Schumacher College

Postgraduate Taught Programme Admissions Policy and Processes

2019/2020

This document is available in hard copy and on the College VLE. Please contact the Postgraduate Office (postgradadmin@schumachercollege.org.uk / 01803 847212) if you have any difficulty in obtaining a copy that you can read, or find any aspect of these regulations difficult to understand.

Contents

This policy and related admissions procedures will be subject to an annual review meeting. As part of this review we will assess the progress we are making towards achieving our Key Principles and commitments to fairness, accuracy, clear communication and equality.

Key Principles

1. The Schumacher College Postgraduate Taught Programme Admissions Policy provides prospective students, college staff and our Awarding Body, University of Plymouth, with a guide to our approach to the admission of students.

2. Schumacher College adheres to the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to providing equality for all, irrespective of:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality)
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity

All appropriately qualified applicants will be given equal consideration during the selection process, and will not be discriminated against on any grounds referred to above. We welcome and support people with disabilities, including learning disabilities, and will make reasonable adjustments and endeavour to meet specific requirements.

3. We clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of staff involved in the admissions process, including who makes the decisions on admissions criteria and applications. We are clear about which staff members are involved in the internal annual review, taking into account any change in regulations set by our Awarding Bodies. We also set out the responsibilities of applicants in the admissions process.

4. To ensure a fair and consistent admissions process we will ensure that the following principles are adhered to:

- All communication, throughout the admissions process, will be honest, comprehensive and inclusive in coverage
- We will clearly state the entry criteria for all our programmes, including academic qualifications, along with appropriate experience and skills required for entry.
- The entry criteria will be easily accessible through our website, using clear language, and offering alternative formats for prospective students with disabilities or particular needs, without making assumptions about how people get information.
- Applicants will be informed in general terms about how they can demonstrate their achievements (both academic and experiential) and motivation to study.
- We aim to provide clear, accurate information and opportunities for an informal discussion with Faculties. This is to enable prospective students to make informed choices based on a realistic picture of what their time at

Schumacher College will entail, in terms of academic and community life, student support, finance and graduate opportunities.

5. Applications to the College are made electronically, or by post directly to us; with supporting documentation received according to our guidelines. An alternative application form format is available. An application progresses through clearly defined stages and where possible, we commit to making a decision within **8 weeks of receipt** of both application and supporting documentation.

6. Entry criteria are set in accordance with standards required for Level 7 of the Regulated Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels). Entry requirements are published on the College website, in programme specifications and in the Programme Quality Handbook. Admissions decisions are recorded by and communicated via the Postgraduate Administration Office.

7. The College will ensure that students are informed as to their academic, financial and general obligations in taking up the offer of a place. We inform students of the enrolment process in advance and have designed an effective induction programme to encourage the integration of our diverse student body.

8. The Postgraduate Admissions Team aims to provide prompt and useful feedback to unsuccessful applicants where requested.

9. The College outlines defined grounds and processes for feedback and appeals in relation to admissions.

9. We are implementing an annual process for monitoring the effectiveness of the admission cycle, including the review of this policy. Feedback from each new cohort of students on ways to enhance the student admissions experience is sought at the beginning of each academic year.

These key principles are explained in more depth in the corresponding numbered sections of the Admissions Policy in the following pages.

1. Purpose of this Document

The policy relates to all postgraduate programmes offered by Schumacher College.

Our priority for admissions is to match prospective students with the course of study that best meets their academic needs, abilities and individual circumstances, while ensuring that our operational objectives are met.

There are a maximum of 24 places on each programme. As places are limited we will select candidates who we consider will make optimal use of the learning

experience afforded by the programme and who are willing to actively participate in the learning community. Further information on our approach to learning can be found here: https://www.schumachercollege.org.uk/courses/postgraduate-courses/our-approach-to-postgraduate-learning

The College is committed to ensuring that no prospective student who meets our entry requirements is deterred from applying. All applications are considered and evaluated on the basis of individual potential.

In achieving this, we make a commitment that our approach to the admission of students is:

- Transparent
- Fair
- Honest
- Consistent
- Accessible
- Personalised
- Timely

This policy is consistent with good admissions practice in higher education, as defined in the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code of Practice for Higher Education* and those identified by S.P.A (Supporting Professionalism in Admissions)

* UK Quality Code for Higher Education - Chapter B2: Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education

2.   Equality and Diversity

Schumacher College follows the Equal Opportunities Policy of The Dartington Hall Trust.

The College utilises the Equality and Diversity Policy set, but not limited by, The University of Plymouth. A copy of this policy can be found online under Policies and Procedures at: https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/about-us/university-structure/service-areas/equality-diversity-and-inclusion. To request the Equality and Diversity Policy in an alternative format please contact The University of Plymouth Equality and Diversity Unit on 01752 582060 or email: equality@plymouth.ac.uk.

Admissions Accessibility

Schumacher College receives applications electronically or by post. To support all applicants, the application is available to download as an editable PDF file. (https://www.schumachercollege.org.uk/courses/postgraduate-courses/making-an-application)
Alternative print copies of this application can be provided on request by e-mailing: postgradadmin@schumachercollege.org.uk.

Website Accessibility

The Schumacher College website can be viewed on a range of different screen sizes and the size of text can be changed to suit different people. We have also included a search facility, to help people find information more easily.

We adhere to the spirit of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/) and recognise these guidelines as the International benchmark for building accessible websites. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines explain how to make websites more accessible for people with disabilities. Conformity to these guidelines also makes websites more user friendly for all users.

Further information on our website accessibility can be found at: https://www.schumachercollege.org.uk/accessibility

Interview process
Reasonable adjustments will be considered for all applicants. Interviews are arranged at mutually convenient times, either in person, via Skype or telephone. Where an applicant has further support needs these will be addressed with the support of University of Plymouth Disability Services.

