Procedure 4.1 Student Enrolment and Selection					
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Procedure owner: Principal / CEO

- ❖ This procedure is shared with our students and/or can be obtained:
    - o on our website https://docklandsacademy.co.uk/policies-and-procedures,
    - o on the desktops of all computers in the library on the top floor,
    - o by emailing us at info@docklandsacademy.co.uk in the case of remote learning.
- ❖ Also, our students are informed about the main aspects of the procedure in the Student Handbooks, Induction Seminar and Learning Agreement.
- ❖ The procedure is reviewed and monitored on a regular basis for currency and fitness as part of our Annual Policy and Procedures Review.

1. Equal Opportunities

Docklands Academy is committed to promoting equal opportunity. The Academy's equal opportunities statement in respect of student recruitment and admissions is as follows:

1.1 In the recruitment and selection of students the only consideration must be that the individual meets, or is likely to meet, the requirements of the programme. No applicant will be discriminated against on the basis of their gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality (within current legislation), disability, sexual orientation, marital status, caring or parental responsibilities, age, or beliefs on any matters such as religion and politics.

1.2 This undertaking must be adhered to in all matters concerning student recruitment and admissions. The Academy is committed to a programme of action to ensure that its policy is implemented and monitored at an organizational and individual level.

1.3 From admission through to completion, all students are provided with support that they need to succeed in and benefit from education in the Academy.

1.4 All decision-making is aligned with the *2010 Equality Act*, https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents and UKCISA Code of Ethics, thus the responsible body of the Academy does not discriminate against, harass or victimize a person:
- o in the arrangements it makes for deciding who is offered admission as a student;
- o as to the terms on which it offers to admit the person as a student;
- o by not admitting the person as a student;
- o affording the students who are enrolled on the course access to a benefit, facility or service in the services it provides or offers to provide;
- o seek enrolment on the course;
- o are users of services provided by the body in relation to the course.

2. Application Process

2.1 Higher Education courses are provided in 3 terms (Autumn-Spring-Summer) and English Language courses are provided on weekly basis. Thus, prospective students can apply in the most appropriate time for themselves. The duration of the admissions and enrolment process changes according to the completion of the required documents by the applicants, but generally takes 2 weeks.

2.2 Applications can be made in several ways:

2.2.1 <u>Direct Applications</u>
- o Applicant walk-ins
- o E-mail/postal or Telephone Enquiries

2.2.1.1 Admissions Team instantly contacts the candidates to notify them of the entry requirements for their chosen programme of study and guide as appropriate.

2.2.2 <u>Applications via Overseas Recruitment Partners</u> (***Currently not applicable as DAL does not hold Tier 4 status***)

2.2.2.1 All overseas students (within the UK or overseas) who are not UK passport holders can make contact either via recruitment partners or directly to the Academy for the purpose of admissions.

2.2.2.2 All overseas recruitment partners, before engaging with the process of recruitment, are required to be assessed by the Academy and sign the Learning Agreement in order to recruit students on behalf of the Academy (see *DAL Procedure 8.2 Recruitment Partner Selection and Monitoring*).

2.2 Initial supporting documents asked for both HE & other courses are (*Admissions Team*):
- <u>Application form</u> (***Appendix 4&5***)
- Valid ID / Passport (*with a current visa if applicable / for overseas candidates or in-country foreign applicants a certified copy*) / BRP (*If the student claims to be an UK or EU national and does not hold a passport, he/she will be asked to provide a birth certificate, or any other document listed in the UKVI guidance. No students will be allowed to enrol at the Academy until a valid passport / birth certificate / ID is produced during the admissions or enrolment process*)
- Proof of address
- Police Registration Certificate (if applicable)
- Previous academic qualifications (certified transcripts/certificates/diplomas → Originals and (if necessary) translations)
- and/or Recognition of Prior Learning

2.3 Initial supporting documents asked additionally for only HE courses are (*Admissions Team*):
- Employer reference (on company letterhead / from an official company email address)
- Professional certificates (regarding any trainings, workshops, seminars etc.)
- CV

2.4 In the interests of robustness and in view of satisfying the UKVI regulatory framework as well as BAC (British Accreditation Council) accreditation, all the documents mentioned above are (*Admissions Team*):

- filed together in **Individual Student Record File**. (***Appendix 3***)
- also scanned and uploaded on the soft-copy version of the file on the Academy's secure electronic database.

Records must be kept for a year after the student's completion and departure.

3. <u>Admissions Process</u>

3.1 *Initial Steps*

3.1.1 Once the application form has been submitted, an admissions team will inform the applicant via email and / or telephone that the application has been received. The admissions team will request relevant documents listed in 2.2 and 2.3 to assess the application.

3.1.2 The admissions team checks the authenticity of the supporting documents presented by the applicants for any sign of alternation, also the personal details on certificates against those in the valid ID in order to determine the eligibility of the student for their chosen programme of study in line with Academy guidelines, awarding organization's entry requirements and UKVI (Border Agency) regulations.

3.1.3 It takes responsible steps to check that documents are genuine; do not contain any obvious alterations; and they relate to the applicant. Where there are any doubts about the authenticity of the documents further checks are made through the issuing authority. Evidence of further checks are placed on the applicant's file. (*Admissions Team*)

3.1.4 Authentication for in-country applicants usually takes place based on the original documentation and copies are kept on the filing system.

