



# Cardiff Academy

## ADMISSIONS POLICY & PROCEDURES

September

2018

**Date approved: September 2018**

**Approved by: Principal**

**Frequency of review: Annual**

**Last review: September 2018**

**Next review due: September 2019**

## **Introduction**

*Cardiff Academy Student Admissions Policy and Procedures* relate to the application and admission of students to Cardiff Academy programmes.

## **2. General principles underlying this policy and procedures**

The policy and procedures used to admit students are transparent, explicit, clear, and consistently applied.

The policy and procedures used to admit students provide equal opportunities for students with:

- special educational needs and disabilities
- The policy and procedures used to admit students provide equal opportunities to all students regardless of gender, sexuality, nationality, race, colour, culture and religion
- Students are offered unbiased guidance and advice
- Students have the right to appeal unsuccessful applications
- Students have the right to complain about any aspect of the way in which their application and/or admission was managed
- A policy and procedures exist for handling student appeals and complaints in a fair, effective and time-bound way
- Cardiff Academy reserves the right to cancel courses onto which students have been accepted, in accordance with its Terms and Conditions.
- Cardiff Academy abides by UK data protection laws.

## **3. Application of policy and procedures**

*Cardiff Academy Student Admissions Policy and Procedures* apply to the application and admission of all students, including those already studying at Cardiff Academy.

All agents, feeder schools and individual students applying for programmes are made aware of the relevant terms of *Cardiff Academy's Student Admissions Policy and Procedures* as part of the application process.

Admissions is accountable for ensuring that appointed agents, feeder schools and individual students abide by the terms of this policy when completing and submitting applications. Admissions is additionally accountable for ensuring the validity of information included in application forms and information/evidence provided in support of student applications and, other than in exceptional circumstances, for the subsequent decision to admit students to Cardiff Academy programmes.

## **4. The role of Admissions**

Admissions manages the student application and admissions process, from providing the materials and means for application through to the students' arrival at college to begin their studies.

All applications and admissions are processed by Admissions in accordance with *Cardiff Academy's Student Admissions Policy and Procedures*, *Cardiff Academy's Term and Conditions*, *Cardiff Academy's Academic Programme Entry Requirements*, and *Cardiff Academy's Complaints Policy and Procedures*.

## **5. Entry requirements**

Entry requirements include minimum and maximum student age, academic qualifications and/or record, English language level.

Requirements are applied to ensure that students meet Home Office requirements for study in the UK, have sufficient English language knowledge and skills to ensure language is not a hindrance to academic progress, and are at an appropriate academic level to allow them to succeed on their chosen programme.

The Management agree programme entry requirements annually and liaise with Admissions and Marketing teams to ensure any changes are embedded into application materials and procedures.

The annual review of entry requirements follows this three-step process:

1. Review of requirements (July - September) in context of:
  - a. Outcomes/results for students accepted following referral for exceptional consideration in the academic year just ending
  - b. Market changes/issues (input by *Marketing*)
  - c. Competitor changes (input by *Marketing*)
2. Evaluation and recommendations by Principal (October)

Please refer to the Principal for current *Entry Requirements*

## **6. Student application and admissions process**

Student applications to Cardiff Academy programmes are usually received through one of the two routes shown below:

- Via an approved local and or international agent
- Local school
- Directly from an individual

All applications must be completed and submitted in accordance with the requirements of the application documents, and must include all relevant supporting documents/evidence.

## **7. Students with relevant medical history and/or special educational needs and disability**

Cardiff Academy will ensure that application and admissions processes comply with the relevant Cardiff Academy's Safeguarding and Wellbeing *policies* that all agents, students and students' parents/guardians can view the latest version of these documents online.

For students under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must provide details of known medical issues (medical conditions or allergies that require attention/notification and any prescribed medicine taken on a regular basis) on the student's application form and sign a disclaimer at the end of the form giving permission for the administration of first aid and appropriate non-prescription medication, and to seek medical, dental or optical treatment when required. Students over 18 years

of age must provide the details requested on the application form and sign the declaration personally.

