



## 4.0 Student Recruitment and Admissions

### 4.1 Student Recruitment, Selection and Admission

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1	Jul 2020	New Policy		Principal	Jul/Aug 2021
2	Aug 2021	Minor changes	Annual Review	Head of HE	Aug 2022
3	July 2022	Minor Changes	Annual Review	Admissions Manager	July 2023
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**External Reference Points**

- UK Quality Code Advice and Guidance on Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access
- Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA)
- Schwartz report (2004)

**Related Policies and Documents**

Affects all other policy documents. This document should however be read together with the following documents:

- Application Form
- Appeal Against Admission Decision Form
- Complaint against Admission Form
- Admission Checklist
- Recognition of Prior Learning
- Widening Access and Participation Statement
- Student Contract
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Student Protection Plan
- Fitness to Work Policy
- Fitness to Study Policy

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# Student Recruitment, Selection and Admission Policy and Procedure

## Scope:

The EDA College (EDA) aims to recruit with integrity and provide a high-quality educational experience for all students.

This policy complies with relevant legislation and takes into account the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Advice and Guidance Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access in complying with the Core practice for Standards and Quality as set out in the Quality Code, any relevant accrediting professional bodies and the Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA) good practice guidance and principles.

## Purpose:

To provide policy information and reference to enquirers, applicants and advisors about recruitment, selection and admissions at EDA.

To provide a policy framework and guidance for all EDA staff who are involved in recruitment, selection and admissions activity.

## Principles of Fair Admissions

EDA seeks to ensure a fair admissions system, which provides equal opportunity for all individuals, regardless of background, to gain admission to a programme suited to their ability, level of attainment and aspirations. Our approach to the admission of students also upholds the principles of fair admission outlined in the Schwartz report (2004) through being:

- Transparent
- Fair
- Honest
- Consistent
- Accessible
- Personalized
- Timely

## Policy Aims:

The first important step in ensuring student success is ensuring students are on the right programme. Consequently, the principal aim of the Admissions Policy of the College is to assess, match and offer admission to students in a programme that appropriately matches their ambition, ability and goals, irrespective of social, racial, religious and financial considerations.

Further aims are:

- aspiration – to encourage applications from groups that are, at present, under-represented
- fairness – to ensure that each applicant is individually assessed, without partiality or bias, by the Equality and Diversity Policy, and to ensure that an applicant's chance of admission to the College does not depend on unnecessary barriers or obstacles

Once students are admitted, we ensure that they are given the academic and personal, support necessary for the successful completion of their programme at EDA.

We, therefore, undertake to:

- To minimise barriers to access for prospective students.
- To prepare students for successful participation in their chosen careers.
- To recruit students who have the potential and motivation to succeed in their chosen programme.
- To ensure fairness, transparency and equal opportunity for all applicants.
- To provide accurate information, advice and guidance to all prospective students concerning all aspects of their student journey
- Enable Students to make informed decisions regarding their choices.
- Encourage applications from all students regardless of backgrounds.
- Ensure that each application is assessed equally and in line with college, and/or partner institutions' policies and procedures.
- Select students based on their merits and their ability to succeed in both their chosen programme and profession.
- Provide students with points of reference and contact to obtain further information advice and guidance when a decision not to offer a place has been given.

## **Information for Applicants and Enquirers**

Pre-entry information and support to enable prospective students to make informed decisions regarding any application they make to College as such EDA will make every effort to ensure information is appropriate, accurate and current.

All relevant Admissions Policies, Procedures and selection criteria for each programme will be displayed on the EDA website, enabling easy access for applicants, marketing consultants and

staff. Advice will also be made available on the website on how to contact EDA for specific queries regarding applications.

Prospective students therefore should also refer to the website for the most up-to-date information. The published information will also make it clear to prospective students how the recruitment, selection and admission process will be conducted and what prospective students have to do to make an application to enrol and whether there are any additional requirements.

All students are expected to complete the College application form and supply any additional information requested. EDA will confirm receipt of the prospective student's application within one week of receiving.

Students can request a telephone, Skype or face-to-face consultation with a relevant member of staff to discuss the programmes on offer, entry requirements, recognition of prior learning, transfers, progression routes, payment methods, the recruitment, selection and admission process, and any other matters pertinent to them making an informed decision about the programme most suitable to their needs and expectations.

Although not a common occurrence, EDA reserves the right to make changes to programmes during the application cycle. Where changes to programmes do occur following receipt of applications, the change will be communicated to applicants at the first opportunity and within two weeks of EDA being notified of the changes.

This includes the units or modules delivered as part of the programme; if this occurs after a programme has started, students will be consulted and their agreement sought before the introduction of the change. Any such changes are also approved through an internal college process before their introduction.