3.1.5 In the case of international applicants, overseas recruitment partners conduct initial face-to-face interviews with prospective students and initial check of all original supporting documentation, including academic qualifications, work experience details, and appropriate English language certificates in order to determine the suitability of each potential student. However, all applicants forwarded by overseas recruitment partners must have all of the relevant documents certified by the Academy.

3.1.6 The Academy reserves the right to interview applicants and refuse entry. We accept students on the assumption that they are of sound health and are at the appropriate age required for their course.

3.2 *The Academy Internal Evaluation (HED / BTEC Programmes)*

3.2.1 UK based applicants who are eligible are invited to take the Academy's Internal Written <u>Entry Test</u>. (***Appendix 6)*** *(Admissions Team + Academic Department)*

3.2.2 Afterwards, they are interviewed (whose details can be found at 4.2 below).

3.2.3 The interview also functions as a <u>Need Analysis</u> to identify the applicants' employment goals, academic and development needs. (*Academic Department*)

3.2.4 The applicants are expected to bring their passport / ID / BRP with them to the interview.

3.3 *The Academy Internal Evaluation (English and Other Courses)*

3.3.1 The applicants might have proven their prior learning; however, the ones who are eligible may still be asked to do a written English Placement Test (*for international applicants a*

pre-arrival version via email) and be also interviewed (*for international applicants online*) to ascertain their English Language level so that they can be enrolled to the right course.

3.3.2 The Academy does its best to ensure applicants are placed according to their booking and level. We have a procedure for misplaced students on the rare occasion it happens. In the case of misplacement by us, it will be resolved swiftly. However, in cases where a placement test is suspicious or fraudulent, then the Academy has the right to determine the applicant's level of English and place them on a course that matches the level that it has determined.

3.4 *Decision Process*

3.4.1 The hard-copy test results of internal evaluation (*for HE applicants, Entry Test and Interview / Need Analysis*; *for GE applicants English Placement Test and Interview*) are added to their file.

3.4.2 At the end of the process, each applicant's file should consist of the following:
  o All the initial documents in Sections 2.2 & 2.3 gathered by Admissions Team,
  o The hard-copy test results of internal evaluation by the HE Academic Department and/or English Department,
  o Any issues, recommendations etc. related to each student by the Admissions Team and/or HE Academic and English Departments.

3.4.3 The Admissions Team refers the file created for each candidate with the recommendation to accept (either conditionally or unconditionally) or to reject to the Academic Head (*for HE applicants*) or Director of Studies (*for GE applicants*) or their nominee for approval.

3.4.4 The decision is then transmitted back to the Admissions Team which writes to the applicant as appropriate informing him/her of the decision. (*Admissions Team*)

3.5 *Decision Delivery*

3.5.1 Once the decision has been made, the applicant will be informed via email within 3 working days.

3.5.2 The successful applicants:

3.5.1.1 are despatched a Letter of Acceptance (conditional) within another 2 working days after they are informed about the decision (*Appendix 8&9*) confirming:
  ▪ that the Academy is willing to offer a place for their chosen programme of study, subject to the receipt of full course fees. (*Admissions Team*)
  ▪ their details along with the pre-enrolment information (Conditional / Unconditional)
  ▪ what their fee status will be.

3.5.1.2 must have their places confirmed or declined within one week after the date of Letter of Acceptance is issued.

3.5.1.3 who are eligible to seek for loan from Student Loan Company (SLC) without any loan evidence should at least provide Customer Reference Number for SLC to be enrolled to a course at the Academy's discretion on a Pending Fees Status. It is the learner's responsibility to ensure their student loan application is successful and completed. If they can't, they are withdrawn from their study. Please look at *DAL Procedure 4.13 Transfers Suspensions Withdrawals Closure and Change of HE Provision* for further details.

3.5.1.4 whose fees are to be met by a third party (such as their employer or sponsor) must supply, at the time of enrolment, a letter from the company or organisation confirming that fees will be met in part or full. In the absence of such confirmation,

the learner remains liable for the full cost of the course. For further details about fees and SLC, please refer to the *DAL Procedure 4.14 Fees Charges and Financial Support.*

3.5.1.5 may be required to verify their qualifications more in-depth and provide any missing documents by the Admissions Team.

3.5.1.6 must satisfy any conditions attached to the Letter of Acceptance.

3.5.1.7 are supposed to fill in and/or sign the necessary sections on the documents attached to the Letter of Acceptance and send them back to the Admissions Team.
- Criminal Conviction Declaration Form (***Appendix 10***)
- Video / Photograph Content Form (***Appendix 11***)
- Parent Consent Form (Students aged under 18) (***Appendix 12***)
- DAL Online Safety Student Acceptable Use Agreement (Students aged under 18) (***Appendix 13***)

3.5.1.8 For international applicants, a UKVI Level 1 user verifies the complete student information, ensures that all records are appropriately in place and issues a CAS number.

3.5.2 The rejected applicants:

3.5.2.1 are provided a letter with a reason why they have failed to satisfy the entry requirements.

3.5.2.2 are given advice on and/or provided assistance with how to improve their qualifications to succeed in their future applications, even in other institutions.

3.6 Post Admissions Procedures

3.6.1 All incoming students:

3.6.1.1 are required to sign a Learning Agreement (***Appendix 15***) and the Induction Declaration Form (***Appendix 16***) on the *Induction Day*, which also includes a signed confirmation from the student that he/she will comply with the Academy's requirements for attendance. A copy of the agreement will be kept on the student's file.