Tuition Fees Bursary
Schumacher College offers bursaries to assist applicants to participate in our Masters Programme. The bursary is available only to full-time Masters students and is applied as a reduction in the tuition fees due on, or before Registration.

Further information about the bursary process can be found at: https://www.schumachercollege.org.uk/courses/postgraduate-courses/schumacher-college-postgraduate-bursary-fund

In the event of a bursary student withdrawing from their studies, the bursary will be terminated and the balance of fees will be payable.

Financial Considerations

Schumacher College does not have provision for student hardship funding, such as support for living costs.

All applicants should ensure they have sufficient funds to cover tuition fees, food fees, and living costs for the full duration of their course. Given the intensive and immersive nature of the programme, UK/EU students are unlikely to be able to fit in employment for the duration of their studies.

Tier 4 visa students **may not be** permitted to work. This is because The Dartington Hall Trust, who sponsor Schumacher College student Tier 4 visas, is not a UK Higher Education Institution, as defined by UK Visas and Immigration. Tier 4 students should check their individual visa carefully and discuss whether they are permitted to work with the Postgraduate Administration Office.

In addition, Tier 4 applicants should pay special attention to the financial requirements and duties imposed by the Tier 4 visa application process. (https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/documents-you-must-provide Specific guidance is located under the guidance and appendix).

3.   Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility of the College in the Admissions Process
The College is committed to providing a professional admissions operation in order to provide the best service to applicants.

The Dartington Learning Executive Director of Learning has overarching responsibility for operational decisions; including responsibility for setting the minimum and maximum number of students registered on each programme. The maximum number of students is clearly communicated on the Schumacher College website and within student offer letters.

Faculty Coordinators within the academic departments are individually involved in the admissions process; they are responsible alongside our Awarding Body (UoP) for agreeing the entry criteria and selection processes for their programmes. Approved entry criteria and selection processes can be found within the Programme Specification of individual Programme Quality Handbooks available on our website:

MA Ecological Design Thinking Quality Handbook

MA Economics for Transition Quality Handbook

Copies can also be requested by e-mailing:
postgradadmin@schumachercollege.org.uk

The Postgraduate Administration Team handles all admission enquiries; signposting applicants to relevant information or putting prospective students in touch with Faculties to discuss individual programmes in further detail. The Postgraduate Administration Team is also responsible for ensuring both applications and enquiries are handled in a timely manner. An application passes through clearly defined stages and, wherever possible, we commit to making and communicating a final decision within **8 weeks of receipt** of both application and supporting documentation.

The Head of Learning Programmes is responsible for coordinating postgraduate admissions training for both Faculty and Administrative staff. At point of employment all new staff members will have access to a copy of this policy, admissions processes, related policies and material within an online Induction pack. The Programme Coordinator is responsible for providing admissions training for faculty members within their programme team. Any amendments to this policy or process will be clearly communicated to all and updated training organised where necessary.

Individual faculties will normally consider individual applications for postgraduate taught programmes once the full application and supporting documentation have been received by the Postgraduate Administration Office. Faculties will review all information on the application, including the personal statement, references and other relevant information.

Responsibility of Applicants in the Admissions Process

It is the responsibility of applicants to provide full and accurate information in the application and to notify the College of any changes or corrections to the original application.

By accepting the offer of admission to a programme awarded by The University of Plymouth, the applicant agrees to abide by their regulations . (https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/academic-regulations). Terms and Conditions will be communicated within the offer of admission letter.

If someone is found to have provided fraudulent documentation or inaccurate/ incorrect information (including failing to provide information which may have affected a decision) in support of your College application or UK visa application, any offer from the College will be invalid. The College employ the services of UK NARIC who provide checks in relation to overseas transcripts and certificates.   In order to verify the authenticity of documentation, the College reserves the right to make direct contact with the Awarding Body from which it was generated. Financial checks and immigration support for Tier 4 (General) student visa applications are conducted by the legal firm, Penningtons Manches.

Where additional information which was not available at the time of selection comes to light, an offer may be amended or, in exceptional circumstances, withdrawn. The College also reserves the right to correct errors where they have been made in the communication of decisions and offers.

The College reserves the right to exclude any applicant who is found to have been aggressive or abusive to College staff, representatives or fellow students during the application process.

4.   Communication of Information and Support to Prospective Students

All information concerning postgraduate programmes, including admissions criteria and the admissions process, is published on the Schumacher College website, along with a copy of this policy.

Applicants who have any support requirements are encouraged to disclose these to the College in order that they may be supported through the admissions process. Early disclosure also enables the College to liaise with applicants to understand specific learning needs and consider how these could be met.

The earlier this conversation occurs, the more effectively both the applicant and the College can consider what reasonable adjustments are possible and if there are any support requirements the applicant may need to consider organising independently.

If applicants to our programmes have any concerns about disclosure they are encouraged to speak with staff in the Postgraduate Administration Office at Schumacher College. All enquiries will be treated in the strictest confidence. Students may also contact Disability Services at The University of Plymouth https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/services/learning-gateway/disability-and-dyslexia

Information published on our website includes:

- The current Teaching, Learning and Assessment Handbook
- The current Postgraduate Quality Handbook (which includes the Programme Specification and Definitive Module Records.)
- The current Schumacher College and University of Plymouth Partner Student Handbook
- A selection of student profiles.
- Resources (including audio, video archive talks and sample dissertations)
- Staff profiles
- International (including Tier 4) student support.
- Support services (including information about disability support provision).
- Accommodation Information

5.   The Admissions Process

Please note: entry to Schumacher College is competitive and due to the restricted number of places on offer, not every applicant may receive the offer of a place. Where candidates are unsuccessful, feedback is available upon request. Please see **Feedback and Appeals** for further information.