In certain circumstances, a programme may have to be withdrawn during the admissions cycle, this most commonly occurs when insufficient student numbers for a particular programme are achieved. Where programmes are withdrawn, any accepted applicants for the withdrawn programmes will be signposted and assisted in finding and securing places on alternative programmes at the college or another learning provider.

## **Selection Criteria**

EDA will publish at least annually, its selection criteria for all of its programmes and applicants are advised to check the college's website for programme-specific selection criteria.

Entry criteria for all programmes are reviewed annually.

For many programmes, entry criteria will exceed the minimum institutional requirements, which are:

- Applicants should demonstrate acceptable levels of literacy and numeracy as prescribed in the entry requirement of the programme they applied for
- Applicants whose first language is not English should be able to demonstrate English Language proficiency in Speaking, Writing, Reading, and Listening to the standards required by either the College or partner organisation and to the programme for which the applicant has applied.

Selection criteria represent the usual level of academic attainment that an applicant is expected to attain before being admitted onto a programme. The selection criteria are not intended to provide a guarantee that all applicants who meet these basic selection criteria will be offered a place.

Staff can use discretion when considering applicants for specific programmes regarding levels of prior experience and academic achievement.

Applications will be assessed against academic and non-academic selection criteria specific to the programme for which they have applied, to ensure the applicant is eligible for admission onto the College's programmes.

This includes checking the qualifications and authenticity of qualification documents. This may require calling and crosschecking with the awarding bodies/organisations of the qualifications. Staff checking qualifications are required to stamp and sign all documents to confirm their authenticity.

Applicants with foreign qualifications may be requested to provide documents that have been interpreted into English or to apply for checking through UK Naric what the UK equivalence of their qualifications is.

For students applying to EDA through a partnership arrangement, the partner institutions' admissions regulations may also apply.

### **Fitness to practice**

Some programmes lead to both academic qualifications and the opportunity to apply for licences to practice. If there is a stipulation about fitness to practice for professional registration, then that may be included in the entry criteria as a mandatory requirement for entry to the programme.

Please note that you may not be offered a place on a programme if your history or personal circumstances mean you would not be able to progress into a specific industry/sector or job role. Some programmes may require occupational health checks or Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as part of their conditions of entry. This could be because there are external requirements regarding placements.

The College reserves the right to deny admission to such programmes to applicants who are unable to supply a satisfactory Occupational Health or DBS check. Where a student has been refused entry based on an Occupational Health or DBS check the College will supply feedback as to the reasons for this decision. All information provided to the College on an

Occupational Health or DBS check remains confidential between the programme leader and the applicant.

Following enrolment, if a further disclosure or other information becomes available that was not disclosed and considered during the admissions process the student's enrolment may be re-assessed and cancelled as a result of the new information.

### **Fitness to study**

The College has a Fitness to Study policy, which is intended to protect individual students and the College community.

If it becomes clear to the College that an applicant may be unfit to study, as defined by the policy, then a discussion with the applicant will take place.

Should it become clear that the issue is not resolvable by discussion the procedures set out in this policy will be followed.

## **Assessing Applications**

The College receives many more applications than it has places for, and therefore the admissions process is competitive. Where the student will be registered with a Partner institution, the admissions procedure for the partner takes the president as an example of students registering for the Partner degree programmes.

All applications are assessed against the same entry criteria on an individual basis. Where places are limited, we offer places to those applications that the admissions staff and Programme Leader consider to best evidence their potential to benefit from their chosen programme. Methods of assessing applications vary between programmes but may include:

- Prior academic achievement.
- References.
- Personal or supporting statements.
- Interviews.
- Aptitude tests/initial assessments (where required).
- Previous relevant employment and experience.
- Previous non-academic achievement.

All students will be tested for English language competency as follows:

- Applicants who have submitted satisfactory qualifications/ experience are invited for an interview and initial assessment to establish competence in the core areas (English, Numeracy and ICT).
- Applicants who have obtained qualifications in the UK in the last five years may be exempt from further English Language tests.



- All applicants may write a statement of a prescribed length in English, on-site in place of an English Language competency test.
- All English Language tests and statements will be assessed and/or verified by a qualified assessor and/or IV
- The interview will serve as a further test of English Language Competency

Interviews are conducted face to face, to enhance the applicant's experience in the college and support him/her where needed. Selection interviews are conducted by Admissions Team, who consult the relevant Programme Leader where necessary.

We understand that, on occasion, the standard procedure for assessing an applicant's suitability for a programme may not provide the admissions staff with an accurate understanding of an applicant's suitability and, in such cases, we may require applicants to submit additional evidence in support of their application.

Applicants will be contacted directly by the admissions staff with clear guidance on what is required.

