



Admissions Policy and Procedures

Mission Statement

Holy Cross, founded by the Daughters of the Cross, is a Catholic Sixth Form College and University Centre, which exists to provide a high quality of education within a community based on Gospel values.

We provide the opportunity for each person to develop spiritually, morally and intellectually and emotionally and we welcome students and staff of all faiths.

Contents

Title	Page
Admissions Policy	4
Pre-Admission Procedures	
1. High School Talks	5
2. Open Evenings.....	5
3. Application	6
4. Interview	6
5. Offers.....	7
6. New Students' Day	8
7. Enrolment.....	8
8. Enrolment into Upper Sixth.....	8
Admission to Third Year Sixth.....	9
Appendices.....	10

Admissions Policy

Holy Cross College aims in its Admission Procedures to:

1. comply with and actively support the Mission Statement of the College;
2. contribute to the Strategic Aims of the College.
3. ensure that prospective students are enrolled on a course which is best for them as individuals and creates the foundations for their success;
4. work to ensure that prospective students receive full and appropriate advice which is impartial and honest;
5. work to ensure that the number of students enrolled support the college's financial targets;
6. ensure that students are fully aware of the distinctive nature of Holy Cross when they apply;
7. give to each prospective student an individual interview which will focus on the course chosen;
8. ensure that students are aware of the way places are offered;
9. obtain relevant information about our prospective new students before they arrive;
10. ensure that staff from the College only talk about Holy Cross College during the process, and not other institutions;

Holy Cross gives first preference in its admissions to 'Looked After Children' and because of its distinctive religious character, (in its non-vocational admissions) to Catholic students, but it welcomes student applications from all faiths. Places on vocational courses would be allocated without regard to religious affiliation. Once students are members of the College all are treated on an equal basis. Catholic students from Bury and the surrounding area are usually guaranteed places, providing that their application form is received by the closing date, the College has a suitable course for them, and their school is supportive.

There is an upper limit on places available on courses and in the College, and if our analysis of applications shows that either the College or certain curriculum areas may be oversubscribed, we operate a reserve list and a waiting list. In offering places we take into account:

- the interview, which concentrates on the course you have chosen and whether Holy Cross is suitable for you;
- information which High Schools provide us with;
- the quality of the application;
- the date of receipt of the application, if after the closing date.

If application numbers are unmanageably high, preference may need to be given to Catholic students (on non-vocational courses) and non-Catholic students may be asked for higher grades. However, we must emphasise that, to date, this has never been necessary. (Please see the current Prospectus or website for individual subject entry requirements.) To start 3 A Levels, students must have at least 6 GCSE passes or equivalent at 9 - 4 of which 3 must be at Grade 5 or above. Please note: these grades must be from at least four distinct GCSE subjects. (To start BTEC or a mixed programme, specific requirements are set out in the prospectus.) The following priorities apply in the allocation of conditional offers:

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Priority 1: | Looked after children/Catholic students |
| Priority 2: | Other students in our partner schools, which are all the secondary schools, plus Holy Family, Heywood, All Saints, Rawtenstall and Our Lady's, Blackley. |
| Priority 3: | Students in all other schools |

Places are conditional upon students meeting the entry requirements set out in the offer letter.

Up to 20% of all offers can also be made at the discretion of the Principal. See Appendix 7 for the criteria for such offers.

Normally students aged 16 - 18 are not charged fees for their studies at Holy Cross. However, there may be exceptions, and if you have not been resident in the UK or European Economic Community (EEC) for three years prior to enrolling at Holy Cross, it may be that you will be charged up to the full cost of your chosen course. If you have any other reason to think that this may be an issue, the following information may be of value:

'The provision of education at Holy Cross College is funded through the Education And Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). In general, overseas learners are not eligible for Government Funding and as such the college may charge the students, who are legally resident in the UK, the full cost fees relevant to the academic year. (Currently, EU students are not charged fees.)

Details of the eligibility for funding criteria can be found in Section 3 of the funding guidance document found by using this link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/607246/16_to_19_funding_guidance_2017_to_2018_v_1.0__003_.pdf

The college reserves the right to require proof of eligibility for funding from a student in accordance with Government funding guidance. Students can contact the Admissions Team at the College for further advice.

Pre-Admission Procedures

All staff involved in any promotional activity are informed that the College never refers to other colleges during such activities.

