name into disrepute, or current or previous defamatory action towards the College
 - Failure to meet previous conditions placed on study with the College
- 13.3 Where concerns of the nature of those above become apparent, a panel consisting of a Senior Manager or Head of Department, and the manager or member of staff who knows the most about the student / applicant, will meet to decide whether an applicant may be admitted to the College, or an existing student may continue.
- 13.4 The College reserves the right to refuse admission to the College, or exclude an existing student, if the panel confirms the concerns or identifies significant risks. The College reserves the right to share information regarding the risk with statutory and other agencies in order to ensure the safety of its students and staff and that of other organisations.
- 13.5 There may be occasions, particularly in the case of a long term mental health condition, in which adjustments are made to enable a learner to achieve, for example on a reduced timetable or working from home, for example
- 13.6 Students and apprentices have the right to appeal against a decision not to be admitted to the College or allowed to continue at the College – see section 22, Appeals and Complaints.

14 DBS Checks

- 14.1 The College requires applicants who apply for specific courses to undertake DBS checks prior to starting the course. All offers for courses where there is a DBS check requirement will be conditional to the successful DBS clearance.

15 Fees Assessment

- 15.1 If an applicant declares a non-UK nationality on their application form, or that their normal country of residence is outside the UK, or that they have not been living in the UK/EEA for the last 3 years their application will be referred to the International Team.

16 Criminal Convictions

- 16.1 Applicants are asked to disclose 'relevant' and 'unspent' criminal convictions or court proceedings for on their application form. Further information will be sought from applicants who disclose and risk assessments will be undertaken. For further guidance on this please contact the College's admissions team. A panel to review the application will be held if the risk rating within the risk assessment exceeds the appropriate thresholds (see also section 13 above, Fitness to Study).

17 Course Offers

- 17.1 Course offers may have conditions in addition to the standard academic entry criteria.
- 17.2 Course offers will be made in writing via the Admissions team normally within 10 working days of the interview subject to relevant support information and references being received.
- 17.3 If a course is not thought to be suitable, or the applicant does not meet the required course entry criteria, they will be advised at their interview and offered an alternative or invited to meet a member of the IAG Team for support in looking at alternative courses.
- 17.4 Reasons not to offer an applicant a place would normally include:
- Applicant not having the (predicted) academic requirements to meet the published entry criteria.
 - Applicant being supplied with a poor reference from their previous school or college. In some instances an applicant may be asked to complete a Code of Conduct as a condition of entry if a reference causes concerns about an applicant's behaviour. Alternative provision or support may well be recommended.
 - Applicants not displaying the core competencies expected for a programme of learning at the College at the Interview.
 - Concern that the applicant could not meet the specific work placement requirements of the course.

18 Course Closure

- 18.1 Where a course is under-subscribed or there is a significant change to how a course is funded, the College reserves the right to withdraw the course. In such cases, applicants will be offered advice on the availability of alternative courses, both at the College and with other local education providers. However, the offer of a place cannot be guaranteed.

19 Course Acceptance

- 19.1 Applicants must accept or decline their place at College by replying to the email, letter or by telephoning the Admissions team. Students may accept verbally during their interview.

20 College Reserved rights

The College reserves the right to:

- Request references and/or school reports for applicants.
- Require DBS checks prior to entry on courses that lead to careers where this is a requirement or where work experience providers have this as a requirement. Certain convictions may lead to a refused course offer.
- Review and refuse admission to an applicant who has previously been excluded from this or any other educational institution. This will be subject to a course review meeting with the relevant College Manager to assess suitability to study in a college environment and duty of care to other students, apprentices and staff.
- Conduct risk assessments, review and refuse admission for applicants where there is evidence that they could be a threat or danger to themselves or others. This

relates to the college's duty of care to students, apprentices and staff. See Section 13, Fitness to Study.

- Review and refuse admission to an applicant/learner who has any outstanding debt to the College.
- Require that students and apprentices are funded by a government body, themselves or another body in order that the College receives payment for the cost of studying.

21 Joining the college

- 21.1 Every effort will be made to ensure that joining the college is a positive experience for applicants. All applicants starting a course will be sent information about joining the college prior to joining the college (for apprentices at time of appointment) and information on financial support, services available for students and any other relevant information about life at the college.

22 Appeals and Complaints

- 22.1 If an applicant wishes to appeal against a decision made by the College with respect to an application to study at the College, a letter should be sent to the Head of Admissions. An acknowledgement of an appeal will be sent within 5 working days. This appeal will then be presented to the relevant College Senior Manager. The applicant should expect to receive a formal response regarding their appeal in writing within 10 working days.

- 22.2 Any dissatisfaction with any aspect of the admissions process can be addressed using the College's published Complaints Procedures. Link to College Policies:

- [Student / Complainant Complaints Guidance And Procedure](#)
- [Equality & Diversity Policy](#)
- [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)

23 Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier where procedure changes or need arises.