

POLICY/PROCEDURE: HIGHER EDUCATION ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Approval required by: Executive Y Governing Body N
 Senior Manager Lead: Director of HE Quality
 Responsible Manager: Head of Student Recruitment
 Date approved: September 2024
 Date to be reviewed: September 2026

Relevant to:	Students	Y	Staff	Y
	Visitors	Y		
Relevant to:	All students	N		
	16-18 Vocational	N	Sixth Form	N
	Higher Education	Y	Adults	N
	Apprenticeships	Y	14-16	N
	Other	N	
Relevant to:	All staff	N		
	Board	N	SPH	N
	Managers	Y		
	Teaching staff	Y	Support staff	Y

Accessible to	Students	Y	Staff	Y
Friendly version	Students	Y	Staff	Y

EQIA required Y

Significant changes to policy:

Policy now states that all applicants will be required to provide proof of their highest qualification(s) on entry.
 Duty to Disclose Criminal Conviction section updated to mirror our FE Admissions policy and procedures.

Impact of changes

The college is able to meet the requirements for audit by the Office for Students.
 Both FE and HE admissions policies are consistent in requirements.

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The college's Higher Education Admissions Policy and procedures have been developed to provide clear guidance on the college's HE admission process for applicants within the recruitment cycle.

The process is fair, transparent, valid, inclusive and explicit and is underpinned by appropriate organisational structures and processes. It is designed to support staff involved in the recruitment and selection of students to ensure that those offered a place, have the ability to succeed in their chosen course. All advisors are committed to providing up to date, high quality Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG).

This policy covers applications for places on our undergraduate and continuing professional development courses (level 4 and above) leading to the award of a degree, diploma, certificate or award. Courses may be offered in one or more of the following study modes: full-time, part-time, distance or blended learning. Study modes for each individual course will be detailed in course information on the college website.

The college adheres to the revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the Office of Independent Adjudicators (OIA) guidance for appeals against rejection of application.

POLICY AIMS

- Treat all applicants equally, fairly and consistently.
- Recruit students with integrity and students who have the potential to succeed in their chosen programme of study.
- Provide accurate, up to date information and guidance about the HE provision currently delivered at Barnsley College and progression opportunities after course completion.
- Ensure entry criteria are annually reviewed and are appropriate for the programme of study.
- Ensure that staff follow the selection process fairly, professionally, consistently and in a timely manner.
- Ensure that students are enrolled to the appropriate programme which meets their ability and aspirations.
- Provide appropriate and timely training for staff new to the recruitment and selection process.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR HE ADMISSIONS

The Director of HE Quality is responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Office for Students (OfS), the revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education and Professional or Statutory Bodies.

It is the responsibility of the Heads of Department to ensure that all academic staff involved in recruitment and selection adhere to the policy and access the relevant staff training and development. The college is committed to ensuring a consistent implementation of the Admissions Policy across the institution.

COURSE INFORMATION

The college will provide accurate, relevant and up to date information for each course to ensure applicants have a clear understanding of the course and module content, entry level requirements and any costs associated with the course (tuition fees and any additional costs).

Information will be available on the website, online prospectus and websites of other key information providers, for example UCAS.

Detailed advice will be provided by Curriculum, Student Recruitment, Student Services and the central Higher Education Quality and Registry team.

The college will provide an Outreach Programme, to ensure key information is available for appropriate groups. This includes Open Days and taster visits to the college. Marketing provide promotional material and events designed to attract and inform prospective students, give a fair and accurate reflection of the college and the student experience it offers.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

All applicants will be expected to meet the entry requirements for their chosen course. These are published on the website and in the online prospectus. Entry requirements for each course are also articulated within the Programme Specification document. **The college does not make unconditional offers to applicants who have not already achieved the entry requirements.**

The college uses the UCAS tariff system and welcomes applications from students for all recognised qualifications. Evidence of an applicant's highest qualification will be required as part of our enrolment process.

Mature applicants who do not have the specified formal qualifications may be considered for admission by Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and/or relevant experience and are able to demonstrate the required level of skill and academic ability at interview.

The college will consider APEL applications where appropriate for direct entry to the second or third year of the course. The decision of whether to approve an APEL claim should be based on whether the applicant has demonstrated that the learning they have acquired from prior experiences is current, relevant, and adequate to demonstrate that the relevant learning outcomes for a given module (or modules) or level of study have been met. The Admissions Tutor will exercise academic judgement and discretion when assessing any application with prior attainment.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

All applications to full-time undergraduate courses should be made through the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and applications will be considered in line with UCAS January deadline date. Late applications for course will be considered, where places are still available.

Applications to part-time undergraduate and professional programmes should be made to the college using the direct application form available on the website. A printed version of the form is also available from the central HE Quality and Registry department.

The college will consider requests for deferred entry on an individual basis. Deferred places may not always be available. UCAS applicants may only defer for one year.

Applicants to programmes involving working with children or vulnerable adults must obtain an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance, in accordance with the college's DBS Policy and Procedures.

Applications are co-ordinated by the Central Admissions team and processed in a timely manner.

The majority of applicants will be invited to attend an interview at the college. The decision regarding suitability for the programme is made by admission tutors. The tutor will notify the central admissions team who will upload the decision to UCAS or inform the applicant directly depending on their application route, within 10 working days of the interview.

Conditional offer holders are responsible for providing evidence that they have met the terms and conditions of their offer. This evidence could include for example, certificates and degree transcripts once these become available or the fulfilment of other requirements such as medical fitness or DBS checks.

