



# **Admissions and Tier 4 Policy**

July 2019



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# Admissions Procedure

## 1.0 Enquiry

- 1.1 Telephone or e-mail enquiries are received by the Registrar or Admissions Administrators.
- 1.2 The Registrar or Admissions Administrators send full information about the College including application procedure, fees, online prospectus and registration form. The email will address any specific queries if applicable and encourage further questions.
- 1.3 A hard copy of the prospectus and registration form is posted if requested.
- 1.4 All enquiry information is entered onto the RS Admissions database.
- 1.5 Prospective applicants are encouraged to send their academic information, including IELTS level if taken, for consideration prior to making the application.
- 1.6 The decision as to the suitability to make an application is usually left to the applicant. Students are made aware of the high academic profile of the College and are encouraged to self-assess their level of knowledge before submitting an application.
- 1.7 Any student expressing an interest in Cardiff Sixth Form College can attend an Observation Day. These days may enable prospective students to sit in on lessons and speak to both staff and current students about the College and its courses.

## 2.0 Registration

- 2.1 Candidates return their completed registration form along with the requested academic information, copy of the applicant's passport, a copy of their birth certificate with a certified English translation (where applicable) and photocopy of registration payment. The admissions database is updated with registration details and parental information.
- 2.2 The accounts department check payment of registration fees has reached the College's bank account and informs the admissions department. Fee information is entered into the admissions database.
- 2.3 Email confirming payment sent to the family.
- 2.4 A prospective student file is created with front cover checklist.

## 3.0 Interview and Entrance Tests

- 3.1 The College offers two points of entry: GCSE (15-16 years) and A Level (16-17 years).
- 3.2 Admissions staff liaise with the family and their agent/the British Council/student's school to arrange a suitable time to take entrance tests. Invigilation guidelines are supplied and entrance exams sent to the named invigilator.
- 3.3 All students are asked to complete relevant entrance and IELTS exams, along with a GL assessment to gather initial base line academic data, under exam conditions.

- 3.4 GCSE entrants take entrance exams in English and Maths and an IELTS test for which they need to score at least 5.5. Offer of a place is unconditional.
- 3.5 International A Level students sit entrance exams in the four subjects they wish to study for A Level. Applicants also need to score 6.5 in academic UKVI IELTS for September entry and at least 6.0 and good grades in their entrance tests for August entry. Offer of a place is unconditional. Scholarship, rather than entrance papers for each subject are undertaken if the student is applying for scholarship. Those applying for a scholarship must declare this at registration stage prior to taking examinations. Scholarship examinations cannot be sat after entrance examinations have been taken.
- 3.6 International students who are able to provide their existing GCSE/IGCSE results at the point of application are encouraged to do so. Students will be generally required to have A\* grades in the subjects they will be taking at A-Level and the whole combination of results will be taken into consideration. Students may be required to sit additional tests if deemed necessary. A standard unconditional offer would be a minimum of six A\* grades.
- 3.7 UK students take one entrance paper in a subject of their choice and are given a conditional offer subject to their GCSE results. The standard offer for GCSE exams would be six A\* grades which must include the subjects to be taken at A level and a minimum standard of 9A\* grades for scholarship applicants. Acceptable subjects for offer may vary according to career choice of the candidate and are determined at the discretion of the college. UK students must also complete a GL assessment.
- 3.8 Students are encouraged to revise before taking the entrance tests and practice papers are forwarded if requested. Only one attempt at the entrance tests is allowed. Papers marked as 'sent' on the admissions database.
- 3.9 All applicants are interviewed unless the applicant decides to withdraw before the interview takes place. Applicants resident in the UK are required to attend the College for interview. International students are offered the option of being interviewed by Cardiff Sixth Form College staff at an overseas education fair or to be interviewed via Skype. Interview details are logged onto the admissions database and a hard copy put into the file. Candidates must present their original passport to be checked at the point of interview.
- 3.10 Interview and entrance tests may be taken in any order.
- 3.11 Papers are received back from agents/British Council/school and 'papers received' marked onto the admissions database.
- 3.12 Papers are marked by teaching staff and a % mark and comment provided. Marks, along with results of the GL assessment, interview and school reports are considered for offer or rejection by senior admissions directors and/or the Principal. Marked entrance papers are filed in the student's file. Exact results of the examinations are not made available to candidates/agents/parents.
- 3.13 All interview information, GL assessment data and exam marks are entered into the admissions database.