3.6.1.2 must complete an Admissions Feedback Form. (***Appendix 14***)

3.6.1.3 who need to prove their enrolment for bank account application, council tax discount etc. should fill in a Student Letter & Certificate Request Form. (***Appendix 17***) for any kind of document requests.

3.6.1.4 is provided a Letter of Enrolment (***Appendix 18***) depending on their request.

3.6.1.5 will be told that they must keep their contact details and any change in their circumstance up to date by filling a Change of Circumstance / Contact Details Form (***Appendix 19***).

3.6.2 International students:

3.6.2.1 are responsible for obtaining the correct visa to study in the UK as required. Students who require a short-term study visa for up to 6 or 11 months will be sent a Letter of Acceptance after they successfully apply for a course. Please see the following link for details of study visas to the UK: https://www.gov.uk/study-visit-visa

3.6.2.2 The Academy will not take responsibility for students who have failed to obtain the right visa without which they are not permitted to stay and study in the UK.

3.6.2.3 Assuming that the student is successful in obtaining a Tier 4 (general) student visa, the Academy will then begin the process of the student's attendance and progression monitoring for the duration of the student's studies. If the student is withdrawn, or is suspended for any reason before the completion of their studies, the UKVI will be notified accordingly.

3.7 Fees, Scholarships, Bursaries, Loans

3.7.1 Students might be eligible for a bursary through industry sponsors in the field of Hospitality, Business and Travel and Tourism. Students will be made aware of what options are available.

3.7.2 The Academy is committed to honour eligible students' bursaries.

3.7.3 Recipients of scholarships or government grants are expected to pay £300 which will be refunded upon receipt of an official financial guarantee letter. If, upon the student's arrival, the Academy is not in receipt of an official financial guarantee letter, we reserve the right to charge tuition at the published higher rate on a weekly basis until the guarantee letter has been provided. Scholarship students will not be allowed into class without either a guarantee letter or tuition fees paid. Any fees paid direct to the Academy will be refunded to the fee payer upon receipt of the guarantee letter.

3.7.4 For details about fees and SLC, please refer to the DAL Procedure *4.14 Fees Charges and Financial Support*.

4. Entry Requirements

4.1 Minimum Benchmark Entry Requirements (BER)

4.1.1 Currently, procedures dictate that to assess an applicant's (possible) acceptability, they must meet the Academy`s minimum (benchmark) entry requirements specified for each programme.

4.1.2 New or altered qualifications acceptable for the Academy are reviewed via the procedures as highlighted in *DAL Procedure 2.6 Self-Assessment and Programme and Annual Monitoring* and *DAL Procedure 2.7 Programme Design and Approval*.

4.1.3 All applicants admitted to the Academy must meet the entry criteria specified for each programme.

LEVEL	QUALIFICATION	DURATION	BER
Level 1	BTEC	1 year	Grade E/2 or above in GCSE English Language & Maths
Level 2	BTEC	1 year	At least 4 GCSEs at grade D/3 or above including English Language or Maths. At least one GCSE needs to be at grade C/4 or above.
Level 3	BTEC	1 year	**For Non-English speakers and/or students who have not carried out their final two years of schooling in English, English language proficiency Level B2**: o IELTS UKVI → 5.5 *(with no less than 5.5 in each of the components)* o Cambridge FCE → 160 / Grade C o Pearson Test of English General (PTE) → Level 3 o Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE) → 42 o Pearson Versant English Test 58-68 o Trinity College London Integrated Skills in English (ISE II) → 39 **and one of the following**: o 4 GCSEs at grade C/4 or above including GCSE English Language and/or Maths o BTEC level 2 diploma o Recognised High School Diploma o Related work experience
HE / Level 4 18+	BTEC	1 year	**For Non-English speakers and/or students who have not carried out their final two years of schooling in English, English language proficiency Level B2**: o IELTS UKVI → 5.5 *(with no less than 5.5 in each of the components)* o Cambridge FCE → 160 / Grade C o Pearson Test of English General (PTE) → Level 3 o Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE) → 42 o Pearson Versant English Test 58-68 o Trinity College London Integrated Skills in English (ISE II) → 39 **and one of the following**: o a GCE Advanced Level profile that demonstrates strong performance in a relevant subject or adequate performance in more than one GCSE subject. This profile is likely to be supported by GCE grades at A* to C (or equivalent) and/or 9 to 4 (or equivalent) in subjects such as Maths and English o the equivalent in other qualifications such as the International Baccalaureate / Foundation programme o a relevant Level 3 qualification / an Access to Higher Education Diploma from an approved further education institution / Recognised Sixth Form or College or High School Diploma o at least 2-year continuous relevant work experience
HE / Level 5 18+	BTEC	1 year	**English language proficiency Level B2**: o IELTS UKVI → 5.5 *(with no less than 5.5 in each of the components)* o Cambridge FCE → 160 / Grade C o Pearson Test of English General (PTE) → Level 3 o Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE) → 42 o Pearson Versant English Test 58-68 o Trinity College London Integrated Skills in English (ISE II) → 39 and **Relevant HNC / Level 4 qualification**.
HE /	BTEC	1 year	**English language proficiency Level B2**: o IELTS UKVI → 6.0 *(with no less than 6.0 in each of the*

