



## **Academic Admissions Policy**

### **Summary**

Bath Academy (the College) is an Independent College based in the City of Bath, Somerset, offering courses, for students aged 14 and above, leading to GCSE, A level, the University Foundation Programme and International Medical Foundation Programme qualifications. The College admits students subject to the availability of places. The Admissions Policy outlines the difference between UK students and International students who require a Student or Child Student visa to study at the College (Appendix I).

Bath Academy is academically non-selective and offers places to those students whose previous academic attainment meets the minimum skills and knowledge requirements to be successful in the programme for which they are applying. The college takes into consideration prior school grades and/or references, entrance tests (if appropriate), performance at interview and assessment of special needs or learning difficulties. The Principal, assisted by the Vice-Principals, Director of English Studies and the Head of Admissions, will be responsible for the admission of all academic students.

The College welcomes applicants from all backgrounds, irrespective of nationality, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. However, not all age ranges are catered for and the facilities at the College and the ability to deliver appropriate programmes for students with various kinds of disability, including Special Educational Needs, are not all-encompassing and are developing (see the *Accessibility plan* and *Appendix II* below for Special Educational Needs).

There are limits to the number of students that can currently be admitted to the College, to individual year groups and to individual classes. For students seeking admission close to one of the College entry points, there may also be timetabling constraints imposed by the combination of subjects being sought. For students applying in good time there are no such restrictions.

This policy does not cover the admissions criteria for any revision courses, for programmes of individual tuition or for extramural students having supplementary tuition.

### **Aims of Bath Academy's Admissions process**

- To identify and admit students who will benefit from the academic provision available at the college.
- To ensure that prospective students understand and comply with the ethos and aims of the college.
- To provide educational advice leading to an academic programme tailored to each student's specific needs.
- To identify and admit students who are keen to achieve academically and are prepared to work hard to achieve this goal.



### **Procedure for prospective UK students**

Following an enquiry about admission to the College, the following procedure will apply:

1. On receipt of an enquiry or application, the Admissions Team will provide up to date information about the College and the relevant courses available, accompanied by information about the fees associated with the relevant course.
2. The College is open to prospective families by appointment to meet with College Staff and to look around the College (with or without their son or daughter), to visit classrooms to see the students at work, to meet teaching staff and to experience the atmosphere and ethos of the College.
3. Prior to an offer being made, the application to the College has three elements:
  - a) Interview, if the student is resident in the UK and is practical for the student to attend. A video interview can be held if this is of more convenience.
  - b) Assessment of performance in previous examinations through academic grades or Certificates sent to the college. References may also be requested from a student's former school.
  - c) Assessment of special needs (where applicable)

### **Assessment of Performance in Examinations - UK and EEA students**

#### **GCSE**

Applicants are not normally selected by entry tests, but the College does sometimes use diagnostic tests to ascertain what level of understanding a student may have in a subject. Potential GCSE students will be assessed on reports and transcripts from their previous schools. The College will outline the options available and explain the different Tiers in various GCSE/IGCSE subjects. Applicants are informed that any decision relating to Higher or Foundation Tiers will be determined by the subject Tutor after one term.

#### **A-Level**

The transition from GCSE classes to A level is subject to satisfactory performance at GCSE level and the availability of appropriate courses of study at the College for A-Level. Applicants should have the required background experience and qualifications to start a course. For a typical A level programme, the College normally requires 5 x (I)GCSE passes at grades A\* - C (or 9-4), including English and Mathematics of an applicant. For European students, a satisfactory IELTS score is required as an alternative to (I)GCSE English.

#### **University Foundation Programme & International Medical Foundation Programme**

Applicants for the University Foundation Programme and International Medical Foundation programme will have successfully completed secondary schooling in their respective country and for those whose mother tongue is not English, will have demonstrated the required English Language Level through a Secure English Language Test (SELT) e.g. IELTS for UKVI (Academic)



Applicants will be made aware of any additional selection tests that they may be required to take if it is their intention to seek a university course in Law (LNAT), Medicine or Dentistry (UKCAT/BMAT) or entry to certain universities during their application.

