



ADMISSIONS POLICY



Baku Talents Education Complex, June '15. © Sigve Austheim.

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Mission and Structure of the Admissions Department

It is the mission of the Admissions Department to recruit, inform and admit new, qualified students to BTEC in a professional and forthright manner, while maintaining the integrity of the school, the students and their families. We aim to ensure that prospective families understand the BTEC mission, philosophy and community. We also strive to give them a good initial understanding of the British National Curriculum.

BTEC seeks to operate an admissions policy which:

- Meets the requirements of the law
- Meets the needs of parents
- Is consistently applied and clearly understood by all
- Operates within the guidelines established by the relevant authorities

The legal framework for admissions is introduced in the Schools and Standards Framework Act 1998 and important changes have been incorporated into the Education Act 2002.

Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and related Regulations establish a new legal framework for school admissions. It is the intention of the new framework to establish arrangements that:

- are clear, objective and give every child a fair chance of a satisfactory school place;
- give full information for an informed choice;
- ensure local admission procedures which are well co-ordinated and easy to follow with minimum bureaucracy and which give parents the opportunity of having their school preference met;
- give an effective statutory right of appeal if parents are dissatisfied

The Admissions department comprises the Admissions Coordinators, who report to the Principal and are assisted by the Admissions Assistant. Admission decisions are made by the Admissions Committee (see 2.b below).

BTEC welcomes applications from students, or parents of students, residing in Azerbaijan for EYFS and primary education, and from all over the world for secondary and upper secondary education.

Admissions Policy and Procedures

- a. General: Applications for admission are received throughout the year, with the first intake made after 31st of March. No official decision on an application is given until all the relevant documents have been received (except in exceptional circumstances, see 2. c.). Families seeking admission for their child(ren) are advised to apply as early as possible as certain classes fill up quickly. All are encouraged to visit the school's website to learn more about the EYFS, Primary or Secondary divisions, and to download all admission materials.
- b. Admissions Committee and decision-making process: The Admissions Committee is comprised of the Principal, one Admissions Coordinator and Head of Primary or Secondary. When appropriate, additional members of staff will also be consulted. In exceptional periods (such as school holidays), a final decision on an application may be made by two members of the Committee, rather than the three usually required. Application files are reviewed by each member in turn and comments/recommendations are circulated on paper or by email. In cases where it is deemed necessary, the Committee will meet to discuss issues relating to the application in question. From

the time an application is completed, the Admissions Committee aims to return a decision within ten days, pending any further follow-up that may be required. All BTEC students must have a legal guardian who resides in Azerbaijan, and any applicant who will turn 18 before they start school must provide proof of visa before a place can be offered. Parents of existing students are responsible for arranging visas as soon as the student turns 18. These documents are needed for curriculum-related trips, hence are a requirement. The final decision on all applications rests with the Principal.

c. Required application materials: Before a student may be admitted to BTEC, all of the following must be submitted:

- Application fee (non-refundable).
- Student Application Form. This should be completed and signed by the parent or legal guardian and accompanied by one passport-sized photograph.
- Parent Statement. This should be completed and signed by the parent or legal guardian.
- Applicant Statement. This should be handwritten and signed by the applicant (Grades 3 to 13) - in English if possible and without assistance.
- Two full years of school transcripts or reports. These should cover two complete years (the most recently completed academic year and the previous one) as well as the year in progress, if applicable. School reports/transcripts must be in English or Azerbaijani, with official translations provided when originals are written in another language.
- Applications for Nursery - Grade 6 - Confidential School Recommendation
- Preschool - Grade 6 - completed and signed by the applicant's current teacher. In addition, the school may ask for work samples (Grades 1 to 5).
- Applications for Grades 7 - 12 - both of the following Confidential School Recommendation Forms:
 - i. Academic Recommendation – completed and signed by a teacher who has reliable experience of the applicant’s academic performance.
 - ii. Personal/Social Recommendation – completed and signed by a representative of the school who knows the applicant well in a social/pastoral capacity. For example: Counselor, head of Years, Director of Studies, or Principal. Confidential School Recommendations must be submitted directly to the Admissions Office by the current school. These documents must be completed in English or Azerbaijani.
- A photocopy of the applicant's passport (and proof of residency for over 18s). It is the parents’ responsibility to ensure that their child(ren) have the appropriate visa(s) to allow them to study at BTEC.
- Medical Form
 - i. Part 1 – completed by the parents (includes the Learning Support Form).
 - ii. Part 2 – completed by a doctor upon examination of the applicant. For students with specific needs, see “Applicants with specific needs” (section h.). In cases where it is impossible to obtain a given application document, the Admissions Committee will make a collective decision as to whether or not they have

sufficient information in the documents presently available to make an informed decision on the candidate's admission. Information from other sources may be requested in such instances (for example: work samples, obligatory interview). BTEC staff members wishing to enroll their children at the school must follow the usual application procedure. Further information, including details of fee arrangements for staff members, can be found in the Staff Handbook.

