



## Cambridge Muslim College Admissions Policy

Committee: Faculty Board  
Next Review Date: April 2025

### 1. Purpose

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

### 2. Scope

This policy is for applicants seeking admissions onto any of our taught programmes and/or OU validated programmes. 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.
- 3.8. Reference letters are confidential and must be sent directly to the Admissions team by email on [admissions@cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk).

All application's supporting documents should be in English. If any of the documentations 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 certified translation.

- 3.9. For all programmes, the selection process will take into account:
  - Achieved and pending academic qualifications
  - The academic context in which a qualification has been achieved.
  - The applicant's stated interest, commitment motivation for study, and how the study programme aligns with their career goals.
  - Where relevant, work or other non-academic experience.
  - Where relevant, the applicant's performance at interview.
  - Where relevant, the applicant's English language proficiency.
  - Where relevant, the applicant's Arabic proficiency.
  - Good references.
- 3.10. Each programme team is responsible for setting their specific entry requirements for their programmes, which will be announced on the Programme webpage and prospectives
- 3.11. When an Interview is part of the selection process, the College aims to convey a diverse admissions panel to ensure a fair selection process.
- 3.12. All BA offer holders must take and pass an Arabic Conditional test to be admitted to the BA (Hons) Programme. The test takes place during July/August at the College. Opportunity to re-sit the test or being admitted to the programme on a condition of retaking the test at the end of term 1 may be possible. However, this is at the discretion of the Admission Panel.

- 3.13. The admissions timeline should be decided as part of the Outreach and Recruitment Strategy for all academic programmes and can be found on the College website under the related programme.
- 3.14. Admissions decisions will be communicated to applicants in an appropriate and timely manner. Any conditions attached to an offer of a place will be clear and specific.
- 3.15. Communication with applicants should take place through the Student Record System to ensure compliance with Data protection and the OU regulations. This includes all communication in relations to application, selection, interview, offer letter, scholarship letter, signed acceptance letter.

#### **4. Responsibility**

- 4.1. The Admissions team is responsible for implementing this policy.
- 4.2. The Registrar is accountable for ensuring this policy is followed.
- 4.3. The Quality Assurance Manager is responsible for reviewing and updating this policy Under the supervision of the Faculty Board.
- 4.4. The Registrar and Quality Assurance Manager are responsible for updating enrolment Terms and Conditions for all academic programmes.
- 4.5. Each programme team is responsible for setting their entry requirements for their programmes, which needs to be approved by Faculty Board.
- 4.6. The Registrar is responsible for ensuring that training is provided for staff involved in the admissions process or being part of the admissions panel.

#### **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](#)
- Procedure for Staff (Appendix 1)

## 6. Criteria for Entry

- 6.1. Entry criteria for each academic programmes is issued on our website and can be accessed through the following links: [BA\(Hons\) Programme in Islamic Studies](#), [Diploma in Contextual Islamic Studies and Leadership](#), and [Diploma in Islamic Psychology](#) and [Arabic Programme](#).
- 6.2. The College reserve the right to evaluate the academic level of an applicant if there is any doubt about meeting the entry criteria of any Programme. This can be through requesting the applicant to submit a written piece.
- 6.3. It is the applicant's responsibility to inform the College, by emailing the Admissions team on [admissions@cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk), 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.

## 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. Currently, all our academic programmes are not accepting RPL due to the unique nature of these programmes and their deliveries. 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 Complaint and Appeal Policy](#).

## 8. Procedure- Applicants

- 8.1. Once a programme is open for applications, the application form and all related information can be found on the [College's website](#).
- 8.2. Applications must be submitted via the online application form. If this is not possible, applicants must get in touch with the Admissions team by email on [admissions@cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk) to request another option for submission.
- 8.3. Applicants are encouraged to disclose any disability, health or learning differences during their application. This information will not be considered in the selection process, rather it is used to ensure programme accessibility for the relevant applicant and used to determine if any adjustments are required to facilitate their study on the programme.

- 8.4. The Admissions team acknowledges the recipient of the application within three working days of receipt, by email or through an auto reply from the admissions system.
- 8.5. The Admissions team creates electronic copies for any admissions materials received via post and stores any hard copies based on the [Data Retention policy](#).

The Admissions team will ensure that Academic-related information is separated from financial and criminal conviction information for all applicants and that the Admission Panel has access to the Academic- related information only to ensure that selection is based on merits, abilities and aptitudes.