### **International students**

Bath Academy assesses the grades of international students either through UK NARIC grade comparisons or based on the College's own database of collated grades from former students to decide if an applicant meets the required level to study on a specific programme.

A satisfactory level of English will be required to demonstrate an applicant's level of English e.g. an IELTS for UKVI (Academic) examination certificate. This is to ensure the student meets Bath Academy standards and meets the required UK Visas and Immigration English Language level to study in the UK.

Continued progression, from one course at the College to another, is also dependent upon satisfactory levels of attendance, behaviour and attainment.

### **Interview**

The style of the interview is intended to be natural and informal and provides an opportunity for the prospective Student and Parent(s)/Guardian(s) to make their own decision of the education on offer as well as for the College to learn more about the student and their background that their academic grades may not reflect. Interviews are conducted by senior members of staff (Principal, Vice-Principal or the Directors of English Studies) either in person or virtually.

The purpose of the interview is to:

- Assess the suitability of the student for their chosen courses
- Explain the academic and extra-curricular provision available at the college and answer any questions the Student/Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may have about the college
- Establish whether Bath Academy can offer a suitable academic programme and provide advice about careers and/or entry into Higher Education
- Provide, if appropriate, an opportunity for the Student and Parent(s) to look around the College

The College sets other criteria for entry which it may explore at interview, including:

1. the applicant enjoys satisfactory general health;
2. the applicant's learning difficulties and other special needs (if any) can, in the opinion of the Principal, Vice-Principals and/or Director of English Studies, be managed within the college's normal provision;
3. the applicant's present or most recent school reports show satisfactory attitude and conduct on the part of the applicant & the parents;
4. fees (if applicable) at the applicant's present school have been paid and the parents are able, if required, to satisfy the Principal that they can pay the fees of the courses applied for.



### **References**

The offer of a place at the college may be conditional upon a satisfactory reference being obtained from the applicant's previous school(s) which may include a pro-forma reference form which requests information about academic ability, motivation and behaviour.

The College may also request copies of a recent set of reports. At certain times of year, particularly mid-August to early September, when students are admitted for retake courses, it is often not possible to obtain references in advance of a place being offered because many schools are closed. However, references are followed up as soon as is practicable and the college reserves the right to revoke an offer of a place should the reference contain relevant information which was not disclosed during the interview.

### **Offer of a place and Acceptance Documents**

The College aims to write to the prospective student, their parent(s), or agent with an Offer Letter together with the Acceptance documents within two weeks of completion of the above process. The College will take no heed of an applicant's skin colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin, religious faith or area of residence in any admission assessment. The College is not obliged to state its reasons for the rejection of any applicants. Upon receiving an Offer Letter, the College asks prospective students to confirm their acceptance of a place by:

- Completing and returning the Registration Form and paying the outlined Acceptance Fee
- Signing the attached copy of the college's *Terms and Conditions*; the contract with the college.
- Completing and signing the Medical form.
- Reading and signing the Visa guidelines (if applicable)
- For students under the age of 18 and not living with their parent(s)/Guardian;
  - Read and sign the Guardian Form which outlines the parents' responsibility to appoint an appropriate guardian resident in the UK.
  - Complete and sign the Letter of Parental consent and Online Safety Form. This must be signed by both parents (where applicable).

### **Registration Form**

Prospective students are asked to complete a Registration Form. This Registration Form allows the student to mention previous academic and extra-curricular achievements to the college. It also allows prospective students and parents to highlight any Special Educational Needs that may not have been mentioned during the interview. Upon completion of the registration form, a non-refundable £400 Acceptance Fee should be sent to the College to confirm the interest of the applicant in joining Bath Academy. The Registration Form should be signed by the student & individual(s) responsible for the tuition fees.



