Admissions Policy



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Ownership:
Assistant Principal, Student Support

Approved by:
LGB

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1 AIMS

This policy applies to all Birkenhead Sixth Form College applicants. It sets out the College's key criteria for admitting students.

2 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

- Policies and procedures used to admit students are clear, fair, explicit and consistently applied.
- All offers of places on courses are conditional (unless explicitly stated in an offer letter) and subject to the College being able to meet each applicant's individual support and study programme needs.
- Fair, effective and timely procedures exist for handling queries, appeals and complaints relating to the admission of students.

3 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

In accordance with the college's policies on equality and diversity, the College's admissions service is fully committed to fair and equal treatment for all applicants regardless of age (though in the context of being a 16-19 only institution), disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex or sexual orientation.

4 STUDY PROGRAMMES AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The College normally admits only students progressing directly from Year 11. Applications from students who are not progressing directly from Year 11, including those who have previously started post-16 study or taken a break from education, will be considered only in exceptional circumstances.

These applicants must identify their current or most recent educational institution on the application form and provide full reasons for seeking admission, including details of the exceptional circumstances they wish the College to consider.

Applications from students who will be 18 years and older when they plan to start studying will not be considered as the College has no available provision for adult learners.

Birkenhead Sixth Form College sets minimum entry requirements for each programme of study. These entry requirements are reviewed regularly by the Principal and the Senior Leadership Team and are published in our prospectus and on our website. All study programmes are full-time.

Regular attendance is essential for successful participation in a full-time College study programme. In addition to academic entry requirements, applicants will normally be expected to demonstrate attendance of at least 90% during their GCSE studies.

Where attendance is below 90%, this will not automatically prevent admission. The College will consider the applicant's individual circumstances, including the reasons for absence, its timing and duration, recent attendance, current readiness for full-time study and any relevant supporting evidence. The College will consider whether appropriate support or reasonable adjustments would enable the applicant to participate successfully in their proposed study programme.

The College endeavours to keep its entry criteria as simple as possible. However, it is acknowledged that it is necessary to set some specific minimum entry criteria for some of our courses. These are stated in the courses section of our website.

5 LEVEL 3 PROGRAMME (A LEVELS AND LEVEL 3 BTECS)

We require at least five GCSEs including English Language and Maths; a minimum of three GCSEs at Grade 4 & two GCSEs at Grade 5. The GCSE grades must have been achieved in a single academic year. Level 2 BTECs and Level 2 CiDAs are not included as part of our entry criteria.

A combination of A Levels and BTEC Level 3 courses can be studied.

6 LEVEL 2 YEAR 0 FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

If an applicant's GCSE results do not meet the entry criteria for Level 3 study, the College may be able to offer the applicant a place on a Foundation Programme which is a 3 year academic programme of study. To join this programme, students must achieve three grade 3s and two grade 4s (including Maths and English Language), which must have been achieved in a single academic year. Only students progressing directly from Year 11 will be considered for Year 0.

English Language and Maths must be retaken alongside the Year 0 where a 5 has not already been achieved. Students are required to achieve two grade 4s and two grade 5s to progress to Year 1 and onto Level 3 study. Places are allocated at enrolment in August in application order.

7 APPLICANTS WITH SUPPORT NEEDS

EHCPs - Students who have an EHCP should work with their Local Authority SEND caseworker (or equivalent) to identify a preferred post-16 placement as part of their annual school EHCP review. Where the College is identified as a preferred placement, the Local Authority will then consult formally with the College to ascertain whether the College can meet the young person's needs. Applications from students with an EHCP or on the EHCP pathway will therefore be held until a Local Authority Consultation has been received. If needs can be met, the College will be named on the EHCP and offers will be made according to receipt of the College application form.

The College has an Additional Learning Support service which seeks to support all students who have disclosed a diagnosed disability, learning difficulty or medical condition which may affect their studies. The service aims to remove any potential barriers to learning to help students develop their personal skills and confidence to become as independent as possible in their learning and help them achieve their learning goals, personal goals and further study/employment aspirations.

In the case of non-EHCP students, where an additional need has been disclosed at application or interview stage, the College will work closely with the student, their parents/carers and relevant agencies such as their high school in order to identify what support is most appropriate and to establish if this support can be provided.

Any student who declares a learning need, disability or medical condition which may affect their learning will receive an assessment of their needs by a member of the Admissions Team. Where appropriate, an Individual Support Plan and on course support will be agreed and implemented. The plan will be reviewed and amended as necessary during the student's period of study at the college.

It is essential that applicants provide full and accurate information about any additional needs at the point of application, as the College assesses its ability to meet those needs based on this information. Failure to disclose additional learning needs may affect the College's ability to provide appropriate support.

8 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Applications from students who have not been ordinarily resident in the UK for the three years prior to the start of their programme will be classified as overseas applicants.

The College does not hold a licence to issue Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) statements required by applicants to obtain UK Home Office Tier 4 immigration permission. Applicants must be able to prove that they have the right to remain in the UK for the entirety of their course.

