



Cambridge Muslim College Admissions Policy

Committee: Faculty Board
Next Review Date: April 2023

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the guidelines for applicants and staff for the College's admissions process.

2. Scope

This policy is for applicants seeking admissions onto programmes leading to an award from the College itself and/or the validating university. It is also for staff dealing with Admissions process.

3. Principles

- 3.1. The College is committed to understanding its responsibilities as a higher education provider under consumer protection law. In creating this policy, the College has referred to the UK Quality Code guidance and compliance advice 'UK higher education providers – advice on consumer protection law', published by the Competition and Markets Authority.
- 3.2. The College values the diversity of its student body and as such assesses applications with transparency and fairness, without discrimination.
- 3.3. The College is committed to making its admissions processes accessible to applicants with disabilities. This includes putting in place appropriate support if an applicant with a disability is selected for interview and offered a place on the programme.
- 3.4. If any applicant is dissatisfied about the handling of their application, they have the right to make either a complaint or appeal via the Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy.
- 3.5. The College ensures that all application documents are kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Only programme staff with a legitimate need to see these details will have access.

- 3.6. The College reserves the right to make reasonable and necessary variations to published programme details.
- 3.7. The Open University signs off all printed and electronic publicity produced to describe validated degree programmes.

4. Responsibility

- 4.1. The Admissions Officer to maintain and implement this policy.
- 4.2. Programme Managers are accountable for ensuring this policy is followed.

5. References

- [Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy](#)
- [Data Retention Policy](#)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- Student Records System Users' Manual
- Disability and Equal Opportunities Policy
- [UK Quality Code for Higher Education- Advice and Guidance- Admissions, Recruitment and widening access](#)
- [Competition and Markets Authority Guidance](#)
- [The Open University Regulations for Validated Awards-Single Awards](#)
- [CMC Access and Participation Plan](#)

6. Criteria for Entry

- 6.1. Entry criteria for academic programmes is issued and updated on our [website](#).
- 6.2. If there is any doubt about an applicant meeting the academic criteria, the College may request to see any prior written work that would aid in assessing suitability.
- 6.3. It is the applicant's responsibility to inform the College, by emailing the Admissions Officer, of any extenuating circumstances that may lead, or have led to, past academic performance that is not truly indicative of their potential. The College reserves the right, if deemed necessary, and with the applicant's permission, to request further information from a third party when an applicant requests extenuating circumstances for past qualifications.
- 6.4. Requested references are confidential and must be sent directly to the Admissions Office by email on
- 6.5. If any of the documentation is not in English, a translation may be required. Translations must be provided by either, an official at an embassy, consulate or a recognised translator. An embossed stamp or similar mark of authority must be on the

translation along with the translator's name, postal address, email address and telephone number. It is the applicant's responsibility to cover the costs of recognized translation.

7. Recognition of Prior learning

7.1 The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process that allows students to be exempt from some parts of the academic study programme by recognition of their learning from previous experiences or achievements. The College Admissions Panel is responsible for deciding whether to admit a student with recognition of prior learning.

7.2 There are two types of RPL that can be put towards a qualification:

- (i) Prior certificated learning
- (ii) Prior experiential learning

7.2.1 Prior certificated learning refers to the process of evaluating and assigning credits that have been acquired and formally assessed by another body that demonstrates knowledge and understanding in the area of study and achievement of specified learning outcomes.

7.2.2 Prior experiential learning refers to the process of evaluating and assigning credits that have been acquired through experience in various contexts, such as employment, self-directed learning, private study, etc.

7.3 Credit may be awarded through RPL for the first one-third of the programme or Level 4 FHEQ. Credit may not be awarded through RPL for any modules or stages at Level 5 or 6 FHEQ.

7.3.1 The College does not currently extend credits based on RPL to individual modules at Level 4 FHEQ. RPL may only be awarded for the entire stage. Thus, the minimum number of credits that may be put towards the programme is 120 credits.

7.4 Students who demonstrate sufficiently strong background in Islamic studies, relevant contemporary intellectual disciplines, and classical Arabic, which in the judgment of the Admissions Panel meets the intended learning outcomes of the programme may be exempted from Level 4 FHEQ (i.e., 120 credits) of the programme and directly proceed to Level 5 FHEQ.