5.1   Assessment of Prospective Students

The setting and maintenance of Academic Standards is shared between Schumacher College (the Provider) and its Awarding Body (The University of Plymouth).

a.   Setting and Monitoring Admission Criteria

Both the Awarding Body and the Faculty Programme Coordinators at Schumacher College hold responsibility for setting the admission criteria for any Taught Masters Programme run by Schumacher College and validated by University of Plymouth.

Recruitment, Selection and Admissions Policies are formalised within the programme development, design and approval processes and are considered under Programme approval.

The Monitoring of admissions is the responsibility of the Dartington Learning, Head of Learning Programmes.

Criteria noted within this policy are reviewed annually. An interim review may be held in light of changing legislation, statutory duties, or changes to best practice.

b.   The Entry Criteria

General academic entry requirements

Whilst we will normally consider a wide range of subjects as appropriate for entry to our programmes, applicants are advised to check individual programme requirements for further information. These are available on the individual programme pages on the Schumacher College website.

- MA Ecological Design Thinking
- MA Economics for Transition

International qualifications will be considered and evaluated by referring to independently published guides that are recognised within the United Kingdom Higher Education sector. We currently review all International Qualifications using UK NARIC; we check whether your University is recognised by NARIC and review the equivalence of qualification levels against those in the UK.

c.   Other criteria

Applications to the Full Masters Programme are given priority over those applying for the PG Certificate so as to maintain the cohort numbers and overall learning community.

In addition to considering academic qualifications when selecting candidates, the college will consider whether an applicant is suitably academically motivated to complete the chosen programme of study, and whether the provision will challenge and benefit the individual.

Schumacher College has a community-based approach to learning, which draws on 90 years of progressive educational history at Dartington and emphasises 'whole person learning', 'peer to peer learning', and 'learning by doing'. Applicants to the programme should be willing to actively engage with community living and working; whether living on or off campus. Information about the Schumacher College approach to Learning can be found the Schumacher College website: https://www.schumachercollege.org.uk/courses/postgraduate-courses/our-approach-to-postgraduate-learning.

In our holistic assessment of an application, we will take into account information provided within the personal statement and references, and consider academic ability, motivation, experience and self-discipline. We will also consider relevant interests outside of studies, such as work or voluntary experience.

Schumacher College will take into account compliancy requirements in regard to external legislation (such as the UKVI policy) when reviewing an application.

The College reserves the right not to consider an applicant for entry if the entrant is or has previously been in debt with The Dartington Hall Trust and/or Schumacher College; has previously been withdrawn from the College on academic grounds; has submitted fraudulent documentation or inaccurate/incorrect information previously to the College.

Whilst we do not routinely use contextual information to inform our decision- making, there may be occasions where the applicant and/or their referee asks us to take account of certain contextual factors which may have affected performance, and to consider this when making an offer.

Evidence of contextual factors will not necessarily mean that any form of preference will be given to the candidate involved, as each case will be considered on its individual merits. However, in cases where there is clear evidence that contextual factors have affected performance and achievement, and where the applicant is able to demonstrate motivation and potential to achieve, the College will consider this as part of its holistic assessment of the application.

d.   Competence in English Language

Students must be able to converse in English to a proficient level. All applicants who do not hold a GCSE (Grade C or above) in English Language, must provide evidence of their English language ability.

The College entry standards for English language are as follows:
IELTS Academic (B2 level) achieving 6.5 overall with minimum 5.5 for each component: reading, writing, listening and speaking.

* Tier 4 students must take the UKVI IELTS academic test (further information below).

EU Applicants

EU applicants may provide an alternative test taken within the last 2 years; Pearson PTE Academic is currently accepted. In exceptional circumstances where an EU applicant can easily demonstrate a good command of both spoken and written English Language, academic discretion may be applied. The College may require further written or other evidence to support their final decision.

International Applicants

Tier 4 (General) must submit a certificate to prove they have met the standard required by UK Visas and Immigration. This is currently set at Level B2 (CEFR) and the only accepted proof is a UKVI IELTS Academic test taken at an UKVI approved provider. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests

To be exempt from this SELT requirement, Tier 4 applicants would need to have obtained a qualification equivalent to a UK degree in a majority English-speaking country as recognised by the UK. Further information can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/knowledge-of-english

5.2   Application handling

Once we have received an application, the Postgraduate Administration Team will contact the applicant to confirm its receipt, explain the admissions procedures and discuss any supporting documentation still required.

Once the College has confirmed safe receipt of your application and all supporting documentation:

The application will be passed to relevant faculty staff for review; wherever possible, two members of Faculty will be involved in the process at each level.

All applications are reviewed using a points based Application Assessment Form. Applications are assessed on previous academic experience, or equivalent experience; and include an assessment of an understanding of the programme applied for; including the Schumacher College approach to learning; a review of references and strength of the supporting statement.

Stage 1 Assessment by Faculty

Each element of the application is scored out of 10, using standard assessment criteria. The maximum score available is 60 points.

- If the applicant scores 40 points or above, with no less than 8 for each element relating to a) Previous Academic attainment or b) Academic or professional background, the applicant will be offered an interview by faculty staff. The faculty staff member will make contact with the applicant directly, to organise a mutually convenient time for interview; either in person, or by Skype. Wherever possible, interviews will be conducted by 2 staff members.

- If the applicant scores *less than* 40 points they will not be invited to interview. This decision will be communicated to the applicant in writing. All letters will be sent via e-mail as PDF attachments. If you require a hard copy of the letter, please e-mail: postgradadmin@schumachercollege.org.uk. Information about how to appeal the decision will be provided.

