

HIGHER EDUCATION ADMISSIONS POLICY

Admissions Policy

This admissions policy has been written with consideration given to the Schwartz Report's five main principles, which states that fair admissions should:

- **Be transparent, and provide consistent and efficient information**
- **Select students who are able to complete the course as judged by their achievements and potential Use assessment methods that are reliable and valid**
- **Minimise barriers to applicants**
- **Be professional in every respect and underpinned by institutional structures and processes.**

This policy relates to admission onto taught higher education programmes at EKC Group only and does not apply to admissions for higher or degree apprenticeships with EKC Training.

1. It is the policy of EKC Group that:

- I. The admissions process will provide a responsive and student-focused service, ensuring all applicants receive the appropriate advice, guidance and information that they need to apply for and enrol on the right programme.
- II. All prospective applicants will have access to impartial pre-entry advice, guidance and information about programmes, fees and funding so that informed decisions can be made. Applicants should ensure that they have sufficient information on which to base decisions about programme acceptance and necessary support.
- III. The admissions process for entry onto programmes will be clear and concise to prospective students.
- IV. All applicants will be considered on an equal basis, taking into account their academic record, potential, references, personal statement and experience.
- V. The admissions process recognises that not all applicants have had equality of educational opportunity and EKC Group will consider applicants in the light of the opportunities available to them.
- VI. Programmes and services will be promoted actively in the community to widen access and increase participation in line with the Equality Action Plan principles.
- VII. The Admissions Policy will promote equality and diversity and will be consistent and complementary to all other Group policies.
- VIII. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide full and accurate information as part of the admissions process and to notify EKC Group of any changes or corrections to their original application.

2 The policy will be implemented in the following way:

- I. The admissions process is clearly outlined on the Group website and due care and attention will be taken to ensure that all communications to potential students are clear and unambiguous.

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Approving Body: Education Committee

Stage of approval: Approved

Date of approval: February 2024

- II. Accurate information and advice about programmes and entry requirements will be provided on the EKC Group website.
- III. All prospective students who declare a learning difficulty or disability will be advised of the support available to them, including the process for applying for Disabled Students' Allowance.
- IV. Guidance is available to students interested in entering into higher education from the Student Support/Information Centre. Programme directors and the higher education department is also available to assist in the choice of the most appropriate programme of study and to get information on level 4 qualifications and higher. Advice about fees and student loans should be directed to the HE Information Officer.
- V. Applicants are considered solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, and the admissions process will take into account:
 - The applicant's potential to succeed on their chosen programme of study
 - The applicant's actual or expected academic or professional qualifications and grades
 - Relevant work or other experience
 - The applicant's own statements of interest in the programme/subject
 - References
 - Where appropriate, an interview, portfolio or audition
 - Qualifications in the use of English language
- VI. For some programmes, there will be more applicants than places and competition for offers is unavoidable. In cases where EKC Group is unable to make an offer for the applicant's original choice of programme, an alternative will be provided, though this may not necessarily be for a higher education programme.
- VII. EKC Group reserve the right to cancel courses before commencement should it not be in a position to run the course. In this instance, applicants will be notified in writing at the earliest opportunity and the Student Protection Plan followed to minimise any detrimental impact to the applicant.
- VIII. EKC Group, have the right to amend entry requirements at any point should it be deemed necessary for quality and standards. Any changes will be communicated to existing applicants and offer holders at the earliest point.
- IX. All applications for full time programmes should be made through UCAS. No preference will be given to applications which are received in advance of the UCAS Equal Consideration deadline date. Applications which are received after this date will be considered if places are still available. Applications for part time programmes should be made directly to EKC Group through the website.

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- X. Applications from students who have non-standard qualifications or wish work experience to be taken into account as part of their application will be considered on an individual basis and may be invited to take part in an interview as part of the assessment.
- XI. Applicants may be made one of two types of offer:
- Unconditional offer: Where an applicant has *already* met the entry criteria [for example, if the applicant obtained the grades then had a gap year] for a programme and there are sufficient places remaining on the programme, an unconditional offer may be made. This is subject to the timely completion of the enrolment process.
 - Conditional offer: Where an applicant is able to demonstrate that they are likely to meet the entry criteria for a programme by the enrolment period and there are sufficient places remaining on a programme, a conditional offer may be made. A conditional offer is subject to the achievement of the entry criteria and to the timely completion of the enrolment process. Applicants will be informed of the conditions that they will have to meet before they will be enrolled onto the programme.
- XII. Applicants are expected to respond to an offer no later than the UCAS Decision Deadline using the appropriate method via UCAS or the EKC Group website.
- XIII. In order for EKC Group to effectively and fairly manage the application process, applicants may be required to respond to communication requesting confirmation that they still intend to take up the offer of a place. If an applicant does not positively respond to such a request, the application may be rejected or the offer may be withdrawn.
- XIV. Should an applicant holding a conditional offer from the Group not meet the conditions outlined in the offer the application will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Groups approach to Contextual Admissions outlined below.
- XV. Where an application has been rejected, the applicant may appeal in writing to the Group Head of Higher Education and Careers if they believe that the policy has not been applied correctly in the processing of their application. Appeals will only be upheld where the Admissions Policy was not applied, and the incorrect application of the policy led to the rejection of the applicant.
- XVI. The admission of students with a declared criminal conviction is subject to assessment by the Senior Safeguarding Officer with regard to the duty of care to the respective wider College's community. All information disclosed is confidential and will be held in accordance with the requirements of the data protection legislation.
- XVII. Students wishing to use prior attainment or experience as evidence of prior learning are asked to refer to the Higher Education Recognition of Prior Learning Policy for further details. Using evidence of prior learning to enter into higher education must be made known at the time of application to the tutor/programme director and the Group Head of Higher Education & Careers to ensure that the appropriate report is filed.

EKC Group does not currently hold a Tier 4 license to sponsor international students.

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3. Contextual Admissions

As part of our ongoing commitment to widening access, the Group recognises that some people may not have met the entry criteria set for our courses due to personal disadvantage, prior educational circumstances or time away from education. We are keen to ensure that we are able to identify potential for success using a range of applicant information and treat each applicant as an individual and judged fairly.

A number of contextual factors will be considered when assessing applications, these will help us to identify applicants who may not have reached their potential due to personal or educational disadvantage. Where an applicant is assessed to be eligible, an adjusted conditional offer will be made for the course(s) applied for. Course-specific conditions will still apply, for example if the course requires you to have a minimum grade in a related subject, this subject grade will not be adjusted.

Eligibility

Applicants applying through the main UCAS cycle or direct to Group through the website may be eligible for a contextual offer if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Are first in their family to enrol in Higher Education
- Live in a POLAR4* Q1
- Have spent any time in Care under a Local Authority
- Are a Refugee or Asylum Seeker

*POLAR – Participation of Local Areas: The participation of local areas (POLAR) classification groups areas across the UK based on the proportion of the young population that participates in higher education. It looks at how likely young people are to participate in HE across the UK and shows how this varies by area. POLAR classifies local areas into five groups - called quintiles - based on the proportion of 18 year olds who enter HE aged 18 or 19 years old. Quintile one shows the lowest rate of participation and Quintile five shows the highest rate of participation.

www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/polar-participation-of-local-areas/

Applicants do not need to do anything in addition to their standard application to be considered, but the college may contact applicants for further information if required.

Related Policies and Procedure

- Fees Policy
- HE Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- HE Student Protection Plan

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Stage of approval: Approved

Date of approval: February 2024