



## **Admissions Policy**

Bath Academy is an independent college based in the city of Bath, Somerset offering courses leading to GCSE, AS/A level, the University Foundation Programme and English Language courses. The College admits male and female pupils from the age 16, subject to the availability of places.

### **Summary**

This policy concerns admissions to the college for pupils aged 14-19 at A level and GCSE. It does not cover our admissions criteria for Easter Revision or for programmes of individual tuition or for extramural pupils having supplementary tuition.

Bath Academy selects on the basis of academic ability, previous educational record, including prior school references, entrance tests (if appropriate), performance at interview and assessment of special needs.

We welcome applicants from all backgrounds, irrespective of nationality, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. However, not all age ranges are catered for (see below) and our facilities and abilities to deliver appropriate programmes for students with various kinds of disability (including special educational needs) are not all-encompassing and are developing (see accessibility plan and below for Special Educational Needs). There are size limits to the number of pupils that can currently be admitted to the whole college, to individual year groups (particularly at GCSE) and to individual classes. For students seeking admission close to one of our entry points, there may also be timetabling constraints imposed by the combination of subjects being sought though, for those applying in good time, there are no such restrictions.

### **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 are in sympathy 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 recruit students who are keen to achieve academically and are prepared to work hard to achieve this goal.

## **Procedure**

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

1. On receipt of a request, the College will provide up to date information about the College, accompanied by information about the College fees.
2. The College is open to prospective families by appointment to meet with College staff and to look around the School (with or without their son or daughter) to watch the students at work, to meet teaching staff and to experience the ethos and atmosphere of the College.
3. The process preceding the offer of a place at the college has four elements:
  - a) Interview (if the student is resident in the UK)
  - b) Assessment of performance in previous examinations
  - c) Reference from previous school
  - d) Assessment of special needs (if applicable)

## **Interview**

The purposes of the interview are to:

- Explain the academic and extra curricular provision available at the college.
- Assess the suitability of the student for his/her chosen courses.
- Provide advice about careers and/or entry into Higher Education.
- Provide, if appropriate, an opportunity for the student and parents to look around the college.
- Establish whether Bath Academy can offer a suitable academic programme.
- Answer any questions the student/parents may have about the college.
- Interviews are conducted by senior members of staff (Principal, Directors of Studies).

## **Assessment of Performance in Examinations**

1. Transfer from GCSE classes to AS level is subject to satisfactory performance at GCSE and the availability of appropriate courses of study at A-level.
2. Applicants should have the required background experience and qualifications to start a course. For a typical A level course, the College normally requires 5 GCSE passes at grades A\* - C, including English and Mathematics. A satisfactory IELTS score is an alternative to GCSE.
3. Applicants are not 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.
4. 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 Mathematics and Statistics GCSE/IGCSE.

Applicants are informed that any decision relating to Higher or Foundation Tiers will be determined by the subject Tutor after one term.

## **References**

- The offer of a place at the college is conditional upon a satisfactory reference being obtained from the previous school.
- Reference requests may include a pro-forma reference form which requests information about academic ability, motivation and behaviour. We also request copies of recent sets of reports. In some cases we also obtain telephone references from a senior teacher from the previous school.
- At certain times of year, particularly in the period mid August to early September when a number of 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.

## **Special Needs Assessment**

Where appropriate, a special needs assessment is conducted by the Director of Studies. This member of staff will advise the interviewer on whether Bath Academy has the facilities and expertise to accommodate a particular student and, if so, the nature of the academic support we would provide. If the student subsequently registers at the college, the Director of Studies will collate all relevant information from sources such as school references, medical and educational psychologist reports.

## **Offer of a Place and Registration**

- In the year preceding entry (or sooner if application is being made for an immediate place), the College will write to the parents with an offer of a place, asking them to confirm their acceptance of a place for their child by returning the accompanying Registration Form and pay a Registration Fee (and deposit, if not UK residents). For short English Language courses payment of the full fees are requested.
- The Registration Form is attached to a copy of the College's *Terms and Conditions* which will form the basis of the contract with Bath Academy.
- 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 rejection of an applicant.

## **Disclosure**

Parents or guardians are required at the earliest opportunity to disclose any particular 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.

## **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 divorce or bereavement.
- If the student's first language is not English.
- If the student has a disability or specific learning difficulties. In such cases the college may request additional information such as an Education Psychologist's report, medical certificate or samples of work to assist us in the assessment of the student's suitability.