### **Terms and Conditions**

The Terms and Conditions must be read and signed by both the student and the individual(s) responsible for the fees prior to enrolment. The Terms and Conditions outline the legislature of College Life and by signing, both the student and fee payer agree to abide by them. Any updates to the Terms and Conditions will be provided to students and fee payers at the soonest instance.

The signing of the Terms and Conditions also declares the information on the Medical Form is true and that the student is medically fit to study.

Finally, when the fee payer signs this form, they agree to undertake all tuition (and accommodation fees where applicable) incurred by the student through their time at Bath Academy.

### **Medical Form**

The Medical Form provides the opportunity for prospective students to disclose any medical information that the college should be aware of and may need to accommodate for. The Medical Form is the declaration of the parent(s)/guardian to the College that the student is of good health and will complete the course applied for.

### **Disclosure**

Parents or Guardians are required to disclose any known or suspected circumstances relating to their son or daughter's health, allergies, disabilities or learning difficulties or any previous disciplinary issues relevant to their application to join Bath Academy in writing to the College.

### **Special Needs Assessment**

If Special Needs Requirements have been outlined by the applicant in the relevant section of the Registration Form and which may have been discussed in the interview at the College, where appropriate, a special needs assessment will be conducted by the SENCO.

The SENCO will advise the interviewer on whether Bath Academy has the facilities and expertise to accommodate a student and, if so, the nature of the academic support we would provide. If the student subsequently registers at the college, the Principal will collate all relevant information from sources such as school references, medical and educational psychologist reports (*Further information can be found in Appendix II*).

### **Special Circumstances**

We recognise that a student's academic history can be affected by particular circumstances, for example:

- If he/she has been unwell when sitting examinations or tests, or has been absent for any significant period from the previous school.
- If there are family circumstances such as a divorce or bereavement.
- If the student's first language is not English.
- If the student has a disability or specific learning difficulties.



### **Grounds for Rejection**

The following are possible grounds for not being offered a place but is not meant to be an exhaustive list:

- Insufficient academic ability for the programme applied for.
- Lack of fit with the ethos and general character of the college.
- Exclusion from the previous school for drug-related offences, bullying or theft.

### **Appeals Procedure**

Appeals against the College's decision not to offer a place must be submitted in writing to the Principal within four weeks of notification of the decision. The decision will then be reviewed under the procedures outlined in the College's Complaints Policy.

### **Enrolment**

Upon arrival at the College, the Admissions Team will;

- Complete all necessary enrolment details, including the student's current address, telephone and email details and check the details given in case of an emergency.
- Ensure that all forms have been completed by the relevant parties.
- Ensure that all fees are paid as outlined in the Offer Letter
- Place all evidence of key documentation in the central students' files as well
- as distributing to other appropriate files or programmes.



## **APPENDIX I - Admissions Relating to Visa Students (International students) in compliance with UKVI rules**

UK Visa and Immigration guidelines require the College to sponsor international applications for either a Student or Child Student visa if the student meets College and UKVI criteria (not to be mistaken for financial sponsorship). This will be sent in the form of a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS), the CAS number confirms that the College has made a student an offer of a place to study, and that a prospective student has accepted this offer. The CAS number will be required as part of a Student or Child Student visa application. The College has an admission process for such students to ensure that it remains compliant with the most recent UKVI regulations as outlined below.

### **Pre-CAS Process**

The rationale behind the Pre-CAS process is to ensure compliance with UKVI requirements. It is of great importance that the College adequately assesses a student's capability and intention to study. The College must be satisfied that the prospective student has the appropriate motivation in coming to the UK to study and that the student is likely to complete the course successfully. Bath Academy takes every reasonable step to ensure that students recruited will progress in their studies and complete their intended course.