The College reserves the right not to admit:

- Applicants/students who have previously been excluded from this or any other educational institution.
- Individuals who previously attended College but failed to make a sufficient effort towards completing their studies.
- Students where there is evidence that they could be a threat or danger to others.
- Students whose behaviour has been considered to be "vexatious" towards EDA

EDA will accept students from a range of different qualification backgrounds and will give fair consideration to any applicant presenting a relevant academic qualification.

## **Widening Access Commitment**

### **Mature Applicants, Prior Learning and Students returning to education**

EDA welcomes applications from mature students. Admissions staff will ensure that these applicants are not disadvantaged in the selection process. The applications will be considered against the advertised programme-specific selection criteria. EDA is aware that for mature applicants the selection process may not always evidence their full suitability for the chosen programme. Where appropriate, admission staff supported by the Programme team will seek and consider alternative evidence to ensure that applicants are given equal consideration.

Where this additional evidence is deemed to meet entry criteria fully, an applicant may not be required to meet the standard academic entry criteria.

Applicants who do not have formal qualifications may be able to be considered based on prior experiences and/or qualifications. Students seeking entry through this route will be required to evidence their previous experience through references.

## **Students with Additional Support Needs**

EDA welcomes applications from prospective students with disabilities or Additional Support Needs. All applications from students are considered against the set selection criteria for each programme, with consideration being given during this process to any impact this may have on attainment.

Upon receipt of an application where a disability, health condition or learning difficulty has been declared, the admissions staff will request additional information from the applicant to ensure that full consideration of the applicant's needs has been considered during the selection process. Where it is apparent that an applicant will require reasonable adjustments to enable them to undertake the programme, and are considered academically suitable for the programme, the admissions staff will discuss the applicant's needs during the interview process so that support measures can be put in place for the start of the programme.

Where the needs of the applicant are complex, EDA may issue an offer based on academic and other eligibility criteria, which remain subject to investigation as to whether the college can make such adjustments. If EDA is unable to provide the support required to the applicant, the college will discuss this with the applicant directly to advise and, where possible, support the applicant in making further decisions relating to this.

Students with Additional Support Needs are welcome to contact EDA in advance of an application to discuss their requirements.

## **Applicants who re-apply and the re-admittance of excluded students**

Applicants can re-apply for their chosen programmes following a rejection decision, providing that they can demonstrate a material change from the previous application.

Applications will be considered against the advertised selection criteria for the specific programme that an application has been made for. EDA may draw upon information provided within any previous application or registration with the college when assessing suitability for a programme.

Any student previously excluded from EDA can normally re-apply the following year. Potential applicants are encouraged to contact EDA before applying to discuss the merits of re-applying.

## **Applicants with criminal convictions**

All aspects of the admissions process are included within EDA's procedures for safeguarding students. The enrolment form will require applicants to declare if they have any unspent criminal convictions. Where a positive declaration is made, the applicant is referred to a safeguarding officer to complete a risk assessment before being permitted to enrol.

EDA retains the right to reject any applications where the nature of their conviction could impact other students. Details of the declaration and staff decision will be completed on a standard interview form and retained, this process will remain confidential.

EDA reserves the right to conduct a risk assessment on any student at any time. EDA reserves the right to withdraw a student if it is found that an applicant has provided incorrect information during the application and enrolment process.

The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify and assess any applicant whose known behaviour or record indicates that they may be a risk to themselves, other students, staff, visitors or the college environment. When conducting the risk assessment, EDA will consider each applicant's circumstances fairly and objectively.

All information collected will be treated as strictly confidential and following the outcome of the risk assessment will be available to a limited number of staff on a 'need to know basis. The risk assessment will then be undertaken by the Director of Studies unless designated to another senior manager.

Applicants who have been refused a place at EDA as a result of a risk assessment may appeal against the decision following the Appeal against admission decision procedure.

Programmes of study which require students to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults will require students to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before commencing their programme of study. Applicants are usually expected to pay

for this check. Where an enhanced DBS check reveals any prior criminal behaviour, which gives rise to concern, EDA reserves the right to refuse admission.

## **Fraudulent and Misleading information**

It is expected that all applicants will provide full, honest, reliable and accurate information in their applications and supporting evidence when seeking admission to one of the college's programmes.

Where there is reason to suspect that this may not be the case EDA reserves the right to investigate the matter fully. If, as a result of such investigations, EDA finds that the applicant has been fraudulent or has provided misleading information to the college, EDA reserves the right to reject the application without further consideration, or where an offer of a place has been granted, withdraw the offer. Where a withdrawal or rejection decision has been made in such circumstances, EDA reserves the right to notify any relevant professional bodies and/or third parties.

Similarly, any student found to be admitted based on fraudulent information may have their enrolment cancelled.

