

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR NEW STUDENTS

Transport: How to get to Bicton College

For information on transport to college and funding support please go to www.cornwall.ac.uk/student-support where you will find detailed information and application forms. If you haven't already done so, you will need to apply as soon as possible to ensure you have everything in place before the start of term.

Registration: Documents to bring

Please use the checklist below to ensure that you bring the following documents with you on the first day of your course. You will need to bring with you some proof of identity. This could be a passport, driving licence or national insurance card. Failure to bring in this documentation could mean the college will be unable to enrol you on your chosen course.

Document	1 st Year Students
Proof of Identity – Driving licence or passport	Yes
Original GCSE / Key Skills certificates or exam slips	Yes
Method of payment for tuition, exam, board and residence fees	If applicable
Proof of benefit for fee remission for over 19's (please ring 01395 562316 to check eligibility prior to registration)	If applicable
If you are a HE student applying for a student loan please bring your SLC assessment	If applicable
If you are a student applying for an Advanced Learning Loan please bring your SLC assessment	If applicable

Initial Weeks

A few weeks after getting to know Bicton and the team, a timetable will be given to you when you first meet with your Programme Manager. The aim of these weeks are to help you familiarise yourself with the campus and the facilities available, and to have a general introduction to your study programme.

Specific activities during this week will include:

- Campus tour
- Course outline and assessment process to be used
- Setting up an IT account
- Introduction to the Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle)
- Health and Safety briefing
- Introduction to the Programme Team
- Enrichment/team building activities
- Vocational area induction
- Student Union
- Safeguarding
- 21 Competencies
- LRC induction

Details of a full programme of events in the evening and at weekends will be available on your first day at Bicton College with both residential and non-residential students welcome to attend.

Please note: All students whose practical activities will include time spent on Bicton Home Farm will be required to wear steel toe capped boots, a Hi-Vis vest (or another suitable Hi-Vis outer layer), and overalls whilst on the farm.

Finance: Tuition Fees

You will receive notification of fees due prior to the course start date.

If you have not been resident in England for the last three years, these fees may be subject to change. Please contact the Management Information Team on 01395 562316 for further details.

If you are aged between 19 and 23 and studying for your first level 2 qualification, you may qualify for waiving of tuition fees.

If you are aged between 19 and 23 and studying for your first level 3 qualification, you may qualify for waiving of tuition fees.

If you are aged 19+ studying a level 3 or level 4 qualification you can apply for an Advanced Learning Loan to cover your tuition fees by visiting www.gov.uk/studentfinance

You can also find guidance on how to apply for other loans and grants. Call the Student Finance Information line on 0845 3005090 or visit www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance. Please ensure that you bring to registration your Student Finance England paperwork.

Finance: Payment of tuition fees

An invoice will be produced with the full amount of your tuition fees.

Payment plans:

Payment plans are available to those students unable to pay the full balance. However, it is expected that the first three months are paid at the start of your course. Any payment plan must be agreed with Finance within a month of receiving your invoice. If you wish to arrange a payment plan please ensure you pay for your first instalment within a month of receiving your invoice. If you are paying your tuition fees via the Advanced Learning Loan you should contact the college on 01395 562316.

Bursaries:

Until any bursaries have been approved by the college and communicated to the individual then the full amount of the course fee/accommodation charges will remain due and any payment plans agreed, also be set up on this basis. Once agreed and communicated, any payment plans will be reduced to take into account any agreed bursary for the remaining period of the agreed plan.

Any questions?

Please visit our Student Funding section on our website or contact the Finance department on 01395 562448 or by email finance@bicton.ac.uk

Please Note: The college will take debt recovery action where necessary should these fees not be paid within the stated time. The college reserves the right to withdraw any student from a course, or prevent progression to a further year or higher level course, if fees remain unpaid.

Funding

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Funding: Fee remission

If you are claiming the following benefits or if you are a named adult dependant on someone who is in receipt of one of these benefits and you are not earning, you may be

entitled to tuition fee remission. Please check with college staff that the course you wish to register for qualifies for fee remission.

- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance (income related only – WRAG)
- Receiving Universal Credit because they are unemployed and are mandated to undertake skills training – income £338 a month (individual claim) or £541 a month (household claims)

To claim fee remission you must provide evidence of your benefit entitlement prior to the 1st September and this document must be dated within six weeks of the start of the course. Failure to do this will result in the college charging you tuition fees.

In the case of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) there are some circumstances under which you can continue to claim JSA while undertaking a course. When considering this please note the following points:

- One of the conditions for receiving JSA is that you must be available for work, you will not generally be considered to be available for work if the course you are undertaking is full time ("full time" is generally understood to mean greater than 16 hours per week).
- You must be prepared to alter times of attendance, give up the course to take a job, or agree a variation of your jobseeker's agreement.
- You must be willing and able to take any job that you are offered immediately. You must also continue to look for work (and keep evidence of your efforts to secure employment) while you are on the course.

If you decide to continue claiming JSA while attending college you should discuss your proposed attendance at college with your Employment Adviser before enrolling on your course.

Students aged between 19-23 may also be eligible for Fee Remission if studying their first full Level 2 or Level 3 qualification.

Supporting your study programme

If you are aged 16-18* and on a full-time course with us, you will be participating in a Study Programme. The Study Programme has been developed because we want to help everyone leaving school become well prepared for the workplace and higher education. Our aim is to broaden your experience; combining a specialist qualification, with skills including English and mathematics as well as preparation and participation in employability.

For learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), this is an essential part of Preparing for Adulthood. We therefore promote independence as much as possible within the study programme, resulting in bespoke approaches to supporting each individual.

*if you are aged 19+ and have an EHCP you are funded as a 16-18 Study Programme Learner.

Supporting your further studies

If you are aged 19+ and on any of our courses, you may be entitled to learning support in order to help you bridge the attainment gap where an identified learning need exists. To access the various types of learning support we offer, a referral will need to be made to our Learning Support Team and an Initial Needs Assessment will be completed by a member of the team to establish the support required.

Study support

Our learning centres, based on every campus, provide a quiet space for independent study. We have a team who can guide you with IT and computer skills, online research and assignment writing. The centres offer PCs and quiet study areas with free internet access and Wi-Fi. There is a comprehensive range of resources available to you, including books, DVDs and journals. Not only do you have access to materials on your campus, you can also access over 150,000 items from learning centres across all eight campuses within The Cornwall College Group via our online catalogue. You can also print, copy, scan and bind documents for final project work.

The learning centres are open Monday – Friday for you to use whenever you want, not just on your days of study. There is also access available during college holidays, relevant opening hours are posted on each campus.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Provision

We are committed to supporting every learner, to ensure they are equipped with the tools and resilience required to successfully achieve their learning goals and aspirations. Please see our SEND PROVISION STATEMENT for further information and details should you wish to talk to someone in person.

Whether you need advice, support, facilities or equipment we will do our best to provide it for you. We want to make sure that you have no problems during your study here at college and are easily able to join in with student life.

When you apply to study with us we will ask you to disclose any additional learning needs you may need help with and put appropriate support in place for the start of your studies. All learners are also able to request various assessments throughout their studies, should they feel they may need support in any of these areas.

To access your Study Programme, further studies, or your Apprenticeship you may also need additional help from our Learning Support Team. This dedicated team is here to enable

equal opportunity, regardless of any physical or learning difficulty / disability and promote progression in line with your learning goals / outcomes. We recognise that you may need support in one or more of the following areas based on the current definition of SEN:

- **Communication and interaction needs** – difficulty in expressing themselves, understanding what others are saying or difficulties socially interacting with others
- **Cognition and learning needs** – difficulties in learning or retaining basic skills or a specific difficulty with reading, writing, mathematics or understanding information
- **Social, emotional and mental health needs** – difficulties making friends or relating to adults. May be withdrawn, isolated or find regulating their behaviours challenging
- **Sensory and/or physical needs** – sensory impairments or difficulties such as those affecting sight or hearing, or physical difficulties which impact on their learning

The graduated response to SEN support

We are committed to providing support in as many formats as possible; all with the aim of meeting your needs but at the same time not hindering your progression. As part of the Graduated Response to SEN Support this means that high quality teaching is the first stage of support we offer. We will continually review your progress and make informed, relevant adjustments as required, which may include working with a member of our support team, or being offered a loan of some useful assistive technology. We also offer a range of targeted interventions to assist you.