- d. Personal Interviews and School Visits: While it is not always possible for overseas families to arrange a visit of the school, it is always preferable to do so. The school reserves the right to request to meet in person any applicant in cases where this is considered necessary (for instance, if the candidate has never attended school before, has had a lengthy absence etc.). Furthermore, a compulsory interview may be required in cases where it is deemed necessary to discuss a candidate's application in more depth in order for a decision to be made.
- e. Criteria for admission: Each candidate's application materials are carefully studied in order to assess suitability for admission. We look for candidates:
 - who are motivated/determined
 - whose academic performance is average to excellent
 - whose conduct is good overall, and who are respectful to others
 - who are, and whose parents are, committed to the BTEC vision, mission and philosophy
 - who are internationally-minded
 - who would benefit from the BTEC curriculum
 - whose qualities would enrich the BTEC community and be a positive contribution to it.

Previous experience with the British National Curriculum can also be an advantage, but is not a pre-requisite for admission. If a student broadly corresponds to BTEC's admissions criteria, but is currently having difficulty reaching his or her full potential, the student may be admitted, in certain cases, pending his or her (and his or her parents') agreement to engage in a program of additional support. This may include, for example: Individualized Personal and Social Education, Counseling, Learning Mentoring, and/or other kinds of learning support as appropriate. Such decisions remain, however, entirely at the discretion of the Admissions Committee. Fluency in English is not a criterion for admission (with the exception of candidates applying for grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 or 13, in which cases a minimum level of English is required). However, we aim to limit the number of students with no prior exposure to English to a maximum of 25% of any one grade. Attention is given to the balance within a class regarding gender, language, specific needs, etc., especially when classes are close to full. At the whole-school level, BTEC aims not to exceed 33% of any one nationality, with the exception of Azeris. The Admissions Committee has the right to accept or refuse any applicant based on their assessment of the applicant's suitability.

Specific admissions criteria are as follows:

- § 1: Students shall apply for admission on the BTEC application form. Under age applicants shall have the approval and signature of the parents/guardian(s).

- § 2: Closing date for applications is 31st of March each year. If there are available places after the closing date, students are accepted consecutively.
- § 3: Students who have passed the preceeding year at BTEC are automatically entitled to continue at BTEC.
- § 4: The Principal decides, in accordance with this Admissions Policy, who is admitted to the school. When admissions decisions are made, after the closing date for applications, new admissions may be made consecutively if the school has available places.
- § 5: Admissions letters are sent to the students home address as declared on the application form, no later than ten days after the closing date for applications.
- § 6: Students, who are not admitted to the school, have the right to appeal the admissions decision. Such appeals shall be made in writing to the Appeals Panel within ten days of receiving the notice, but under no circumstances later than three weeks after the decision was sent the applicant. The appeal must clearly state why the applicant is of the opinion that he or she is entitled to admission, with reference to the relevant paragraph in this Admissions Policy.
- § 7: Students, who are admitted, are entitled to complete the whole academic year, unless the student is expelled (see disciplinary regulations).
- § 8: If the there is an oversubscription at BTEC, students will be admitted in order of the following criteria:
 - a. Current students have first priority, providing they are registered within the closing date each year.
 - b. A child who have a sibling in the school at the time their admission.
 - c. A child where one or both of the parents work(s) for SOCAR.
 - d. A child who have a cousin in the school at the time their admission.
 - e. The academic performance of the students
 - f. Pupils with social and/or medical reasons for attending the school
- § 9: Tie Breaker: Where we have to choose between two or more children in the same category as each other, priority will be determined on the basis of distance between home and school. Measurements are taken by a straight line on a map using the Council's electronic mapping system – the shorter the distance the higher the priority. Measurement points will be from an internal point of the building concerned (usually the visual centre of the building). Flats are therefore taken to be the same measurement point regardless of floor of location. In the above circumstances, if the applicants live in the same block of flats, the allocation will be made by way of drawing lots.