Terms and Conditions are available on the Barnsley College website at <https://www.barnsley.ac.uk/higher-education/he-terms-and-conditions/>

All applicants are treated equally and applications are considered impartially and professionally on the basis of academic capability and potential to succeed.

In making a decision on the suitability of the applicant, the interviewer will consider the following:

- Application form and relevant certificates.
- References.
- Information obtained at interview.
- Written test (if appropriate).
- Audition (if appropriate).
- RP(E)L if the applicant does not have formal qualifications.

Where the selection of students uses information not captured on the application form, such as interviews, auditions, additional tests, or portfolios, the college will explain openly to prospective students what these selection tools involve, why they are being used and the contribution they make to the selection decision, while maintaining the right to exercise academic judgment in selection.

The college is committed to the national widening participation agenda and welcomes applications from students with a specific disability or learning need. Applicants are advised to inform the college at the application stage so that support strategies can be agreed before enrolment. Where an applicant has disclosed a disability on the application form, a copy of the form is sent to the HE Disability Adviser at the college.

All data obtained as part of the application process is held and processed in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Barnsley College will collect personal data such as name, address, personal characteristics and course details in order to create a learner record. The college will share your data with government and other third parties linked to, and approved by, the college. For full details please read the college Privacy Notice at <https://www.barnsley.ac.uk/privacy-policy/>

RECORD OF PRIOR ACCEPTANCE (RPA)

RPA's are used to accept applicants in exceptional circumstances only and when UCAS Clearing has closed. The following criteria should be met:

- They have received an Unconditional Offer (satisfied all entry criteria).
- The programme is confirmed as running.
- The programme is due to run from September.
- The applicant only wants to apply to Barnsley College.
- The applicant has not already applied via UCAS and therefore has no UCAS Personal ID number.

DECISION FEEDBACK

All applicants are informed of decisions in a timely manner. The UCAS system is updated within 10 working days of receipt of the Interview Decision.

All applications are considered fairly and effectively against the published entry requirements and in line with college procedures. Applicants that have been unsuccessful may request feedback via the central admissions office. Feedback is usually given in writing, at the discretion of the course admissions staff.

If an applicant is unsuccessful, they will be offered a suitable alternative course wherever possible.

Where prospective students have to fulfil certain conditions to secure a place, they will be provided with explicit information about the actions they should take if they do not achieve the results and/or meet the criteria specified in the offer of a place.

The college reserves the right to cancel or withdraw any offer made if, subsequently, it is discovered that the application contains fraudulent or misleading information. This includes the falsification of documentation such as certificates and reference statements.

ADMISSIONS MONITORING

Admission reports are produced by the central Admission team and are circulated on a weekly basis.

Analysis of recruitment, selection and admission data, considered alongside data such as progression and retention rates of students, withdrawal and transfer, and reasons for non-completion, assists the college in evaluating the extent to which their recruitment, selection and admission policies and procedures are supporting their mission and the achievement of their strategic objectives. The college is also required to publish transparency information as part of its registration with the Office for Students (Condition F1). This information can be found at <https://www.barnsley.ac.uk/about-us/policies/>

CHANGE TO PROGRAMME

From time to time, college may find it necessary to make changes to a programme between the time the online prospectus is produced or offers are made to prospective students and the time when enrolment/registration of current students has been completed.

In such circumstances, to ensure compliance with Competition & Markets Authority (CMA) requirements, college will inform prospective students at the earliest opportunity of any significant changes and ensure that they are advised of the options available to them, which may include applying to a different programme at college or applying to a different provider. Any such changes will be undertaken and managed in line with the Higher Education Course Changes and Closure Policy and Student Protection Plan. Both are available on the college website.

DUTY TO DISCLOSE CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

The college has a duty of care to ensure the safety of its students, staff, and all users with whom students interact as part of their programme of study.

Any programme that requires interaction with children and/or vulnerable adults, applicants are required to pass a criminal records check carried out by the Disclosure and Barring Service (<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/vetting-barring-scheme/>). Applicants will be asked to declare spent and unspent convictions. For other programmes, applicants will be asked to disclose unspent criminal convictions.

The Safeguarding team will investigate the nature of the criminal conviction and advise staff accordingly.

The college reserves the right to withdraw any student who knowingly does not self-declare an unspent, and where relevant a spent, criminal conviction.

Please refer to College's 'Assessing Criminal Convictions' Policy for further detail including what information must be disclosed.

COMPLAINTS

The college is committed to providing a professional and timely service to all applicants. If, however, an applicant has a concern about a procedure or administrative process, they may make a formal complaint using the college's Complaints Policy.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The college believes that all those who form the community at Barnsley College (governors, staff, students, visitors and applicants) have a right to be valued equally and to have the equality of opportunity.

All students have equal access to the policy and the procedures and will be supported according to individual needs through the process should they wish to make a formal complaint.

The EqIA for this policy is available on the college's intranet.

LINKED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The HE Admissions Policy is linked to:

- Single Equality Scheme
- Higher Education Course Changes and Closure Policy
- Higher Education Terms and Conditions
- Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning Policy
- Barnsley College Student Protection Plan
- Assessing Criminal Convictions Policy

LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THIS POLICY

This policy is available on the college's intranet and website.

REFERENCES

This policy has been reviewed with consideration of the following guidance:

[QAA Advice and Guidance: Admissions, recruitment and widening access](#)

[Higher Education Course Changes and Closures: Statement of Good Practice](#)