If you have any specific questions or would like further information please contact learningsupport@bicton.ac.uk

English, maths and ICT skills for FE students

What are Functional Skills?

Functional skills are core elements of English, mathematics and ICT and are an integral part of your course at Bicton College. They cover the skills we use in all aspects of our studies, work and everyday life.

There are five main levels for each Functional Skill: Entry 1, Entry 2, and Entry 3, Level 1 and Level 2. The level you will be studying depends on your initial assessment result, current skills level and GCSE grade for English and mathematics.

How do Functional Skills benefit you?

Each Functional Skill is a qualification in its own right. They provide you with the essential knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable you to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life, education and work.

Functional Skills will demonstrate to potential employers that you can; use a computer, deal with numbers and communicate with people in an appropriate style and manner, both verbally and in writing.

How are Functional Skills delivered?

Functional Skills English and mathematics are timetabled weekly sessions in which you will update your underpinning knowledge in preparation for externally set tests. You will be given support in English and mathematics which will be closely linked to your main qualification and are embedded into your main course of study.

GCSE English and maths

Alongside timetabled Functional Skills, there will be an opportunity to retake GCSE mathematics and English with formal assessments for both subjects. If you have not yet achieved a grade C in these subjects then we will support you to achieve a grade C, although you may work towards other English and mathematics qualifications as stepping stones towards this goal.

To be entered for a GCSE at Bicton College, you must have previously achieved a Grade 3 or D in mathematics and/or English and your initial assessment / diagnostic results must indicate that you are ready to achieve a grade 4.

Please bring your English and Maths certificates or statement of results with you for your induction.

Many people returning to mathematics and English will follow the Functional Skills route. However, English, mathematics and ICT specialists work closely with teaching staff, programme managers and learning support staff to make sure you are offered the most appropriate qualification to suit your needs. The English, mathematics and ICT team will also update programme managers regularly on your progress during your time at college.

1 Study Programme Entitlement and Conditions of Funding

This relates to all students starting a new study programme of 150 planned hours or more who are aged 16 to 18, or aged 19 to 24 if they have a Learning Difficulty Assessment or Education and Healthcare Plan.

- Learners who do not hold a GCSE grade A*-C or equivalent qualification in maths and/or in English, are required to be studying these subjects as part of their study programme in each academic year.
- Full time students on a study programme of at least 540 planned hours who have a grade D GCSE or equivalent qualification in maths and/or English must be enrolled on a GCSE.
- A student who has grade D in both maths and in English will need to be enrolled on GCSE or approved IGCSE in both subjects in each academic year and is required to continue to study until they achieve at least a grade C or are no longer EFA funded.
- Learners who have less than a D in maths and/or English will be required to continue to study them on an appropriate programme (Functional Skills)
- The student must be timetabled to attend lessons or appropriate blended learning and be progressing in the subject.
- Any student who does not study/attend maths and English mandatory entitlement will be removed from eligibility for funding. (lagged)
- **Therefore The Cornwall College Group has established its policy for academic year 2015-2016. Learners who do not routinely attend the maths and English entitlement agreed with them at the outset of the course will place their status on all components of their study programme in jeopardy.**

Term dates for the academic year 2018 – 19

Please see <https://www.cornwall.ac.uk/student-support/college-calendar-term-dates/>

Residential Services team

The Residential Services team's mission is to keep your social life at Bicton College as full as possible and to be there to support you in everything you do and through any difficulties you may have. They will help you to settle into Bicton College when you first arrive and give you advice on anything you may be having problems with. They also organise evening social events and weekend activities to keep you entertained all year round. These include: swimming, fitness sessions, cinema trips, live music nights, pool competitions, cookery sessions, games nights and much more. For those who enjoy shopping, trips are arranged to Exeter and other shopping spots. Christmas and Summer Balls are also arranged by the team and students and are the main social highlights of the year and an opportunity to dress up and party!

