

Admissions Policy (Further Education)

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Birmingham Metropolitan College (BMet) has an open-access policy to admissions and actively encourages applications from any individual interested in embarking on a programme of study with us.
- 1.2 The college aims to treat each applicant as an individual and to find an appropriate programme from a broad range of courses which meet the applicants' aspirations and goals and are aligned to national and regional skills needs.

- 2.1 The student admissions process is the responsibility of the Director of Student Experience supported by college-based Heads of Student Experience and their teams.
- 2.2 Responsibility for the admission of any applicant rests with the Curriculum Director for the course area, although this will be devolved to curriculum staff in the majority of cases in line with published entry criteria.
- 2.3 All staff supporting the admissions process within the Student Experience teams will receive training and regular updates on the procedures and processes.
- 2.4 All staff accessing applicant information and making electronic offers will be able to access training through on-line instruction, comprehensive guidance notes and support from Student Experience staff.

2.5 Department Roles

2.5.1 Student Services

The college admissions service is part of the Student Experience Directorate and has responsibility for providing a college-based admissions service at James Watt, Matthew Boulton and Sutton Coldfield Colleges this includes satellite sites that are affiliated with a main college site.

Staff will process applications fairly and equitably, providing advice to applicants on the process and where required book interviews if these have not been self-booked online.

Staff will provide information to applicants throughout their applicant journey, this will include but not limited to open events, experience days, next steps and wider student support available.

Staff will maintain availability of online appointment slots throughout the application cycle.

2.5.2 Inclusive Support

The Inclusive Support team work closely with Student Services to ensure that all applicants who disclose a support need are assessed and have an interview with the Inclusive support team to ensure a suitable support plan can be put in place.

- 2.5.3 Staff need to be aware of the process for the disclosure of criminal convictions at application. The college Safeguarding Lead will take responsibility for assessment of any disclosures which should be notified to the college Safeguarding Lead immediately and the application suspended pending review.

3 PROCEDURE/COMPLIANCE OBLIGATIONS

3.1 Admissions Entry Criteria

- 3.1.2 Entry requirements are published in the college prospectus and on the college website. These requirements will be discussed with the applicant at interview. Some courses or subjects may require additional skills evidence such as an audition, a dexterity test or evidence of a minimum level of fitness. These requirements will be discussed with the applicant at the interview stage.
- 3.1.3 Applicants, where appropriate, will be screened during interview/enrolment/induction to assess their levels of literacy and numeracy.
- 3.1.4 Admission of applicants will be based on an assessment of their ability to succeed on their chosen course of study. Admission will be based on several criteria including qualifications, aptitude, professional or work experience and personal experience.
- 3.1.5 Individual programmes may have specific entry criteria including achievement of specific qualifications or demonstrable levels of literacy or numeracy. Some programmes will require applicants to have relevant work experience or employment. The specific details relating to entry criteria for each course are published in the college prospectus and on the college web site.
- 3.1.6 16-18 year old applicants who have not achieved a Grade 9 – 4 in either GCSE English Language or Maths are required to retake this GCSE alongside their vocational programme. The college will not provide support for re-takes where students have already achieved a Grade 9 – 4. However, the college will encourage further study of these subjects where it will support career and study progression.
- 3.1.7 No applicant will be refused entry to the college as a result of discrimination on the grounds of protected characteristics defined within the Equalities Act 2010. Where an applicant has a disability that we are not able to make reasonable adjustments for we will inform them as soon as possible in line with our Inclusive Support Policy.

- 3.1.8 The college reserves the right to recruit to age related provision, where this is appropriate to funding regulations and the quality of education and career pathways.
- 3.1.9 The college will aim to give each applicant an offer of a place which is appropriate to the course and the individual. Offers can be conditional or unconditional.
- 3.1.10 Where the entry criteria or offer conditions are not met, where it is possible the applicant will be offered alternative courses, careers advice or referral to another learning provider.
- 3.1.11 Where an application is unsuccessful, the college reserves the right to refuse admission, although we will endeavour to give reasons wherever possible.
- 3.1.12 Where additional information that was not available at the time of offer comes to light, an offer may be amended or in exceptional circumstances withdrawn.
- 3.1.13 Where an applicant is found to have falsified information provided, an offer may be amended or withdrawn.
- 3.1.14 The college reserves the right to withdraw courses where there is insufficient demand.
- 3.1.15 Where appropriate applicants will be offered alternative provision on a different course or at another BMet college.

3.2 Accreditation of prior learning

Applicants may be considered through the accreditation of prior learning which can be certified or experiential. The Curriculum Director, or their representative, is responsible for advising the applicant whether the course they wish to study will accept prior learning or credit transfer.

3.3 Refusal of Admission to College

The college reserves the right to refuse admission to applicants who:

- 3.3.2 Do not meet the entry criteria for their chosen course. In this case, applicants will be offered further information, advice and guidance to discuss alternatives.
- 3.3.3 Applicants who do not meet the specified entry requirements for a course may be offered a place subject to specified conditions. These conditions will be made explicit to the applicant and will be at the discretion of the appropriate Curriculum Director/Manager.
- 3.3.4 Withhold information or provide false or misleading information.
- 3.3.5 Have previously been excluded from BMet or another educational institution. Students will only be re-admitted on assessment / approval by the Vice Principal and Curriculum Director.

3.3.6 Have previously attended BMet or another educational establishment and not completed courses, including all external assessments.