Stage 2 Assessment by Faculty - Interview

Applicants invited to interview will be contacted directly by the Programme Coordinator or a member of the Faculty to which the application has been made. Applicants may be asked to come to the College for an interview, or to attend a telephone or Skype interview if not able to attend in person. College staff will suggest a time and date; however this is not fixed and a further time and date may be negotiated to support applicant attendance.

Where possible, interviews are conducted by two members of Faculty. The interview format is that of a two way conversation; in which staff will ask a standard set of questions and develop conversation around these. Staff members will also be open to answering any applicant queries.

Interviews will involve questions around the applicant's understanding of his/her academic strengths and weaknesses, and which academic subjects they did or did not enjoy. The interview may also explore the applicant's learning style preferences, why the applicant chose the College, their main reasons for wanting to take the

programme, and how they hope to apply learning following completion of the course. Staff may also wish to discuss aspects of the application form.

Following Interview

A formal decision will be communicated directly to the applicant by the Postgraduate Administration Office via e-mail; unless an alternative format has been requested. Where a candidate has applied for one programme and is not successful, the application may be considered by an alternative programme at the College.

The Postgraduate Administration Office will send one of the following letters depending on the decision of faculty staff 1) A Letter of Support. 2) A Conditional Offer Letter 3) An Unconditional Offer Letter 4) A Rejection Letter.

1)   **A Letter of Support** – For those applicants to whom Faculty would like to offer a place, but who do not hold the funds to take up an offer.
This letter confirms that Schumacher College would like to make an offer to the applicant and encourages potential funders/funding bodies to support the student. These letters can be tailored to meet the requirements of specific funding bodies. Letters of Support are also used by applicants applying to the [Chevening Scholarship Programme.](#) The College will keep in regular contact with those in receipt of these letters to provide support while funding is being sought and to keep applicants updated on course places available.

Once full funds are secure and if places remain available on the course we will provide an offer of a place (conditional or unconditional) and request the payment of a deposit.

Please note: Letters of Support will remain valid until the start of the academic year to which applicants originally applied. A further letter of support *may* be provided for a further academic year but must be requested by e-mailing: postgradadmin@schumachercollege.org.uk. A further letter of support is not, however, guaranteed and a renewed application for the following year may be required.

2) **A Conditional Offer letter** (Specific to Tier 4 or Home/EU applicants)
A Conditional Offer letter will clearly outline the conditions in full.

3) **An Unconditional Offer letter** (Specific to Tier 4 or Home/EU applicants)
An unconditional offer letter will confirm that all conditions have been met in full.

4) **A Rejection letter** (which includes details on how to gain feedback and information on appeals)

Where a programme is full, this will be communicated to all applicants on the [Postgraduate pages of the Schumacher College website](#)

Once a programme is full for the forthcoming academic year, the College may offer a place on a **Reserve List**. A place on the Reserve list will be offered instead of a conditional or unconditional offer and any conditions necessary to take up a place will be noted in a confirmation of Reserve List place letter. The Reserve List will remain open until the student registration is complete for the academic year concerned. Applicants may withdraw from this Reserve List at any time. Where a place becomes available on the programme, the Postgraduate Administration Office will e-mail a student on the Reserve List to see if a place is still of interest, prior to sending out an offer letter.

All letters will be sent via e-mail as PDF attachments. If you require a hard copy of the letter, please e-mail: postgradadmin@schumachercollege.org.uk.

Where applicants need a Tier 4 Visa to study at the College, the appropriate offer letter will be sent out to them, containing details on how to obtain their **Confirmation of Acceptance for Study** (CAS) number from the College and what supporting documents they will need to apply for their visa.

Where International Applicants have accepted a place on a Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert), they may be required to obtain a Short Term Study Visa. The Postgraduate Administration Office will advise the applicant to check UKVI requirements on the UK Government website for short term study in the UK here: https://www.gov.uk/study-visit-visa.

Where a short term study visa is necessary, the Postgraduate Administration Office will provide successful applicants with a hard copy letter detailing the College Tier 4 sponsorship information, confirming course dates and fee payments received from the applicant. The hard copy of this letter needs to be carried, along with other documentary evidence required so that it may be viewed by the Immigration staff upon arrival and entry into the United Kingdom.

Sending an Offer Letter:

An offer letter, whether conditional or unconditional, will be made in good faith, taking into account information as supplied by the applicant and/or referee at the time of the application. In some circumstances, an offer may be conditional upon non-academic requirements e.g. police checks which are deemed satisfactory.

e. **Accepting An Offer**

To accept and secure a place

Applicants offered a place on a Taught Postgraduate Programme will be asked to pay a non-refundable deposit to secure their place on that Programme. **We ask that applicants do not pay a deposit until they are sure they can afford the full tuition fees, food fees and all costs associated with their chosen course.**

For programmes running from September 2019, the deposits are:

- **£750 non-refundable deposit for UK/EU applicants**

- **£1000.00 non-refundable deposit for non UK/EU applicants**

The Postgraduate Administration Team will calculate the date for payment of non-returnable deposits

The deadline for payment of the deposit will normally be **2 weeks** from the date of issue of the offer letter. An earlier deadline for payment of the deposit may be given in cases where the application is being handled after the closing date. The date chosen will relate to the time left until the course begins, and will depend on whether the student needs sponsorship to enter the UK.

The deposit will be off-set against the remaining tuition fees due for the programme of study.

If an applicant changes their mind within 14 calendar days of the money leaving their account, they may request a full refund. After the 14 calendar day period (ie on day 15) of the money leaving the applicant's account, the deposit **will not** be refunded, but the applicant will not be liable for further tuition fees.

