

Procedure 4.1 Enrolment and selection					
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1 Equal opportunities

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

- 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
- 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 organisational and individual level

2 Application process: local and EU applicants

All local and EU applicants must complete an application form. All application forms are forwarded to the Academic Head for dissemination.

Currently, procedures dictate that to assess a candidate's acceptability/possible acceptability with reference to programme entry requirements, students will be invited for an interview, which will be conducted by the Academic Head plus a minimum of one other member of the Academic team. Candidates will be asked to complete an English and Mathematics entry test depending upon their current qualifications and always at the discretion of the Academic Head. The Academic Head or their nominee may give advice to those who fail to satisfy the entry requirements.

Applicants from under-performing schools will be invited to interview without exception. Grades in offers of admission should not be adjusted systematically to favour applicants from under-performing schools. The Academic Head may, however, adjust an offer where the particular individual's circumstances merit it. At the current time, no other contextual data is used by the Academy

The recommendation to accept (either conditionally or unconditionally) or to reject is referred to the Academic Head or their nominee for approval. The decision is then transmitted to the

Marketing Department or direct to the applicant as appropriate. Where an offer is made, Administration will write to the candidate informing him/her of the decision. This offer letter also informs the candidate what his/her fee status will be. Departments should not, however, include details of conditions attached to the offer that are subject to confirmation by the Academic Head. All rejected applicants are provided with a reason for rejection

All applicants must be given an opportunity to visit the Academy before they are required to make a final decision on any offer they may receive.

Administration will despatch a status letter confirming the candidate's details and send the pre-enrolment information. At this time, administration will also require applicants holding unconditional offers to verify their qualifications. Administration is responsible for preparing Certificates of Acceptance (which may be required for banking) for all incoming students.

Candidates who firmly accept the offer of a place at the Academy have their places confirmed as and when any conditions attached to the offer are satisfied.

3 Entry requirements

The Academy's minimum (benchmark) entry requirement is DD at GCE A-level or the equivalent in other qualifications such as the International Baccalaureate (Or an level 3 qualification) (See website for updated entry requirement. Applicants may not be admitted below the benchmark level without the advance approval of the Academic Head. Cases for consideration should be submitted to the Academic Head via Administration.

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

3.1 English Language proficiency requirement

Command of the English language is essential for all programmes. All undergraduate (and graduate) level applicants whose first language is not English must provide recent evidence that they have an adequate command of both spoken and written English. (The Academy requirements on English Language proficiency can be viewed in Procedure 4.2)

3.2 Admission to undergraduate level programmes via alternative criteria

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. To be considered for special entry, the applicant must possess one of the following types of qualification;

- 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 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)

Teams wishing to recommend an applicant for special entry should provide full details to the Academic Head, whose decision in such matters is final.

3.3 Entry under the age of 18

The Academy requires that approval be given by the Academic Head before a student under the age of 18 is admitted (this only applies for General English students). This is to ensure that appropriate pastoral provision is provided to the student and that all Child Protection requirements have been met. Teams wishing to recommend the admission of a student under 18 should consult the Academic Head. The Academic Head will require written confirmation from the parents (or legal guardian) of the student of their willingness to allow the student to study at the Academy. An assurance will also be required from the team that it will offer enhanced tutorial and pastoral support.

3.4 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 for full- time study.

4 Complaints about the selection process

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. In the first instance, any such complaint should be addressed to the Academic Head.

The Academic Head will investigate the complaint and respond formally. If the complaint is not resolved through this investigation, or if the complainant is not satisfied with the response, the complainant may submit the complaint to the Principal. The complaint must be received by the Principal within 10 days of the date of the formal response from the Academic Head. Complaints received after that deadline will not be considered. (The Academy will take full account of guidance in Chapter B9 of the *UK Quality Code*)

The Principal will decide whether there is substantive evidence sufficient to justify a formal investigation. If she decides the evidence is not sufficient to justify a formal investigation, he/she will inform the complainant accordingly.

If the Principal decides there are *prima facie* grounds for a formal investigation, the complaint will be referred to a panel comprising: Head of Administration; Academic Head;

Director. The Principal will inform the complainant of the decision to refer the complaint to the panel.

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, ie. the applicant and the officer(s) who took 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.

The panel will review the complaint and decide upon any action to be taken as a result of their determination. Their decision will be conveyed to the Principal, who will communicate it to the complainant and arrange for the implementation of any action resulting from it. The other parties to the complaint will also be informed.

The panel is final as far as Academy internal procedures are concerned. If a complainant is dissatisfied with the decision of the panel, he or she may have recourse to the courts.

The Head of Administration will keep a full and complete record of all complaints, which will include details of the age, gender and ethnicity of complainants.

5 Cases of fraud

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 processing of student loan applications if applicable
- issuing of certificates of student attendance
- monitoring the attendance of students

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.

6 Widening participation

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.

6.1 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 will:

- 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 the Academy 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.

6.2 Good practice in widening participation

- work with lecturers, including conferences and workshops
- work with pupils including visits to the Academy and activities in schools
- work with parents, families and carers who might be unfamiliar with higher education
- work with external partners like community groups and groups that support under-represented groups
- students acting as role models through a variety of schemes
- training of and increasing awareness among tutors
- using the Web as a means of widening participation
- schemes to retain students
- monitoring and targeting of activity to ensure the Academy is working with appropriate groups.

6.3 Good practice in widening participation in teams

- adhering to and advancing the Academy widening participation strategy
- work with pupils including visits, workshops, master classes, shadowing and work placements
- ensuring training of staff concerned with interviewing and admissions in cultural awareness and widening participation issues
- making use of information on applicants' educational background