7.4.1 If the students prior learning is uncertified, the College will assess the students learning through the submission of additional evidence of learning. This may include a portfolio of evidence, an assessment, or both.

7.5 Students who have successfully completed the College's Diploma in Contextual Islamic Studies and Leadership may be exempted from Level 4 FHEQ (i.e., 120 credits) of the programme and directly proceed to Level 5 FHEQ.

7.6 Prior learning will not normally be accepted if three or more years have elapsed since it occurred. However, if the student can provide evidence that their learning has continued in a professional or similar context, the College may test an applicant's knowledge through an assessment.

7.7 Performance in work for which an award of credit for RPL has been made is not taken into account in the calculation of the final award.

7.8 Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing and the outcomes will be explained generally. Unsuccessful applicants who wish to lodge an appeal are advised to refer to the Admissions Policy.

7.9 The BA Manager is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of this policy. The programme team will maintain records regarding the number of RPL applicants, the proportion of applicants that are successful, their progression rates, and student experience.

7.10 The RPL Policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

8. Procedure

8.1. Application Submissions

- 8.1.1. Applications must be submitted via the [online application form](#). If this is not possible, applicants must get in touch with the Admissions Office by email on admissions-ba@cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk
- 8.1.2. to request another option for submission. The admissions timeline can be found [here](#)
- 8.1.3. The Admissions Officer acknowledges the application within three working days of receipt, by email, and stores the applicants' basic details, in accordance with the procedures set out in the Student Records System Users' Manual.
- 8.1.4. The Admissions Officer creates electronic copies for any admissions materials received via post and stores any hard copies based on the Data Retention policy.
- 8.1.5. The Admissions Officer will create four subfolders for each applicant in the following way.
 - 8.1.4.1 Personal information, to include diversity & inclusion criteria,
 - 8.1.4.2 Academic information – All academic and professional history including academic references
 - 8.1.4.3 Financial Information identify applicants who have requested scholarships and liaise with the Finance team to determine if the applicant is eligible for scholarship. This information should be noted,

recorded and communicated at the final selection stage after interviews have been conducted

- 8.1.4.4 Unspent criminal conviction If shortlisted for an interview Safeguarding lead will make further investigation i.e., liaise with probation officer. This information should be noted, recorded and communicated at the final selection stage after interviews have been conducted and before offer letter is sent out

8.1.5 The Admissions Offer ensures that the Admissions Panel have access to the Academic Information subfolders only during the admissions process.

8.2. Admissions Panel (Internal process- Staff related)

- 8.2.1. The Admissions Officer must familiarise all panellists with the shortlisting, interviewing, and final selection process.
- 8.2.2. The Admissions Officer liaises with the Programme Manager at the start of the Admissions process to convene an Admissions Panel, to review and shortlist applications.
- 8.2.3. The Programme Manager must convene a diverse (e.g., Sex, race/ethnicity, expertise, etc.) panel to review student applications.
- 8.2.4. Panellists must declare any prior knowledge or relationship with an applicant.
- 8.2.5. Each application must be reviewed by at least two panellists, in addition to welfare personnel.

8.3. Shortlisting (Internal process- Staff related)

The Admissions Officer must prepare application packets for each of the panellists, along with an evaluation rubric as agreed upon with the Programme Manager to assess each application based on the entry requirements.

- 8.3.1. The Admissions Officer must ensure each application has been reviewed and assessed by each panellist and records saved according to data storage policies.
- 8.3.2. The Admissions Officer must notify applicants via email who have not been shortlisted about the outcome of their application.

8.4. Interviews

- 8.4.1. The Admissions Officer arranges interviews with shortlisted applicants and communicates via email the necessary information for applicants to prepare for the interview.

