



Oakswood College

Empowering Through Education



Oakswood BNU Admissions Procedure

*(aligned with BNU
Admissions Policy)*

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Oakswood College
Empowering Through Education

(Trading name of Oakswood Group Ltd)

Oakswood BNU Admissions Procedure

(For Programmes Delivered in Partnership with Buckinghamshire New University)

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1. Purpose

This procedure outlines the admissions process implemented by Oakwood College for applicants applying to the programmes delivered in partnership with **Buckinghamshire New University (BNU)**. This procedure operates in accordance with the Buckinghamshire New University Admissions Policy and relevant regulatory expectations for higher education admissions.

The procedure ensures that:

- Admissions decisions are **fair, transparent, and consistent**
- Applications are assessed in accordance with **BNU Admissions Policy**
- All applicants are treated equally and without discrimination
- Applicant identity, qualifications, and documentation are properly verified
- Admissions processes meet the expectations of the **UK Quality Code for Higher Education** and regulatory requirements of the **Office for Students (OfS)**.

This procedure also establishes internal controls to ensure accuracy of documentation, integrity of interviews, and consistency across all application evidence.

Oakwood College supports the admissions process through recruitment, screening, and verification activities only. All final admissions decisions, including offers, rejections, and conditions of entry, are made solely by Buckinghamshire New University (BNU).

Participation in the Oakwood College admissions process does not guarantee an offer of admission. All admissions decisions are made solely by Buckinghamshire New University, and in accordance with its Admissions Policy.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to:

- All applicants supported by Oakwood College applying to programmes delivered in partnership with Buckinghamshire New University (BNU).
- All staff involved in recruitment, admissions, screening, and verification
- All stages of the admissions process including:
 - Initial screening
 - Document verification
 - Interview and EAF Video Recording
 - Application submission to BNU
 - Final verification and offers

3. Definitions

EAF (Extended Application Form)

A structured component of the admissions process requiring applicants to provide detailed information about their academic background, motivation, skills, and experience. As part of the verification process, applicants must complete an EAF video recording to confirm authenticity of responses and demonstrate suitability for the programme.

CreditSafe

A third-party identity and address verification service used by the College and Buckinghamshire New University to validate applicant information, including identity, address, and fraud risk indicators.

Wozzad

An online admissions platform used by Buckinghamshire New University to manage student applications.

4. Admissions Principles

Oakwood College is committed to operating admissions processes that are fair, transparent, inclusive, and consistent, ensuring that all applicants are treated equitably and assessed on their ability to succeed in their chosen programme of study. Oakwood College operates admissions processes based on the following principles:

4.1 Fair Admissions

Admissions decisions are made fairly and consistently in line with BNU admissions requirements. Admissions decisions are made using clear criteria that are applied consistently to all applicants. Decisions are based on academic merit, potential to succeed, and the specific requirements of the programme.

4.2 Transparency

The College publishes clear and accessible information about entry requirements, admissions procedures, and decision-making processes to enable applicants to make informed choices. Applicants are provided with clear information about:

- Entry requirements
- Required documentation
- Interview and assessment processes
- Admissions timelines and outcomes

4.3 Equality of Opportunity

Admissions processes are designed to promote equality of opportunity and comply with the **Equality Act 2010**. The College seeks to remove unnecessary barriers to higher education and encourages applications from individuals from diverse backgrounds including through the provision of reasonable adjustments where required.

4.4 Integrity of Evidence

Admissions processes are subject to appropriate governance, oversight, and risk controls to ensure integrity and regulatory compliance. All documentation submitted by applicants must be:

- Authentic
- Verifiable
- Consistent across application materials

4.5 Support for Widening Participation

The College supports widening participation and encourages applications from under-represented groups, including individuals from low participation neighbourhoods, mature learners, and those returning to education.

4.6 Continuous Improvement

Admissions policies and practices are regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure they remain effective, fair, and aligned with sector expectations and regulatory requirements.

4.7 Applicant Responsibility

Applicants must provide accurate and complete information during the admissions process. Failure to disclose relevant information or submission of fraudulent documentation may result in rejection.

