



## ADMISSIONS POLICY – ENTRY 2021

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<b>Approval body</b>	Governing Body		
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## **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 education within a community based on Gospel values. The College provides the opportunity for each person spiritually, morally and intellectually and welcomes students and staff of all faiths

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The College strives to deliver excellent information, advice and guidance (IAG) to young people across the borough so that they might make informed decisions about their future study and career aspirations. Holy Cross College is a Catholic College that serves the local community, we welcome applications from students of all backgrounds and support those with learning difficulties and disabilities to access the curriculum. The College operates an Equality and Diversity policy and aims to ensure that recruitment of students is undertaken in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

## **PURPOSE**

This policy outlines the admissions and enrolment process for applicants and their parents/carers.

## **ENTRY CRITERIA**

There is something for everyone at Holy Cross College. We recognise that whilst many students excel in their GCSEs, others do not always fully achieve their potential. We aim to ensure excellent education is available to all. We offer 2-year Level 3 study programmes which can be a dedicated A level programme, a wholly vocational programme or a mixed programme of A level and vocational courses. We also offer a 1 year level 2 programme which will enable students to progress to level 3 study the following year. The exact study programme will be discussed at interview and again at enrolment to ensure all students enrol to the right course. All study programmes include compulsory attendance at weekly General R.E. and pastoral tutorial sessions. College minimum entry criteria are:

- Level 3: At least 5 x Grade 4s at GCSE to include English or Mathematics. One suitable alternative to GCSE will be accepted.
- Level 2: At least 3 x Grade 3s and 1 x Grade 4 at GCSE. One suitable alternative to GCSE will be accepted.

In addition, most study programmes and subjects have individual entry criteria which need to be met. Full details are available on the College website: [www.holycross.ac.uk](http://www.holycross.ac.uk).

## **PRIORITY OF ADMISSION**

- Priority 1: Catholic students and looked after children progressing straight from high school.
- Priority 2: All applicants from our Partner High Schools (All Bury High Schools, Holy Family Heywood, All Saints Rawtenstall and Our Lady's, Blackley).
- Priority 3: Applicants in all other schools including those moving into the area who apply before the closing date.
- Priority 4: Applicants who have completed an additional year of level 2 study elsewhere, who apply by the closing date.
- Priority 5: Applicants who have completed a year of level 3 study elsewhere, who apply by the closing date.
- Priority 6: Late applications. Note it is likely these students will be placed on a waiting list.

## **THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

The College can only accept applications from 16 – 18 year old students resident in the UK. Students who will be 19+ before the start of their intended study programme are not eligible to apply. All applicants must provide evidence of eligibility to study in the UK and to receive funding from the ESFA, the College does not accept privately funded applications.

### **1. The Application Form**

- All students must apply using the electronic application form in the admissions portal, accessible via the College website.
- Students must choose 3, level 3 courses to study at College. Where a fourth is desired this can be added but is not required, only a very small number of students nationally are now studying 4 full A levels.
- The application form must be fully completed and include as much detail about the applicant as possible. The application form is used as part of the selection process for interview and offer of a place at the College.
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to disclose any disability, learning or health need so that we can ensure effective support is available at every stage of the application, enrolment and study. Any such disclosure will be treated in strict confidence and used to support the application and (possible) future enrolment.
- Timely applications must be received by the closing date. Applications received after the closing date will be treated as late applications.

### **2. Interviews**

- All students who apply by the deadline will be invited to interview. Under the current COVID-19 related circumstances, how these will be managed will be communicated to students in advance.
- Students should prepare for the interview in a similar manner as they would for a job interview. Smart dress is therefore encouraged. Please note that students and visitors to the college are not permitted to wear full face veils or coverings while on site unless this is required for medical reasons.
- Students should bring with them their most recent progress report from school.
- The purpose of the interview is to ensure the student has made an informed choice about their programme of study, is likely to achieve the entry criteria and that the programme of study supports any intended career aspiration.
- There will be opportunity for students to ask questions and discuss any concerns they may have. Students will also be encouraged to share any disability, learning or health need they have not yet informed the College about.
- There is opportunity to amend the subjects and or courses applied for at the application stage. Once finalised and following discussion, the subjects and courses agreed at the interview become the basis for the offer being made.
- Offers of a place at the College are not made at the interview, but informed in writing shortly after.

