

Admissions Policy

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Our Mission

To provide opportunities for all our learners to thrive and achieve in life and work.

Our Values

- We will make respect our Golden Rule
- We will try to stand out in everything we do
- We will not be afraid to innovate even if we risk failure
- We will learn something new every day
- We will persevere until we get it right
- We will celebrate our achievements
- We will champion our students
- We will always have high expectations
- We will be responsive and enterprising
- We will work together and in partnership with our communities and businesses
- We will never forget that we are accountable to the students, communities and businesses that we serve
- We will be responsible stewards of public money

Admissions Policy

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1. Introduction

East Berkshire College is committed to equality of opportunity for all potential learners at the college and we offer an Admissions service whereby applicants are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, regardless of ethnic or national origin, disability, gender, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation or other distinction. Programmes have differing entry criteria but all require a commitment to, and enthusiasm for, learning

2. Policy Statement

The College will ensure that all applications are handled individually and will recruit with integrity, placing the best interests and success of the learner foremost in the recruitment process.

3. Principles of the Admissions Policy

- 3.1 Every applicant is considered individually using all the information available to us. The college is committed to an admissions process which is easily understood by applicants, transparent and fair.
- 3.2 All admissions decisions are made in accordance with the College's policies, procedures and requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.3 The College will abide by the Student Charter and the Internal Charter in the meeting of service standards relevant to the application process.
- 3.4 Anticipated success rates, and not learner numbers, dictate decisions to admit applicants on to programmes at the College.
- 3.5 All applicants will be offered the opportunity to access impartial and confidential Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services to ensure they have chosen a suitable programme to meet their personal and career aspirations.
- 3.6 An applicant will be taken on to a programme leading to a qualification only where it is confidently and reasonably believed that they have a good chance of achieving the agreed qualification aim.
- 3.7 We take seriously the need to ensure that the information contained in college publications (both printed materials and on line) is accurate at the time of publication. However, the college reserves the right to cancel, amend the entry criteria, or alter the content of any programme.
- 3.8 Where this is necessary, applicants will be advised at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.9 Decisions to admit applicants are taken by the Directors of Curriculum (or nominated deputy), with responsibility for the substantive qualification of the programme. Directors of Curriculum are responsible for recruiting to the programme with integrity.

- 3.10 The decision to admit an applicant should reflect the meeting of specific entry requirements or equivalent of the relevant programme. Where required by entry criteria applications should be supported by satisfactory references if applicable. Exceptional circumstances can be taken into account
- 3.11 Enabling students to progress thorough levels of study is key to the college's purpose and commitment in supporting students to succeed whilst both attending and beyond East Berkshire College
- 3.12 The college will carry out a timely Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check of applicants to certain programmes and in specific circumstances. When a (DBS) disclosure is requested, the outcome will inform the decision as to whether a place is offered.
- 3.13 This policy is consistent with good admissions practice in higher education, as defined in the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education¹ and the Schwartz Recommendations for Good Practice², and complies with current legislation affecting the admission of students. East Berkshire College is committed to the Widening Participation Strategy.
- 3.14 The information provided to the college may be shared with other organisations for purposes of administration, the provision of career and other guidance statistical and research purposes, relating to education, training, or employment. The college will not disclose applicants' information to 3rd parties for marketing purposes. The college's Data Protection Policy is available on the college's website: www.eastberks.ac.uk

4. Implementation of the Policy

The College will ensure that applicants and prospective learners are offered a structured, responsive and accessible admissions service, including:

- 4.1 Ensuring adequate time is given to applicants to attend interviews where applicable to meet curriculum staff to discuss, explore their chosen qualification in order to make an informed decision.
- 4.2 The opportunity to receive impartial advice and guidance through the application process from an adviser qualified to offer Information, Advice and Guidance
- 4.3 The opportunity and encouragement to disclose their specific learning needs and disabilities.
- 4.4 Clear, consistent and accurate information on programme entry criteria, fees and qualification aims.

¹ The Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2013) Chapter B2: Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education - October 2013

² Admissions to Higher Education Steering Group (2004) Fair admissions to higher education: Recommendations for good practice

