



Admissions Policy

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Our mission

BCA's mission is to provide high quality education, in a caring environment, that gives our students the knowledge, skills and experience to be successful in their chosen career.

BCA is committed to the principle of equal opportunity for all potential learners. We are committed to reducing gaps in attainment among people of all backgrounds and to promote equality and diversity as an integral part of all that we do. We are committed to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential through a fully inclusive approach to learning, in which:

- equality is actively promoted
- diversity is welcomed, valued and celebrated
- barriers are broken down
- unfairness, discrimination and inequalities are tackled and resolved

Purpose of this policy

This policy outlines the College's procedure and practice for managing the admission of students to the college. It aims to provide a fair and consistent approach for admissions. The overall aim being to underpin the College mission and values as stated above. This policy is linked with other College policies, including the Single Equality Scheme, Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, Prevent policy and Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) policy. It is also linked with College publications such as the College prospectus, website, course leaflets and all marketing material.

Roles and responsibilities

Overall responsibility for College admissions and recruitment activity lies with The Principal and Senior Leadership Team, who oversee the operation of this policy and procedure and ensure it is reviewed and updated every two years unless there are intervening changes in legislation. Day to day responsibility and management for processing and managing applications and communication with applicants lies with the Director of MIS and the members of the Admissions Team. Heads of Department are responsible for the provision of information about the course and managing fair and transparent interviews. Heads of Department and Course Tutors are responsible for agreeing the specific criteria by which applications are assessed and admissions decisions will be made. All staff involved in the admissions process will have been adequately trained to undertake their roles.

Information for Applicants and Entry Requirements

When applicants are considering applying to study a course we want them to be sure that they make choices that will be right for them. We provide information on our website and in our prospectus that is intended to provide a clear, accurate and comprehensive description of our courses and the services and facilities that we offer.

Through our website and prospectus, we intend to provide information about:

- the courses that we offer
- the content and structure of individual courses
- entry criteria and skills requirements for individual courses
- clear guidance about how to apply for individual courses
- likely additional costs or unusual requirements of specific courses (e.g. relating to industry placements, field trips, materials, or equipment)
- the services and facilities which we offer to students

We will hold regular open days and taster day sessions at which prospective students will:

- have the chance to visit our campus
- learn about student life at BCA
- learn about the admissions process for BCA courses
- learn about the services and facilities available on campus

Information about these events and how to book places on them is provided on our website.

Application criteria

When an application is made, we aim to process this efficiently and fairly.

- Every applicant is considered individually using all the information available to us. The College is committed to an admissions process which is easily understood, transparent and fair.
- The decision to admit an applicant will be based upon the meeting of specific entry requirements or equivalent for the relevant course or programme. Exceptional circumstances will be considered.
- The college has a clear approach to identifying and responding to students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). There are many opportunities throughout the application, interview and enrolment process for a student to declare their SEND needs. All tutors are responsible for identifying applicants with SEND and, in collaboration with the Head of Additional Learning Support and the Additional Learning Support (ALS) team, will ensure that those applicants requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage. The decision to admit an applicant may be based upon the college being able to meet the applicant's specific learning needs and requirements.

- Entry criteria, which may apply by type of provision and/or for an individual course, are located on the college website, in college prospectuses and other key publications. If an applicant does not meet the entry criteria, the College reserves the right to decline an offer of a place on a course or programme of study.
- An applicant will be taken on to a course or programme of study leading to a qualification only where it is confidently and reasonably believed that they have a good chance of achieving the qualification aim. Decisions to admit applicants are taken by the Head of Department, with responsibility for the substantive qualification of the programme. Enabling students to progress and succeed through levels of study is fundamental to the College's purpose and commitment.
- The College will carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for applicants to some courses and programmes of study where this is a requirement of an integral industry placement or of the resulting career pathways. When a (DBS) disclosure is required, the resulting certificate will inform the decision as to whether a place is offered
- If there are concerns about a student's ability to study a particular course, we would wish to establish the capacity of that student to develop the under-pinning skills necessary for success. This may be done during the enrolment period or the induction period, or throughout the course using academic tutorials and the flexible timetable delivery.

Application process

Applications for full time FE courses, part time courses and apprenticeship programmes can be made either by completing an online application via the college website or by completing and returning a hard copy application form by post or at a College Open Day.

Online application forms are available to use on the college website. Hard copy application forms are available from the College reception or downloadable from the website.

On completion of an online application an instant acknowledgement will be generated by email confirming receipt. Once the application has been forwarded to the Admissions team, a personal email is sent, explaining the next steps. All applications will receive an acknowledgement response from the college within seven working days.

We generally receive more applications than places available for the majority of our programmes so we strongly encourage applicants to apply as early as possible.

Interviews -

The Admissions team will arrange a date and time for an interview with the department tutor and the Additional Learning Support (ALS) team, where relevant. An invitation for this interview will be sent by email to the email address on the application including a Next of Kin (NOK) contact, if given. The interview may take place in person at college or, due to COVID, it may take place via an online interview with the tutor. Details of the interview will be advised in the email and online meeting invites will be provided, where relevant.

