



ADMISSIONS POLICY 2020-21

Updated September 2019

Approved by the Governing Body

1. Overview and mission statement

1.1 Big Creative Academy is an institution for 16-18 year olds specialising in the creative industries. Our curriculum is specialised and offers subjects that provide links to the creative sector. Students will study their chosen creative specialism as well as Maths or English (dependent on entry grades) and Wellbeing to support personal development. The Academy will have strong links with industry that will help ensure young people have the skills, experience and knowledge to progress in their chosen careers. We are an institution that seeks to engage students that have an interest and aptitude in creative subjects and may not have had access to excellent specialist teaching and equipment thus far in this phase of their education.

2. Admissions criteria

2.1 Big Creative Academy's admissions policy will be clear, fair and transparent.

2.2 Big Creative Academy operates as its own admissions authority. Our Admissions Policy is published on our website at www.bigcreative.education, and the agreed admissions arrangements for any year will be published on our website by 30 September of the preceding year. This information will include how many places will be offered in that year, the minimum academic requirements for entry, and how places will be allocated if the Academy is oversubscribed. It will also include details of how the Academy will operate its waiting list.

3. Planned admissions number and capacity

3.1 The capacity of Big Creative Academy will be 250 in September 2019. The published admissions number for 2020-21 is 320. Applications will be accepted for entry in September 2019 from students born between 1 September 2001 and 31 August 2004. Please see Appendix A for the applications timetable.

3.2 There will be up to 20 places available on each of the following courses:

- Music and Performance Level 3 (Year 1)
- Music and Performance Level 3 (Year 2)
- Music Production Level 3 (Year 1)
- Music Production Level 3 (Year 2)
- Performing Arts Drama Level 3 (Year 1)
- Performing Arts Drama Level 3 (Year 2)
- Performing Arts Dance Level 3 (Year 1)
- Performing Arts Dance Level 3 (Year 2)

- Creative Media Level 3 (Year 1)
- Creative Media Level 3 (Year 2)
- Art and Design Level 2 (Year 1)
- Art and Design – Fashion Level 3 (Year 1)
- Art and Design – Fashion Level 3 (Year 2)
- Technical Theatre Level 3 (Year 1)
- Theatrical and Media Make Up Level 3 (Year 1)
- Health, Fitness and Wellbeing Level 3 (Year 1)

4. Minimum Entry Requirements

- 4.1 Applicants must be between the ages of 16-18 on 31 August 2019.
- 4.2 Applicants for Level 2 courses must have at least 4 GCSEs at Grade D / Grade 3 or below (or equivalent) including English.
- 4.3 Applicants for Level 3 courses must have at least 5 GCSEs at Grade C / Grade 4 or above (or equivalent) including English and a Grade D / Grade 3 at Maths.
- 4.4 Prospective students will be offered places on a conditional basis until they receive their GCSE results.
- 4.5 Interested applicants who have taken iGCSEs or other alternative qualifications should contact the school to discuss what our equivalent minimum expectations are.
- 4.6 Students progressing internally must meet the minimum entry requirements (see Appendix B).

5. Application Process

- 5.1 Students or parents/guardians may obtain a prospectus in any of the following ways:
- by phone, written request or by visiting the Academy
 - by visiting our website at www.bigcreative.education
- 5.2 We strongly recommend visiting the academy during an open day before applying. This will enable applicants to understand the way in which the Academy works but is not a requirement for admission.
- 5.3 Applicants should contact the admissions office to complete an application form. Applicants will need to complete a separate form for each course they are interested in.
- 5.4 All applicants who meet the minimum entry requirements will be interviewed for their chosen programme and will be required to take part in workshops and / or auditions. The purpose of workshops and auditions is to establish the applicant's aptitude and talent for their chosen area of study.
- 5.5 The Academy will admit students who are able to demonstrate:
- Aptitude and talent for their chosen specialism
 - A clear commitment and a real determination to study, practice and succeed
- 5.6 These criteria will be scored and assessed by experienced Academy staff using a combination of the following sources of information. The criteria for assessment will be available on request if an applicant wishes to view them:
- Rigorous interview

- Assessment at workshop / audition
- Portfolio of work (physical or electronic)
- References from school or college tutors
- Curriculum vitae

5.7 Big Creative Academy will admit any pupils with a statement of special educational needs whose statement names Big Creative Academy and who meet the minimum entry requirements.