Beyond 14 calendar days of the deposit leaving the account, where the deposit will not be refunded, any further tuition or residential fees paid by the applicant prior to Registration on the course will be refunded in full in the event they withdraw from the programme prior to Registration.

In the unlikely event that the programme does not recruit sufficient numbers to run in the forthcoming academic year, the college will notify students via e-mail **by the end of the first week in June. The exact date is confirmed within all offer letters.** If this situation were to occur we would offer applicants an alternative course, where appropriate, or support them in making alternative arrangements. In the event that a programme is suspended or closed and an applicant elects not to accept the offer of a place on an alternative programme, the deposit and any further tuition fees, or residential fees paid prior to the College decision point will be refunded in full.

DEPOSIT

It is essential that the deposit is paid by the applicant in order to secure their place on the course.

The following documents will be sent out with any offer letter:

University of Plymouth Award Programmes:

- Acceptance Form for Full-Time Residential or Non Residential Study or Acceptance Form for Part-Time Residential or Non Residential Study for the appropriate year of application
- Food and Accommodation Policy for Postgraduate Students (for appropriate programme); or Food Policy for non-residential students.
- Copy of document 'How to Make Payments to Schumacher College'
- Student Contract for the relevant year of study
- Accommodation Agreement

A place on the course will be secured once the deposit has been received and the signed Postgraduate Agreement has been returned in time to meet the deadline. The Postgraduate Administration Team will e-mail the applicant to confirm safe receipt.

By signing the Postgraduate Agreement the applicant agrees to the regulations of each Awarding Body

Where a Letter of Support has been sent, the Postgraduate Administration Team will continue communication with the applicant regarding funding position. Once the applicant is able to confirm that they have funding in place a Conditional or Unconditional Offer letter, dependent upon circumstance, will be provided. Such an offer can only be made where places are still available on their chosen programme.

Proof of funding may be sought from the applicant before an offer letter is sent out.

Following receipt of the postgraduate agreement & deposit

The Postgraduate Administration Team will:

- Continue to communicate with the applicant and where they require a Tier 4 visa, to send further details regarding responsibilities and processes.
- Send out a Disability Disclosure Form with further information to encourage early disclosure to the College.
- Organise access to the College Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) allowing students to make contact with each other prior to the start of the course.
- Send out pre-course reading lists.
- Send out further information concerning Registration and Induction week.
- Send out course Handbooks (usually in early August).

Deferred places

If a conditional or unconditional offer is made and the applicant chooses to defer their place it is the responsibility of the applicant to make contact with the College during the next admissions cycle (between October and April of the academic year prior to the year the applicant wishes to begin) to confirm an intention to take up the offer of a place in the next academic year.

Applicants must note that programme content and delivery format may change between years. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that they make themselves aware of any Programme changes or developments. These will be communicated on the [Schumacher College website](https://www.schumachercollege.org.uk) under the individual programme pages. Applicants who defer and confirm that they wish to return will be asked to attend a meeting (via Skype, or in person, as appropriate) to ensure that any changes are clearly communicated and discussed.

Bursary Applications

All bursary applications are dealt with separately from the main programme applications.

The Postgraduate Administration Team carries out the following tasks following payment of tuition fees deposit and receipt of a bursary application:

- Confirm receipt with applicant
- At agreed dates, arrange Bursary Panel Meeting with staff from Dartington Learning Executive

The Bursary panel will consider each individual application in relation to the published criteria of Applicant Potential and Financial Need found on the bursary page of the College website: https://www.schumachercollege.org.uk/courses/postgraduate-courses/schumacher-college-postgraduate-bursary-fund

A second panel meeting may be held to consider late applications and distribution of any remaining funds.

The meetings are minuted to record discussions and decisions.

Following the meeting, the Postgraduate Administration Team will carry out the following tasks:

- Confirm all panel decisions with each applicant via email and request each applicant to send written confirmation of their acceptance, together with confirmation that they have the remaining tuition fees in place.
- Upon receipt of this written confirmation from the applicant, the Postgraduate Administration Team will send out a Formal Bursary Acceptance form detailing final tuition fees due less the College Tuition Fees Bursary Award amount.

Please note: Bursary students who withdraw from their studies will be liable to pay back all or some of their bursary, commensurate with the duration of study undertaken. The terms and conditions of the bursary, along with details of how repayable sums are calculated in the event of withdrawal are sent out with the bursary offer.

NOTES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS CONCERNING ADMISSION

To meet our responsibilities as a sponsor of Tier 4 students, Schumacher College undertakes academic checks on submitted documents and retains the right to consult with a third party organisation (NARIC) in order to verify degree certificates and transcripts.

Where there are queries or concerns about any aspect of a Tier 4 related admissions documents, details or procedure, we may share your information with our appointed Immigration Lawyers. (Currently: Penningtons Manches, 125 Wood Street, London, EC2V 7AW)

APPLICATIONS AND DEADLINES

If there are spaces available, applications can be made up to the start of the programme. After the closing date, updated information on spaces available will be communicated via the postgraduate pages of the [Schumacher College website](#) and applicants advised to check with postgradadmin@schumachercollege.org.uk.   In deciding when to submit an application applicants should take into account factors such as securing accommodation and, if appropriate, applying for funding.

Conditional/Unconditional Offer deadlines

UK/EU passport holders

For programmes that have the standard **entry date in September** all conditions of offers must be met in full **by 1ˢᵗ August** to guarantee a place for entry in the year of application.

If conditions are met after this point we will review the cohort numbers and either offer a place for the current academic year or may, in some circumstances, be able to confirm a deferred place.