Level 6 **18+**			*components)* o Cambridge FCE → 170 / Grade B o Pearson PTE Academic UKVI → 57 o Trinity College London Integrated Skills in English (ISE II) → 39 and **Relevant HND / Level 5 qualification**.
B2 16+	Cambridge Exam Preparation / **CAE**	1-12 weeks	B1 Level / Might need a Student Visa
C1 16+	Cambridge Exam Preparation / **FCE**	1-12 weeks	B2 Level / Might need a Student Visa
16+	IELTS Preparation	1-12 weeks	At least B1 Level Might need a Student Visa
16+	Academic English	1-12 weeks	B1 Level / Might need a Student Visa
16+	Business English	1-50 weeks	B1 Level / Might need a Student Visa
16+	English for Gastronomy	4-12 weeks	A2 Level / Might need a Student Visa
16+	English for Travel and Tourism	4-12 weeks	B1 Level / Might need a Student Visa

4.2 The Academy's Internal Evaluation (HE / BTEC Programmes)

The aforementioned benchmark entry requirements are only a part of the information we use to build a picture of the applicants' academic ability and potential. That's why applicants who are eligible for application then:

4.2.1 are invited to complete a **Written Entry Test** depending upon their current qualifications (always at the discretion of the Academic Head),

- o The Entry Test consists of two sections: (*Appendix 6*)
  - Section 1: Written English Proficiency Test where their use of language, reading and writing skills are tested,
  - Section 2: Diagnostic Mathematics Test where their basic Mathematics level is evaluated.

4.2.2 (Following the written Entry Test) are invited for an **Interview** (*Appendix 7*), which:

- o is conducted by the Academic Head and/or a minimum of one other member of the Academic team.
- o assesses:
  - their academic and / or professional background,
  - their understanding of and suitability for the course,
  - their English communication/ interaction ability,
  - their understanding of the subject area, related industry, and relevant careers,
  - information on their medical conditions, disability, learning difficulties.
- o serves as both:
  - a need analysis questionnaire designed to identify their employment goals, academic and development needs, and
  - an English Speaking and Listening skill test to ascertain their English Language level along with the written test.

4.3 The Academy's Internal Evaluation (English Courses)

4.3.1 Applicants are given a written English Placement Test and are also interviewed to ascertain their English Language level so that they can be enrolled to the right course.

4.3.2 We do our best to ensure you are placed according to your booking and level. We have a procedure for misplaced students on the rare occasion it happens. In the case of misplacement by us, it will be resolved swiftly. However, in cases where a placement test is suspicious or fraudulent, then we have the right to determine your level of English and place you on a course that matches the level that we have determined.

4.3.3 The Academy reserves the right to interview applicants and refuse entry. We accept students on the assumption that they are of sound health and are at the appropriate age required for their course.

4.4 English Language Requirements

4.4.1 Command of the English language is essential for BTEC programmes. All undergraduate (and graduate) level applicants (Home/ EEA/ ILR and Swiss national) whose first language is not English must provide recent evidence that they have an adequate command of both spoken and written English level B2 of the _CEFR (Common European Framework Reference)_ for the programme of study for which they have applied or go through our Internal Evaluation Process.

4.4.2 The Academy specifies the need for its students to have adequate English in order to ensure that their academic progress is not hindered by language difficulties and that students are able to integrate socially whilst studying at the Academy and living in the UK.

4.4.3 Evidence of English language proficiency may take the form a recent obtained acceptable English language qualification or test result such as:

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS)
- Pearson Test for Academic English (PTE)
- Cambridge (CAE or FCE)
- Trinity College London Integrated Skills in English (ISE II)

4.4.4 The qualification or test result must have been awarded at the appropriate level (standard, good or advanced) no more than one year prior to the proposed date of enrolment.

4.4.5 The Academy reserves the right, in individual circumstances, to specify an additional language requirement for an applicant OR accept students whose English test requirement is below entry criteria. This decision strictly requires approval by the Academic Head.

4.4.6 If an applicant has shown adequate academic application but does not qualify the Academy`s absolute minimum BER for English Language and/or needs assistance with their English prior to the start of their programme of study, the applicant is:
- not, under any circumstances, permitted to enrol, but
- sent a Letter of Acceptance with an English language condition and
- offered English language support (with an additional fee) until they reach the entry requirement level for the course. (Feeder Programme).

4.5 Admissions via alternative criteria (HE / BTEC Programmes)

4.5.1 The term 'alternative assessment' is applied to applicants seeking admission who hold qualifications which do not satisfy benchmark entry requirements or programme-specific entry requirements. All students offering non-standard qualifications are expected to demonstrate the same level of academic potential as those offering standard qualifications.

4.5.2 Recognition of Prior Learning is also a valid method of enabling individuals to claim credits for units, irrespective of how their learning took place. For further details please refer to *DAL Procedure 4.3 Recognition of Prior Learning*.

4.5.3 To be considered for special entry, the applicant must possess one of the following types of qualifications:
- an appropriate academic qualification other than a degree from a recognised university or other institution,
- an intermediate or equivalent examination towards the award of a degree by a university, or institution of similar status, plus passes (minimum grade C / 4 is preferable) in an appropriate number of subjects at GCSE level or the equivalent,
- a qualification gained by examination which satisfies the entrance requirements for admission to a recognised university outside the UK,
- a qualification gained by examination, and which is necessary for admission to membership (Associateship, Corporate Membership, or the equivalent) of a recognised professional body or leading to appointment in another field of public service recognised qualifications that fall short of the benchmark requirements but are supplemented by additional recent study over a sustained period of time. (Applicants in this category must demonstrate that they have achieved sufficient competence in their chosen field of study to justify admission),
- a reference letter from an employee for applicants who have settled status in the UK.