#### **4.0 Offer of a Place**

- 4.1 The Registrar sends an offer letter which outlines the conditions of the offer which always includes completion of the acceptance form and payment of the deposit within a set timeframe

and the College's terms and conditions. The offer is valid for one week from the date of the offer letter and extensions are only granted in special circumstances. The offer date is entered into the admissions database.

- 4.2 Conditional offers can be made, subject to an international student gaining the appropriate IELTS qualification, as often timelines for this (invigilated by the British Council) may be longer. Once all the conditions of the offer have been fulfilled, the Registrar sends an-unconditional offer-to the student.
- 4.3 Offers made to ALL international students would include reference to demonstrated levels of proficiency in English Language, usually with a minimum IELTS or equivalent level of 6.5 for September entry, 6.0 for August entry and 5.5 for GCSE. The received copy of their IELTS Test Report Form is verified on the online IELTS Test Report Form Verification Service. Students are required to bring original copies to their enrolment session.

## **5.0 Acceptance**

- 5.1 A candidate is accepted and their place confirmed when both the acceptance form and deposit are received.
- 5.2 When an applicant notifies the Registrar of a transfer of funds for a deposit, this is verified by the Finance Manager.
- 5.3 Letter is sent by admissions to confirm payment of the deposit, explaining The Taylor Partnership will be in touch regarding the preliminary CAS and visa application and that new joiners' documentation will be sent normally in April or within a week if after this date.
- 5.4 Any documentation received in the process of the applicant fulfilling their conditions is added to their prospective student file and entered into the database.
- 5.5 A file for the student is created on Volume and relevant documents uploaded.

## **6.0 New joiners' documentation**

- 6.1 New joiners' documentation will be sent by the Registrar to the Student / Parents / Agent and online forms uploaded onto the school website to include:
  - Initial letter for parent event including time and date
  - Pre Arrival Guide
  - Medical Questionnaire
  - Insurance Form
  - Guardianship information
  - Photographic permission form
  - Travel and contact form for students arriving by plane
  - Uniform Guide
  - Textbook List

- 6.2 Parents are informed that CAS will not be requested until **all** forms listed above have been returned to the Registrar.

## **7.0 Visa Application**

- 7.0 For all non EU applications, a CAS request form is sent to the Taylor Partnership by the Registrar.
- 7.1 A CAS is issued where relevant via the Taylor Partnership, in line with our Tier 4 policy (see overleaf).

## **8.0 Post- Acceptance**

- 8.1 The Academic Data Manager transfers the data from RS Admissions to iSAMS. All accepted students' physical files are passed over to the Office Manager to transfer and are scanned and electronic copies placed into student specific volume files.
- 8.2 The file is now available to other members of admin staff:
- Student Services Manager – to allocate accommodation; send pre-arrival documentation/forms
  - Finance Manager – to issue an invoice;
  - Academic Data Manager – to create a timetable

## **9.0 Pre-Arrival**

- 9.1 A confirmation of the issue of a visa and BRP is received by the Registrar from The Taylor Partnership.
- 9.2 The Students Services Manager finalises arrival and accommodation arrangements.
- 9.3 The Academic Data Manager finalises the student's timetable and notifies tutors.
- 9.4 The student's timetable may be emailed to the student in advance of their start date, but in most cases, timetables are given to students on the first day of their course.
- 9.5 The Finance Manager confirms payment of first term's fees to the Registrar, the Principal, the Head of Pastoral, the Office Manager and the Student Services Manager.
- 9.6 The Administration Team send out Enrolment information and an Invitation Letter for the initial Parent Event.