3.3.7 Have outstanding debts to the college.

3.4 Applicants with a learning difficulty and or disability

The college welcomes applications from applicants requiring inclusive support on their chosen course and actively encourages applicants to declare any learning difficulty or disability at any time through the admissions process. Applications from individuals with learning and support needs will be assessed by the Inclusive Support team and the appropriate Curriculum area. The college will make reasonable adjustments for applicants with support needs. If, for any reason, the college is not able to meet the needs of the individual, the college will inform the applicant as soon as possible.

3.5 Applicants with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Applicants who declare an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will be given the opportunity to name BMet as their preferred choice of post sixteen education after due consultation with all interested parties. The college will engage with the Local Authority EHCP consultation process as set out in the SEND Code of Practice and will provide information to the Local Authority as to the college's ability to meet the educational support needs of the young person. A positive confirmation of this will not necessarily mean acceptance to the programme of study applied for, and applicants will still be required to follow the application and interview process set out in this policy.

3.6 Equality & Diversity

The college will always operate within the terms of current legislation for Equality and Diversity. In cases where applicants have additional needs or special requirements, the college will discuss these with the applicant and their parents/carers at an early stage in the application process so that all necessary arrangements can be put in place to meet the needs of the student by the start of the academic year.

3.7 Admissions Processing

3.7.1 Information, advice and guidance will be available to assist applicants in making informed decisions and opportunities to view the college and its facilities prior to application or commencement of a course will be made available through open events, careers events, experience days or other arranged visits.

- 3.7.2 Applications are accepted online via the college website. Acknowledgement of applications received is automated within the application process.
- 3.7.3 Interviews are available to book online for all applicants excluding those who have declared a learning difficulty or disability who will be invited to attend an assessment appointment with the Inclusive Support team.
- 3.7.4 The college will aim to respond to admissions enquiries received by telephone, email or in person within 5 working days.
- 3.7.5 Applicants will receive an invite to book their interview via, e-mail and will receive a SMS reminder 24 hours before the interview. Where applicants do not book their interview within 7 days the college will automatically provide them with an interview date and time.
- 3.7.6 Applicants will be interviewed by an appropriate member of curriculum staff to enable the applicant to gain all the information they need to make a decision about their course choice.
- 3.7.7 An unconditional (definite) offer will be made if an applicant has met the entry criteria. A conditional offer will be made where the entry criteria require qualification achievement that the applicant is currently undertaking.
- 3.7.8 The interviewing member of staff will record the offer electronically into the admissions system. All offers are checked by the Student Services team. An email confirmation of the offer is sent to the applicant the following day.
- 3.7.9 Non-attendees will be sent an automated email and asked to re book an appointment. Where no response is received the application will be withdrawn. Applications can be reinstated by contacting the college admissions team.
- 3.7.10 Applicants will be invited to enrol prior to the start of the start of their course. Applicants with unconditional offers do not need to see a curriculum member of staff at enrolment.

3.8 Progression Applicants

All current students will be informed of the college progression application process and criteria during tutorials and this will be followed up by discussions with their tutor regarding their intended progression pathway. Students will have the opportunity to attend progression fairs to find out information about career pathways and courses across the college.

3.9 Safeguarding & Disclosures

The college takes its responsibilities for Safeguarding extremely seriously. Criminal convictions are not necessarily a barrier to entry to study at the college. However, a risk assessment will be carried and the college reserve the right to contact agencies such as the Independent Safeguarding Authority, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Police and Youth Offending Teams if this is deemed as necessary.

For some courses of study, it is a requirement that students are registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority before they are able to go out on placement. Where this is appropriate applicants will be notified in advance. Applicants will be informed of the requirements to register for a DBS check prior to the commencement of specific courses.

4. COMPLIANCE/APPEALS

4.1 COMPLIANCE

This policy and related procedures will be reviewed and monitored annually by the Director of Student Experience and the Senior Leadership Team. It is the responsibility of the designated staff/departments identified in section 2 to ensure that the correct procedures are followed, the policy is adhered to.

The effectiveness of the admissions process will be continually monitored and reported on using the following methods:

- Admissions KPIs and monthly reporting
- Annual Self-Assessment
- Matrix Annual Improvement assessment
- Student Feedback by way of admissions surveys and Student Voice
- Mystery Shopping mechanisms
- Peer Observation process

Student Services will work closely with Quality, Marketing, Inclusive Support and Curriculum departments to ensure continuous quality improvement and effectiveness of student admissions at BMet.

4.2 APPEALS

In the first instance resolving queries is the responsibility of curriculum staff. Appeals regarding admissions decisions made which cannot be resolved by curriculum staff should be made in writing within 15 working days of the date of the original decision. Appeals made outside of these time frames will not be considered. All appeals must be made in writing to (Admissions@bmet.ac.uk). Appeals should outline the reason for the appeal and provide supporting evidence information if applicable. Appeals will be responded to within 15 working days. In some cases, applicants and parents/guardians may be asked to attend an appeal hearing at college.

The applicant will then be advised of the outcome and any action to be taken in writing within 28 days. The decision of the appeal panel is final and cannot be further appealed.

Appeals and complaints which cannot be resolved, concerning failure to comply with policy or published procedures should be made in accordance with BMet's complaints and compliments policy. Please note that appeals regarding admissions entry decisions cannot be considered within the Customer Complaints & Compliments Policy.