- 8.4.2. At least two diverse panellists must be at the interview stage. It is recommended that all panellists be present, however, it is at the discretion of the Chair to finalise the interview panellists.
- 8.4.3. The Admissions Panel must appoint a chair per each admissions round, who will oversee each interview, this includes:
 - 8.4.3.1. Identifying panellist who will be at the interview stage.
 - 8.4.3.2. Setting questions in advance of the interview to be explored by each panel member and discuss expectations of full answers to the questions, prior to the interview.
 - 8.4.3.3. Ensuring interview questions are phrased so that they do not favour any one applicant or group of applicants.
 - 8.4.3.4. Ensuring the same areas of questioning are covered with all applicants.
 - 8.4.3.5. Ensuring assumptions are not made regarding the expertise or abilities of candidates because of their academic or employment history.
 - 8.4.3.6. Ensure panellists take care to avoid questions that could be construed as discriminatory (e.g., questions about personal circumstances). Information regarding personal circumstances which is offered in the application form or at interview must not be taken into consideration in reaching a selection decision.
 - 8.4.3.7. Ensure decision discussions are summarised and recorded for any applicant feedback.
- 8.4.4. The Admissions Panel will use supplementary questions to probe for further information or clarification where answers are incomplete or ambiguous.
- 8.4.5. If an applicant is not in the UK or otherwise unable to travel to Cambridge, a remote interview is arranged by the Admissions Officer.

8.5. Selection

- 8.5.1. The Admissions Officer convenes the Admissions Panel following interviews to identify successful applicants.

- 8.5.2. Once successful applicants have been identified, the Admissions Officer will identify any successful applicant who has requested a scholarship for the Admissions Panel to decide. At this stage, any unspent criminal convictions safeguarding report will be provided where the candidate is substantial risk. The panel will consider the applicants' (i) academic potential, (ii) ability to self-fund, (iii) criminal convictions safeguarding report (if applicable).
- 8.5.3. Unsuccessful applicants may request feedback by contacting the Admissions Office via admissions-ba@cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk

8.6. Offers

- 8.6.1. The Admissions Officer informs shortlisted applicants of the outcome of their application via email as per the [Admissions timeline](#)
- 8.6.2. Successful applicants are required to confirm their admission with a written response via email or post and make a non-refundable deposit by cheque or bank transfer within two weeks of receiving the offer, which confirms their acceptance of the offer.
- 8.6.3. When an offer is accepted, the College and prospective student enter into a contract. The College has legal responsibilities as a higher education provider under consumer protection law.
- 8.6.4. Applicants seeking to defer admission should indicate this in the appropriate place on the initial form or upon receiving an offer. Deferred entry is granted at the discretion of the College for up to one year.

REVISION HISTORY

Revision Number	Effective Date	Description of Change
00	March 2017	New Document
01	26 April 2018	1. Formatting change 2. Policy number assignment 3. Change of policy ownership to BA Programme Manager
02	25 January 2018	1. Add to Admissions Officer to responsibility list. 2. Change responsibility of publicity from to College Coordinator to Admission Officer under Programme Publicity

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Change responsibility of communication arrival details from the Admissions Officer to the College. 4. Updated Application Timeline to reflect 2019 dates. 5. Removed information related to Qasid Institute.
03	25 September 2019	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The members of the Admissions Panel. 2. The format of the interview 3. Delete the Arabic language assessment from interview process
04	10 January 2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Added three forms for Recognition of Prior Learning. 2. Removed application timeline.
05	10 January 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Change applicant who holds EU passports into applicants who hold EU settled status. 2. Change Interview Panel into Admissions Panel and that members may take notes of the interviews. 3. For college arrival, facility manager sends information to students in relation to accommodation
06	08 March 2021	Update the References of QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education
07	29 March 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amended policy to cover all award granting academic programmes. 2. Added role of chair for admissions panel. 3. Removed need for notes. 4. Updated info on data retention.
08	8 August 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow for minimum of two panellists to review applications. 2. Interview panel to be set at discretion of the chair. 3. Welfare personnel specified as application reviewer.
09	14 March 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add reference to Admissions timeline to clause 8.1.2 2. Admissions officer to create 4 subfolders for each applicant separating Personal, academic, financial and unspent criminal conviction information 3. Revised RPL requirements 4. Admissions Panel to access Academic information only during the admissions process 5. Details of how information regarding criminal conviction will be used 6. Admissions officer to categorise for the panel Applicants by those who fit entry criteria, those who don't and those who fit diversity and inclusion criteria
10	June 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update policy as a response to IR conditions of the OU.