## **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 decision not to offer a place must be submitted in writing to the Principal within four weeks of notification of the College's decision. The decision will then be reviewed under the procedures outlined in the College's complaints procedure.

## **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

## APPENDIX

### Admissions Relating to Visa Students in Compliance with UKBA rules

#### Pre-CAS Process

The rationale behind the Pre-CAS process is to ensure compliance with the UKBA requirements. It is of fundamental 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. As a part of HTS status, Bath Academy takes every reasonable step to ensure that students recruited will progress in their studies and complete their course.

Once an application form is received by the College:

1. Prospective students are asked to supply a copy of their passport, GCSE transcripts (or equivalent qualification) and any secure English language certificate they may have, such as IELTS/TOEFL/PTE.
2. The information contained in the application form is cross-checked with the documentation given and if there is any field that is incomplete or needs clarification, the student will be asked for clarification before any offer is made. Students may also be asked to take part in a *Skype* interview 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 *Skype* interview is arranged wherever this is possible.
3. The Principal or Director of Studies makes an assessment according to (2) above as to whether the student is considered capable of successfully completing the course and makes the final decision as to whether the student is given a conditional/unconditional offer. The assessment of capability is based on previous attainment, qualifications and reports. The College also has to be assured of the student's intent i.e. that the motive for coming to the UK is to study and to improve career prospects. Intent is assessed by a mixture of email correspondence, telephone interviews and face to face interviews. If the student is coming through a trusted Agent, then the College will expect the Agent to assess capability and intent by direct interview and the submission of evidence.
4. An unconditional offer will be made only if:
  - a) The applicant has supplied a valid copy of their passport details i.e. key pages.
  - b) The applicant has met English language requirements e.g. minimum 5.0 IELTS in all disciplines or 5.5 with nothing below 4.0; alternatively, the SELT equivalents for Tier 4/EU students. Home students will be asked

for a minimum of Grade C at GCSE. If there are any concerns, verification checks can be made through IELTS.

- c) The applicant has completed GCSE or High School equivalents. A typical offer will require a minimum of at least 5 GCSE's at Grades A\* - C including Mathematics, English and any other subject related to the intended subjects of study.
- d) The applicant qualifies for a Tier 4 Child Visa, in which case he or she is exempt from the secure English test but must still have proven proficiency in English.
- e) The applicant has met (4a) and (4c) but has scored a 4.5 or 5.0 in their IELTS (meeting the minimum Tier 4 General requirements), in which case the applicant may be made an unconditional offer but asked to undertake 3 – 6 months of pre-session English at the College before commencing the Advanced level course.

5. A conditional offer will be made if:

- a) There are any outstanding documents outlined in (4) above.
- b) The applicant has yet to take a secure English test and meet the minimum requirements outlined in (4b) above.
- c) The applicant is awaiting final High School results/examination grades. In this case a conditional offer is usually based on Grade 10/11 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 the A level course. The conditional offer will state the conditions which must be met for acceptance.

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

7. Applicants receiving offers will be sent a letter stating their Conditional or Unconditional status, the College Terms and Conditions, guidance on accepting the place and securing a CAS and information on accommodation. This includes information on UKBA requirements for bank statements and other financial evidence necessary when submitting the visa application in accordance with the UKBA website.

8. Once an applicant wishes to accept the offer of a place, and in order to be issued with a CAS, having met all conditions in (4) or (5) above, the applicant will be asked to:

- a) Pay the minimum deposit of £6000.
- b) Forward copies of bank statements, as outlined in (7) above.

9. Students will only be issued a CAS if they have complied with (8) above.

## **Upon Arrival in the UK**

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 an procedure to inform key staff of their imminent arrival. If a student fails to attend the College and take up their course after 10 working days, then the student must be reported to UKBA, and if known, the reason explained in the reporting email / Sponsor Management System.

Upon the student's arrival, the Registration staff:

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. Copies of these documents must be secured in the student's file and be available for inspection by the relevant authorities. If the student has a biometrics ID card this must also be copied, signed and kept on file.
2. Complete all necessary enrolment details, including the student's current address and telephone details; check the contact details given for contact abroad in case of emergency or the need to verify if a student has returned. If the address has changed the new details must be recorded and a history of all old addresses kept.
3. Note the expiry dates of passport and visa – 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.

## **Non – arrival of student**

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 must 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 UK Border Control Agency in accordance with current legislation.





## **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 Education Needs Disability Act 2001 and the Disability and Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005.
- 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 Governors.

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 a number of interactive whiteboards. It also intends to purchase easy-to-use and view keyboards and software that facilitate learning for specific disabilities.