Note: Parents/carers are welcome to accompany the student to the evening but do not accompany them into the interview. Should a parent or carer have concerns or wish to ask questions they will of course be able to do so.

### **3. The Offer**

Offers are made in writing shortly after the interview has taken place. Offers will not be made without a completed application form and the student attending an interview.

- The offer letter will confirm the subjects and courses agreed at the interview, if these are incorrect then the applicant must contact the College immediately.
- The offer letter will confirm the entry criteria.
- The College reserves the right to withdraw any subject/course from the offer if unforeseen circumstances prevent its delivery. Whilst this situation is highly unlikely the College will inform all applicants as soon as possible if an adjustment to the offer is necessary.
- Applicants must accept the offer through the admissions portal.
- The College has the right to withdraw the offer made at any stage if, following receipt of relevant information (e.g. within a school reference) it is felt that continuation of the offer would no longer be appropriate.
- There are 3 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:** Applicants have a guaranteed offer to study at the College. They must, however, meet the requirements as set out in the offer letter to study the chosen subject / course. If after GCSE results an applicant does not meet individual subject / course requirements but still meets the minimum college entry requirements, they will still have an offer to study at the College and will need to amend the subject / course choice at enrolment.

**Reserve:** The applicant does not have an offer to study at the College. They have the potential to be a student at the College but for various reasons, typically an increased number of applications or staffing of the chosen subject / course we are not able to make an offer at the current time. They will be placed on a waiting list.

Applicants on the waiting list should contact the College as soon as their GCSE grades are known. It is possible that during the enrolment process spaces will become available and if results have been confirmed we may be able to make an offer and enrol as soon as the opportunity arises.

#### **4. New Students' Day**

- All applicants holding an offer to study at the College are invited to attend the New Student Day.
- We consider this to be the day that applicants become students of the College and as such attendance is expected.
- Where students have unavoidable and prior commitments they must inform the College by phone or email [admissions@holycross.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@holycross.ac.uk) of their reason for not attending and confirm that they still wish to hold an offer to study at the College.
- Students will attend a short session in each of the 3 subjects they have chosen to study.

#### **5. Enrolment**

- Students are allocated an appointment to enrol. Appointments are allocated by school.
- Students who do not meet the requirements of their offer should still attend their appointment to discuss and explore alternative subjects / courses.
- All students are treated equally during the entire process. The opportunity to change subject / course is not affected by the appointment time or day.
- Further information, advice and guidance is available to all students on the day. Those who need or request a change to their programme of study are given the information they need, support to decide and time to consider their next steps.

#### **6. Additional Information**

- Students who enrol to a one year Level 2 study programme will need to re-apply for a place on the two year level 3 programme. For an offer to be made, certain internal progression criteria must be met. This process is managed internally and all information is shared with the students early in the spring term.
- Students who enrol to two year level 3 programmes are expected to complete the two year programme. Students who leave mid programme are unlikely to have completed any qualifications. Progression to the second year is however subject to students showing dedication to their studies and a commitment to the ethos of the College. Exceptions are managed through the College intervention policy.
- The College does not offer the opportunity for students to repeat a year of study; students must complete their chosen study programme in the agreed time. The only exception to this would be for students who are taking an agreed break from study under 'The Fitness to Study' policy.
- Admissions to any course after the first October half term of that programme of study are unlikely and any exception is solely at the Principal's discretion.
- The College aims to treat all students as individuals, with dignity and respect: as such some applicants will present with unique and extenuating circumstances. For these students it is possible that an adjusted offer may be made. Any such adjustments are solely at the Principal's discretion.

#### **7. Data Gathering and Evaluation**

- The College collects information directly from the applicant and their school. The purpose and use of this information is detailed in the GDPR policy available on the College website.
- In order to constantly review and improve the service we offer, applicants may be contacted by a member of the College admissions team at any point in the process and asked to evaluate their experience.

#### **8. Appeals**

- If an applicant wishes to appeal with regard to any decision he /she is advised to make the case in writing to the Principal within two weeks of the decision.
- The Principal has the sole right to receive appeals and will make the final judgement in relation to appeals about admissions.