If an applicant holds, or is due to hold, qualifications from a country other than England or Wales, they are asked to apply to NARIC for a statement of comparability. There is a fee for this service. This gives the applicant a GCSE equivalence for their qualifications and the College will make its conditional offer on that basis.

9 STUDENTS WHO WISH TO RE-ENROL HAVING NOT COMPLETED A STUDY PROGRAMME AT THE COLLEGE

Students who are applying to re-join the College having previously enrolled but having not completed their study programme will be considered on a case by case basis and only where the withdrawal has been as a direct result of identified health issues. Such students must complete an application form and state that they have previously enrolled at the college.

Applications from former College students are considered under the re-enrolment provisions below

- The student withdrew from College of their own accord
- There is robust medical support outside of College and there is time before the restart to respond to this support
- Up to date medical evidence is submitted supporting the student's fitness for study at the restart date.
- There is evidence of their fitness to study e.g. through voluntary or paid work

Students wishing to restart Year 2 will be required to pass end of Year 1 exams to evidence academic readiness.

The decision to restart will be made by the Assistant Principal, Student Support in consultation with the Learning Support Team and relevant staff in the best interests of the student. Where there is insufficient evidence that the restart will be successful, then it will be refused with the decision confirmed in writing.

Where the College offers the opportunity of a restart, the onus is on the student and their parents or carers to ensure they are recovered enough for the restart to work. Any restart will be conditional on maintaining reasonable expectations of attendance and progress as relapses would not be in the interests of students.

Students who have previously enrolled and who are seeking to re-join the College may have specific conditions applied to any offer of a place. Such conditions will be put in a contract to be signed at enrolment.

10 APPLICANTS TRANSFERRING FROM ANOTHER INSTITUTION

The College does not accept transfers into partially completed study programmes. In exceptional circumstances, applicants who have started post-16 study elsewhere may be considered for admission to restart their programme from the beginning, subject to the College's entry requirements.

11 FEE PAYING STUDENTS

As an Academy, we do not accept fee paying students

12 CRITERIA FOR OFFERING PLACES

The College's entry requirements are stated in the prospectus, website and admissions materials. The prospectus contains information about each course on offer as well as information on the College in general.

The deadline for receipt of applications is published and prominently displayed at College events, admissions literature and on the College website.

Applications that are received by the deadline will be screened, and where appropriate an interview will be offered. At interview, the applicant should provide an up-to-date school report containing information about attendance, punctuality, effort and conduct.

Applicants who are homeschooled and therefore unable to provide a school report will be asked to provide some additional information at point of application to assist with the screening process.

Following interview, an offer of a place will be made subject to

- A satisfactory course discussion interview where the student has demonstrated a commitment to the ethos of the College, provided a satisfactory school report and an appropriate study programme has been agreed
- The allocation of additional funding necessary to provide essential additional support which meets the specific needs of an individual applicant

If the applicant fails to attend their interview and does not contact the College they will be notified that the College has withdrawn their application.

The criteria to be applied when deciding whether or not to offer an applicant a place at the college are

- Students should be 17 years of age or under on 31 August of the academic year in which they are seeking admission.
- The applicant should be committed to continuing with their education for the full duration of the study programme.
- The applicant should meet the entry requirements for their chosen study programme and for individual courses within the study programme.
- Students must have an up-to-date report from their school showing a satisfactory record of effort, attendance (at least 90% for the duration of their GCSE studies), punctuality and conduct and upon enrolment must agree to the College Core Requirements.
- The College may have specific conditions applied to any offer of a place. Such conditions will be put in a contract to be signed at enrolment and will be subject to a probationary period at the College.
- The College does not at present apply any criteria giving preference to applicants from particular geographical areas.
- The College reserves the right to close a course if there are insufficient student numbers for the particular course. The College will inform applicants for such a course as soon as possible and will offer the most suitable alternative.

Where attendance is below 90%, the College will undertake an individual and contextual assessment in accordance with section 4 of this policy.

13 LATE APPLICANTS

A waiting list is operated for those students who apply after the deadline. The entry criteria is the same as for on time applications, however, priority is given to 16 year olds, students moving into the area, and students from our Partner High Schools

- Prenton High School
- Ridgeway High School
- The Birkenhead Park School
- Woodchurch High School
- Oldershaw High School
- Hillside High School
- Pensby High School

14 ENROLMENT

All students who are offered a place must attend an enrolment interview in August. If the applicant does not attend their enrolment interview without notification then their place may be offered to a waiting list candidate.

15 LATE ENROLMENT

The College will continue to admit students after the enrolment days from the Waiting List at the discretion of the Principal. If maximum capacity is reached then the College will make this public and inform all those still on the Waiting List. Beyond the end of September, further enrolments will be highly exceptional due to the amount of missed teaching which can not be replicated. After this point, applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will only be admitted with SMT approval.

16 APPEALS

Applicants have the right of appeal against any decision taken during the application and enrolment process. In the case of an appeal against a decision made relating to the offer of a place or admission at enrolment, the applicant can appeal in writing to the Principal who will consider and rule on the matter. The Principal's decision is final.