Admissions Code of Practice

South and City College Birmingham
1. Purpose

This document sets out the College’s approach to admissions for students. The Code has been developed with reference to the UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access and the Education Inspection Framework (EIF).

The admissions process set out in section 5 The Admissions Process and Communication with Applicants, applies to home and European Union students only. There is a specific admissions process that applies to international students to meet the requirements set by the UK Home Office. International applicants can find admissions information on the College’s website at https://www.sccb.ac.uk/international

2. Admissions Principles

2.1. South and City College Birmingham values and seeks welcome applications from a diverse community and is committed to widening participation, enabling students from all backgrounds to engage in education.

2.2. The college will endeavour to abide by the principles of fair and transparent admissions to ensure that all students are given the opportunity to achieve their potential in relevant subjects at appropriate levels.

2.3. The College recognises that student potential is not always demonstrated merely by formal academic qualifications and will consider contextual information for applicants and encourage applications from potential students who are underrepresented within post-16 education.

2.4. The college is committed to promoting equal opportunities for all students, recognising that our provision is enriched by a diverse student body that is reflective of the wider community, and welcomes applications from all communities.

2.5. Admission to the College is at the College’s discretion, and in accordance with our commitment to fair admissions, selection is made on the basis of a range of criteria. Evidence of suitability to study includes academic achievement, professional and personal experience, and the potential to succeed on the intended programme of study.

2.6. The Admissions Code of Practice aims to support students at each stage of the admissions process and to ensure that potential applicants succeed in their chosen programme of study.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. The Admissions Office works closely with curriculum schools and academic/teaching staff to deliver a comprehensive and professional service to applicants. Overall responsibility for the admissions of prospective applicants onto a particular programme of study rest with the curriculum. However, such authority is generally devolved to the course leader or tutor.
3.2. During the application process the Admissions Office will be responsible for:

a) Liaising with applicants throughout the admissions process  
b) Processing and communicating all formal decisions to applicants  
c) Inviting applicants to interview and/or advice sessions and open days  
d) Liaising with curriculum and academic staff regarding admissions and applicants  
e) Refer applicants with declared learning support needs to the Student Engagement Team.

3.3. During the application process Curriculum and Academic Staff will be responsible for:

a) Providing information for applicants about courses and studying.  
b) Setting entry criteria for all courses in line with awarding body requirements and college processes.  
c) Make admissions decisions on applicants, or where decision making is delegated or shared with non-subject specialist staff, make decisions for borderline or nonstandard applicants.  
d) Conducting advice and guidance sessions and interviews (where required) and meetings with applicants.  
e) Refer applicants with declared learning support needs to the Student Engagement Team.

3.4. During the application process the Employer Engagement Team will be responsible for:

a) Providing information for applicants about apprenticeship courses, studying and working  
b) Liaising and negotiating with employers appropriate courses and levels of course most suitable for an apprentice  
c) Ensuring all business and contractual process are completed timely to enable an apprentice to engagement with the admissions process.

4. Entry Requirements

4.1. The admission of an applicant will be determined by an assessment of their potential to contribute to, and benefit from their proposed studies. Admissions can be based on a range of criteria which could include contextual data such as personal circumstances, academic achievement and professional experience.

4.2. Entry requirements are available for applicants on the College’s website under the course information section. Applicants can also check with the Admissions Office or curriculum team to see if they have appropriate qualifications for entry to a specific programme.

4.3. Some programmes may need applicants to undertake an interview, test or audition as part of the admission process. This information will be indicated on the course web page and specific information will be made available by curriculum teams or Course Leaders.
4.4. Some programmes have non-academic admissions requirements, this could be for example a DBS check. The College will apply sector and awarding body requirements for non-academic admissions requirements. Where these apply they will be indicated on the course information on the College’s website.

4.5. Applicants with learning support needs applying for an ESFA funded course will be referred to the Additional Learning Support Team. The college will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate applicants with support needs. However, if the college is unable to meet these additional needs or can only do so by compromising the learning experience of the applicant, or other students, the college retains the right to refuse entry to an applicant.

4.6. Applications for apprenticeship programmes will include criteria relating to academic suitability and will be made in collaboration with the Employer who has offered the employment opportunity.

4.7. Applicants for higher education courses with learning support needs will be referred to the Additional Learner Support Team, and sign posted to the Disabled Students Allowance scheme.

4.8. Applicants for courses which do not require a DBS clearance and have a criminal conviction are required to declare any unspent convictions at the point of application. The conviction will receive careful consideration in the context of their application, safeguarding and duty of care to students and staff the College.

5. The Admissions Process and Communication with Applicants

The College recruits students in a variety of ways, through a portfolio of information and recruitment opportunities such as open days, taster days, interviews, UCAS application system, progression events for existing students and during the main enrolment and clearing period. The admissions process provides the key information for admissions.

Admissions information will be regularly updated on the College’s website for open days and enrolment. Where a course has specific admission requirements the information will be available on the course information section on the College’s website.

5.1. The college will ensure enquiries received via telephone, email, in person or letter will be responded to within five (5) working days.

5.2. The College will direct applicants to the most appropriate application process for their programme. This may be through for example an application form, an open day, an in person discussion or UCAS application process.
5.3. The college will respond to applications within five (5) working days of receipt. On submission of an application form, applicants can request information about the progress of their application at any stage.

5.4. UCAS applications will be assessed within five (5) working days of receipt of the application and decisions promptly recorded following UCAS processes.

5.5. Direct applications to higher education courses will be assessed within five (5) working days of receipt of the application and applicants notified within ten (10) working days of receipt of the application.

5.6. Where alternative admissions process apply to a course applicants will be notified of the appropriate admissions process such as UCAS. Applicants can access support for these processes via the College’s Student Engagement Team.

5.7. For courses that have auditions or tests as part of the admissions process, applicants will receive clear information on the stages and requirements of the process.

5.8. Offers of a place on a course will be made in writing to applicants along with any conditions of acceptance and instructions on how to enrol at the College, including the timing of enrolment.

5.9. All applicants are entitled to discuss their application in person, and to receive confidential and impartial information, advice and guidance at pre-entry and whilst on programme.

5.10. Applicants who are invited for an interview or in person discussion will be notified of the outcome of their application within ten (10) working days of an interview or discussion.

5.11. If an applicant does not attend an interview appointment they will be invited to the next available Open Day. If a follow up appointment is missed, applicants will be invited to main enrolment.

5.12. During the main enrolment period applicants who have evidence of their qualifications will be given an offer in person and guided through the enrolment process. In these circumstances applicants will not be issued with an offer letter and essential information will be confirmed during the enrolment process

5.13. Unsuccessful applicants are entitled to feedback on their application, requests for feedback can be made by emailing admissions@sccb.ac.uk, and applicants will be sign posted to an admissions review and the complaints procedure.

6. Admissions Review

There may be occasions where an applicant would wish to request a review of the admissions decision. Applicants can submit a request for review in writing to the Admissions Team at admissions@sccb.ac.uk.
admissions@sccb.ac.uk stating the grounds for the review. The request will be considered by a curriculum manager from the academic school associated with the course. Admissions decisions based solely on the grounds that the applicant disagrees with an academic judgement applied in reaching the decision will not be considered.

7. Complaints about Admissions

If an applicant believes they have grounds for a complaint about their application and process of admissions, they will be sign posted to the College’s complaints procedure and any complaint submitted will be considered following this procedure. Complaints about admissions will be considered in a timely manner so as to not disadvantage an applicant.