## **10.0 Induction, Registration and Enrolment**

- 10.1 During this process, the student will be made to feel welcome and provided with all the relevant information and support to enable them to settle in quickly to Cardiff Sixth Form College. The following events will take place during this stage:

1. Induction event with parents and students to include presentations, meeting teachers, house and admissions staff and Heads of Houses
2. Register with the College
3. Receive student handbook
4. Complete international Student Data Form
5. Immigration check/BRP/Visa/Vignette/Passport/Birth Certificate
6. Police Registration
7. Student ID Card issued and photograph taken
8. Speak with IELTS and Careers representatives
9. Collect Uniforms
10. Complete enrolment with College Secretary (who takes copies of all the documents stamps and files and organises student signing of photographic permission form)
11. Assistance to open a bank account
12. Be given a tour of the building
13. Be introduced to staff and at least one other student
14. Be briefed on Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Fire Evacuation rules
15. Be introduced to Head of Academic Studies and Outreach, the Head of Pastoral and given an up-to-date timetable
16. Presentations given by senior staff and guest speakers
17. Team building activities
18. Environmental orientation in the City of Cardiff

## Compliance with UKVI requirements

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is guided by and should be read in conjunction with Tier 4 sponsor's guidance for educators (revised from time to time to implement changes to the UK Immigration Rules) which can be found on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website.
- 1.2 In order to recruit students who are non-EU/EEA (or other overseas students) to study full-time academic programmes in the UK, CSFC must hold a valid Tier 4 Licence with Tier 4 sponsor status which is issued and approved by UKVI under the direction of the Home Office and UK Government.
- 1.3 The Dukes Education Tier 4 Sponsor status covers all Colleges in the Dukes Education Group and is reviewed and approved annually by UKVI who carry out a Tier 4 Compliance Assessment every 12 months. In addition, CSFC must provide evidence of compliance with its Tier 4 sponsor duties, if requested, by way of UKVI visit or audit. Failure to do so can result in the immediate suspension or revocation of Tier 4 Licence.

### 2.0 Compliance



- 2.1 In recognition of the continuously changing demands on Tier 4 Sponsors to meet the UKVI compliance regime – not least the challenge of adhering to the permissible refusal rate for student visa applications (currently 10%, due to reduce to 5%), the College has contracted with The Taylor Partnership (TTP) to act on its behalf and assist in compliance.
- 2.2 TTP is a law firm and recognised specialist in Tier 4.
- 2.3 The College's admissions team must ensure that when making an offer of study, the applicant meets the following UKVI requirements:
- 2.4 Academic suitability (varies depending on the chosen course of study)
- 2.5 Proof of identity and parenthood
- 2.6 English language proficiency (if the student applying from overseas and has not previously studied and completed a course of study in the UK).

### **3.0 TTP Responsibilities**

- 3.1 Issue all CAS as a level 1 user
- 3.2 Maintain the College's licence
- 3.3 Engage with the UKVI on the College's behalf as and when necessary
- 3.4 Report any changes or student absences on the SMS
- 3.5 Liaise with consultants, students and parents to ensure that only visa applications that meet the immigration rules are submitted
- 3.6 Maintain all the school's recording data in a format that meets the compliance requirements of the UKVI
- 3.7 Attend any announced inspection of the College by UKVI
- 3.8 Operates a policy of attendance by Skype in the case of unannounced visits (see section 6)
- 3.9 Ensure that the College is Tier 4 compliant at all times
- 3.10 Visit the College at least twice every academic year