5.8 Once all applicants have been interviewed and assessed the admissions team will meet to discuss the candidates and award places. Decisions to offer a place will be based on eligibility, aptitude and potential.

5.9 Successful applicants will be informed via an offer letter detailing any conditions (for example achievement of grades to meet eligibility criteria).

5.10 In the event of over-subscription candidates not chosen will be placed on a reserve list and informed of their place on the list in order to enable them to evaluate their options.

5.11 Unsuccessful applicants will also be informed via letter. Brief feedback will be provided on request to unsuccessful candidates.

5.12 Applicants offered a place must formally accept the offer within 14 days of the date of the letter or the offer may be withdrawn.

5.13 Big Creative Academy reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place where information received from a third party who works with the applicant or a disclosure is made that leads the Academy to believe that the student may be of a risk to others or requires specialist intervention or an environment that will better meet the needs of the young person. Third parties made include:

- Previous school/college
- Youth offending officer
- Social worker/key worker
- Police officer

6. Oversubscription criteria

6.1 In the event of a course being over-subscribed by learners of equal ability and potential, places will be allocated on the basis of the following criteria:

- Looked after children or formerly looked after children who meet the minimum entry requirements
- In receipt of income support in their own right
- Current or former learner at Big Creative Academy or Big Creative Training
- Distance from the Academy measured by a straight line measured from the front door of the applicant's home to the main gate of the school

6.2 The final criteria (distance) will always be utilised in the event of a tie-breaker. In the case of flats or multiple occupancy measurement will be taken from the main entrance of the building. If this results in a tie, places will be allocated randomly and this process overseen by someone independent of the school.

7. Waiting list

7.1 It may be that some applicants do not receive their predicted grades, or decide not to attend Big Creative Academy for whatever reason. We will therefore establish a waiting list, with applicants prioritised in line with our over subscription criteria.

7.2 Applicants' places will be held on the waiting list until such time as they are offered a place or they request in writing to be removed from the waiting list.

8. Admissions appeals

8.1 The objectives of the admissions appeals procedure are to ensure that:

- (a) applicants are able to have concerns about the admissions process heard
- (b) the Academy's admissions appeals procedures are clear
- (c) throughout the process of admissions the proper procedures are followed

8.2 We recommend that applicants obtain a proof of postage when sending an appeal letter as the Academy cannot be held responsible for receipt. Date stamped envelopes will not be considered proof of postage. We will not accept requests for appeals via email, fax or telephone.

9. Appeals procedure

9.1 If an applicant is not offered a place after the review and the applicant believes that this is because the admissions procedure has not been properly and fairly applied, they may appeal in writing to the Chair of Governors. Letters must be addressed to the Clerk of Governors at the Academy postal address.

9.2 This letter must refer to the admissions criteria and should detail the reasons for the appeal. Appeals must be received in writing within 20 days of the date of the review decision letter.

9.3 The Academy will write acknowledging receipt of the appeal. If the Chair of Governors is not satisfied that the appeal is made on an allowable basis (i.e. failure by the Academy to follow its published admissions procedure) the letter will say this and there will be no further consideration of the matter.

9.4 If the appeal is allowable the Chair of Governors will decide whether to:

- (a) uphold the original decision to refuse a place, or
- (b) refer the application back to be considered afresh.