1. High School Talks

All partner schools (and many others) are offered talks for their Year 11 pupils in the first term of the year. The talks vary according to the school and the amount of time allowed, but the emphasis is on the college generally and the positive promotion of our provision rather than detailed subject information. In some schools there is time for input by subject teachers. We always try to allow time for questions, and we try to take existing students from Holy Cross with us if time allows.

We also attend parents' evenings, presentation evenings and careers evenings which we are invited to.

Evaluation

- This is usually done formally with contacts in our main partner schools at an annual meeting and informally throughout the academic year.

2. Open Evenings

Due to numbers attending, we hold at least two open events in the first term. Advertising is through letter, adverts, website etc. There is the opportunity for the visitors to attend short talks about Holy Cross, in which we aim to give an honest and positive impression of the college.

Evaluation

- The evening will be evaluated by Admissions staff and through the College Leadership Team (CLT). College staff are also invited to provide feedback. Visitors are invited to complete a questionnaire after or following their visit.

3. Application

All students apply using our on-line system, accessible via the college website. Students are encouraged to give as much information as possible about themselves on the form, and are asked to select their proposed course. In addition they have the opportunity to inform the college of any need (disability, learning and/or health) they may have.

All applicants are invited to interview, and we ask all high schools for a reference on each student. We recognise the need to be sensitive when requesting references from some feeder schools with their own sixth form.

The closing date, which enables us to assess demand and therefore informs curriculum planning, is identified on the form and on the website. Forms received after this date go onto the waiting list, unless there are special circumstances which would justify an exception being made. Late applicants are asked to provide a covering letter outlining the reasons for the timing.

4. Interviews

Students are invited for an evening interview (these are spread over a number of weeks). All teaching staff and some support staff are involved in conducting the interviews. The students are encouraged to bring in their progress file, if relevant, and parents/carers are invited to accompany their children to the evening but not into the interview. The atmosphere is intended to be a balance between being open and welcoming and a more formal setting for the interview itself (an element used to determine offers made later in the process).

The focus of the interview is the course chosen and the student's reasons for choosing to attend Holy Cross. The students will be encouraged to narrow down their choice, where appropriate - the choice at the end of the interview is the one which, if we offer a place, we guarantee.

Students are all offered an opportunity to identify any need (disability, learning and/or health) at this stage of the process.

Holy Cross staff make notes on the interview and indicate whether they consider the student suitable for a place in college. Staff also provide an overall score for the interview. Members of the College Leadership Team and the Admissions/Marketing Manager meet to decide on offers of places. The reference, estimated grades (in relation to College entry requirements) and application form are taken into account. Demand for certain subjects may mean that we are unable to offer students places on certain courses.

We also make Reserve Offers, which means that we will contact students if a place becomes available (usually during enrolment in August/September).

Rarely, no offer will be made if it is felt that we have no suitable course to offer or if it was believed that the student is clearly not sympathetic to the college ethos. On occasion an offer maybe withdrawn if relevant information (e.g. the school reference) suggests this is appropriate.

Following offers, consultation with Learning Support and Student Services allows appropriate development of

provision for students as necessary before enrolment based on any previously identified need.

Places are offered soon after all interviews are completed, and a proportion of students are asked to complete a questionnaire. All students are informed of the College's entry requirements through their Admissions portal. Specific requirements for the subjects offered to each student are sent with the offer letter. This information replaces that in the prospectus and subject leaflets if amendments have been made. Entry requirements (see Appendix 5) are determined by the College Leadership Team in the year of application.

Evaluation

- Student evaluation form
- Staff comments
- College Leadership Team

5. Offers

Types of Offer:

Unconditional:

This means a guaranteed place can be offered immediately, as the student already has the qualifications required in the relevant subjects.

Conditional:

This means that there is a place at the College, providing the student meets the requirements set out in the offer letter. The subjects finalised at interview are the only ones on which we can guarantee a place, although in practice it is often possible to make changes at Enrolment.

Reserve:

This means that there will only be a place if we have withdrawals in the desired subjects or we are able to offer additional places prior to or during enrolment. These students are asked to contact us during enrolment (i.e. once GCSE results are known) to ascertain if there is any space available. It is a good idea to call once at the end of the previous term to indicate continuing interest.

We aim to send offers within three weeks of the interview. Responses to these are requested by specified dates and are acknowledged by the college via a postcard. Acceptances are to be made via the Admissions Portal.