The information provided in the Application Form by a prospective student is cross-checked with the supporting documentation. If any field is incomplete or needs clarification, the student will be asked for clarification before any offer is made. Once an application form is received by the College:

1. Prospective students are asked to supply:
  - a copy of their passport
  - (I)GCSE transcripts or equivalent qualification (*verified by research into the comparative level of the qualification for instance using UK NARIC or previous experience compiled as a database by the College*).
  - School reports, and in some cases references, required by the College.
  - A Secure English Language Test (SELT) Certificate the student may have, this must be a recognised SELT in line with UK Visa and Immigration regulations, e.g. an IELTS for UKVI (Academic) examination, if a student requires a Student visa.
  - A statement of intent setting out their motive for wanting to study at Bath Academy and their future career aspirations.
  
2. Students may also be asked to take part in a video interview, remotely, if they are exempt from the English language requirement or if the College wishes to confirm the applicant's ability in English and/or suitability for the course. If the College has any concerns about the student's English language capability, then a video interview is arranged wherever this is possible.
  
3. The Principal (assisted by the Vice-Principals, Director of English Studies and the Head of Admissions) make an assessment as to whether:
  - the student is considered capable of successfully completing the course based on previous attainment, qualifications and reports (see above).And;



- the student's motives and intent in coming to the UK is to study and to improve their career prospects based on the above and other communications such as emails and telephone interviews. If the student is coming through a trusted Agent, the College will expect the Agent to assess capability and intent by direct interview and forward appropriate evidence. If this is not provided, the College will take the relevant steps as above.

Having made the assessment, the Principal will make either a conditional or unconditional offer to the student.

An unconditional offer will be made only if:

- a) The applicant has supplied a valid copy of their passport
- b) The applicant has met English language requirements e.g. minimum 5.5 overall IELTS score for the University Foundation Programme or 6.0 overall IELTS score for the A Level Programme according to the information in the College prospectus, or the SELT equivalents for international students.
- c) For RQF level 3 courses, the applicant has completed GCSE or High School equivalents. For RQF level 2 courses, the applicant has satisfactory school reports and transcripts. Equivalency is confirmed by NARIC or the compiled evidence that the College has available, if necessary.
- d) The applicant qualifies for a Child Student visa, in which case he or she is exempt from the secure English test but must still have proven proficiency in English. The student may still be required to undertake a video interview.

A conditional offer will be made if:

- a) There are any outstanding documents outlined (in 1,2,3) above.
- b) The applicant has yet to take a Secure English Language test and meet the minimum requirements outlined (in 1) above.
- c) The applicant is awaiting final High School results/examination grades. In this case a conditional offer is usually based on school transcripts, predicted grades or mock examination results and will take into consideration the intended area of study.
- d) The applicant has been requested to retake an examination to meet the entrance requirements for their course. The conditional offer will state the subject and grade to be attained.

4. Applicants receiving offers will be sent;

- a. An Offer letter stating their Conditional or Unconditional status,
- b. the College Terms and Conditions,
- c. Medical Form,
- d. Acceptance and Undertaking Form,
- e. Visa Guidelines
- f. guidance on accepting the place and securing a CAS and information on accommodation. This includes the requirements for bank statements and other evidence necessary when submitting the visa application in accordance with the UKVI guidelines.

*Applicants who fail to receive an offer will be notified.*



### **Visa Guidelines Form**

The Visa Guidelines Form outlines the process for, including the required documentation, making a Student or Child Student visa application to study in the UK at Bath Academy. It consists of up to date information regarding UK Visas and Immigration requirements and policies. The Visa Guidelines Form should be read thoroughly, and all parties should understand it fully. Upon signing this form, the applicant and fee payer(s) agree to their roles and the College's in making a visa application.

### **Letter of Parental Consent**

The Letter of Parental Consent is required to be completed by both the College and UK Visas and Immigration. This document identifies that the Parents'/Guardian(s) of students under the age of 18 give permission for the student to study and use their funds in the UK. This letter also gives consent to the application, travel, reception and care arrangements in the UK provided by the College.

