

Student Admissions Policy

1. Policy statement

EKC Group welcomes applications from all individuals of the East Kent Community with the motivation to learn and the potential to succeed. The Group is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all individuals seeking a place on a programme of study.

It is the intention of this policy to:

- Ensure that staff making admission decisions are equipped with the required judgements and competency to undertake such a role and responsibility.
- Ensure accuracy, relevance and accessibility of promotional activities and information to enable applicants to make an informed decision.
- Ensure selection policies and procedures are clear, impartial, and moreover, inclusive to all applicants.
- Ensure impartial advice and guidance is delivered to meet the demands of the individual.

This policy applies to all applicants (including late applicants) who are seeking admission to an EKC Group College/business unit for any programme of study including Higher Education and existing EKC Group students who wish to progress to an alternative pathway programme. It does not cover admissions to the Junior College, EKC Group Nurseries, or students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Separate policies are in place for these areas and are available on EKC Group's website. Learners who enrol on short, professional development and leisure courses are also out of the scope of this policy.

EKC Group operates an open Admissions Policy that ensures fair, transparent, and equitable treatment of all applicants and is committed to providing a high-quality teaching and learning environment, focused on supporting students to achieve their full potential. The Group believes in a student body that is diverse in terms of background and experience, with all students contributing to a stimulating learning environment.

2. Admissions procedures

2.1 Applicants aged 16-18

- There will be clear written entry criteria for every pathway programme which is published on the College pages of the EKC website.
- All applicants must complete a College online application in order to be considered. The College will provide support to access an applicant's online portal and to allow

them to track the progress of their application, book applicant events and make additional applications for other colleges/programmes etc;

- All applicants who meet the published entry criteria for full time or part time programmes will attend an Applicant event. During an Applicant event, the applicant will engage in a conversation about their chosen subject and level of study, and an offer is agreed on the most appropriate programme for them. If an applicant already meets the entry criteria, they will receive an unconditional offer on a programme. If an applicant does not meet the direct entry criteria (e.g. they are awaiting the results of their GCSE examinations), they will receive a conditional offer on a programme. The conditional offer will become unconditional upon the applicant fulfilling the criteria set out in their offer. Those who do not meet the criteria of their conditional offer, may be offered an alternative programme (e.g. at a different level of study), at the discretion of their chosen EKC Group College.

We would encourage all learners at application and interview to let us know if they have a support need. A member of our Inclusive Learning Support Team will contact you to discuss your needs and wherever possible make reasonable adjustments to meet your needs.

- Other than in exceptional circumstances opportunities for students to view an EKC Group College and its facilities prior to the commencement of a course will be organised by holding Open Events, Advice and Guidance sessions, post GCSE results Information Events, Taster Events and interview and Welcome Events.
- Students must provide information to allow Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to be made prior to entry on courses for all work experience providers and employers in areas such as Teaching Assistants, Early Years and Health and Education programmes. This is to ensure that students have every chance to gain work experience opportunities and employment in their chosen career at the end of the programme.
- Where students are progressing to the next level on the same pathway, they will need to meet the entry criteria for that pathway programme. They do not need to go through the online application process, or an interview as curriculum staff will complete a progression form.

2.2 Applicants who have not previously sat public examinations

- In cases where an applicant has not had the opportunity to previously sit public examinations, EKC Group wants to ensure they are applying for pathways at a fair, appropriate, and inclusive level to their prior knowledge. This may refer to learners who were previously registered as electively home educated with the local authority for example but is not to be confused by learners who sat public examinations but did not achieve a grade.
- These learners need to make this known in their application so they can be invited to an initial assessment event prior to the summer break. Learners will undertake initial assessments to ascertain the most appropriate level of study. Once marked and quality assured, a learner will receive an unconditional offer onto the level identified from the initial assessment.

2.3 Full and part time adult applicants

- There will be clear written entry criteria for every pathway programme which is published on the College pages of the EKC website.
- All applicant must complete an online application via Kent Choices. The College will provide support if needed.
- All applicants who meet the published entry criteria for any adult programmes will be invited to attend an Applicant event. During an Applicant event, the applicant discusses their chosen subject and programme, their eligibility for the course and funding (as required), and begin/complete the enrolment process. Opportunities for students to view an EKC Group College and its facilities prior to the commencement of a course will be provided.
- On courses where work experience providers and employers require Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to be made before placement, such as Teaching, Early Years, and Health and Education programmes, students must provide the required information before the course commences. This is to ensure students have every chance to gain work experience opportunities and employment in their chosen career at the end of the programme.
- Applicants will need to pay the required fees in full or provide confirmation of a learning loan before the course starts. Instalment plans are available for courses where the fees are over £750.00.
- Where students are progressing to the next level on a pathway, they will need to meet the entry criteria for that pathway programme. They do not need to go through the online application process as curriculum staff will complete a progression form.