- f. Grade Placement: In general, students will be placed according to their age on September 1st of their year of entry. The school may extend this date to the 15th of September to comply with Azeri regulation. Where it is considered to be of benefit to the student, he/she may be placed in a lower grade than requested. Only under exceptional circumstances will a student be placed in a higher grade than his/her age group. In these cases, the cut-off date may be extended to December 31st.

This is conditioned upon a report from a recognised Educational Psychologist or equivalent, that strongly recommends this. Such a report should take into consideration the student's *intellectual capabilities, social skills* and *emotional intelligence and development*. Other factors to be considered for such a placement include:

- The cut-off date in the child's country of origin (BTEC aims to avoid situations in which children will be penalized on return to their home country, where possible);
- The child's successful completion of the equivalent grade elsewhere;
- A transcript or report cards from the previous year demonstrating exceptional academic performance and social skills. If a student is placed in a grade higher than his/her age-group, the parents are clearly informed that this initial placement is tentative, and that the school may advise a change of grade after the student's abilities have been thoroughly observed. Any change of grade would normally take place within the first two months after the student's entry into the school.

g. Requirements for specific grades: Certain specific requirements apply to three categories of students:

- *All applicants who have not yet attended school*: It is recommended that all candidates in this category meet with the appropriate Principal and/or the Director of Studies prior to registration. This can be a mandatory requirement when it is deemed necessary by the school (see 2.d.).
- *Nursery*:
 - i. The applicant must be fully toilet-trained before commencing school at BTEC
 - ii. The applicant must be able to feed and dress him- or herself reasonably independently
- *Grades 12 and 13*: To successfully transfer into Grade 12 or 13, students must coordinate their choice of subjects with the Director of Studies and/or Secondary School Principal, as they have an overall picture of the courses offered and the space available in each class.

h. Applicants with specific needs: BTEC has a Learning Support program, although the number of students to whom it can be offered is limited by the resources it has available at any given time. Parents or guardians of any applicant having a specific need must submit complete reports with the application. These might include individualized education programs (IEPs), psychological reports or speech and language reports. Any student with significant specific academic or physical needs for which the school does not have adequate resources will not be admitted. Students needing Learning Support may be admitted if it is believed that the school can offer appropriate support and that the children can be placed in the regular classroom. When reviewing the application of a student with specific needs, the Admissions Committee will take into consideration all students receiving learning support in that grade, with additional consultation from the Learning Support specialists. As part of this process, the applicant will usually be interviewed, and the Admissions Committee reserves the right to request that a psycho-educational evaluation be conducted before a decision is made, if necessary. In the case where a specific need has not previously been identified, the school reserves the right to review the situation in order to assess the appropriateness of the student's presence in the school based on

our capacity to address his/her needs. Please note that levels A and B of Learning Support have an additional fee.

- i. Post-review procedure: When a decision has been taken on a candidate's application, parents will be notified of the decision by email or telephone within 48 hours. Subsequently, the action taken varies depending on the decision taken regarding the student:
- Acceptance: If an applicant is accepted, this will be followed by a formal email of acceptance accompanied by the Registration Contract and the Parent Permission and Authorization Sheet. The Registration Contract must be completed and returned to the Admissions Office, within 10 days of receipt, along with a Registration Deposit for each child, in order to officially reserve the space(s). The Parent Permission and Authorization Sheet must be completed and returned before the applicant begins school. There may also be additional subject choice forms to complete, depending on the grade level. If the offer of a place has not been accepted by the 10-day deadline, it can be offered to another family.
 - Denial: If an applicant is denied a place, a formal letter or email is sent to confirm this.
 - Waiting lists: If an applicant is accepted but no space is available in the appropriate class, he/she will be placed on a waiting list, and the parents will be sent a letter or email to confirm this. When a place becomes available in the appropriate class, it will be offered to a student on the waiting list. Criteria used to decide which student on the waiting list is offered the place include:
 - i. Siblings already attending, accepted in or applying to the school
 - ii. The existing gender balance of the class
 - iii. The existing language balance of the class
 - iv. Background/experience in a British National Curriculum program
 - v. Any of the Criteria for Admission detailed in section 2. e.

A family's planned length of stay may also be taken into account in such cases, although we appreciate that this is difficult to predict accurately given the partly transient nature of our population.