4.8 Rules governing admissions and applications

Further to the above principles, specific rules apply to BNU applications and safeguards are built into the Staff Checklist that supports this Procedure to ensure these rules are complied with. Details of these rules are set out in Section 6 (Admissions Process) of this document. In summary, the rules cover:

- **Interview transcript Requirement**
- **One-Applicant-Per-Address rule**
- **50-Mile Geographical Proximity Requirement**
- **Proof of Address (POA) rules**
- **Immigration Status Verification**
- **DBS Checks (where applicable)**

- **Reference requirements**
- **Application Submission Deadline**

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems

Responsible for:

- Oversight of admissions compliance
- Ensuring processes align with BNU policy
- Maintaining audit trails
- Monitoring admissions outcomes
- Continuous quality improvement of admissions processes

5.2 Nominated Staff

- Conducting the interviews
- Completing interview transcripts using BNU question bank
- Ensuring interview integrity and compliance with BNU requirements
- Providing guidance for EAF video recording.

5.3 Admissions Staff

Responsible for:

- Conducting initial screening
- Verifying documentation and CreditSafe Verification
- Providing guidance on the University's Wozzad application and personal statement
- Maintaining applicant records
- Ensuring consistency across application evidence

5.4 Partner Admissions Team (BNU)

Responsible for:

- Final review of submitted applications
- Admissions decision making
- Issuing unconditional offers
- Ensuring compliance with BNU admissions policy

6. Admissions Process

The Oakwood admissions process consists of five key stages. Oakwood College supports recruitment, screening, and verification activities only. All final admissions decisions are

made solely by Buckinghamshire New University (BNU) in accordance with its Admissions Policy.

6.1 Stage 1 - Initial Screening

All applicants must complete an initial screening interaction.

This may be conducted:

- By telephone, or
- Face-to-face at Oakwood College.

Purpose of Screening

The screening aims to assess:

- Basic eligibility for the programme
- Spoken English ability
- Applicant motivation and understanding of the course
- Educational background
- Current or ongoing studies

Admissions staff record the outcome of the screening using the **Initial Screening Outcome Sheet**.

Applicants who meet initial requirements proceed to the next stage.

6.2 Stage 2 - Document Verification

Applicants must bring original documents for verification.

These include:

Identification

- passport, national identity card, or driving licence

Proof of Address

Applicants must provide a **proof-of-address document**, such as:

- Driving licence
- Utility bill
- Council tax bill
- GP or hospital letter
- Broadband bill
- Bank statements must be from recognised UK high street banks and stamped by the issuing branch

- Documents must normally be dated **within three months of the course start date**.
- Online documents must be downloaded **live in front of admissions staff**.
- Staff confirm this through an attestation record.

Qualifications

Applicants must provide:

- Original certificates
- Evidence of English language competence (where required)

UK qualifications may be verified through awarding body websites.

6.3 Stage 3 - Face-to-Face Interview and EAF Recording

Applicants may be required to attend an interview as part of the admissions process where this forms part of the partner recruitment and verification process prior to submission to BNU. For the current course provision all applicants are required to attend a face-to-face interview at Oakwood College.

Identity Verification

Before the interview:

- Original passport or ID must be checked
- Interview recording consent must be obtained

Interview Conduct

Interviews must:

- be completed in accordance with BNU requirements
- Be conducted independently
- Not involve prompting or coaching
- Assess the applicant's academic motivation and suitability

Interview responses must align with:

- Personal statement
- Education history
- Work experience
- References

EAF Video Recording

Applicants must record a **3-minute EAF video** addressing specific questions about:

1. Motivation for studying the course
2. Educational experience
3. Relevant work experience or skills

To maintain integrity of the recording:

- The applicant must be alone in the room
- A 360° camera view must confirm no assistance
- The applicant must show their passport
- Recording must be completed in one take

Interview and EAF recordings are stored in the applicant's admissions folder.