### **4.0 Process for issuance of CAS**

- 4.1 Upon a student's acceptance of the College's offer of place, the College will, within a reasonable time (normally April onwards), send the CAS Request Form to the TTP Senior Account Manager
- 4.2 TTP will immediately contact the consultant / parent to introduce themselves
- 4.3 So as to protect the College's refusal rate, TTPs starting point is to complete all student visa applications
- 4.4 Some consultants are known to be very competent and can be trusted to ensure that only compliant applications are submitted. In these cases, CAS can be issued to the trusted agent as long as the application form and documents are checked by TTP. Decision for this is made by the College.
- 4.5 Where a consultant is unknown – or a parent is acting directly – or is operating in a high risk area and insists on submitting the application themselves, TTP will diplomatically reinforce its role.

- 4.6 All correspondence will be copied to the College
- 4.7 If a student has been found to have provided the College with false documentation at Registration they may be asked to leave the College and the UKVI notified
- 4.8 Where consultants / parents are uncooperative, TTP will refer the matter to the College for a final decision.

## **5.0 Data recording and reporting duties**

- 5.1 Students are normally advised to arrive 1-2 days prior to the start date of their course by the College. Thus, if their course starts on Monday, their expected arrival date will be Saturday or Sunday. Students arriving before this time must be catered for and accommodated by parents/guardians.
- 5.2 Upon arrival, the College's enrolment team will check the following originals
- 5.3 Student passport
- 5.4 Student visa / Biometric Card
- 5.5 Original copies of IELTS and other academic certificates
- 5.6 TTP will carry out a Tier 4 enrolment at the beginning of every term and half term to ensure that all Tier 4 students have arrived with the Cardiff office manager
- 5.7 Copies of passports and visas will be kept on Volume and on TTP's Volume database
- 5.8 Any Tier 4 student whose circumstances have changed will be referred to TTP as soon as possible so that all necessary reports can be made on the SMS
- 5.9 TTP will maintain a compliant master sheet of data at all times

## **6.0 Attendance and studying**

- 6.1 Tier 4 students must be "genuine" students and must demonstrate progression
- 6.2 Only recognised and accredited courses – GCSEs and A levels - are offered by the College to Tier 4 students
- 6.3 Attendance is monitored on a daily basis and non-attendance is challenged on the day of absence
- 6.4 As all of the College's international students are also boarders at CSFC, any absences are identified and tackled at a very early stage through disciplinary discussions with Welfare and Academic teams and, where necessary, with parents/guardians
- 6.5 The College is aware that unauthorised absence must be reported to the UKVI and ten missed consecutive interactions must lead to the withdrawal of sponsorship. Attendance below 90% is deemed unacceptable
- 6.6 Students are only permitted to work within the parameters stated on their visa / BRP (some students from age of 16 are permitted to work – detailed on their visa – but not all)

## **7.0 Tier 4 Student Responsibilities**

- 7.1 Ensure timely arrival to the College prior to the start date of the course

- 7.2 Ensure collection of their BRP. BRPs are normally sent to TTP directly for checking. Those without errors sent to the Registrar. If there are errors, they are sent back to the BRP office for them to correct and re-distribute to TTP. These are then sent to the College and distributed by the admission team during enrolment. If a BRP is sent to the local post office the College's designated member of staff will collect the BRP and issue to the student (only the designated member of staff can collect BRP's from the post office)
- 7.3 Bring all relevant originals of IELTS certificates, academic reports/certificates
- 7.4 Maintain an acceptable level of attendance (at least 90% of the scheduled hours in each month) – except where the hours are rearranged or cancelled due to a college trip/field visit authorised by the Principal and/or Academic team
- 7.5 Notify the College admin team of any changes to their contact details
- 7.6 Comply with restrictions specified on their BRP
- 7.7 Register with the police (if required by their BRP) – the designated member of staff will accompany the student to the local police station within one week of the student's arrival (or when required to do so by police)
- 7.8 Not engage in any criminal or indecent/offensive activity which may harm the reputation of the College.