In addition, Cardiff Academy will request that each student/their representative return a completed copy of a *Health Declaration Form* as part of the admissions process before arrival at their college. This form provides the college with details of medical conditions and SEND and should be signed by the student's parent or guardian for students under 18 years of age. Students aged over 18 years of age may sign the declaration personally.

Where appropriate, Cardiff Academy will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students during their period of study at the College.

## **8. Student application and admission timelines**

Cardiff Academy will only process applications if sufficient time is available to carry out their admission processes fully and if all necessary arrangements can be put in place to enable the student to begin their studies on or within 1 week after the programme start date.

For applicants who are too late to be enrolled on their chosen programme, Cardiff Academy will provide information regarding options to study on alternative programmes starting at a later date, or regarding deferred entry for their chosen programme.

Students whose applications are successful will be offered a conditional/unconditional place within 2 weeks of their application being received.

Students whose applications are not successful will be notified within 48 hours of their application being received.

Students holding a Conditional Offer, but who subsequently fail to meet the relevant conditions, will be notified within 48 hours that their Conditional Offer had been rescinded

Students who receive a conditional or unconditional offer must sign and return the acceptance and indemnity and provide proof of payment form provided to initiate the Cardiff Academy confirmation process and guarantee their place on a programme.

Students will be made aware that places on programmes will only be guaranteed following confirmation of acceptance of an offer, provision of any requested materials and payment of the requested deposit, and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

## **9. Application outcomes**

Students applying for a place on a programme before the specified application deadline will have one of three outcomes:

- Application is successful and an offer of an unconditional place is made
- Application is successful and an offer of a conditional place is made
- Application is unsuccessful.

Admissions staff aim to consider and respond to applications within two business days. However, where a decision is not able to be made (due to a lack of information or the need to consider

mitigating circumstances) this time may be extended. When this occurs, Admissions staff contact Agents/applicants to advise on the status of their application.

The following guidelines should be used to determine the application outcome:

- A student whose application information has been validated by Cardiff Academy and meets all entry requirements will be offered an unconditional place on their chosen programme, subject to availability
- A student who is awaiting results of tests or examinations, or who needs to undergo tests/assessments to determine whether they meet entry requirements, will be offered a conditional place on their chosen programme, subject to availability, if they are predicted to meet the entry requirements or have demonstrated through previous/informal assessment that they are capable of meeting the entry requirements
- A student who fails to meet entry requirements will either be unsuccessful in their application, and receive information regarding alternative study paths
- In most cases, a student with a previous history of academic impropriety or a poor discipline record will be unsuccessful in their application. However, Admissions will evaluate and make a decision regarding each situation individually.

#### **10. Unsuccessful applications and failure to convert conditional offers**

If a place is not offered because a student's application does not meet entry requirements for the chosen programme at the time of application, Admissions must ensure that the student clearly understands the reasons behind the decision not to accept them onto the programme. If appropriate, Admissions will provide details of options the student could consider to help them to attain the required elements for entry to the same programme in the future. Alternatively, Admissions will provide details of and relevant application documentation for programmes for which the student does meet, or can readily take steps to meet, the entry requirements.

If a student narrowly fails to meet programme entry requirements, Admissions has the option to refer them to the Principal for exceptional consideration in accordance with the stipulations for referral and procedures.

Students who fail to meet the conditions of their original offer will be encouraged to apply to an alternative programme for which they may be more academically suited, or defer their entry until they have met the entry requirements for the programme.

#### **11. Admissions appeals and complaints**

Students have the right to appeal against any decision taken during the application process. An appeal can be made by an individual student or by their representative.

Students also have the right to complain about any aspect of the application or admission process and the service that they receive.

Appeals and complaints must be made in accordance with *Cardiff Academy's Admissions Appeals and Complaints Policy and Procedures*.