6.4 Stage 4 - Address and CreditSafe Verification

Applicants who pass the screening stage must undergo an address verification check.

CreditSafe Check

Applicants must complete CreditSafe verification. Admissions staff must ensure that results are reviewed, recorded, and deemed satisfactory prior to progression. CreditSafe results must be securely stored within the applicant record.

6.5 Stage 5 - References

Applicants must provide one relevant academic or professional reference according to the status.

References must:

- Be academic or professional in nature
- Be dated within six months of the course start date
- Be provided on official letterhead or from a verifiable organisational email address
- Include referee contact details for verification

The following are not accepted:

- References from agents or consultants
- References from family members or personal acquaintances
- References that are not dated within six months of the course start date

Oakwood College may verify references directly with the referee.

All references must align with the applicant's personal statement, interview, and supporting documentation.

Employed Applicants

Employer reference on:

- Official letterhead, or
- Official company email address

Self-Employed Applicants

Reference from an accountant.

Unemployed Applicants

Character reference from:

- Previous employer
- Tutor
- Professional mentor
- GP or other registered medical professional
- Recognised community or faith leaders (where appropriate and subject to verification of professional standing)

References should be sent directly to the partner admissions email address to partner.admissions@bnu.ac.uk (as specified by BNU), with Oakwood Admissions copied to: admissions@oakwoodgroup.co.uk admissions staff verify that references are consistent with:

- Interview responses
- EAF recording
- Personal statement

6.6 Additional BNU Mandatory Requirements (2025 Policy Alignment)

The following requirements apply to all applications processed by Oakwood College in support of programmes validated by Buckinghamshire New University (BNU). These requirements are mandatory and must be satisfied prior to submission to BNU.

6.6.1 Interview Transcript Requirement

A full written interview transcript must be produced for each applicant using the Buckinghamshire New University approved interview question bank.

- The question bank will be provided and rotated by BNU for each intake
- All responses must be recorded accurately and in full
- The transcript must align with the recorded interview and EAF video
- The transcript must be stored as part of the applicant audit record

6.6.2 One Applicant Per Address Rule

As a fraud prevention measure, only one applicant or student should normally be registered at a single permanent address.

Where multiple applications are identified at the same address:

- Enhanced verification checks must be conducted
- Additional documentation may be requested
- The case must be flagged to BNU for review

This control is applied as a fraud prevention measure and will be implemented proportionately, with due consideration to equality, legitimate household circumstances, and supporting evidence where applicable

6.6.3 Geographical Proximity Requirement

Applicants should normally reside within a 50-mile radius of the teaching location. Where this is not the case:

- Applicants must demonstrate a clear and sustainable travel plan
- Evidence of travel feasibility may be requested
- Applications may be subject to additional scrutiny

6.6.4 Immigration Status Verification

All non-UK applicants must provide evidence of their right to study in the UK, which may include a valid UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) share code where applicable to verify their immigration status and right to study in the UK.

Verification must be completed prior to submission to BNU.

6.6.5 DBS Checks (Where Applicable)

For programmes requiring Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance:

- Applicants must provide a scanned copy of a valid DBS certificate
- The requirement must be clearly communicated at application stage

6.6.6 Application Submission Deadline

All required documentation must be complete and submitted no later than three (3) weeks prior to the course start date.

Incomplete applications after this deadline will not normally be processed for the relevant intake.

6.6.7 Proof of Address (POA) Requirements

Applicants are normally required to provide one valid proof of address in line with BNU requirements.

- Mobile phone bills are not accepted
- Bank statements must be from recognised high street banks and branch verified (stamped)
- Documents must normally be dated within three months

Oakwood College will not impose requirements exceeding BNU policy unless explicitly agreed with the partner university.

7. Personal Statements

Applicants are responsible for submitting the admissions application through the Wozzad admissions platform used by Buckinghamshire New University for partner recruitment. During the Wozzad application process, applicants are required to write a personal statement. Applicants must provide a personal statement explaining:

- Motivation for studying the course
- Academic background
- Relevant skills and experience
- Future career goals

Personal statements are not required to be submitted in a specific format or follow a specified word count but there is a character limit on online application form field.