A member of the appropriate teaching staff will conduct the interview. Notes will be taken during the interview and used later to ensure fair decision making. Parents/guardians may be present at the interview. The purpose of the interview is to assess the applicant's suitability for the course. In doing so we will be considering the following:

- academic ability,
- aptitude and attitude to learning,
- suitability for the course and study at BCA

Interview Non Attendance - Should applicants not attend their College interview and they do not contact the College, the College reserves the right to withdraw their application. The College will also endeavour (wherever appropriate) to contact the applicant, either directly or via their school or college, to ascertain the reasons for their non-attendance.

Non-Acceptance onto a Programme of Study

The College reserves the right to make the final decision on whether to accept an application or enrolment to the college. It also reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place at any time during the applicant/learner's time on their course or programme if additional information becomes available which impacts on the original decision to offer a place. This includes where:

- The applicant provides false or misleading information on an application form, enrolment form or during an interview
- The applicant is subject to an exclusion or suspension from this or another educational institution at the time of application
- The College has a reasonable belief that the applicant has caused a disruption to good behaviour at this or any other educational establishment. This decision will be taken after discussions between the relevant department Head and the Student Welfare Team, to assess suitability to study in the College environment and the College's duty of care to other students and staff.
- The applicant has an undisclosed criminal conviction which makes a particular programme unsuitable for them.

- The College has a reasonable belief that admittance may cause a risk to the applicant or others' health & safety, in relation to the College's duty of care to learners and staff.
- The College may reasonably be supposed to be unsuitable and/or an unsafe environment for the applicant (including but not limited to, if the College has reasonable belief that the applicant is not mature enough to keep themselves safe, has significant poor mental health, requires constant supervision, is a potential serious risk to self or others, or has substantial medical needs that cannot be supported on campus)
- The College has information that the applicant has previously attended this or another educational institution and has repeatedly demonstrated a lack of commitment
- The College may refuse admission or progression to an applicant/learner who has any outstanding debt to the College.
- The College requires that learners are funded by a government body, another funding body or are self-financing their course in order that the College receives payment for the cost of studying.

This list is indicative only and is neither exhaustive nor exclusive.

Course Closure

Where a course is not viable through being under-subscribed or there is a significant change to Government funding which creates non-viability, the College reserves the right to withdraw the course (including after an offer has been made or accepted). In such cases, applicants will be offered advice and guidance on the availability of alternative courses, both at the College and with other suitable alternative education providers wherever possible.

Decisions

At the interview, the tutor will make the applicant a verbal offer of a place, which will be followed up in writing within two weeks. This will be in the form of an Offer Letter which is sent to the home address given on the application form.

All offers will be conditional based upon the confirmation of examination results and/or a review of any learning support needs. Offer letters are sent out by post to the address provided in the application. Applicants must confirm and accept their offer by signing and returning the acceptance slip on the Offer letter, either by post or a confirmation email. A conditional College place will only be guaranteed on receipt of the Offer Acceptance slip.

If an applicant is unsuccessful, the tutor will either explain the reasons at the end of the interview or in a follow up letter from the Head of Department, giving full and clear reasons

why. If it is felt that there may be an alternative course that better suits the academic potential and achievements of the applicant, this will also be discussed and followed up.

If an applicant is declined based upon the College being unable to meet their learning support needs, this will be confirmed to the Local Authority, by our Additional Learning Support team. Again, an alternative course may be considered or an alternative provision may be recommended.

Applicants who have been unsuccessful are welcome to re-apply in subsequent years.

Complaints or Appeals

If an applicant believes that the Admissions Policy has not been correctly applied in the processing of their application or disagrees with a decision made in accordance with the Admissions Policy, they have the right of complaint or appeal. Complaints or appeals should be sent in writing for the attention of the Vice Principal. All complaints or appeals will be assessed by the Vice Principal and applicants will be notified of the decision as soon as possible, but within 10 working days.

Applicants who have been unsuccessful in obtaining a place on their chosen course are welcome to re-apply for and will be guided towards alternative courses (where appropriate) if they feel that is suitable and where they have taken into account the reason that their original application was unsuccessful.

Data Protection

We will handle data and information in a manner that ensures that we safeguard individuals and personal data. Information will always be managed in a manner that complies with the BCA Data Protection Policy. All staff involved in admissions will have received training that enables them to discharge their responsibilities in relation to data protection. Further information on our Data Protection Policy can be found on the BCA website.

Further information - Contact details

Senior Admissions Administrator - sjones@bca.ac.uk - 01628 827479

Admissions Administrator - lepowell@bca.ac.uk - 01628 827325

Additional Learning Support (ALS) - additionallearningsupport_team@bca.ac.uk

Student Welfare - studentwelfare_team@bca.ac.uk

Finance Dept - finance@bca.ac.uk