## **Applicant Data**

All data submitted to EDA during the Admissions Process is used to assess the suitability of an applicant for study at the college. Data may also be used by EDA for

statistical and reporting purposes. The application data forms part of a student's record when they are admitted to EDA and, where relevant, partner organisations.

EDA complies with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), as set out in the Data Protection Act 2018, in its use of applicant data. Further information about Data Protection at the College can be found on our website, under our Data Protection Policy.

## Feedback, appeals and complaints

Applicants will receive the decisions on their applications within two weeks of application. Where unsuccessful, applicants are given reasons for not being selected and signposted to the alternative options available for them. The applicants are also informed about their right to complain or appeal. The admissions Team involved in the selection process maintain a log of any appeals or complaints received and their outcome.

For unsuccessful applicants, EDA feels it is important for students to have the opportunity to receive feedback on the reasons for the decision. Feedback can be requested in writing by contacting the Admissions Officer via letter or email. The Admissions Officer will aim to respond to any requests for feedback within 10 working days of receipt of the request.

Following feedback, if an applicant feels that they have any grounds for a formal review of the admissions decision, they can formally appeal in writing by completing the Appeal against recruitment, selection and admission decision form and returning it by email to [appeals@edacollege.co.uk](mailto:appeals@edacollege.co.uk) or post to Appeals, EDA College, Balfour Business Centre 390-392 High Road, Ilford IG1 1BF.

We endeavour to make a formal response to an appeal within 15 working days of receipt of the full appeal form. This decision is final.

If a student or applicant is not satisfied with any aspect of the Admissions Service, they can contact the Admissions Manager. They will receive an acknowledgement of their concern within five working days and a response within ten working days.

If they are not satisfied with the response, they can lodge a formal complaint. To complain against an admission process, the prospective student must complete the details provided in the Complaint against recruitment, selection and admission process form (available from the EDA website). Once completed this can either be emailed to [complaints@edacollege.co.uk](mailto:complaints@edacollege.co.uk)

We endeavour to make a formal response to any formal complaint within 15 working days of receipt of the full complaint form.

## Programme Closures

EDA reviews the demands for its programmes regularly. This process involves the consideration of a wide range of factors including fit to EDA's strategic priorities; current and future student demand; resourcing and investment requirements; and quality and effectiveness of delivery.

## **Programme Closures – Before the start date**

There are occasions when it is necessary to either reduce or close provision. When any such decision is made, EDA must manage how students who may have been interested in enrolling on the affected programmes are supported.

Students affected by a closure are informed as soon as possible after such a decision is made. The Head of the Department will follow this up in writing and an advice and guidance session will be offered to assist in identifying alternative provisions available.

## **Programme Closures – During the programme**

EDA does everything possible to prevent programmes from closing that are in progress, however, there are occasions when it is necessary to close provision which is already running. When any such decision is made, EDA must manage how students who may be affected are supported.

Students affected by a closure are informed as soon as possible after such a decision is made. The Head of Department will follow this up in writing and will meet with each of the student groups to discuss continuation options this may include the transfer of students to alternative provision or organisation.

## **Monitoring and Review**

To monitor and improve the advice and recruitment process, EDA will:

- Conduct regular surveys to gain feedback from enquirers, applicants and students
- Monitor and action plan any complaints received through the EDA complaints process, if appropriate.
- Monitor changing patterns in the application market, availability of and demand for different modes of study and qualifications offered for applicants.
- As part of Equality and Diversity monitoring, compare the recruitment levels and achievement rates of applicants/students from minority and disadvantaged groups with those of the majority.
- Summarise and review data regarding applications, offers made and enrolments on a programme-by-programme basis to inform the future recruitment strategy and curriculum development.

## **Liability**

EDA takes reasonable care to ensure that you as a student are safe and secure whilst on Campus and/or using the college's services. EDA cannot accept responsibility and expressly excludes liability, for loss or damage to your personal property, which includes computers and software. You are strongly advised to insure your property against theft and other risks.

EDA will not be liable if we fail to carry out our responsibilities as stated in this policy or other college policies or procedures if events are outside of our control. This includes war, terrorist attacks, civil commotion, riots, fire, explosions, natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods and adverse weather, failure of public or private telecommunications networks or power outages.

In the event of any of the above happens, EDA will take reasonable steps to contact the students and will re-institute our contractual obligations as soon as reasonably possible after the event.

## **Equality Commitment**

We are committed to ensuring that all of our college community is treated with fairness and respect, having the opportunity to learn and work in an environment that is free from discrimination. EDA is dedicated to giving a fair chance to all our applicants so additional support and signposting are in place for DSA students to ensure we can support their needs and make sure they have a great experience while studying with us.