Tier 4 visa students

For programmes that have the standard start date in September all conditions of offers must be met in full **by 1ˢᵗ June** to guarantee a place for entry in the year of application. This is an earlier deadline than UK/EU passport holders as the

progressing of Tier 4 student Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies commences in the first week of June each year**.**

If conditions are met after this point we will review the status of an applicant's Tier 4 documentation, necessary financial evidence, and discuss the possibility of gaining a visa application in time to commence the programme. Overall cohort numbers will also be taken in to consideration. We will either offer an applicant a place for the current academic year or may be able to confirm a deferred place for entry in the next academic year.

It is particularly important for applicants who require a visa to study to allow sufficient time for both the application and visa process. Typical length of time from receipt of an application (and all supporting documentation), to notification of a decision if progressed to interview, is 5-6 weeks**.** Visa processing times and services vary from country to country; with some countries offering priority services to expedite the visa process, at an increased cost. For approximate visa processing times the home office tool located at https://visa-processingtimes.homeoffice.gov.uk/ may be helpful.

Further information including advisory deadlines can be found on the relevant Faculty Postgraduate Admissions page.

Acceptance of Accredited Prior Learning (APL)

Accredited Prior Learning (APL), Accredited Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and Accreditation of Prior Certified Learning (APCL) are not accepted by the College toward, or in place of any modules.

APL is the generic term for the accreditation of prior learning, whether the result of a formal course or learning through experience. APCL is APL based on certified (or certificated) learning - a formal course at another university or in another context. APEL is APL based on experiential learning - learning achieved through experience, rather than on a formal course.

6.   Enrolment at Schumacher College

a. **International Students who require a Tier 4 Visa to study at the College**

Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

A CAS is a unique reference number which is assigned and used by the UK Visas and Immigration service. CAS numbers will link to electronic information about the individual student and their course of study as provided by the College. Every student will have a unique CAS number which is linked directly to their information.

Schumacher College generates the CAS via the UK Visas and Immigration Sponsor Management System.

A CAS number will be assigned once:

- All admissions criteria have been met and the applicant has received an unconditional offer.
- A non-refundable deposit of £1,000 has been received and 14 calendar days have elapsed.
- We are satisfied that the applicant has met UK Visa and Immigration requirements with respect to evidence of funding/finance **
- We have received UKVI IELTS Academic scores that the applicant has met the minimum standard of English language proficiency set by UK Visas and Immigration.

** It is college policy to forward all financial information to an Immigration Lawyer for checking prior to the College assigning a CAS.

A visa application can only be made in the 3 months prior to a student's planned start date.

For programmes commencing in September, students will be contacted to provide financial evidence from June 1st and invited to join a secure website (Huddle) where they can share the documentation to be reviewed by the Immigration team.

All financial information shared on Huddle will be deleted by Schumacher College upon evidence of a successful visa application and within 4 weeks of Registration at the College.

Where a Tier 4 applicant withdraws from the Tier 4 process at the point financial evidence has been submitted to Huddle, it will be deleted as soon as possible and no later than 4 weeks of a notice to withdraw**.**

In order to apply for a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa applicants should hold original certificates and transcripts, along with other documents necessary for visa application appointments. It is important that applicants request the return of any original documentation sent to the College as part of the admission process; including certified and notarised translations that meet UKVI requirements. All requests should be made at point of application or as soon as possible thereafter.

b. Enrolment Information

All students due to enroll at the College will normally receive an invitation to join the Schumacher College Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) upon payment of the non-refundable deposit to secure their place. Enrolment information is uploaded to this site.

Students will be encouraged to disclose any support needs again at this point so that support can be put in place as soon as possible and preferably before the start of term.

Additionally enrolment forms and further information about arrival is sent (where possible) 2 months prior to registration; unless the application has been received after the deadline, in which case they will be forwarded as soon as possible. Digital copies of course handbooks for the new academic year are e-mailed and available on the Schumacher College website and VLE prior to Registration.

Tier 4 students receive additional enrolment information relating to visa requirements on entry to the UK; including details of where to collect Biometrics cards and/or register with the Police. Biometrics cards must be produced as soon possible after arrival to Schumacher College as they are necessary to complete formal Registration. A visa to remain in the UK will expire unless the Biometrics card is collected and in this instance Schumacher College would stop sponsoring the student and the visa would be curtailed.

All students enrolling at Schumacher College will be asked to bring their passport and any documentation that we have requested in advance in order to complete their registration successfully.

Passports, Biometrics cards and any outstanding documentation will be copied upon Registration or as soon as possible thereafter and whether or not they have been requested before.

c. **Effective Induction and Integration**

Once applicants have access to pre-course areas on the VLE, they may upload a profile and begin interacting with other students and accessing pre-course information.

Induction timetables are sent out to applicants prior to arrival. The first Induction week includes an introduction to College operations; including, but not limited to work groups, use of the library, student areas, college grounds, the wider Dartington Estate, and facilities. It also includes morning meetings and occasions where students are formally welcomed by the wider College community. Staff from Dartington Learning Executive will provide introductions covering aspects such as Awarding Body responsibilities, academic regulations and College policies, the course handbooks and the QAA. Staff members will outline responsibilities of

student representatives; asking each cohort to choose one or two representatives for each course prior to the first Postgraduate Programmes Group meeting of the year.

A second Academic Induction week is run independently by each Faculty and will also include an introduction to programme specific areas of the VLE.

An introduction to the English Language Support Tutor is arranged for students who request support in this area, together with an introduction for all students to wellbeing support by the Specialist Mentor and Study Skills Tutor.

7.   Feedback and Appeals

Entry to Schumacher College is competitive and due to the nature of small group learning offered by the College not every applicant will receive an offer of a place. Where candidates are unsuccessful, feedback is available on request. For feedback please e-mail: postgraduateadmin@schumachercollege.org.uk

Feedback policy

We are happy to provide feedback on an individual basis in response to receiving a formal request (written or emailed) from the applicant **within six weeks** of the decision being made. For identification purposes we ask that you provide the following information in your request:-

- **Full name**
- **Date of birth**
- **Programme name applied for**

Feedback will only be given in written format (not over the telephone or in person) within eight weeks of receipt of the request.