Personal Statement Review

Admissions staff review the statement to ensure:

- Originality
- Consistency with interview and references
- Alignment with the applicant's qualifications and experience

The personal statement is stored in the applicant's admissions folder.

8. Application Submission to BNU

Admissions staff must confirm completeness before submission. Once all checks are completed, admissions staff must conduct a final consistency check across:

- Interview
- EAF video
- Personal statement
- References
- Supporting documents

Complete applications are uploaded to the **BNU SharePoint admissions folder** for review.

9. Outstanding Documentation

Incomplete applications will not be submitted to BNU unless explicitly authorised under exceptional circumstances. Where documentation is incomplete near intake deadlines:

- Pending documents are clearly identified in the applicant record
- Comments are added to the BNU SharePoint folder

Applicants must provide outstanding documentation before admission deadlines. Any exceptions must be formally approved and documented and retained as part of the applicant audit record with justification and audit trail.

9.1. Admissions Risk Controls

Oakwood College is committed to maintaining the integrity, transparency, and fairness of its admissions processes. Appropriate controls are in place to prevent, detect, and respond to fraudulent applications or misrepresentations.

Admissions risk controls include:

- **Verification of applicant identity** through official documentation such as passports, national identity documents, or other government-issued identification.
- **Authentication of academic qualifications**, including verification with awarding bodies where necessary and the use of recognised qualification verification services.
- **Verification of English language proficiency** where applicable.
- **Detection of fraudulent or altered documents**, including the use of document verification tools and manual review by trained admissions staff.
- **Monitoring of application patterns** to identify unusual or suspicious activity.

Where fraud, deception, or material misrepresentation is suspected:

- Applications may be **suspended or rejected** pending investigation.
- Any offer made may be **withdrawn**.

- Confirmed cases of fraud may result in **withdrawal of admission**, reporting to relevant authorities or awarding bodies, and exclusion from future applications.

All admissions staff receive appropriate training to ensure that applications are reviewed consistently and that potential risks are escalated in accordance with institutional procedures.

9.2. Equality, Diversity and Widening Participation

Oakwood College is committed to promoting **equality of opportunity, fairness, and widening participation in higher education**. Admissions decisions are made solely on the basis of **academic potential, capability to succeed, and the requirements of the programme**, and are free from unlawful discrimination.

The College operates its admissions processes in accordance with the **Equality Act 2010** and supports applicants regardless of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy or maternity
- race or ethnicity
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The College actively supports **widening participation** and encourages applications from individuals who may face barriers to higher education. This includes applicants from:

- low participation neighbourhoods
- under-represented backgrounds
- mature learners
- first-generation higher education students
- individuals returning to education after employment or caring responsibilities

Where appropriate, the College may apply **contextual admissions considerations** to support fair access while maintaining academic standards. However, all admissions decisions to a Buckinghamshire New University (BNU) course delivered by Oakwood College rest solely with BNU.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that applicants with disabilities or additional needs are able to participate fully in the admissions process.

9.3. Admissions Governance and Oversight

The admissions process is subject to clear governance arrangements to ensure **transparency, accountability, and regulatory compliance**.

Overall oversight of admissions procedure and practice is maintained through the College's governance framework:

- The **Academic Board** has responsibility for oversight of academic standards, including the effectiveness and fairness of admissions processes.
- The **Academic Board** approves the Admissions procedure and receives assurance that admissions processes operate in accordance with regulatory requirements.
- The **Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems** monitors compliance with internal policy and external regulatory expectations, including those of the **Office for Students (OfS)**.

Regular monitoring and reporting includes:

- annual review of admissions data and trends
- analysis of equality and widening participation indicators
- review of complaints and appeals relating to admissions
- identification of risks and improvement actions

Findings from admissions monitoring are reported to the **Academic Board** and, where appropriate, escalated to the **Board of Governors** as part of the College's quality assurance and governance framework.

