

## Policy Title

FE Student Admissions Policy  
2024-25

Written by:	Equality Impact Assessment	Date of Policy/last reviewed	Date of next review
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# FE Student Admissions Policy 2024-25

## 1.0 Policy Statement

Bishop Auckland College and South West Durham Training (hereafter to be termed 'the Organisation') sets its own admissions policy in line with the strategic plan, vision and values of the Organisation, promoting a fair and transparent admissions process. As a strategic partner with the The Open University for the provision of Higher Education (HE), this policy is used in conjunction with the HE Student Admissions Policy POL-HE-01. The Organisation ensures that this policy meets any funding requirements associated with the recruitment of students including Education and Skills Funding Agency, Office for Students, Advanced Learning Loans, Higher Education Loans and other external funding received into the Organisation.

All admissions to the Organisation will be handled confidentially and as guided by the principles laid out in this document and the Organisation's associated procedures, service commitments and recruitment strategies. The Organisation is committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, the Single Equality duty and its duty of care for students studying at the Organisation. All staff involved in admissions interviews and decision-making process are recognised as professional and appropriately trained.

The Organisation will:

- Recruit students with integrity and to the most suitable course
- Be guided by a sense of fairness and a transparent process
- Provide accurate and timely impartial information advice and guidance at all stages in the pre-entry student journey
- Ensure that at all times the safeguarding of students is embedded into admissions process

The Organisation accepts that it is not possible to plan for every situation that might arise in the admissions process but will strive to ensure that a fair and equitable service is provided to all potential students.

The Organisation requires that students are funded by a government body, in receipt of an Advanced Learning Loan, Higher Education Loan, have secured other funding, or are self-funding in order that payment for studying is received.

## 2.0 Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all applicants who are seeking admission to the Organisation. This includes new full time and part time students and apprentices. The policy also includes those students who are already at the Organisation and wish to progress from one course of study to another.

This policy does not include flexible learning and students studying with an organisation working in partnership with the Organisation for which separate arrangements exist.

This policy does not include students under 16 who may be admitted to the Organisation via a partnership with the school or other agencies. Individual requests for admission for potential students under 16 are required to be forwarded in writing to the Head of Durham Gateway.

For HE applicants, please refer to the Higher Education Student Admissions Policy POL-HE-01.

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## 3.0 Related documents

- Strategic Plan 2024-27
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Student Disclosure of Criminal Convictions Policy
- Recruitment Strategy and associated plans
- Fee Policy
- Customer Complaints procedure
- Higher Education Student Admissions Policy
- The Open University regulatory framework and associated policies
- Higher Education Admissions Appeals Procedure for the Open University

Copies of the documents can be found on the Organisation website:  
[www.bishopaucklandcollege.ac.uk](http://www.bishopaucklandcollege.ac.uk) or [www.swdt.co.uk](http://www.swdt.co.uk) or upon request direct to [Quality@bacoll.ac.uk](mailto:Quality@bacoll.ac.uk).

## 4.0 Context

### 4.1 Pre-entry

At enquiry stage all potential students will receive accurate and up to date course information, including entry requirements, fees and funding information to enable informed choices to be made. This will be promoted to prospective students, parents/carers, employers and other organisations through:

- Organisation open events
- Online course guide and information
- Website: [www.bishopaucklandcollege.ac.uk](http://www.bishopaucklandcollege.ac.uk) or [www.swdt.co.uk](http://www.swdt.co.uk)
- Access to pre-entry impartial information advice and guidance to make informed choices
- Published information (including policies) available in other languages, large font, audio etc. via the accessibility icon (eye symbol) on the homepage of the college website

### 4.2 Making applications

#### 4.2.1 New applicants

All courses need an application form completing to generate their course interview which can be done online via the Apply Now button on the course page you are interested in.

All applications are assessed on an individual basis and admission to the College is based on an applicant's merits and abilities. The principal academic criterion for determining a candidate's suitability for admission is that there is a reasonable expectation that the candidate will be able to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course and achieve the standard required for the award. The College will look for evidence of academic achievement as well as personal and professional experiences, where relevant, that provide an indication of ability to meet the demands and professional requirements of the course.

Entry criteria for a given course are set by the Director of Department responsible for the course and can be accessed through the College website. Where appropriate, programmes comply with Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements for entry.

Bishop Auckland College welcomes applications from students who do not meet conventional entry requirements and will consider alternative qualifications or other experience. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a generic term for the process by which the organization recognise and, where appropriate, award credit for learning that has taken place before entry onto a programme of study. Recognition of Prior or Experiential Learning (RPEL) and Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL) provide opportunities for individuals to claim credit for knowledge and skills that they have obtained through experience, certified learning or uncertified learning, against courses of further study.