4.5.4 Cases for consideration should be submitted to the Academic Head via Admissions Team. Applicants below the benchmark level are not admitted without the advance approval of the Academic Head. The full details of the applicant recommended for special entry should be provided to the Academic Head, whose decision in such matters is final.

4.6 Entry Requirements for Applicants under the Age of 18

4.6.1 The minimum age for students at the Academy: for our adult classes of English the minimum age is 16 years old, but we have English summer programmes for groups of children aged 11-15. For Higher Education Courses, the minimum age is 18.

4.6.2 The Academy requires that approval be given by the Academic Head before a student under the age of 18 is admitted (this is only valid for students applying for programmes / courses other than HE programmes). This is to ensure that appropriate pastoral provision (*DAL Procedure 5.2 Welfare Services and Pastoral Care*) is provided to the student and that all Child Protection requirements (*Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2024 Guidance*) have been met. When the admission of a student under 18 is recommended, Academic Head should be consulted. The Academic Head requires written confirmation from the parents (or legal guardian) of the student of their willingness to allow the student to study at the Academy via the forms listed in 2.4.4, also given below:

- Criminal Conviction Declaration Form *(Appendix 10)*
- Video / Photograph Release Form (*Appendix 11*)
- Parental Consent Form (*Appendix 12)*
- Online Safety Student Acceptable Use Agreement (*Appendix 13*)

4.6.3 An assurance is also required from the team that it will offer enhanced tutorial and pastoral support.

4.7 Part time students

Students wishing to study on a part-time basis should apply to the Academy directly. Requirements for admission for part-time study are identical to those applying for full- time study subject to availability at the time of the enquiry.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Admissions and Enrolment Process

5.1 The **Academic Head** is formally responsible for the admission process; however, decision-making will usually be delegated to members of staff working more closely including **Head of Admissions**, **Head of Academic Administration** and **full-time Lecturers** who interview applicants and evaluate their entry tests. If needed, staff can refer decision-making upwards to the Academic Head.

5.2 The Academic Head is responsible for making sure that all staff working in admissions are fully aware of and equipped with knowledge and skills regarding relevant admission procedures and that training in assessment for criteria is carried out on a regular basis to ensure that academic judgement is consistent. This is maintained by the KPIs and also the review and verification of the Head of Quality.

5.3 The **Head of Quality** works with the Admissions Team to review and monitor the quality of the process. All procedures are monitored, reviewed and evaluated annually through quantitative and qualitative data collection tools such as:

- student feedback (via specifically designed online <u>Admissions Feedback Form</u> (**Appendix 14**)
- staff feedback (via specifically designed online feedback forms)
- observation records of application process (**Appendix 21**)
- review notes from school / college visits or contacts
- Admissions and Enrolment Process Checklist (**Appendix 2**)
- Admissions and Enrolment Student File Checklist (**Appendix 3**)

5.4 The Head of Quality makes sure that:

5.4.1 Admissions Staff attend required trainings, seminars and workshops to keep up to date with the latest guideline and policies, conducted by accredited government and educational organisations, such as *Home Office, Study UK, QAA, Pearson/Edexcel, SLC, HESA*, etc.

5.4.2 Admissions Staff review related policies annually, yet in the case of governmental and/or awarding body changes, the Admissions Team update their policies accordingly to ensure the department is following it.

5.5 It is ensured that external partners (agents etc.) are operating to the same high standards set for the academy itself (*DAL Procedure 8.2 Recruitment Partner Selection and Monitoring*)

6. Obligations of Each Party

6.1 The summary below identifies the obligations of the applicant as well as of the Academy, in relation to offers, rejections and deferrals by both parties.

6.1.1 Students who apply to study at Docklands Academy London are required to complete the online application form available on the Academy's website or hardcopy at the Academy accurately and to the best of their knowledge.

6.1.2 Students can withdraw the application within the cooling off period of 14 days. *("Cooling Off Period" is 14-day time limit that you have the right to cancel a service you've arranged for any reason and get a refund. Your cooling-off period begins the day after you enter a contract with us*.) After the cooling off period, the related refund timeframe for cancellations will apply. For further details about withdrawals or cancellations, please refer to *DAL Procedure 4.10 Refund of Tuition Fees and Compensation*.

6.1.3 Students will be able to defer their studies with approval from the Academic Head before enrolment date and between programmes (e.g., moving from HNC to HND).

6.1.4 Docklands Academy London will inform students on any changes to the programme at the earliest possible occasion. Formal letter will be sent to the student at the point of decision. Please see *DAL Procedure 4.13 Transfers, Suspensions, Withdrawals Closure and Change* of HE Provision for full details.

6.1.5 In the case of course being cancelled, applicants will be advised on alternative course.

6.1.6 Admissions Team will adhere to *Equality Act 2010* and *UKCISA Code of Ethics* to promote diversity and equality, taking into consideration aspect of culture, social and academic background.

7. <u>Cases of Fraud</u>

The Academy is aware of the potential risk of applicants seeking fraudulently to gain admission and/or receive funding. The prevention of such fraud is implicit in our processes relating to the following areas of work:

- selection of candidates for admission,
- assessment of accepted candidates' fees status,
- verification of the qualifications of students admitted,
- enrolment of students,
- issuing of maintenance allowances to enrolled students and the process of student loan applications if applicable,
- monitoring the attendance of students,
- issuing certificates of student attendance. (***Appendix 20***)

8. <u>Criminal Conviction</u>

8.1 Applications from applicants who have disclosed a Criminal Conviction are considered in line with the Academy's related policies regarding student support (*Procedure 5.1 Student Code of Conduct*)

8.2 Please note that in accordance with the Academy's obligations towards students and staff, we will request information about relevant, unspent criminal convictions during the admission stage so that appropriate steps can be taken to facilitate effective support and/or assess whether a prospective student poses an unacceptable risk to students and staff.