9.4. Admissions Complaints and Appeals

Oakwood College is committed to ensuring that admissions decisions are fair, transparent, and consistently applied. Applicants have the right to raise a **complaint or appeal** in accordance with the BNU Admissions Policy, as follows:

Appeals

An admissions appeal may be submitted where an applicant believes that:

- the published admissions policy or procedures were **not correctly applied**, or
- there was a **procedural error** in the handling of the application.

Appeals cannot normally be made on the basis of **academic judgement**, such as the assessment of qualifications or suitability for the programme.

Appeals must be submitted in writing within **10 working days** of the admissions decision being communicated. Appeals will be reviewed by a senior officer who was **not involved in**

the original decision to ensure impartiality. Applicants will be directed to the BNU Admissions Appeals process in accordance with the partner university's policy.

Complaints

Applicants who are dissatisfied with any aspect of the admissions process may submit a complaint through the College's [Complaints Procedure at College's website](#).

Complaints relating to admissions will normally be reviewed by the **Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems** or another designated senior officer to ensure that procedures have been followed correctly.

Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their complaint or appeal within a reasonable timeframe, normally **within 20 working days**. Oakwood College cannot overturn or amend admissions decisions made by Buckinghamshire New University.

The College will use feedback from complaints and appeals to improve admissions procedures and ensure continuous quality enhancement.

Right to Withdraw Application

Oakwood College reserves the right to withdraw an application at any stage of the admissions process where:

- incomplete, inconsistent, or fraudulent information is identified;
- required documentation is not provided within specified deadlines; or
- the applicant does not meet the requirements of the partner institution.

Where appropriate, such cases will be referred to Buckinghamshire New University for further review.

10. Data Protection and Handling of Applicant Information

Oakwood College processes personal data relating to applicants in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Data processing is also conducted in accordance with data sharing agreements with Buckinghamshire New University.

Applicant information collected during the admissions process is used solely for legitimate institutional purposes, including:

- assessing eligibility for admission
- verifying qualifications and identity
- monitoring equality and widening participation
- meeting regulatory and statutory reporting requirements

Applicants should be aware that all applicant information and data collected by Oakwood College for an application to a BNU programme delivered by the College, will normally be shared with BNU in the course of progressing the application and an admissions decision being made. All personal data is processed in accordance with the College's **Data Protection Policy** and **Data Privacy Notice**.

Key principles include:

- collecting only data that is **necessary and proportionate** for admissions purposes
- ensuring that applicant data is **securely stored and accessed only by authorised staff**
- retaining information only for the **period required by institutional and regulatory obligations**
- providing applicants with clear information on how their personal data will be used

Applicants have rights regarding their personal data, including the right to **access, rectify, or request deletion of personal information**, subject to legal and regulatory requirements.

Data processing under the Oakwood College Admissions Procedures and processes is carried out on the lawful bases of legitimate interest, contractual necessity, and compliance with legal obligations. Data processing is also conducted in a transparent manner and applicants are informed of their rights at the point of data collection. Any concerns regarding the processing of personal data may be raised with the College's Data Protection contact point. Applicants also have the right to raise concerns with the UK regulator, the **Information Commissioner's Office**.

Applicant data will be shared with Buckinghamshire New University for the purposes of admissions assessment, verification, and enrolment. This data sharing is conducted in accordance with UK GDPR and relevant data sharing agreements between Oakwood College and BNU.

11. Admissions Transparency, Monitoring and Annual Review

Oakwood College is committed to ensuring that admissions processes are **transparent, fair, and subject to regular monitoring and review** in order to maintain academic standards and promote equality of opportunity.

The College publishes clear information about:

- entry requirements for each programme
- admissions procedures and timelines
- contextual admissions considerations where applicable
- applicant rights, including complaints and appeals procedures

This information is made available through the College website and applicant guidance materials to ensure that prospective students can make **informed decisions about applying to the College**.