2.4 EKC Training adult courses

- All candidates are required to complete an 'initial assessment' to determine the suitability of the provision and evaluate any other individual specialised requirements.
- Applicants seeking to be fully funded through the adult skills budget, will need to provide proof of ID (Bank card, Photo ID, Birth Certificate) and proof of annual income being below £25,000
- Where students are progressing to the next level on a pathway, they will need to meet the entry criteria for that pathway programme. They do not need to go through the application process and curriculum staff will complete a progression form.

2.5 Apprenticeships

- All Apprenticeship vacancies are advertised via the National Apprenticeship Website <https://www.gov.uk/recruit-apprentice>

- All applicants must complete an online application in order to be considered. These applications are screened and those meeting the specifications of the employer are invited for an interview to assess suitability. Shortlisted candidates are sent to the employer for a final interview and employment decision. An Apprenticeship enrolment is accordingly scheduled.
- All applicants invited to interview will be required to complete initial assessments for English and Maths or provide evidence of prior attainment at the level required for entry to the Apprenticeship Standard programme
- In an instance where the employer has identified their own potential apprentice, the candidate will still be invited for interview to assess their suitability for the apprenticeship standard in question. Should they meet the eligibility requirements an Apprenticeship enrolment will be scheduled.
- Where an applicant is unsuccessful for their chosen Apprenticeship programme feedback, support and guidance will be provided to enable them to access a more suitable learning opportunity or alternative option.
- Inclusive Learning requirements are determined during the screening interview and forwarded to the Apprenticeship Support Officer with responsibility for overseeing Inclusive Learning requirements and the associated access arrangements.
- Apprentices progressing to the next level of Apprenticeship learning will need to meet the eligibility requirements of the programme and have satisfactorily completed all elements of the previous standard.
- In order for us to enrol a candidate on an Apprenticeship Programme they must be employed in a role that meets the conditions of funding laid down by the ESFA <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apprenticeship-funding-rules-for-training-providers>

2.6 Higher Education admissions

- To apply for a Higher Education Programme at EKC Group students must apply online through UCAS, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service at <http://www.ucas.com>. There are two types of HE applicants as follows:

- Students at a school or College registered with UCAS.

All UK schools and colleges (and a small number of establishments overseas) are registered with UCAS to manage their students' applications. Advice is available from teaching staff or a careers adviser at the school or college. Students fill in an online application and submit it to a member of staff. After checking their details, and adding their academic reference, the school or college submits the completed application online to UCAS. The student must pay online using a credit card or debit card before sending it to a referee. Payment can sometimes be made through the school or college.

- Independent applicants in the UK

Other UK applicants, who are not at school or college, apply online independently. It is likely that they will be a mature applicant, who, unlike school and college students, cannot readily seek advice from a teacher, but can instead consult with various careers organisations. Students are responsible for paying the correct application fee, for obtaining and attaching an academic reference and for submitting the completed application online to UCAS.

All HE applicants may receive an interview so that they are fully informed about the course, fees etc prior to accepting a place.

2.7 International admissions

- We want to make the international admissions process as smooth as possible for students applying to Level 3+ programmes at the EKC Group from outside the UK
- For applicants to be successful, they will need to satisfy our general entry requirements and also the requirements of their chosen course
- To apply for an International Programme at EKC Group, students will need to apply for a Student Route visa from the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) to study in the UK (replaces the Tier 4 Route)

If their study with us is less than six months, they should apply for a [standard visit visa](#) or a [short-term study visa](#) instead

- In order for us to enrol a candidate on an International Programme they must receive a CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies) from the designated college in which they intend to study

A CAS is a digital document assigned by the college to international students applying to study at EKC Group via a student visa. The CAS is a 14-digit number generated by UKVI and assigned to a student for use in their visa application.

- All applicants must complete a college online application in order to be considered. The College will provide support to access the online application and to allow students to track the progress of their application.
- Applicants will then have a MS Teams/telephone conversation with a member of the international team and complete any academic assessments – as students will be studying via a Student Visa, they will be required to take an English Language test – UKVI IELTS and achieve an overall grade of 5.5 to study on an AS level or Vocational Programme
- All applicants who meet the entry criteria for full time courses or part time programmes will be interviewed. At the interview, the applicant's programme pathway will be discussed, and an offer agreed on the most appropriate pathway. If a student already meets the entry criteria, they will receive an unconditional offer on a pathway programme. If an applicant does not meet the direct entry criteria (e.g. they are

awaiting the results of their examinations), they will receive a conditional offer to a pathway.