In line with our Data Protection policy we will not be able to provide feedback to anyone other than the applicant unless the applicant has given specific written permission for us to do so. (See policy: communication, data protection and your application). The feedback will be sent to the email address the applicant has provided on their application form. Therefore please be sure to inform the Postgraduate Administration Team of any changes.

ADMISSIONS APPEALS

We do not accept appeals on academic judgements however, if following feedback an applicant wishes to make an appeal on procedural grounds, they should e-mail: postgradadmin@schumachercollege.org.uk.

The applicant should submit a formal request clearly outlining the procedural grounds on which they wish to appeal (written or emailed); this must be

received **within four** weeks of the receipt of feedback. The College will respond to all appeals **within eight weeks** of receipt.

For further information please do not hesitate to contact us at:

Postgraduate Admissions
Schumacher College
The Old Postern
Dartington
Devon
TQ9 6EA
Tel: 01803 847212 (UK callers)
+44(0) 1803 847212 (From outside the UK).

Postgradadmin@schumachercollege.org.uk

8. Implementation, Dissemination, Monitoring & Review

Responsibility for oversight of and changes to our Postgraduate Admissions Policy rests with the Dartington Learning Executive. It is the responsibility of the Dartington Learning Director to disseminate any updated policies, training or information to the Programme Coordinator of each faculty for implementation. It is the responsibility of the Dartington Learning Quality & Standards Coordinator to organise an Annual Review of the documentation and to bring together relevant data, student feedback and monitoring reports as part of that review process.
It is the responsibility of the Programme Coordinators to alert the Dartington Learning Director to new staff within their team who will require admissions training.

9. Related Policies

The Postgraduate Admissions Policy is underpinned by a number of other policy statements offering specific guidance on aspects of the process or for specific kinds of applicant:

- Communication, Data Protection and your application (University of Plymouth)
- Dartington Trust Data Protection
- Dartington Trust Equal Opportunities Policy
- Equality and Diversity
- Applicants Declaring a Criminal Conviction
- Religious observance

Changes to your Programme or this document.

The College is continuously developing, refining and improving its services and programmes, and introducing new options, programmes or courses, for the benefit of its students. This may be in response to student feedback or matters of academic judgement or expertise; to accommodate changes or developments in learning and/or teaching theory or practice, facilities; or to keep programmes, practices and areas of study up-to-date. This may lead to changes in the terms, content or delivery mode of the College programmes from those set out in the programme handbooks or website.

If you are offered a place and the College decides to make a significant change to a programme of study, it will advise applicants in advance of the change, except where the change is required for regulatory or legal reasons, or on account of events beyond the College's control, in which case the College will notify applicants of this as soon as possible and try to minimise any adverse impact.

The College may change this document from time to time to comply with any legal or regulatory requirements. If the College is required to make significant changes to this document or process, the College will notify you of this as soon as possible.

In the unlikely event that a programme does not recruit sufficient numbers to run in the forthcoming academic year applicants will be notified by **the end of the first week of June (The exact date is confirmed within all offer letters)**. If this situation were to occur students could:

1) withdraw from the College without any liability for fees, and have their deposit refunded or;

2) transfer to another programme offered by the College, subject to suitable qualifications, availability of places and the Programme Coordinator's approval. Another interview may be required in this instance.

If in these circumstances the student wishes to withdraw from the College and to enrol on a programme at a different institution, the College shall use its reasonable endeavours to assist the student.

Communication, data protection and your application

In accordance with The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) we must protect the information you disclose on any aspect of your application. In line with this legislation we are unable to discuss any aspect of an application with a third party unless we receive confirmation from applicants in writing stating the programme applied for, date of birth, details of the person(s) to allow this privilege and a satisfactory reason why this is required. Where we receive this request we will provide you with a number to share with the Third Party concerned; this number **must** be quoted in all communication with the College in order to access agreed

information. This does not mean that we will refuse to accept information from a third party with reference to an application but we will not disclose information without permission.

Once we have received confirmation from the applicant confirming the third party we will be able to discuss their application with them and give information on the following:

- Application offer
- Application decision
- Reason for unsuccessful decision
- Confirmation of letters/emails sent

Change of applicant's personal details by a third party
Schumacher College will not share applicants' personal details with third parties. Details could include the applicants' address or telephone number, date of birth or institution of study. If the third party believes these details are wrong, the College will not accept changes from anyone other than the applicant in writing.

Third party definition
A third party could be any of the following people:

- Tutor/Lecturer
- Careers adviser
- Parent/Guardian
- Friend
- Family member
- Agent assisting with your application

All third parties must provide the reference number given to the student by the Postgraduate Administration Office. If they cannot provide the number we will not be able to discuss the application at that time.

Receipt of an application from a contracted Agent is deemed as confirmation of authorisation.

Record keeping

Schumacher College will keep admissions documentation for all students who enroll/register at the College for the duration of their studies and for six years following the end of the student relationship.

Documentation relating to unsuccessful applicants will be retained for the current academic year, plus one year.

Documentation relating to applicants offered a place who then decline, withdraw or fail to enrol, will be held for the current academic year, plus one year.

Where a successful applicant confirms they wish to defer the offer of a place and this is agreed by the Faculty Coordinator for the programme concerned, files will be held securely until registration the following year. If the applicant withdraws or fails to enrol, all documentation will be held for the remainder of the current academic year in which the decision was communicated, plus one year.

