

# Advice note for pre-registration inspections of university technical colleges (UTC)

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School name	Aston University Engineering Academy
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## Context of the school

Aston University Engineering Academy is to be a 14 to 19 mixed University Technical College sponsored by Aston University. Accommodated in purpose-built premises on the University campus in the heart of Birmingham, the academy aims to be nationally recognised as a centre of excellence in providing the very best engineering and technical education for successful and rewarding careers.

The academy plans to open on 5 September 2012 with just over 40 students in Year 10 and over 80 students in Year 12; of these, less than 10% are female and it is one of the academy's priorities to increase this proportion. It will offer boys and girls of compulsory school age (Years 10 and 11) the opportunity to take a core engineering course alongside their GCSE studies in English language and literature; mathematics and additional mathematics; physics, chemistry and biology either individually or in combination for a double award; and an applied modern foreign language. In Years 12 and 13, students' A level choices will include mathematics, chemistry, physics, mathematics for engineers, applied art and design, English, modern foreign languages and an AS or equivalent course in business. All students will follow enrichment programmes including sports, personal, social and health education and citizenship, together with a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Information and communication technology will be readily available to, and used by, students across the curriculum.

The Academy's purpose-built accommodation is nearing completion and is due to be handed over on 3 September 2012. Students will have exclusive use of the University's campus sporting facilities as part of their timetabled provision and will have access to these facilities for their personal use at other times.

## **Compliance with the regulations**

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

The academy is likely to meet all the requirements for registration. Implementation could not be seen as the academy is not yet operating. Based on a comprehensive policy and detailed schemes for personal, social and health education and citizenship, the academy's proposed provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is appropriate and is grounded in the academy's aims. The academy proposes to offer students a wide range of social and cultural activities, including visits and visitors, to promote their development and understanding of the arts, technical innovation and industry, and public services and institutions in England. The academy's policies and procedures promote high expectations of students' behaviour, positive attitudes to learning and respect for others. Students will have many opportunities to develop their confidence and self-esteem, through academic and enrichment curricular provision and as active members of the academy community. Respect for the law and for the differing views and opinions of others, including those of different faiths and cultures, are to be promoted additionally through links with the university and with schools in the West Midlands.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The academy is likely to meet all of the requirements for registration. Implementation could not be seen as the academy is not yet operating. The academy's safeguarding policy reflects the guidance provided by the Secretary of State and details about the local safeguarding board are included in an appendix. The designated person for child protection is due to attend and complete training at the required higher level prior to the academy opening; confirmation of the booked place on a recognised course was provided during the inspection. The school plans to provide other staff with appropriate training in safeguarding procedures as part of their induction training, so that requirements will be met. The academy has a suitable policy for recruiting staff which takes account of safer recruitment guidelines. The Principal Designate and other senior staff have undertaken training in safer recruitment practice. All the required checks are being made on staff and the members of the proprietorial body as they are appointed.

The academy's policies for promoting students' good behaviour, preventing bullying and ensuring their health and safety, both in the school and when on visits, meet requirements. A confidential computer-based record will be maintained of the sanctions imposed on students for serious misbehaviour. The new building has been designed to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and a comprehensive risk assessment brief was scrutinised on this inspection visit; compliance will be confirmed in the documentation provided when the building is handed over to the academy on 3 September 2012. The academy's architects have incorporated the latest requirements for ensuring access to the premises and the academy is ensuring a high level of access to the curriculum and to information. Once it opens, the academy intends to carry out a full audit and establish a new

three-year accessibility plan from this baseline. The Principal Designate and other staff hold current first aid certificates and it is planned to train staff in first aid procedures as part of their induction process. The first aid policy provides explicit guidance on dealing with body fluid spillages and when to call for expert assistance. The academy has commissioned an electronic database to provide admission and attendance registers that reflect requirements. While this could not be seen in operation during this inspection visit, confirmation of its readiness for when the academy opens was obtained from scrutiny of documentation.

### **Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

The school is likely to meet all of the requirements for registration. All the required checks are made about staff and the members of the proprietorial body, including enhanced disclosures obtained from the Criminal Records Bureau. These are clearly recorded on the academy's single central register. The academy's records of the checks made on the identity and qualifications (where required) of staff, together with their medical fitness and any other checks, have been completed for those staff already in post, and are in the process of being completed for those recently appointed. The academy obtains and checks written references on all applicants. The Chair of the Proprietorial Body has been checked by the Secretary of State.

### **Premises of and accommodation at the school**

The academy is likely to meet all the requirements for registration. The premises are at an advanced stage of construction. Discussions with the construction team leader, together with scrutiny of planning schedules, indicate that work is proceeding at a brisk pace and is likely to be completed within the expected timescales. The timetable for the installation of equipment and machinery has been agreed with suppliers and specialist contractors, details of which were scrutinised and confirmed during this visit. Some teaching rooms have been completed, including those fitted out as laboratories, and a number of washrooms have been installed. These demonstrate the high standard of finish and fitness for purposes detailed in the architect's plans and models. All mains services will be connected to the academy and there are no concerns about their functionality. Agreements have been signed with contractors to maintain the premises and to ensure they are kept clean and tidy. The standards of decoration, lighting, ventilation, heating and flooring specified and, in those rooms completed, are likely to meet requirements. There will be suitable access, including for people using wheelchairs, and sufficient exit routes in the case of emergency are already established.

Two state-of-the-art kitchens are being installed to provide halal and non-halal meals respectively and the restaurant area is of sufficient size for the number of students sought, together with staff. Classrooms are of a generous size and a sample scrutiny of orders and invoices confirms that the provision of furnishings and fittings is likely to meet requirements. There are sufficient washroom facilities for staff and visitors, and for the number of students sought. There is a room designated for students who are ill, for which the appropriate fittings and furnishings are awaiting installation. A

suitable and secure paved area will be available for students' recreation and for court sports. The academy's central hall and the adjoining multi-gymnasium will be used for physical education and recreation. There are suitable changing room facilities for male and female students, and for staff. The academy will have exclusive timetabled use of the nearby university's sporting facilities, including outdoor pitches for team games. The security of the building and grounds are likely to meet requirements and the proposed partnership with the university is not likely to impact adversely on the academy's arrangements for students' health, safety and welfare.

### **Provision of information**

The provision meets all regulations.

### **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The provision meets all regulations.

## **Recommendation to the Department for Education**

### **Registration**

Is registration recommended?

- **YES. This school is likely to meet all regulations when it opens and is recommended for registration.**

Recommended number of day pupils: 600

Recommended number of boarders or residential pupils (if applicable): n/a

Recommended age range: 14 to 19 years

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: n/a