## **12. Offering places on Cardiff Academy's programmes**

- A student receiving an offer of a place at one of Cardiff Academy programmes should clearly understand:
- The details, terms and any conditions of the offer
- That the offer can be withdrawn based on failure to meet the conditions on which it is made
- The total fees associated with their programme of study and the related payment plan
- That programme places are not secured when an offer is made but will only be guaranteed following confirmation of acceptance of an offer, provision of any requested materials and payment of the requested deposit, and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis
- How to accept or decline the offer
- Where to direct any queries they may have for the remainder of the admissions process.

## **13. Exceptional and Borderline Cases**

Cardiff Academy recognises that some students may have mitigating circumstances that they wish to be taken into consideration when an application is processed.

A proactive request to consider these mitigating circumstances from the outset of an application is termed as a request for an Exceptional Case. Typically, an Exceptional Case is a known and significant deviation from the published entry requirements and a student/agent requests to make a case for the mitigating circumstances to be considered as part of the application. In this instance Admissions will undertake further investigations which may include an interview with the student, before reaching a decision. If Admissions endorses the mitigating circumstances, details are provided in writing as part of the application process. The Admissions Coordinator will present this written endorsement to the Principal for consideration, who will have the overall decision on whether to recognise the mitigating circumstances and accept the student onto the requested course of study.

A reactive request by an Admissions Coordinator to consider a minor deviation from the published entry requirements is termed as a Borderline Case. In this instance the Admissions Coordinator will document the nature of the 'near miss' to the entry requirements and present this to the Principal for consideration, who will have the overall decision on whether to recognise the mitigating circumstances and accept the student onto the requested course of study.

## **14. Confirming student places on Cardiff Academy programmes**

Following a student's acceptance of an unconditional offer, or successful conversion of a conditional offer, Admissions will contact each student, or their representative, to confirm their place and provide all relevant logistical and programme information and advice.

When all outstanding conditions have been met within a Confirmation, and within 12 weeks of the start of a course of study, the Admissions team will issue the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (also known as the 'CAS'). The CAS is an electronic document that allows the student to apply for a visa to study within the UK.

Prior to the CAS being supplied to the student, a statement of the information to be used in the CAS is first issued which requires the student to check the accuracy of the given information. Upon receipt of a signed CAS declaration form and the appropriate CAS payment the formal CAS is then usually issued to the student's representative.

Some students may require further checks prior to an issuance of a CAS for visa compliance purposes, this may include a financial documents check. Students may also be required to attend an interview to assess the credibility of their intentions for studying in the UK on their chosen course. This interview broadly resembles the interview the student may undertake as part of their visa application.

### **15. Pre-arrival processes and checks**

Following confirmation, Admissions will keep in contact with the student's representative throughout the remainder of the admissions process to provide advice and support where needed and to ensure the following before the student arrives:

- Suitable insurance is in place
- Pre-arrival health declaration has been sent to the student and they have been requested to complete and return it before arrival
- Student inbound travel details are obtained
- Suitable UK accommodation and arrival transfer are booked
- Student has access to relevant pre-arrival information pack(s).

### **16. Student scholarships**

A number of GCSE and A level scholarships are available from Cardiff Academy for academically gifted students.

Management will inform Admissions of the number of scholarships available for each student intake. Admissions will process scholarship applications in accordance with defined A Level Scholarship Process Flows.

### **17. Cancellation and refunds**

If a student requests to cancel a confirmed place on a Cardiff Academy, Admissions will refund an amount against fees paid to date in accordance with *Cardiff Academy refund policy*.

### **18. Maintaining records**

Information submitted within the Admissions process is held within Cardiff Academy MIS System. Information submitted as part of the Admissions process is held in multiple forms, including images of supplied documents, electronic copies of formal written notifications and copies of email communications between Admissions Coordinators and students/agents. This information is used to assess the suitability of an applicant, and student records (bookings) are also used during the course of study to track student payments, academic progression and other required data points along the student journey.

In addition to the use of the noted bookings data, anonymised student data is also used by Study Group for statistical and reporting purposes.

Admissions will maintain detailed records of all student applications and admissions in line with UK Data Protection laws and the Cardiff Academy Data Protection Policy.