## **8.0 English Language Proficiency**

- 8.1 Prior to making a Tier 4 visa application, Tier 4 students must also show competency in English language
- 8.2 Offers made to ALL international students would include reference to demonstrated levels of proficiency in English Language, usually with a minimum IELTS or equivalent level of 6.5 for A Level and 5.5 for GCSE as well as an internally set English Language test
- 8.3 Students will be expected to take additional tutorials in English if their minimum level of English is insufficient to cope with demands of their chosen programme

## **9.0 Unannounced visits by the UKVI**

- 9.1 The UKVI can undertake an inspection at any time. Sometimes the UKVI will call in advance and give notice of their inspection (an "announced" visit). However, increasingly, the UKVI is relying on "unannounced" visits (i.e. without notice)
- 9.2 Inspectors can visit the school even during the school holidays when key staff are away. In the case of an unannounced visit:
  - Do not panic!
  - The inspector(s) will present themselves at reception. Please check their ID and ask for their names
  - Reception staff should inform the Authorising Officer, Paul Ludlow (07584 012130) and the College Principal, Gareth Collier (07825678898 or 02920493121) immediately.

- The Authorising Officer will contact all other Principals in the Dukes Education Group.
- A call should be made to Steve Paxton (SP) immediately (07506484453 or 0113 3401515).
- If he is not contactable by mobile, please call the office.
- Inspectors should be offered refreshments and told that the key staff are being contacted and will be with them shortly.
- If SP is in the vicinity he will immediately attend.
- SP will ask to speak to the inspector and explain that he is on his way.
- If SP is not in the vicinity, SP will speak with the inspector and either persuade the inspector to return another day or, alternatively, to allow SP to carry out the inspection via Skype.
- If the inspector insists on continuing with the inspection, this will have to take place in a room which has access to Skype. SP's Skype address is thetaylorpartnership
- Whilst SP should be able to answer all questions posed by the inspector, it would be helpful to have a member of staff physically present in the room in case additional documentation is required.
- If SP is not present in person, TTP will e mail all required spreadsheets to the Key Contact or other nominated staff member and / or to the inspector.
- In the extremely unlikely event that SP cannot be contacted (on a flight, for example), Michelle Holmes at TTP will fulfil SP's role.
- SP will follow up any inspection with representations in writing to the UKVI to ensure that any outstanding issues are clarified.

## Fees and refunds

- 1.0 Prospective international, EU and EEA students receive an offer letter that contains information relating to the type of course and the start and completion dates
- 2.0 At the point of registration there is a non-refundable charge of £250 (international) or £180 (EU/local)
- 3.0 Students are asked for a deposit of £9,500 (International), £3,000 (EU) and £500 (UK) at time of acceptance. It is explained that the entire deposit is held until completion of the course when it is returned in full minus any outstanding charges
- 4.0 The incidental charges are explained to the students which are currently £500
- 5.0 UK students are given a conditional offer letter based on their predicted GCSE results and entrance test.
- 6.0 International students, EU and EEA students are sent a deposit and acceptance confirmation letter upon receipt of their deposit
- 7.0 Tuition fees are invoiced bi-annually and must be paid by 30 June and 30 November of each year for the following term or immediately following acceptance if after this date. Tuition does not commence until fees are received.
- 8.0 Each student is a separate customer within the College's accounting system. This records all invoices issued and funds received, and therefore the balance owed or paid in advance for each student

- 9.0 If the student is unsuccessful in obtaining a Tier 4 education visa, or in meeting the conditions contained in their offer letter, a full refund of the deposit will be given upon evidence of the same
- 10.0 At the end of the course, a full financial reconciliation is undertaken. The College aims to reconcile all accounts and return any deposit and fees outstanding by 31<sup>st</sup> December following successful completion of an academic course
- 11.0 Annual fees for the 2019/20 GCSE course are £41,860 and the A level course is currently £42,700 - £46,450