- After the student receives an unconditional or conditional offer to study with the college, they then need to complete a Host Family, Medical and Parental Consent Form, after which the process to receive the CAS will begin. Receiving an offer will require the student to meet all conditions stated on their decision letter, including paying a study deposit.
- Students cannot make a successful visa application without a CAS number assigned by a sponsor. If they submit an application without using their CAS number, it will be refused.
- As part of EKC Group's compliance process, applicants who need to submit their financial documents to the UKVI with their application must also submit their documentation to the college for review.
- Students must show UKVI that they have adequate funding to cover any remaining tuition fees as well as the requisite maintenance funds as defined by the UKVI.
- If their application is successful, they will receive a 60-day vignette in their passport that will allow them to travel to the UK to undertake study as a student.

3.0 General admissions standards

Students must then attend enrolment with the international team to show their passport and original academic documents used to obtain their offer (qualification certificate, transcripts etc.

All offers of places and enrolments at any EKC Group College/business unit are made based on:

- There being sufficient demand for the course offered.
- There being sufficient spaces available on the course concerned (first come first served basis from receipt of application)
- Meeting the published entry requirements
- Suitable references and checks if required.
- The applicant being able to attend 100% of the programme.
- Applicants with any outstanding debts to EKC Group (either financial or material) will be required to clear these debts before their application is progressed. (Refer to the Fees Policy)

There may be exceptional circumstances where an applicant has applied to an oversubscribed programme at an EKC Group College. In such cases, endeavours will be made to place the applicant on a suitable pathway at another EKC Group College.

- Applicants who have declared on their application that they are non-UK National will need to provide evidence of their status with regards to immigration and permission to reside in the UK.
- Information collected in the admission and enrolment processes will adhere to the current legislation concerning data protection and the Group's Data Protection Policy.
- All applicants are considered for admission based on their willingness to learn, attitude, educational performance, prior qualifications and professional experience; these factors determine the extent to which an applicant has the ability to meet the demands of their chosen pathway programme.
- All applicants will have access to impartial advice and guidance and information about courses, progression, and funding upon which appropriate and informed decisions are made.
- A student who has been excluded from an EKC Group College or business unit may not apply to any College within EKC Group for the duration of the exclusion period.

4.0 Applicants and students with criminal records

EKC Group does not wish to debar individuals with criminal records from taking advantage of the opportunities provided by further education. In general, a criminal record is not to be regarded as an obstacle to studying at EKC Group. In any event, the Group will not consider, when dealing with existing students and selecting applicants for admission, criminal convictions which are deemed "spent" under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, unless such convictions are deemed as "exceptions" under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. If spent offences are required to be disclosed this will always be indicated on the application form.

If a criminal conviction is deemed as 'unspent' then the procedure for handling applicants and students with criminal records must be followed.

If a criminal conviction is deemed as 'spent' then the standard admissions procedure as outlined below will be followed.

If at any stage an applicant/student fails to disclose accurate information on their past criminal record, then this will be regarded as an extremely serious matter and may lead to any offer being withdrawn; if the applicant has commenced their programme of study, the student may be required to cease their studies.

5.0 Appeals process

Students who wish to appeal against any decision during the admissions process should contact the Principal/Managing Director of the setting they are applying to. All appeals

should be made in writing within 10 working days to the respective Principal/Managing Director. Assistance with this will be provided on request if required.

- **Ashford College:** Susan Bonett
- **Broadstairs College:** Emily Johnson
- **Canterbury College:** Victoria Copp-Crawley
- **Dover College:** Paul Owen
- **Folkestone College:** Donna Smith
- **Sheppey College:** Alexandra Syrotiuk
- **EKC Training:** Rhona Williams

The Principal/Managing Director of the relevant setting, or a nominated representative will collate all relevant evidence for review. This evidence should include:

- Appeal letter
- Application form
- Interview Records
- Any other relevant information such as references etc.

The Principal/Managing Director or a nominated representative will assess the evidence and the applicant will be notified in writing of the panel's decision within 10 working days.

The decision of the Principal/Managing Director is final. A record of the panel discussion and decision with specific reasons will be retained.

Associated policies and procedures

- Fees Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Managing Applicants and Students with Criminal Convictions Procedure
- HE Admissions Policy