The above criteria may also be applied in cases where several applicants are competing for a limited number of remaining spaces in a given grade.

- Deferrals and Re-entries: An applicant who has been accepted or waitlisted can choose to defer his or her place to the following academic year, provided that the school receives notification in due time and there are still spaces available. In such cases the Application Fee is also deferrable one academic year, although all deferrals are subject to Admissions receiving satisfactory additional school recommendations and school reports/transcripts over the course of the school year preceding the deferred entry.

Students who are enrolled in the school and then leave can re-enter the school at a later date without incurring a new Entry Fee, provided that the re-entry occurs within 5 years of the departure from the school. The school reserves the right to request new

submissions of any of the usual application documents, and the Application Fee if the re-entry occurs more than one academic year after the departure, before agreeing to a re-entry.

- j. Registration: An accepted applicant's place in the school is guaranteed only after a completed Registration Contract (signed by the parents) and Registration Deposit have been received by the school, and after the Registration Contract has been signed by the Principal. The Accounting department then sends an invoice to the family for the remainder of the tuition fees (see section l.). At this point, responsibility for maintaining and updating the student's records (changes of contact details, etc.) passes to the appropriate EYFS, Primary or Secondary School member of staff.
- k. Re-registration process: Every January the Admissions Department gathers preliminary information about parents' intentions for the following year through an electronic survey and, where appropriate, follow-up telephone calls. This information is used as an initial basis for enrolment planning for the following year, but the answers provided during the survey are not binding on the part of the parents. Formal re-registration takes place in late March, once the fees and calendar have been approved, and have been published. At this time, a Registration Contract and fee schedule are sent to all families. Parents intending to re-register their children at BTEC for the following academic year must sign and return the Registration Contract, along with the Registration Deposit, by the given deadline (usually around the end of the month). Failure to do so may result in the place being given to another candidate. In certain cases, where there is a financial, academic or behavioral issue with a student, parents may not be invited to re-register their child(ren) until the situation has been resolved, and in some cases will be refused re-registration. The Principals and/or Accounting department are responsible for coordinating any necessary communication with the families concerned with the resolution of such issues. As soon as the completed Registration Contract and Deposit are received by the Admissions Office, and the Contract is signed by the Principal, the student(s) are re-registered for the following academic year. The Registration Contract and Deposit, are then passed on to the Accounting department who invoice for the remainder of the coming year's fees.
- l. Fees:
 - General: The application, entry and tuition fees are set out in the Fee Schedule each year. Tuition fees are payable once a year before July 1st, although parents paying the tuition fees themselves may make special arrangements with the Accounting department to pay the tuition in installments.
 - Financial Assistance:
 - i. Financial aid: Currently the school has no financial aid, nor do we offer any discounts.
- m. Follow-up procedures:
 - For new students at the start of the school year
 - i. General: Just prior to the start of the academic year, all new student files are handed over to the relevant EYFS, Primary or Secondary School administrative

assistant(s). At that time, class teachers and grade heads are invited to consult the files, and can contact Admissions for specific information about any new student at any mutually convenient time. The files of any new students with specific needs are discussed with the Learning Support department on an individual basis, as part of the admissions process.

- ii. Secondary School students: There will be a special orientation day for all new Secondary School students (and parents) just prior to the first day of full classes. The Principal and the grade heads will introduce the students to the school, its rules and regulations, and the various buildings, and will orient the students to life at BTEC in order to prepare them for a smooth transition into their new school. Students may also have placement testing in certain subjects during this period.
 - iii. Primary School students: There will also be an orientation session for new Primary School students (and parents) just prior to the start of classes. Each classroom teacher will continue to individually ensure a smooth transition for all new children once the academic year begins. Students may also have testing in certain subjects (notably English) during this period.
- For new students arriving during the course of the year
 - i. General: The Admissions department informs primary or secondary staff as appropriate, as well as all administrative staff, of the arrival of new students with an e-mail providing the student's grade, entry date and any relevant background details. The Admissions Office will also inform the PTA President and appropriate PTA class representative(s).
 - ii. Secondary School students: New students who arrive during the year will be given an orientation by the Head of Secondary, the relevant curriculum coordinator, the Director of Studies, and one of the Admissions Coordinators.
 - iii. Primary School students: There is no specific orientation program for new Primary School students arriving mid-year. Rather, each classroom teacher ensures a smooth transition for all new children.