8.3 The Academy has adopted a policy for any case where an applicant with an offer for a programme running at the Academy has a relevant, unspent criminal conviction which has either been declared by an applicant to the Academy or which has otherwise come to the Academy's attention (such as where information is disclosed by a third party).

8.4 This policy also applies to applicants with offers for recognised student status.

8.5 *What must be declared?*

8.5.1 The Academy will only ask about relevant, unspent criminal convictions. 'Relevant' convictions are:

- any kind of violence including (but not limited to) threatening behaviour, offences concerning the intention to harm or offences which resulted in actual bodily harm,
- offences listed in the *Sex Offences Act 2003*,
- the unlawful supply of controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns

commercial drug dealing or trafficking,
- offences involving firearms,
- offences involving arson, and
- offences listed in the _Terrorism Act 2006_.

8.5.2 Convictions that have been 'spent' (as defined by the _Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974_) or will have been spent at the point of starting the course of study do not need to be declared. If students are uncertain as to whether their conviction is spent, they are asked to seek independent advice.

8.6 _Programmes requiring Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks_

Some of the programmes delivered by the Academy might require DBS check. In these cases, a question relating to criminal convictions may still be asked at application stage. The DBS process and date for completion will be managed by academic department and is separate from the criminal conviction process described here. Declarations relating to criminal convictions for these programmes will also follow the Criminal Conviction Panel (CCP) process outlined below where the conviction is found to be relevant and unspent. However, where the timing of offers is such that the DBS certificate can be obtained before the start of the course, the DBS check will act in lieu of the Academy's Criminal Conviction Panel process.

8.7 _Process for handling cases of declared relevant convictions_

If an applicant has declared a criminal conviction, Head of Academic Administration will contact them to seek further information on the conviction and to explain the procedure to them. It may also be necessary to approach third parties in order to request additional information (for example referees or the applicant's probation officer). The applicant's permission will always be obtained before approaching such third parties.

8.8 _Criminal Conviction Panel_ (CCP)

8.8.1 Head of Academic Administration will assess whether the details of any relevant, unspent offence should be considered by a Criminal Conviction Panel (CCP), comprising Academic Head, Head of Academic Administration and Student Welfare and Student Support Service. The CCP will assess, considering the documentation gathered by the Head of Academic Administration, whether the declared conviction(s) is/are such that the applicant ought not to be admitted to the Academy or whether special measures ought to be put in place to facilitate effective support for the applicant and/or to protect other students and staff from perceived risk. The CCP may reach its decision at a meeting or teleconference.

8.8.2 The CCP will reach a decision on behalf of the Academy and will convey this decision to the Academic Department and Admissions Team as promptly as possible, to ensure that delays to the standard admission process are minimised.

8.8.3 The following factors are among those that are likely to be considered by the CCP on a Criminal Conviction Panel Form (**_Appendix 22_**):

- The nature of the offence(s)
- The time that has passed since the offence was committed
- Any additional information provided by other sources, such as the Probation Service, Social Services or senior prison officers, in the form of independent references or reports
- If more than one offence was committed, the number of offences and whether each was a separate offence or part of a series of similar offences.

8.8.4 One of the following decisions will be made by the CCP:

- to require further information from the applicant or a third party,
- to confirm that the applicant has satisfied the criminal convictions condition with no further conditions relating to the criminal conviction. In such cases Head of Academic Administration will advise the applicant accordingly,
- to confirm that the applicant has satisfied the criminal convictions condition but that further measures are imposed on the offer-holder, for example specific support for the applicant, restrictions to accommodation or to activities not related to degree, etc. In such cases Head of Academic Administration will contact the applicant to outline the additional conditions set by the CCP,
- to withdraw the offer of a place. In this case Head of Academic Administration will contact the applicant to inform them of the decision.

8.8.5 In rare cases, following risk/safeguarding assessment by the Criminal Convictions Panel (CCP), it is possible no college will be able to offer a place, in which event the Academy will not be able to admit the candidate.

8.8.6 The reasons for the decision will be recorded by Head of Academic Administration. If the offer-holder becomes a registered student, the CCP must determine who, if anyone, within the Academy should be provided with details of the conviction to facilitate effective support for the applicant and/or to protect other students and staff from perceived risk.

9. <u>Record Retention</u>

9.1 Academic Head will keep a record of all cases dealt with in accordance with the Academy's *Procedure 1.7 Data Protection, Data Protection Act 1998* and *GDPR regulations*. This record will ensure that any decision can be verified, to show that procedures have been correctly followed and to allow any feedback to the applicant if required. Soft and hard copies of all records and correspondence relating to an applicant declaring a relevant criminal conviction will be securely stored in accordance with the Academy's Data Protection procedure for 1 year.

9.2 If a criminal conviction is declared and the offer-holder becomes a registered student, all records and correspondence relating to the application and supporting materials will form part of the student's personal record and will be kept in the same way as all other student records. However, any information and correspondence relating to the applicant's conviction will be stored separately and securely.