Monitoring and Data Analysis

The College monitors admissions activity to ensure that policies are applied consistently and fairly. Monitoring activities may include:

- analysis of application, offer, acceptance, and enrolment data
- monitoring equality, diversity, and widening participation indicators
- review of admissions outcomes by applicant characteristics where appropriate
- identification of trends, risks, or areas requiring improvement

Admissions data may also be used to support regulatory reporting requirements and institutional quality assurance processes.

Annual Review

The Admissions Policy and associated procedures are subject to **annual review** to ensure they remain effective, fair, and aligned with regulatory expectations.

The review will consider:

- admissions data and trends
- feedback from applicants and staff
- outcomes of complaints or appeals
- changes in regulatory requirements or sector guidance

Findings from the review are reported to the **Academic Board**, with significant issues or proposed policy changes escalated to the **Board of Governors** for approval.

12. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

Admissions outcomes are reviewed after each intake to identify:

- Common rejection reasons
- Documentation issues
- Process delays
- Quality improvement opportunities

Findings inform:

- Staff training
- Applicant guidance

- Updates to admissions processes.

All staff involved in admissions activities receive regular training to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, partner expectations, and internal quality standards.

13. Admissions Integrity and Fraud Prevention

This section complements the admissions risk controls outlined in Section 9.1 and provides further operational detail. Oakwood College is committed to maintaining the integrity of its admissions processes and ensuring that all applicants admitted to programmes validated by Buckinghamshire New University meet the required academic and suitability standards.

To prevent fraud, misrepresentation, and academic misconduct during the admissions process, Oakwood College implements the following verification measures:

13.1 Identity Verification

All applicants must present valid original photographic identification (e.g., passport or driving licence). Admissions staff must verify that the identification matches the applicant attending the interview.

13.2 Document Verification

Admissions staff must verify the authenticity of all submitted documentation, including qualifications, proof of address, and employment evidence. Where necessary, additional checks may be conducted before submission to the partner university.

13.3 Interview and EAF Recording

Applicants must complete an interview and Extended Application Form (EAF) recording. The recording must demonstrate that the applicant has personally completed the form and understands the information provided. The video recording must include:

- a clear introduction by the applicant,
- confirmation that the EAF responses are their own work, and
- a brief explanation of their motivation for study.

EAF and interview recordings are processed on the basis of legitimate interest and, where required, explicit consent. Applicants are informed of recording requirements in advance and consent is obtained prior to recording.

13.4 Reference Verification

References submitted as part of the admissions process may be verified by contacting the referee directly using official organisational contact details.

13.5 Fraud or Misrepresentation

Where fraudulent documentation, misrepresentation, or third-party completion of application materials is suspected:

- the application may be rejected;
- the case may be escalated to senior admissions staff;
- the matter may be referred to Buckinghamshire New University for further investigation.

13.6 Data Protection

All admissions documentation and recordings will be stored and processed in accordance with the **UK GDPR** and the **Data Protection Act 2018**, and in line with guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office.

14. Record Management and Audit Trail

All applicant records are securely stored in the BNU admissions SharePoint system. Records are retained in accordance with the College's Data Retention Schedule and relevant regulatory requirements.

Records include:

- Interview recordings
- EAF video recordings
- Document copies
- Reference letters
- Personal statements
- Admissions decision records

15. Related Documents

This procedure should be read alongside:

- BNU Admissions Policy
- Staff Admissions Checklist
- Student Admissions Guidance
- Personal Statement Guidance
- EAF Video Recording Guidance
- Reference Guidance for Mature Applicants

16. Consumer Protection and Applicant Information

Oakwood College is committed to ensuring compliance with consumer protection legislation and guidance issued by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

Applicants will be provided with clear, accurate, and timely information including:

- Tuition fees and any additional costs associated with the programme
- Key course information including structure, delivery, and assessment
- Information regarding material changes to programmes
- Applicant rights, including complaints and appeals processes

All information provided to applicants will be transparent, accurate, and not misleading, enabling informed decision-making. Information provided will be compliant with CMA guidance and will not omit material facts that could influence applicant decision-making.

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all information provided is accurate at the point of submission. Oakwood College is not responsible for decisions made by Buckinghamshire New University based on the information provided.