Criminal Convictions

All applicants to our programmes are asked to declare whether or not they have a relevant criminal conviction that is not 'spent'.

Please note that the declaration of a criminal conviction does not mean an applicant is automatically ineligible for a programme.

Please read the guidance notes in full below. If you have any queries these should be addressed to the Postgraduate Administration Team postgradadmin@schumachercollege.org.uk.

<u>Guidance Notes – Criminal Convictions</u>

It is important that you read these in conjunction with your application form. Please read the following carefully.

The College's main concerns when considering applicants with criminal convictions are to:

• minimise risk to the safety and well-being of staff, students, visitors, volunteers and others using our services or facilities
• protect Dartington Trust [Schumacher College's] property
• protect Dartington Trust [Schumacher College's] reputation

To help reduce the risk of harm or injury to our students and staff caused by the criminal behaviour of other students, we must know about any relevant[1] unspent criminal convictions that an applicant has.

[1] At this stage of the application process 'relevant' criminal offences include convictions, cautions, admonitions, reprimands, final warnings, bind over orders or similar involving one or more of those listed below:

- Any kind of violence including (but not limited to) threatening behaviour, offences concerning the intention to harm, or offences which resulted in actual bodily harm.
- Offences listed in the Sex Offences Act 2003.
- The unlawful supply of controlled drugs or substances where the convictions concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking.
- Offences involving firearms.
- Offences involving arson.

- Offences listed in the Terrorism Act 2006.
- Warnings, penalty notices for disorder (PNDs), anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) or violent offender orders (VOOs) are not classed as convictions for the purpose of this section, unless you have contested a PND or breached the terms of an ASBO or VOO and this has resulted in a criminal conviction

If you tick the box on our application form declaring that you have a criminal conviction you will not be automatically excluded from the application process.

Applicants with unspent convictions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Those parties involved in decision making are noted below.

What is a 'spent' conviction?

A spent conviction is a conviction which, under the terms of Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, can be effectively ignored after a specified amount of time. The amount of time for rehabilitation depends on the sentence imposed, not on the offence. The more serious the conviction, the longer the period of rehabilitation. For example, if you have received a prison sentence of more than four years, the conviction will never become spent, but cautions become spent immediately (apart from conditional cautions which will become spent after three months).
The Act aims to rehabilitate offenders by not making their past mistakes affect the rest of their lives if they have been on the right side of the law for some time.

For details of the length of time before a conviction becomes spent, the following website provides further information:
https://www.nacro.org.uk/resettlement-advice-service/support-for-individuals/jobs-and-volunteering/disclosing-criminal-records-to-employers/
Unless applying for particular types of work, a person who has spent convictions and cautions does not have to disclose them to prospective employers, and employers cannot refuse to employ someone on the basis of spent convictions.

A conviction that is not spent.

It is against the law to fail to disclose a relevant unspent conviction. Please remember that disclosing convictions does not mean you will automatically be excluded from the application process.
Any admissions decision relating to the disclosure of criminal convictions will be taken in the light of a risk assessment against these criteria.[1]

In addition, Schumacher College will comply with current and future legislation and aims to promote good practice in all aspects of College practice.

[1] Supporting Professionalism in Admissions provide further background and guidance via http://www.spa.ac.uk/good-practice/criminal-convictions.html

This assessment is separate to and will not influence the decision as to whether an applicant is academically suitable for a programme.

Process
Applicants for places on a postgraduate programme will be asked to declare any relevant unspent criminal convictions on the Schumacher College application form.

Convictions that are spent (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) are not considered to be relevant and need not be revealed.

If an offer of a place is recommended, we will then ask the applicant to provide further details of the nature of the offence(s) in order to assess whether an offer can be made (eg a pre-sentencing report and/or references). Failure to provide this information by the requested deadlines may mean we do not make an offer of a place.

The College reserves the right to invite applicants with a declared criminal conviction to interview, particularly if further information relating to the offence(s) is not forthcoming.

Third Parties
We may also need to contact third parties (for example, probation officers) regarding the offence(s). We will only contact third parties when we have gained the applicant's written consent to do so. However, if we do not gain consent it may mean we are unable to make an offer of a place.

If information is received from a third party (anonymous or otherwise) indicating that an applicant has an undeclared criminal conviction, the College will seek verification as appropriate. This may involve contacting the referees provided by the applicant and/or statutory bodies as appropriate. The applicant will also be notified that an allegation has been made against them, although we will protect the identity of the third party if known. If the information is proved to be correct and relevant, standard procedures for dealing with the cited offence(s) will be followed.

Failure to Disclose
Failure to answer questions on application forms or questions subsequently asked by the College accurately could lead to the withdrawal of any subsequent offer of a place, or to the termination of any subsequent registration.

Ongoing Disclosure
An applicant is also required to disclose details if he/she is convicted of an offence after an application has been submitted, but prior to registration with the College. If an applicant is convicted of an offence after registration with the College he/she should immediately notify the Head of Schumacher College.

Confidentiality
Any information relating to criminal convictions will only be seen by those who need to consider it as part of our admissions process or other Dartington Trust/College staff concerned with the initial and ongoing risk assessment in line with the criteria

listed above. We will preserve the anonymity of applicants during these processes wherever possible, and will comply with Data Protection legislation at all times.

Decision Making
Decisions as to whether to offer a place following the declaration of a relevant unspent Criminal conviction will be overseen directly by the Director of Dartington Learning and Chief Operating Officer of Dartington Hall Trust. Either of these may nominate Admissions Staff to deal with straightforward cases.

Anonymised records of decisions made will be kept to act as case studies and facilitate consistent decision making.

[1] Supporting Professionalism in Admissions provide further background and guidance via
http://www.spa.ac.uk/good-practice/criminal-convictions.html