Bespoke courses have been developed and provided to individual students to best support their identified specific needs, to enable them to maintain good attendance and remain on course through to its conclusion.

Allocation of offers from the Reserve and Waiting Lists:

If, following the completion of enrolment of students holding conditional offers, there is space in specific subjects and the college overall, places will be offered to students on the Reserve and Waiting Lists. Criteria for these offers are:

- students satisfy the college and subject entry requirements;
- the college's ability to offer a relevant and viable course based on available space and student need;
- students' interview performance and school reference, where applicable;
- Principal's discretion (see Appendix 7)

6. New Students' Day

This is held in June/July. Students are invited to spend part of a day in college and have the opportunity to attend a session of each of their top three chosen subjects. Students can change subjects after this day, but are told that we are not always able to guarantee such changes from the original (i.e., post-interview) choice. A date record of these requests is kept. In practice the vast majority of these requests are met. Pressure on numbers in subject areas impacts significantly on our ability to be flexible and accommodating with regard to these requests.

Evaluation

- Staff Comment
- Student evaluation

7. Enrolment

Begins on GCSE results day. Students receive an appointment at/following New Students' Day and, if they have met the entry requirements, attend at that time. Students not attaining their minimum 5 passes at grade 4 or above are encouraged to keep their appointment to access advice about alternative courses and/or providers.

Enrolment takes place in the main IT Suites and neighbouring rooms and is designed to give the student all the advice needed to enrol on the course which is correct for them. All staff are involved, and are told to ensure that students do not feel under pressure. The focus is very much aimed at ensuring enrolment on appropriate courses.

Evaluation

- College Leadership Team
- Admissions Team review
- Staff comment
- Student evaluation forms

8. Enrolment into Upper Sixth

Progress to Y13 is, since the return of the linear courses, the norm. However poor effort, progress or behaviour can call this into question. Continuation into the upper sixth is not automatic if a student has not been meeting College expectations.

Due to current developments/changes to the structure of A Levels, appropriate progression to the second year will be decided by relevant senior and pastoral staff working with individual subject staff and data.

Students are also aware that there are no guarantees of any places in 'new' subjects desired as an addition to or change of programme in Year 13, or on Lower Sixth courses. Priority goes to the new students in September. All students will continue with the full enrichment programme.

Admission to the Third Year Sixth

Apart from the core of students who have had an initial Progression Year with us, advanced courses are normally two years in duration and a third 'resit' year is strongly discouraged by the Government. Occasionally, for very

serious pastoral reasons, a course needs to be extended into a third year. Our aim with such students is to ensure that a return to College is appropriate and that they are enrolled on the right course for them. In many cases, Higher Education, employment or training may be more appropriate and we will try to assist with this. However, we recognise there may be exceptions. Students seeking this opportunity are asked to contact their Senior Tutor and their application will be discussed by all subject staff concerned, so that they have the chance to make recommendations. The Senior Tutors conduct the interviews, but recommendations are made and decisions taken by Senior Management. Relevant Heads of Subject are also closely involved in the decision making process. It must again be stressed that such cases are usually for serious extenuating circumstances. The Government no longer funds the re-sit of qualifications already taken at the College.

'External' students

Occasionally, students who have left Holy Cross ask if they can attend individual subject lessons to improve a grade. Since they would not be full time students this is normally not allowed. However, in exceptional circumstances the Principal may decide to permit this: in this case such permission could be withdrawn at any time, and students would be responsible for all costs associated with this arrangement.

This Admissions Policy should be read with reference to the following College documentation:

- Mission Statement
- Strategic Aims
- College Charter
- Pastoral Guidance Policy
- Careers Department Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Prospectus
- Entry Requirements
- Marketing Plan
- Curriculum Documents

Appendices

Appendix 1	Questionnaire to Colleagues in High Schools
Appendix 2	Interview Feedback Questionnaire
Appendix 3	New Students' Day Questionnaire
Appendix 4	Enrolment Questionnaire
Appendix 5	Entry Requirements
Appendix 6	Marketing & Admissions : Code of Practice
Appendix 7	Criteria for Principal's Discretionary Offers
Appendix 8	GDPR - www.holycross.ac.uk/documents/information/policies-and-documents/holy-cross-student-privacy-notice.pdf?5b07d41c