Open Days

BTEC arranges one or more Open Day(s) during the academic year for parents and prospective students.

Entrance Tests

BTEC arranges one or more Entrance Test(s) during the academic year for prospective students. These arrangements require that in order to be eligible for consideration for admission to the school, would-be students must pass an entrance examination. On the day of testing all students will take Verbal and Non-Verbal Reasoning tests, in addition to specific subject tests as specified by BTEC. Details of the tests will be sent to the students soon after the closing date for applications. All applicants will be tested together. On the basis of their test results students will either reach the required standard for consideration for admission or will fail to reach the required standard. The scores for the entrance tests are adjusted (or "standardised") according to age. There is, therefore, no advantage in taking the test either early or late in the year. The Admissions Committee will then consider which students have met

our entrance requirements and this information will then be passed to the prospective students, whereupon we will then allocate places in accordance with the results. If an application is made it does not commit the applicant to accepting a place.

Published Admission Numbers

The school's Published Admission Number for Nursery is 80. Maximum class sizes are taken to be 27, but 20 from primary and onwards. In exceptional cases the school can admit 21 students, for instance if a non-Azeri teacher brings his/her child to the school, and the class is already full. Suitably qualified students may be admitted when there are vacancies. Such students will be required to produce evidence that they can benefit from a BTEC education. This is normally a report from their current school and the results of tests administered by the staff of BTEC. If there is a vacancy in the year group, students who wish to be admitted to the school will be required to sit an entrance test. The place will then be offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria as stated above. In the event that two or more applicants are of equal ranking for this place then priority will be given to the student in accordance with what is described above. Alternatively if the year group is full, parents may still request that the school tests their child(ren). However, the school will be unable to offer a place as the school cannot offer places above its Published Admissions Number but parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel.

Applications from Separated Parents/Carers

Only one application can be considered for each student. Where parents/carers are separated it is essential that agreement is reached by both parties concerning the nominated preferred school. If agreement cannot be reached BTEC will only consider the application from the parent/carer who is the prime carer of the child. The prime carer is the parent/carer in whose name Child Benefit payments are made.

Applications for Children of Multiple Births

If applications from children of a multiple births span the threshold for the published admission number, this will be treated as an exceptional circumstance and they will be admitted.

Applications for Students Outside their National Curriculum Year Group

- A student cannot normally be tested or accepted into a year group if they are too old for that year group
- A student who is too young for a year group can be tested if
 - i. They are already being taught in that year group in another school; and
 - ii. They have a letter of support from their existing Principal

For more information on this, see section 2f.

Admission to the Sixth Form

Students are normally required to have achieved six IGCSEs (including Mathematics, Sciences and English) at grades A* to C with an A*, A or B in the subjects chosen at advanced level or in a related subject.

Students attaining this academic qualification in Year 11 at BTEC have an automatic entry to Year 12. Students from other schools, have to have achieved the same academic requirement as students in Year 11 at BTEC. A student can only be admitted for a particular AS level if there is a place on the course. In

the event of the over-subscription to the Sixth Form, priority will be given to the students who scores highest in rank order on the above criteria i.e. success at IGCSE and suitability for A level studies.

Parents who are not offered a place for their child in the College

Parents who are not offered a place for their child at the college, are entitled to appeal to an independent committee under provisions of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended by section 40 of the Education & Inspections act 2006, only if there is maladministration, an unreasonable decision or the admission criteria is non-compliant. Parents wishing to appeal in these circumstances should complete an appeal form available from the school. The form should be sent to the Clerk to the Appeal Committee, via the school, within 15 school working days from the notification of the decision not to admit.

Definitions

'Sibling' – This means a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.

Parents/Guardians and Family Members - A parent is any person who has parental responsibility for, or is the legal guardian of, the child.

Home Address - The home address where a child lives is considered to be the address at which he or she is ordinarily resident during term time. Where a child spends time with parents who have shared parental responsibility at more than one address BTEC will consider the home address as being where the prime carer resides. The prime carer is the parent/carer in whose name Child Benefit payments are made.

Applications and Further information:

Applications should be made to:
The School Admissions Committee
Baku Talents Education Complex
Mikayil Aliyev 20-41
Neftchiler pr 73, Baku
AZ 1119, Azerbaijan.

Applications can also be made on-line at the BTEC's website: www.btec.az.

The same address and website can be used to obtain further information regarding admissions.