9.3 If a criminal conviction is declared and the offer-holder does not become a registered student, all paper documents will be securely destroyed. Academic Head will keep a copy of the information relating to the conviction and this will be securely stored for a period of one year after the admission cycle has ended, at which point all electronic and paper files will be deleted. See the Academy's *Procedure 1.7 Data Protection* and also for full details of our *Privacy Statement* at https://docklandsacademy.co.uk/privacy-statement.

9.4 On all email communications, any personal information related to the applicant/student is sent via secured link only. Any personal information or students' academic achievements cannot be passed to third parties without the student's permission.

10. Complaints about the Selection Process

10.1 Decisions on the admission of applicants by the Academy are final and there is normally no appeal against such decisions. However, the Academy will consider a complaint relating to an application for admission if there is substantive evidence of an irregularity in the procedure under which the application has been processed.

10.2 In this case, the stages provided in the DAL Procedure 2.5 Complaints / Section 9.2 Formal Complaints will be followed.

10.3 The Academy will take full account of guidance in _OIA The Good Practice Framework for Complaints and Appeals_ and _Revised UK Quality Code – 2018, Advice & Guidance – Concerns, Complaints and Appeals_.

10.4 The panel will normally consider the appeal on the basis of the papers relating to the case. The panel may interview the applicant, and any other persons involved in the case and shall be required to ensure equal treatment to the parties concerned, i.e., the officer(s) who have made the decision on the application or who were involved in the procedure for handling it. Such persons shall receive copies of all the documentation relevant to the complaint.

10.5 A full and complete record of all complaints are kept in the student's file.

10.6 If fraud is suspected, the Academy will, as appropriate, liaise with relevant external bodies (including the police, local education authorities and _Student Loans Company_) and implement disciplinary procedures.

10.7 The Academy has the right to refuse applications that are believed to have plagiarized.

11. Widening Access

Through its widening participation activity, the Academy seeks to develop into a leading independent sector institution of further and higher education which engages with all sections of the community. For further details, please refer to _DAL Procedure 2.13 Access and Participation Statement_.

11.1 Our Strategy for Widening Participation

This places a particular focus on students from groups currently under-represented, and activity before and at undergraduate level, to raise awareness of independent sector higher education through a comprehensive range of outreach activities. The Academy tries to:

- assist in the preparation for higher education by addressing the academic, social and cultural issues relating to the stereotypical levels of low participation,
- enhance the diversity of our student body by recruiting students regardless of their background,
- improve the retention of students by targeted interventions before and after enrolment,
- position itself as a leader in the field by communicating effectively its vision of an inclusive, accessible independent sector provider committed to removing barriers and enabling choice.

11.2 Good Practices followed by the Academy in Widening Participation

- Adhering to and advancing the Academy's widening participation strategy.
- Use of the Web as a means of widening participation.
- Ensuring training of staff concerned with interviewing and admissions in cultural awareness and widening participation issues.
- Training and increasing awareness among lecturers.
- Working with lecturers through conferences, seminars and CPD sessions.

- Working with students via organisation of visits to the Academy and activities in schools, workshops, seminars etc.
- Supporting students acting as role models through a variety of schemes such as class representative, student representative at varies committee meetings of the Academy and student committee member.
- Creating schemes to retain students in particular by utilising the organic connections with business, hospitality and tourism industries.
- Cooperating with parents, families and carers who might be unfamiliar with higher education and its prospects.
- Working with external partners like community groups and groups that support under-represented groups.
- Making use of the learner data collated during the admissions process to widen participation for certain groups.

11.3 Part Time and International Students

11.3.1 Students wishing to study on a part-time basis should apply to the Academy directly. Requirements for admission for part-time study are identical to those applying for full-time study subject to availability at the time of the enquiry.

11.3.2 The Academy aims to increase the number of overseas students. The Academy historically registered a larger proportion of overseas students compared to UK/EU students. Currently almost all of the Academy students are from the UK/EU and it endeavours to reach out to the overseas markets to recruit students onto our HE courses.

11.4 Disadvantaged Learners

11.4.1 The Academy has an intention to continue to widen student recruitment to include those from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds and those who would not normally access higher education, including students from families with no previous HE experiences through reaching out in the local community and through a wider network of agencies.

11.4.2 The Academy approaches sensitively to the educational needs of the community it is located in. Thus, as a part of this diverse community, the academy aims to cover skill gaps of especially low-skilled and disadvantaged residents and increase their employability by helping them gain a better workforce profile, a professional insight and above all their self-confidence via up-skilling them with either its own bespoke or Pearson BTEC programmes.

11.4.4 The Academy raises awareness amongst all of its staff in particular those managing marketing, administration and admissions around the significant inequalities in employment outcomes in the borough; some groups are not benefitting from growth in the borough as much as others. Pregnant women, young and residents from ethnic minority backgrounds and transgender people might face discrimination in the labour market when they apply for a vacancy.

11.4.5 Hence, the Academy submitted applications for certain local authority and government projects to specifically persuade similar disadvantaged individuals to join its programmes and provide necessary skills training to support their future aspirations.

11.4.6 In order to reach these groups, the Academy works with community centres, places of worship and local schools, utilizes all the facilities of any means of social media and holds free seminars and workshops within its premises.

11.4.7 When applicants become our students, we offer them the opportunity to talk freely and openly about their personal situations and reflect upon their own progress and give feedback upon their experience of their courses. This feedback then allows us to shape

and alter the course design as required, ensuring our delivery is continually adapted to the needs and requirements of our learners.