### **Guardian Form**

The Guardian Form is required to be completed for Visa Students who are under the age of 18. As the students will be enrolling on a course longer than 28 days, it is mandatory for them to have a Legal Guardian who is responsible for them during their studies at the College. The Legal Guardian must be identified prior to the student enrolling at Bath Academy and their roles are outlined within the form.

Once an applicant wishes to accept the offer of a place at the College, and to be issued with a CAS, having met all conditions in 1,2,3/4 above, the applicant will be asked to:

- a) Pay the minimum deposit equivalent to the first term's fees.
- b) Forward copies of bank statements. If the bank statements are from the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) then a Birth Certificate/legal document will be requested.
- c) Return the completed Guardian Form (if the applicant is under the age of 18), Terms and Conditions, Medical Form.

### **Upon Arrival in the UK, the Admissions Team:**

1. Check the passport and relevant supporting documents; take a copy of the passport (cover page, personal details page, visa page and other key pages) and ensure that the copies are signed and dated. Copies of these documents must be secured in the student's file and be available for inspection by the relevant authorities. Students who require a Biometric Residence Permit card and/or to register with the police will be assisted in this process and upon collection, it will be copied, signed and kept on file.
2. Complete all necessary enrolment details, including the student's current address and telephone details; check contact details given for contact abroad in case of emergency. New details must be recorded and a history of all old addresses kept.
3. College Staff should note the expiry dates of passport and visa and add them to the central tracking record. Reminders should be sent out 3 months before visa expiry dates.
4. Ensure that all fees are paid.
5. Place all evidence of key documentation in the central students' files as well as distributing to other appropriate files or programmes.



**Non – arrival of student**

The College has a duty of care to ensure that students, once they arrive in the UK, take up their course and complete it. The College should be concerned if a student does not make contact for more than 48 hours after known arrival. The College has a procedure to inform key staff of their imminent arrival. If a student fails to attend the College and take up their place on the course, where known, the reason will be explained on the Sponsor Management System to the UKVI.

If the student fails to arrive at the college on the expected date without a credible explanation, every effort must be made to contact that student or their Parents/Guardians and a reason obtained. Evidence must be kept of all attempts to contact the student e.g. telephone notes of the phone call, emails printed and put on the student's file.

Staff will keep trying to contact the student for a period of no more than 10 working days, after which - if they have not received a credible and believable explanation - an email must be sent to them explaining that they are being reported to UKVI.



## **Appendix II - Additional notes relating to disability**

### **Enrolment/admission and disability**

- The College endeavours to ensure that less favourable treatment is not given to students with any form of disability. However, the College also has a duty of care to ensure that the student receives the correct standard and provision of care/attention that is appropriate to the level and extent of the disability. As such, a detailed risk assessment is undertaken by the College when a student with significant disability contacts the College and wants to enrol.
- The College is aware of the *Children and families Act 2014* and the *SEN and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25 years 2014*.
- The College is happy to consider applications from students with hearing difficulties, visual impairment, mobility access disability and those with moderate mental health issues. The College is also willing to consider applications from students with ADHD, forms of autism, dyslexia and dyspraxia. Each case will be assessed for risk to themselves and to others at the College. Any disabled student who is refused enrolment at the College has the right to appeal directly to the Board of Directors.

The College's policy is to improve the physical environment and make improvements in the provision of information, thereby increasing access for students to the curriculum. The College wants to increase its use of assistive technology and to this end has ordered and installed several interactive whiteboards. It also intends to purchase easy-to-use and view keyboards and software that facilitate learning for specific disabilities.

### **Associated Policy and Other Documentation**

- The college Prospectus
- The college's Terms and Conditions
- The college's Equal Opportunities policy
- The college's Disability policy
- The college's Accessibility plan
- The college's Special Educational Needs policy

*Reviewed: November 2020*

*Next Review: November 2021*

*Responsible Officer: Samuel Hollingshead*

*Signature:*