9.5 The decision of the chair of governors is final and will be communicated in writing within 20 days of the appeal.

10. Late applications

10.1 Applications received after the deadline will only be considered should places remain after the consideration of all applications received on or before the deadline. If following consideration of all applicants the school is oversubscribed applicants may request that they are placed on the Academy's waiting list.

11. Equality and diversity

- 11.1 The Academy, in operating admission arrangements, will do everything it reasonably can to enable every student to perform at their best, and in making acceptance decisions will not discriminate between students on grounds of gender, disability, faith, ethnicity, or sexual preference provided they meet the criteria for entry.
- 11.2 Big Creative Academy will work with the local authority to provide education to students who cannot attend due to medical conditions, and students who are returning to education. Re-integration plans will be implemented as required.

APPENDIX A: TIMETABLE OF APPLICATIONS PROCESS FOR SEPTEMBER 2019 PLACES

ACTIVITY OR ACTION	TIMELINE
2020-21 admission arrangements published.	30 September 2019
Open evenings for prospective applicants and opportunity to meet teaching staff.	October 2019 and ongoing
Applications open	1 October 2019
Application deadline	31 July 2020
Interviews begin	Rolling
Places awarded and offer letters sent	Rolling
Successful candidate accept places by	Two weeks after offer
Unsuccessful candidates notified	Two weeks after interview
Waiting list candidates notified	Two weeks after interview
“Keep in touch” taster sessions	July 2020
Clearing process for unfilled places	August 2020
Inductions start	September 2020
Courses start	September 2020

APPENDIX B: PROGRESSION FOR LEARNERS

Big Creative Academy will designate learners onto courses that stretch and challenge them and are appropriate to meet their needs. It is essential that learners have extensive Initial Assessment activities to identify the correct programme of study for them from their start date.

All students must undertake an Initial Assessment at Interview to gather their English and Maths abilities and use this information in unison with their Accreditation of Prior learning to make a judgement as to which programme of study that they will be enrolled on.

Students requiring support will be evaluated at interview by the Inclusion Lead at the Academy in order to support their application and enrolment on to a programme which meets their needs identifying whether any in class, or discreet sessions are required for that learner.

Upon completion of a course all learners will have a progression interview with their tutor and careers officer with a view to determine the next best step for the learner. Big Creative Academy will support every learner to secure their next step with any organisation that meets the needs of the learner whether it be internally or externally.

General conditions to gain placements on courses at Big Creative Academy.

- Level 2 students will need to demonstrate that they are working towards level 2 in Maths and English and preferably have a relevant level 1 Diploma in their subject area.
- Level 3 learners will need to show that they have either 5 GCSEs at Grade A-C including English or a full Level 2 Diploma with a Merit grade to secure a place on their chosen field of Study.
- Maths is preferable at Grade C or above for students enrolling on Level 3. The Academy will however provide GCSE/Functional skills course in Maths and English to students that have D-E or Level 1 qualifications in Maths and English to support their advancement to Grade C throughout their course of Study.
- All Level 3 students will be supported through the UCAS application process if they desire to undertake an undergraduate course within higher education.

Recruiting with integrity

It is vital that Academy staff recruit with integrity onto vocational qualifications. Big Creative Academy will ensure that learners have the correct information and advice on qualifications they may wish to follow and that the qualifications will meet their needs.

The recruitment process should include the centre assessing each potential learner and making justifiable and professional judgments about the learner's potential to successfully complete the assessment and achieve the qualification, checking the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of mandatory units as well as selecting the most appropriate route of optional units, where applicable.

Such assessment must identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the learner to facilitate access to the assessment.

Where the recruitment process identifies that the learner may not be able to demonstrate attainment and thus gain achievement in all parts of assessment for the selected qualification, this must be communicated clearly to the learner. A learner may still decide to proceed with studying a particular qualification and not be entered for all or part of the assessment.

The centre should ensure that learners are aware of:

- the range of options available, including any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary, to enable the demonstration of attainment across all required assessment
- any restrictions on progression routes to the learner as a result of not achieving certain outcomes.