Bicton College has its own fully licensed bar where you can play pool, darts, join in with the weekly pub quiz or socialise with your friends. If you are over 18 then you can enjoy nights out in Exmouth.

Bicton College's Residential Services team supports all students in all areas of welfare, medical, counselling and support. They hold regular block meetings as well as carrying out checks to monitor tidiness. The Residential Services team rewards this tidiness and participation in events with rewards. If you are unsure about anything, the team will be able to point you in the right direction, whether it's to speak to a counsellor or to make an appointment at the local doctor's surgery.

The Residential Services team also arranges trips to the local supermarket, so you can stock up on supplies. Bicton College's dining room provides meals three times a day.

The Gym at Bicton

The Gym at Bicton College is open daily from 9am - 10pm (approx) and is available to all Students and Staff. It has a range of Cardio-Vascular equipment including a treadmill, cross trainer, bikes, rowers and a step machine. It also has a large selection of resistance machines and free weights. Anyone wishing to use the gym must book a gym induction with a qualified member of staff and pay £35.00 for their year's gym membership. If you would like more information or you would like to see the gym please see a member of staff in Residential Services after you have started in September.

Your College, Your Voice, student council and freshers fair

This college believes in the principle of freedom from discrimination for everyone, regardless of their age, disability, ethnic or national origins, gender, sexual orientation, social or religious background, or of being part of any other group which may have experienced discrimination. Students and staff are encouraged to respect and recognise the worth of others. All sections of the community are welcome to apply to the college.

At Bicton College students and staff work together on committees, working parties and through special events to meet the diverse needs of our college population for everyone who lives, studies and works here. We believe in everyone having the opportunity to reach and fulfil their own potential, and staff and students are encouraged to do that. We will work collectively with our students to discover what works best for them and wherever possible, change and improve accordingly.

Our Student Council, run and organised by our Student President and the student course representatives, plays a crucial and active role in this. The Council allows us to hear the student voice and ensures that we are in a position where all students feel that they have a say in 'their' college and an active role to play in the decision making processes. Every year we hold our student-led conference where many suggestions have been taken forward for change, including charges and choice for accommodation and catering.

Whilst we cannot promise to always implement every request called for, we will always give due thought and attention to each petition and if at all possible, will do our best to carry it out. If it is not possible to carry out a request, we will always explain our reasons. The happiness, achievements and welfare of our students is at the core of all we do at Bicton College, and we consider it our duty to listen to every student voice, be it individual or collective.

Student Council

The Student Council is run by the Student President. The Student Council consists of student representatives elected in the first term.

The Council's role is to give all students a voice and to ensure you all have a say about how your college is run.

Meetings are held once a month and senior college managers attend to listen and respond. Your tutor will let you know more once you have started at Bicton.

Freshers' Fair

Freshers' Fair gives you the chance to sign up for our sports teams and other activities, such as clay pigeon shooting. Not only can you sign up for sports and activities, but local businesses also bring stalls and information about the products or services they offer. There

will also be a chance for you to obtain impartial information about different subjects such as alcohol and drug use, sexual health and how to keep healthy.

Calling all potential student ambassadors!

If you think you have the skills to represent Bicton College to visitors, parents and in local schools and are willing to make a positive contribution to the college, as well as your own C.V. then come and talk to the Schools' Team at the Freshers' Fair. Being a student ambassador is a hugely rewarding way to 'put something back' into college and enables you to build up skills to impress employers and Universities/Colleges.

Summary of key contact people and departments

Residential Services

Maxine Bentley, Residential Team Lead

01395 562320

Maxine.bentley@bicton.ac.uk

Student Funding

Lena Welch, Funding and Transport Adviser

01395 562393

Lena.welch@cornwall.ac.uk

Admissions

Louise Winchester, Full-time Admissions

01395 562408

Louise.winchester@bicton.ac.uk

Inclusion, Study Support and Disability Advice

Lydia Cherrett, Coordinator Skills for Life and Learning Support

01395 562406

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