11.5 Access for Disabled Learners

11.5.1 The Academy is committed to ensuring that disabled people have the same opportunities as non-disabled people, and that disabled people are treated fairly. The Academy follows the *Equality Act 2010*, https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

11.5.2 The aim of the Academy is to ensure that it does not, without justifiable reason, treat a disabled person less favourably than others because of the nature of their disability. The Academy does not unjustifiably discriminate against a person who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, adverse and long-term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities. The term 'normal day to day activities' includes mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination, perception of risk or physical danger, speech, hearing, vision, memory, concentration and the ability to understand. The definition of disability applies to clinically well recognised illness and disfigurement. It does not include addictions or personality/social disorders.

11.5.3 The Academy does not discriminate against a disabled person:

- in the admission or enrolment procedures for students.
- in the terms on which admission or enrolment offers are made.
- by unreasonably refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for admission or enrolment.
- in the provision of services provided for students, including courses of education, learning support, recreational and leisure activities, catering facilities, accommodation and work-based learning.
- in all learning and teaching, assessment and social activities.

11.6 Reasonable Adjustments

11.6.1 The Academy makes reasonable adjustments to ensure that a disabled student is not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with someone who is not disabled. Please refer to *DAL Procedure 5.3 Equality, Diversity and Special Needs*

11.6.2 Reasonable adjustments may include:

- admission, administrative and examination procedures
- course content and work-based learning activities
- teaching arrangements and learning support
- individual care and support arrangements
- accommodation
- facilities and services
- assessment
- any other Academy service provided to all students and staff

11.6.3 Factors which are considered when providing *reasonable adjustments* include:

- maintenance of academic standards
- financial resources
- cost
- practicality
- other aids or services available
- health and safety requirements
- relevant interests of other people

11.7 Minimising Barriers

DAL aims to minimise any barriers that are irrelevant to Admissions requirements. These could potentially come from:

- means of assessment,
- resources and support available to applicants; disability,
- the type of applicant's qualification.

12. **Related Documents**

12.1 Policies

- **2** Academic Management
- **4** Admissions
- **5** Student Support, Engagement and Learning Resources
- **7** Information
- **8** Marketing and Promotion

12.2 Procedures

- **1.5** Equal Opportunities
- **1.7** Data Protection
- **1.9** Review and Revision of Policies and Procedures
- **2.4** Appeals
- **2.5** Complaints
- **2.6** Self-Assessment and Programme and Annual monitoring
- **2.7** Programme Design and Approval
- **2.11** Pearson Registration
- **2.13** Access and Participation Statement
- **3.6** Internal Verification
- **4.3** Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- **4.4** Attendance Monitoring
- **4.6** Student Induction
- **4.10** Refund of Tuition Fees and Compensation

- **4.11** Student Protection Plan
- **4.12** Consent from Parents or Guardians
- **4.13** Transfers, Suspensions, Withdrawals, Closure and Change of HE Provision
- **5.1** Student Code of Conduct
- **5.2** Welfare Services and Pastoral Care
- **5.3** Equality, Diversity and Special Needs
- **6.15** Safeguarding
- **6.16** Prevent Duty (Racist, Discriminatory, Abusive and Extremist Behaviour)
- **7.1** Review and Sign off PI
- **7.4** HE Public Information
- **8.2** Recruitment Partner Selection & Monitoring
- **8.3** Links with Other Educational Institutions and Businesses

12.3 Terms and Conditions

12.4 External Reference Points

- **Office for Students (OfS) Requirements and Guidance** at *Advice and guidance - Office for Students*
- **UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access** at *https://www.qaa.ac.uk//en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/admissions-recruitment-and-widening-access*
- **UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Concerns, Complaints and Appeals** at *https://www.qaa.ac.uk//en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/concerns-complaints-and-appeals*
- **UK Quality Code Advice & Guidance – Partnerships** at *https://www.qaa.ac.uk//en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships*
- **Higher Education Code of Governance** (Committee of University Chairs, December 2014) at *https://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CUC-HE-Code-of-Governance-publication-final.pdf*
- **Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) principles of Good Governance for Independent Training Providers** at *https://www.aelp.org.uk/media/2595/code-of-governance-final-sept-*

2018.pdf

- **OIA The Good Practice Framework for Complaints and Appeals** at *https://www.oiahe.org.uk/resources-and-publications/good-practice-framework/*
- **OIA The Good Practice Framework: Handling Students Complaints and Academic Appeals** at *https://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/1859/oia-good-practice-framework.pdf*
- **Pearson Recognition of Prior Learning Policy** at *https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/Support/policies-for-centres-learners-and-employees/Recognition_of_prior_learning_and_process_policy.pdf*
- **Competition and Markets Authority Guidance for HE Providers** at *https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-consumer-law-advice-for-providers*
- **UKCISA Code of Ethics** at *https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Membership/Codes-of-practice/Code-of-ethics*
- **UK Visa & Immigration (UKVI) regulations** at *https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration & https://www.gov.uk/study-visit-visa*
- **Student Loans Company Regulations** at *https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/student-loans-company*
- **Equality Act – 2010** at *https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents*
- **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974** at *https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945449/rehabilitation-of-offenders-guidance.pdf*
- **Data Protection Act 2018** at *https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents*
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2024 Guidance** at *Keeping children safe in education 2024*
- **Sex Offences Act 2003** at *https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents*
- **Terrorism Act 2006** at *https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/11/contents*