## 4.2.2 Apprenticeship programmes

Applications for Apprenticeship programmes have a differentiated approach depending up on the following:

- **If an individual has been recruited by a business with a view to doing an apprenticeship or is already working for an employer and they wish to access an apprenticeship:**  
That individual or the employer must contact the Employment Services Team on 01388 743164 or at [apprenticeships@bacoll.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@bacoll.ac.uk). The individual or the employer will then be informed about the process and informed of the following steps leading to enrolment.
- **The individual has seen an advert for an apprenticeship that Bishop Auckland College are advertising and wants to apply:**  
Applicants are encouraged to follow the guidance within the advert for information on how to apply for the vacancy. If an individual needs any further help/guidance they are encouraged to contact the Employment Services Team on 01388 743164 or at [apprenticeships@bacoll.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@bacoll.ac.uk).
- **An individual is currently in year 10/11 and is considering an apprenticeship for when they leave school:**  
If an individual isn't sure about what apprenticeship they would like to do then we'd encourage them to speak to a Student Progression Coach, either at their own school or at Bishop Auckland College. To keep informed of apprenticeship opportunities, the young person is encouraged to create an account on the Find an Apprenticeship website (<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>) which will keep them informed of all local apprenticeship opportunities relevant to their interests – they can also submit applications via this website. They can also view any available apprenticeship opportunities via Bishop Auckland College's social media platforms and their apprenticeship vacancy page here: <https://bacoll.ac.uk/ApprenticeVacancies> - this page is updated on a regular basis.

The young person is encouraged to create a CV with the help of a Student Progression Coach and send out to local businesses that could potentially support an apprenticeship for them. If an individual is happy with the apprenticeship subject that they would like to work within, they are also advised to enrol on to a suitable full-time course as a back-up option, in the event that an employer isn't found to support an apprenticeship.

## 4.2.3 Existing students

- Full and part time students (excluding HE programmes) wishing to progress from one course to another can move directly to enrolment upon the production of a student progression record signed by both outgoing and incoming tutor. Students not progressing will be referred to the Student Progression team for guidance on other opportunities.
- For students on certain HE programmes a 'pass to proceed' will be agreed facilitating progression to the next year (Refer to the Higher Education Student Admissions Policy POL-HE-01).

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## 4.3 Interview stage

- All applicants will be invited to attend an interview with the curriculum tutor or designate for their chosen course within the Organisation's recruitment process.
- All applications received for full time courses where three or more choices have been selected will be contacted by a Student Progression Coach, in the first instance. Following which, an admissions interview will be arranged for the most suitable programme.
- All admissions interviews will follow set criteria and are designed to ensure that a good match between the abilities of the applicant and the demands on the programme are achieved and students are selected who can reasonably be expected to complete their studies successfully.
- Any applicant that discloses learning support needs may require additional discussions to establish the most appropriate action required to meet their individual needs to support successful achievement.
- A student disclosure form is completed with all students and then the Organisation will determine the level of support required in readiness for commencement of the programme.
- All applicants are requested to disclose any criminal convictions at the application stage. Please refer to the Student Disclosure of Criminal Convictions Policy BAC-SS-06. The Organisation recognises its duty of care to students and staff and reserves the right to refuse entry to the Organisation.

## 4.4 Decisions

All decisions relating to admissions will be made by course tutors or designates and will be based upon:

- Meeting the set entry criteria
- Ability to complete and achieve the qualification
- Other supporting information from external agencies
- Outcomes from panel meeting for criminal conviction disclosure
- Outcomes from DBS checks
- Availability of places
- Work related experience, if applicable
- Equality and Diversity
- Ability to secure appropriate funding

## 4.5 Making an offer of a place

Offers made for courses may be conditional or unconditional depending on the above outcomes from the admissions interviews.

The Course Tutor/Programme Leader is ultimately responsible for any offers made.

All applicants will be advised of the outcome of the admissions interview via email, followed up with a phone call and letter (where needed). If applicants are required to apply for an Advanced Learning Loan, information to support a loan application will be issued once this is agreed by Student Finance England. The offer of a place will also include the Organisation terms and conditions set out for loan applications.

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Places on courses can be limited due to funding. If courses are full the applicant will be informed and waiting lists may be established depending on curriculum planning and availability of funding.

If an applicant is not offered a place at the Organisation, a referral will be made to the Student Progression team to discuss alternative provision, as appropriate.

Where applicants have accepted offers on courses which incur a fee, the applicant will be expected to secure funding prior to course commencement and agree a payment plan in the event of funding declined.

In the event of changes to course programmes i.e. start dates, all applicants and directly enrolled students will be advised of changes prior to the start date of the programme.

## 4.6 Registration and enrolment

Places for full time courses are finalised at the Organisation Results and Enrolment Days held post examination results when applicants for full time courses holding offers are invited to attend. All students must verify proof of identity and following a discussion with the course tutor, enrolment is completed on the agreed course and level.

Part time students are invited to complete and finalise enrolment following the course offer. Payment is collected upon enrolment where students are self-funding. The Organisation may complete enrolment without funding secured on the condition that the student accepts the responsibility that payment will be required if funding is unsuccessful. If an employer is paying they would need to provide a confirmation letter on enrolment.

All applicants enrolling for Organisation programmes do so in accordance with the procedures, terms and conditions as published on the Organisations learning agreements.

Applicants may not enrol for a course that they have previously completed and achieved.

## 5.0 Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of Community and Careers responsible for student admissions services. The Organisation reserves the right to vary any part of the admissions processes to ensure that it upholds its duty of care for staff and students.

## 6.0 Appeals procedure

If an applicant is not offered a place at the Organisation, they have the right to appeal.

A letter is required to be sent to the Head of Community and Careers who will investigate the decision and provide feedback on the outcome within 10 working days.

Appeals are to be directed to the following address

Head of Community and Careers  
Bishop Auckland College  
Woodhouse Lane  
Bishop Auckland  
Co Durham  
DL14 6JZ

**For further information contact: Jennifer Phillips, Head of Community and Careers**

**November 2024**