- 8.6. The Admissions Panel for each programme will follow the process in the Appendix 1 to select and interview candidates following the specified admissions timeline for the related programme
- 8.7. Applicants who are not in the UK or otherwise unable to travel to Cambridge, a remote interview maybe arranged by the Admissions team.
- 8.8. Admissions decisions will be communicated to applicants in an appropriate and timely manner. Any conditions attached to an offer of a place will be clear and specific.
- 8.9. The applicants, who have not been shortlisted, will receive a confirmation email from the Admissions team about the outcome of their application within two weeks of the shortlisting date. Unfortunately, providing feedback will be difficult due to the large number of applications.
- 8.10. The College reserve the right to reject or cancel an application if a fraud or plagiarism is confirmed. The College will be fair and investigate this properly before taking any decision
- 8.11. Accepting an Offer should be done in writing by signing the Offer letter and make a non-refundable deposit <sup>1</sup>within two weeks of receiving the offer.
- 8.12. Once an Offer is being made and accepted, applications for financial support will be made following the Admissions timeline.
- 8.13. After the completion of the financial application, an Acceptance Letter listing all details about the offered place, any related financial commitment and/or offered scholarship as well as link to Terms and Conditions should be signed by the prospective student. A non-refundable deposit should be paid to the College within two weeks of receiving the offer, which confirms their acceptance of the offer.

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<sup>1</sup> A cooling off period of 14 days applies from the date of signing the Offer. Within this time, you are entitled to cancel your commitment and retrieve the deposit.

- 8.14. After signing the Acceptance Letter, the College and, the prospective student enters into a contract as per the related enrolment Terms and Conditions.
- 8.15. Applicants seeking to defer their registration should indicate this after signing the Acceptance letter and paying the non-refundable deposit. Applications for deferring the offered place will be considered on a case-by-case basis for each programme. Decisions will be made by the Admissions Panel.
- Deferral enquiries can be accepted 4 weeks prior to the beginning of the related programme.
  - Deferred entry can be granted for one year only,
  - Financial support and scholarships can't be guaranteed for deferred students.
  - Deferred students should apply/reapply for financial support at the beginning of their registration year.

## Appendix 1 Procedure- Staff

1. The Admissions team to liaise with Programme Lead, the Registrar and Quality Assurance Manager to update all relevant information and documents on the College's website.
2. The Admissions team to create/update the following templates:
  - Application form
  - Reference Guidance Notes
  - Application Guidance Notes
  - Initial Offer Letter indicating offering a place on an academic programme
  - Acceptance Letter including details about the offered place, financial commitment, scholarships and link to Terms and Conditions.
  - Financial Application Form drafted by the Finance Manager.
3. The Admissions team to approve all the above templates with the Registrar and the Quality Assurance Manager to ensure compliance with the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education- Advice and Guidance- Admissions, Recruitment and widening access and Competition and Markets Authority Guidance](#).
4. Terms and Conditions for all academic programmes to be reviewed by the Quality Assurance Manager, the Registrar and the Finance Manager before opening for admissions.
5. Financial aid guidance and Fees policies should be updated by the Finance Manager and approved by the Registrar and the Quality Assurance Manager.
6. The Admissions team to liaise with Communication team to publicise the application form and all related documents on the College's website and the social media.
7. Applications must be received via the [online application form](#). If this is not possible, applicants can request another option for submission.
8. The Admissions team acknowledges the application within 5 working days of receipt, by email or through an auto reply from the system confirming the recipient of the application form.
9. The Admissions team creates electronic copies for any admissions materials received via post and stores any hard copies based on the [Data Retention policy](#).
10. The Admissions team separates the personal, criminal conviction, financial information from the Academic information for each candidate.
  - Academic information includes all academic and professional history including academic references.

- Personal information includes diversity & inclusion criteria.
  - Unspent criminal conviction. 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.
  - 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.
11. The Admissions team ensures that the Admissions Panel have access to the Academic Information **only** during the admissions and selection process.
  12. At this stage, any unspent criminal convictions and safeguarding issues report will be shared and evaluated by the safeguarding team. Where a candidate poses substantial risk, and the College has no resources to mitigate the risk, the application will be rejected and the applicant informed of this decision.
  13. The Admissions administration team liaises with the Registrar at the start of the Admissions process to convene an Admissions Panel, to review and shortlist applications. When possible, the Admission Panel should be diverse in terms of sex, ethnicity, and expertise.
  14. The Admissions team must familiarise all panellists with the shortlisting, interviewing, and final selection process.
  15. Panellists must declare any prior knowledge or relationship with an applicant.
  16. Admission decisions must be made by an Admissions Panel. The panel should consist of three members, structured as follows: two academic faculty members and one senior member of the administrative staff. A quorum requires the presence of at least two panel members.
  17. The Admissions team must ensure each application has been reviewed and assessed by same panellists as other applicants to ensure quality in the selection process. Assessment reports from all panellists should be saved in the related applicant folder.
  18. The Admissions team must notify applicants via email who have not been shortlisted about the outcome of their application within two weeks of the shortlisting date.
  19. The Admissions team arranges interviews with shortlisted applicants and communicates via email the necessary information for applicants to prepare for the interview.
  20. The Admissions team should ensure that applicants are supported throughout the application process and that any unnecessary barriers are being removed for all applicants.
  21. The Admissions Panel must appoint a chair per each admission round, and agree on the following at the beginning of the admissions round:

- Agreement on the ideal composition of the cohort, aiming for diversity in terms of key attributes such as age, gender, ethnicity, geographical location, previous education and others.
  - 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.
  - Ensuring interview questions are phrased so that they do not favour any one applicant or group of applicants.
  - Ensuring the same areas of questioning are covered with all applicants.
  - Ensuring assumptions are not made regarding the expertise or abilities of candidates because of their academic or employment history.
  - 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.
  - Ensure decision discussions are summarised and recorded for any applicant feedback.
  - The Admissions Panel may use supplementary questions to probe for further information or clarification where answers are incomplete or ambiguous.
22. The Admissions team meet with the Admissions Panel following interviews to identify successful applicants. Assessment reports provided by Admissions Panel members are discussed in this meeting.
23. The Admissions team informs shortlisted applicants of the outcome of their application via email as per the relevant [Admissions timeline](#).
24. Successful applicants are required to confirm accepting the offer in writing via email.
25. Once successful applicants have been identified, the Admissions team will follow up with those who requested scholarships to submit their financial support application.
26. After the completion of the financial application, an Acceptance Letter listing all details about the offered place, any related financial commitment and/or offered scholarship as well as link to Terms and Conditions should be signed by the prospective student. A non-refundable deposit should be made by bank transfer within two weeks of receiving the Acceptance Letter.
27. After signing the Acceptance Letter, and pay the non- refundable deposit, the College and the prospective student enter into a contract as per the related Terms and Conditions. The College has legal responsibilities as a higher education provider under consumer protection law.
28. Applicants seeking to defer admissions should indicate this after signing the Acceptance letter.
- Deferral enquiries can be accepted within 21 days of signing the Acceptance letter.

- Deferred entry is granted at the discretion of the College and offered for one time only. Extend the deferral to another year is not possible.
- Students who defer their place on any programme should re-apply for financial support. Financial support and scholarships can't be guaranteed for deferred students.
- Deferral enquires during the academic year should follow the [Extenuating Circumstances policy](#).
- Financial Support and Scholarships can't be guaranteed for deferred students.
- Deferred students should apply for financial support once they resume their registration on the relevant programme.

### REVISION HISTORY

Revision Number	Effective Date	Description of Change
00	March 2017	New Document
01	26 April 2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Formatting change</li> <li>2. Policy number assignment</li> <li>3. Change of policy ownership to BA Programme Manager</li> </ol>
02	25 January 2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Add to Admissions Officer to responsibility list.</li> <li>2. Change responsibility of publicity from to College Coordinator to Admission Officer under Programme Publicity</li> <li>3. Change responsibility of communication arrival details from the Admissions Officer to the College.</li> <li>4. Updated Application Timeline to reflect 2019 dates.</li> <li>5. Removed information related to Qasid Institute.</li> </ol>
03	25 September 2019	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The members of the Admissions Panel.</li> <li>2. The format of the interview</li> <li>3. Delete the Arabic language assessment from interview process</li> </ol>
04	10 January 2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Added three forms for Recognition of Prior Learning.</li> <li>2. Removed application timeline.</li> </ol>
05	10 January 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Change applicant who holds EU passports into applicants who hold EU settled status.</li> <li>2. Change Interview Panel into Admissions Panel and that members may take notes of the interviews.</li> <li>3. For college arrival, facility manager sends information to students in relation to accommodation</li> </ol>
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"> <li>1. Amended policy to cover all award granting academic programmes.</li> </ol>

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Added role of chair for admissions panel.</li> <li>3. Removed need for notes.</li> <li>4. Updated info on data retention.</li> </ol>
08	8 August 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Allow for minimum of two panellists to review applications.</li> <li>2. Interview panel to be set at discretion of the chair.</li> <li>3. Welfare personnel specified as application reviewer.</li> </ol>
09	14 March 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Add reference to Admissions timeline to clause 8.1.2</li> <li>2. Admissions officer to create 4 subfolders for each applicant separating Personal, academic, financial and unspent criminal conviction information</li> <li>3. Revised RPL requirements</li> <li>4. Admissions Panel to access Academic information only during the admissions process</li> <li>5. Details of how information regarding criminal conviction will be used</li> <li>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</li> </ol>
10	June 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update policy as a response to IR conditions of the OU.</li> </ol>
11	<p>Nov 2024</p> <p><i>Z Alkhatib</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Include all academic programmes in this policy</li> <li>2. Make required changes to match the updated Org chart.</li> <li>3. Remove all RPL related information as none of the academic programmes accept RPL.</li> <li>4. Include the Arabic Conditional test in this policy.</li> <li>5. Add more details about the deferral's enquiries in admissions.</li> <li>6. Add a paragraph about deferring the registration at the admissions stage.</li> <li>7. Create a simplified process for applicants under paragraph 08 and move the detailed staff process to the appendix.</li> <li>8. Add some details to the staff process like creating templates and how to approve them</li> <li>9. Clarify the differences between Offer letter and acceptance letter.</li> <li>10. Signing Acceptance Letter and paying the non-refundable deposit is done after the financial application, if applicable.</li> </ol>