- 4.5 Information provided in accessible formats and other appropriate arrangements in place for applicants requiring support during the application and interview process.
- 4.6 Opportunities to visit the college and to meet relevant curriculum staff with whom to discuss the particular programme(s) in which they are interested³.
- 4.7 Applicants who apply late will receive full and equal consideration. Later applications will be considered on an individual basis if there are still places available on the relevant programme.
- 4.8 Progression meetings with tutors for internal applicants to discuss progress and advancement. Learners wishing to progress within the College will, subject to meeting entry requirements, be offered a place on an appropriate programme.
- 4.9 A conditional or unconditional offer on a suitable programme, or if unsuccessful in their application impartial advice and guidance regarding other internal or external provision and referral as appropriate.
- 4.10 The College reserves the right to withdraw an offer at any time if additional information affecting the decision becomes available which impacts on the original offer
- 4.11 An offer subject to a DBS check for accepted learners where this is required for a programme (DBS checks will be processed in line with the Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure procedures).
- 4.12 Impartial advice, signposting and support for those individuals for whom the College, its programmes or facilities may not be appropriate⁴.
- 4.13 Where programmes do not require an interview applicants can still expect to access information, advice and guidance and other services as detailed above.
- 4.14 Procedures for appealing against an admissions decision or for making a complaint. (see 7 below)

³ Curriculum Directors have the responsibility for ensuring that their staff have the appropriate skills and training to carry out interviews and are clear when to refer applicants for independent IAG

⁴ Whilst the College aims to place all applicants, subject to availability of places, on a programme of his/her choosing or a reasonable substitute, it recognises that the provision and services offered may not be suited to all individuals at the time of their applications.

5. The Applicant is expected to:

- 5.1 Satisfy all pre-programme requirements including accurate completion of an application form (including details of prior qualifications or predicted grades).
- 5.2 Attend an interview to assess suitability to attend the chosen programme of study (may not be required for some adult part time programmes)
- 5.3 Attend and participate fully in all requested pre programme initial, diagnostic and or aptitude based assessments.
- 5.4 Meet the specified entry criteria of all programmes constituting the programme of study and any other admissions criteria, or to satisfy the relevant Curriculum Directors as to their ability to successfully complete the programme.
- 5.5 Demonstrate that any previous qualifications gained outside of the UK, or awarded by an institution based abroad or not recognised by the UK government, are considered equivalent to the entry requirements of the particular programme for which an application has been made.
- 5.6 Where applicable be supported by satisfactory references.
- 5.7 Pay the programme fees (in line with college fees policy) promptly and prior to starting the programme⁵.
- 5.8 Demonstrate, by providing appropriate documentation if requested the entitlement to government funding for education in the UK.
- 5.9 Demonstrate that he/she meets English Language and visa requirements of the home office if studying in the UK as an international student.

6. Non acceptance onto a programme of study

A place on a programme of study may be withheld on a short term or indefinite basis if one or more of the following situations are in evidence:

- 6.1 The applicant is subject to an exclusion or suspension from this or another educational institution at the time of application
- 6.2 The College has a reasonable belief that the applicant has caused a disruption to good behaviour at this or any other educational establishment
- 6.3 The applicant has a criminal conviction which makes a particular programme unsuitable for the applicant at the time of application.
- 6.4 The applicant at the time of application has a criminal conviction which, following a risk assessment, leads the college to reasonably believe that admittance may cause a risk to other learners or staff at the College
- 6.5 The applicant has previously attended this or another educational institution and has repeatedly demonstrated a lack of commitment to

⁵ If the applicant is undertaking a qualification which requires full payment, the college will require payment in full or evidence of financial support if the applicant is applying for a 24+ loan, Higher Education Student Loan or Employers letter on headed paper

completing programmes of study including external assessments without good reason.

- 6.6 The applicant has outstanding debts with the college.
- 6.7 The applicant provides false or misleading information on an application form, enrolment form or during an interview.
- 6.3 The above list is indicative only and is neither exhaustive nor exclusive. The College reserves the right to make the final decision on whether to accept an application or enrolment to the college.
- 6.4 Curriculum staff who interview applicants to whom one or more of the above situations apply should seek advice from the Director of Curriculum before offering a place or making a referral.

7. Appeals process

- 7.1 Where an application to attend a programme of study has been rejected for any reason, the applicant may appeal in writing to the Director of Learner Services and Communications
- 7.2 Grounds for appeals are either because the applicant:
 - Disagrees with a decision made in accordance with the Admissions Policy
 - or believes that the Admissions Policy has not been correctly applied in the processing of their application
- 7.3 All appeals will be assessed by the Curriculum Director responsible for the delivery of the programme, in consultation with the Director of Learner Services & Communications and the decisions reported to the Director of Curriculum
- 7.4 Where the Curriculum Director is unable to assess the appeal for any reason (including involvement in the original decision), the Director of Curriculum will assess the appeal
- 7.5 Applicants will be notified of the appeal decisions as soon as possible but certainly within 10 working days.

8. Associated documents

Associated Policies and Procedures

- Diversity and Equality Policy
- Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare for Children & Vulnerable Adults
- Fees Policy
- Complaints Procedure and Policies