

## Headstart Parents' Guide

### A quick 'heads up' for EDT Headstart parents

We realise that parents are sometimes the last to know what their sons or daughters are planning! As parents ourselves we understand that you might like to know a bit more than they're willing to share, so you can help them make necessary plans or at least be aware of what's going on – especially if you are trying to book holidays, or have other children to organise. We've put together this informal, friendly paper to guide you, but would urge you to please read this in conjunction with the rest of our website, so that you are well-informed. We also ask that you encourage your son and daughter to "own" their application and take this chance to use their initiative to make their own decisions and arrangements in the run up to (hopefully) attending a course.

### The early stages - applying:



Your son or daughter may be told at school that an EDT Headstart course is a good idea for them, or they may have found out about these opportunities on our website, so they could apply online without mentioning anything to you. When applying they'll have expressed a preference for up to five courses. It's important that they understand this is a preference and not a booking for a course.

Once they've submitted their application to us online, we'll check it and make sure that we have all the information we need. We take every application very seriously and we start making provisional allocations when they come through and so it's helpful if we receive applications as soon as possible after applications open. This is because we receive around 3,500 applications, and it takes time to read them all and decide who we can offer a place to. We don't make a final decision on who'll be offered a place until the point of offer (see below).

### My son or daughter is exceptionally talented and only wants the EDT Headstart Oxford or Cambridge courses – our suggestions on course preferences

Oxford and Cambridge would love to welcome everyone, but they have limited places and they simply can't! Some parents think that Headstart is a type of open day and their son or daughter will have time to wander around a uni, chatting to admissions tutors and gain an advantage in that way. Headstart is an intense experience, intended to give students a flavour of Engineering, Maths, Science and Technology subjects. What is important is that young people are excited and passionate about the subject they take. We encourage students to be open-minded with their Headstart course preferences, so they can be well equipped to make informed decisions when they apply for their under-graduate studies. Perhaps an exciting Headstart course at a venue they'd not considered before might be just perfect for them to get the information they need for their UCAS application?

### Acknowledgement that application has been submitted

When the application is submitted online a confirmation email is sent to the email address entered on the application. It is important the student looks out for this email and that they have added our email address [headstartteam@etrust.org.uk](mailto:headstartteam@etrust.org.uk) to their address book or safe senders list and join our  Facebook group TheEDTUK. We'll use Facebook to announce important information or updates, but we'll also post these on our website. They can also follow us on Twitter  @TheEDTUK.

We know that if students don't store our address, their computers might reject our emails, or divert them to their trash. If that happens, the student could **miss out on a place**, so you can see why we stress this point. It's also important for students to remember which email address they've given to us.

### Application query

We check all applications to make sure we have all the information we need and email the student if we have any query. We cannot consider their application until they have replied to the query.

**When we make an offer:**

If the student is lucky enough to get an offer, we will send it by email to the email address they've given us when they submitted their application. The acceptance deadline date will be one week later, by which time we will need to receive full payment online. Please note that once a payment has been made, this is non-refundable. Please check your calendars beforehand for availability.

**How will the students know?**

We will send a text the same day as we email the offer to the student to let them know an offer has been sent – but they must look out for the email and treat it seriously, otherwise they will lose the offer of the place because we won't hold the offer open past the acceptance deadline and we won't chase students.

**How will a parent know an offer has been issued to their son or daughter?**

We will email both emergency contacts the student has given us on their application the same day as we email the offer to the student. In many cases, the person named is a parent. Please look out for this email and ask your son or daughter if they have received their course offer email. We do not chase up "no replies" so if we don't hear back by the acceptance deadline, we will assume the student doesn't want the place and it will be offered to someone else.

**Paying for a course using a debit or credit card**

We ask you to pay for the Headstart course online using a debit card. As you may already be aware, companies are charged when consumers use credit cards to pay for purchases. Even though we are a charity, these rules do still apply. So could we please ask that if you are intending to pay for your course using a credit card that, you consider using a debit card if possible? If this isn't possible we have added an extra product, this is an optional £10 credit card charge.

We are a charity and do not receive any government funding so your help with lowering these costs would be greatly appreciated.

**Holidays, DofE and work experience – these are some of the clashes we hear about!**

We do understand that people have lots going on during the summer and that this period seems to be the worst time for commitments clashing. However, once a student has told us which courses are their preferences, we do ask that they try to keep those dates free so they can accept a course if it's offered to them. It's unlikely that we will be able to find an alternative course if your son or daughter declines the offer of a place on a course, they've told us is one of their five preferences. However, if they have submitted their application and they subsequently find out that they are on a DofE expedition or similar which causes a clash, please ask them to email [headstartteam@etrust.org.uk](mailto:headstartteam@etrust.org.uk) urgently (before an offer is issued) so that we can make a note on their application and try avoid this date.

**What if our contact details change or we move to a new house?**

We cannot stress more strongly that it's essential we know how to get in touch with your son or daughter, so please ask them to tell us by email to [headstartteam@etrust.org.uk](mailto:headstartteam@etrust.org.uk) if an email address, contact phone number or postal address changes.

**Joining instructions**

Once a student has accepted a course place and made a payment, we tell the university that they are definitely coming. Normally around three weeks before the start of the course, the university will email the student and send them joining instructions, which will include information about what to bring and where to go. We recommend that you don't book travel arrangements that incur a cost before you get the joining instructions.

**It is not acceptable to arrive late or leave early**

EDT Headstart courses are very over-subscribed (1,100 students didn't get a place last year) and universities use these summer schools as part of their outreach programme. They are keen to have students who are truly committed to taking part and do not look favourably on students who arrive late or leave early. It disturbs the programme and makes it very difficult to run the course. We display all the details of start and finish times on our website (and in our offer emails) so that students and parents can be fully informed. Universities would prefer not to negotiate with parents and students who phone to organise "a special favour" and feel embarrassed and awkward about these calls. If you or your son or daughter cannot commit to the timings of a particular course, please make an alternative selection.

EDT (Engineering Development Trust) is a registered charity in England and Wales (1156066) and in Scotland (SC039635), and is a company limited by guarantee (number 8879288).

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