



# **Admissions and Visa Policy**

July 2025

## Document Quality Control

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*We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students. During the admissions process we do not discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics, including but not limited to race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment. All applications are assessed based on academic merit and potential, in accordance with the principles of equality and fairness.*

## **Admissions Procedure**

### **1.0 Enquiry**

- 1.1 Telephone or e-mail enquiries are received by a member of the Admissions staff.
- 1.2 The member of Admissions staff sends full information about the College including application procedure, fees, online prospectus and link to the online registration form. The email will address any specific queries if applicable and encourage further questions.
- 1.3 A hard copy of the prospectus and registration form is posted if requested.
- 1.4 All enquiry information is entered onto the Salesforce Admissions database.
- 1.5 Prospective applicants are encouraged to send their academic information, including IELTS level if taken, for consideration prior to making the application.
- 1.6 The decision as to the suitability to make an application is usually left to the applicant. Prospective applicants are made aware of the high academic profile of the College and are encouraged to self-assess their ability level before submitting an application.
- 1.7 Any prospective applicant expressing an interest in Cardiff Sixth Form College can ask to visit the College. These visits may enable prospective students/families to speak to staff and current students about the College and its courses, as appropriate.

### **2.0 Registration**

- 2.1 Candidates submit a completed registration form from the College website which directly feeds into the admissions database, Salesforce. An email is then automated to the candidate asking them to provide requested academic information, a copy of the applicant's passport and a copy of their birth certificate with a certified English translation (where applicable). A registration invoice is then raised from Salesforce and sent out to the candidate.
- 2.2 Once the registration fee has been cleared via the financial system, Xero, which is linked to Salesforce, admissions staff are alerted to register the account. The account is now in a registered stage and a parental/agent portal is activated to allow them to view/edit and track the application as it progresses. Several data checks are held against all information on the application on Salesforce by admissions staff and then the application can proceed to the next stage, entrance assessments.
- 2.3 An automated email confirming payment sent to the family/agent is created once Registered stage has been actioned on Salesforce by admissions staff.
- 2.4 An electronic prospective student file is created from this process on Salesforce and this feeds into college systems at later stages of the process.

### **3.0 Interview and Entrance Tests**

- 3.1 The College offers three points of entry: GCSE 1 Year (age on entry: 15-16 years); GCSE 2 Year (age on entry: 14 -15 years) and A Level (age on entry: 16-17 years).
- 3.2 Admissions staff liaise with the family and their agent/the British Council/the student's school to arrange a suitable time to take entrance tests. Invigilation guidelines are provided and entrance exams sent to the named invigilator. All external costs associated with the entrance examinations, if not facilitated by Cardiff Sixth Form College/Dukes Education staff are the responsibility of the applicant.
- 3.3 All students are asked to complete relevant entrance and IELTS exams, along with a GL Assessment to gather initial baseline academic data, under exam conditions.
- 3.4 GCSE entrants take entrance exams in English and Maths. and an IELTS test for which they need to score at least 5.5 if applying for the GCSE 1 Year course. The GCSE 2 Year course is exempt from IELTS as requirement, but applicants will sit our internal English assessment. Offer of a place is unconditional once the IELTS/English assessment level is met.
- 3.5 International A Level students sit entrance exams in the four subjects they wish to study for A Level. Applicants also need to score an average of 6.5 in Academic IELTS with a minimum score of 6.0 in each of the four components for September entry, and at least an average of 6.0 with a minimum of 5.5 in each of the four components and good grades in their entrance tests, for August entry. Offer of a place is unconditional once the IELTS level is reached.
- 3.6 Scholarship papers, rather than entrance papers, for each subject are undertaken if the student is applying for scholarship. Those applying for a scholarship must declare this at registration stage prior to taking examinations. Scholarship examinations cannot be sat after entrance examinations have been taken (see separate scholarship policy).
- 3.7 International students who are able to provide their existing GCSE/IGCSE results at the point of application are encouraged to do so. Students will be required to have A\* (9-8) grades in the subjects they will be taking at A-Level and the whole combination of results will be taken into consideration. Students may be required to sit additional tests if deemed necessary. A standard unconditional offer would be a minimum of six A\* (9-8) grades with the required level of IELTS.
- 3.8 UK students take entrance papers in each of their chosen subjects for A Level, plus an Online Non-Verbal Reasoning test, and an interview. A decision is then made on this and a conditional offer subject to their GCSE results is given. The standard offer for GCSE exams is six A\* (9-8) grades which must include the subjects to be taken at A level with a minimum of grade A (7) in English Language and Mathematics. A minimum standard of 9A\* (9-8) grades for scholarship applicants is required with grade A in English Language and Mathematics (see separate scholarship policy). Acceptable subjects for offer may vary according to career choice of the candidate and are determined at the discretion of the college. UK students must also complete a GL assessment.
- 3.9 Students are encouraged to revise before taking the entrance tests and a website link to the college examination board is advised to view past practice papers for this purpose. Only one attempt at the entrance tests is allowed. Papers are marked as 'sent' on the admissions database Salesforce stage and an automated email is sent to the registered applicant updating them.
- 3.10 All applicants are interviewed unless the applicant decides to withdraw before the interview takes place. Applicants resident in the UK or who are applying, as 'day students' are required to attend the College for interview. International students are offered the option of being interviewed by Cardiff Sixth Form College staff at an overseas education fair or to be interviewed online. Interview details are logged onto the admissions database and an electronic copy put into files on the student application profile on Salesforce. The stage can then be changed to "Interviewed". Candidates must present their original passport for verification by the interviewer at the point of interview and this is then recorded.
- 3.11 Interview and entrance tests may be taken in any order.

- 3.12 Papers are received back from the agents/British Council/school and 'papers received stage' is marked onto the admissions database, Salesforce, which sends an automated email to the applicant to update them.
- 3.13 Papers are marked by teaching staff, or an external marker and a % mark and comment provided. Marks, along with results of the GL assessment, interview and school reports are considered for offer or rejection by the Admissions Manager and/or the Principal. Marked entrance papers are filed electronically in the student's file on Salesforce. Exact results of the examinations are not made available to candidates/agents/parents.
- 3.14 All interview information, GL assessment data and exam marks are entered into the admissions database, Salesforce.

## **4.0 Offer of a Place**

- 4.1 The Registrar sends an offer letter, which is produced and sent via Salesforce, outlining the conditions of the offer and including an acceptance form, parental consent form and terms and conditions. If the applicant chooses to accept at this stage, they will need to complete and submit the forms using the specific link from Salesforce and electronically sign the acceptance form and parental consent form if needed. This then registers on Salesforce as transaction completed, and then Admissions staff proceed to raise a deposit invoice from Salesforce, which feeds into Xero, and is sent out to the applicant. Payment of the deposit is requested. The offer is valid for one week from the date of the offer letter and extensions are only granted in special circumstances. The offer date is entered into the admissions database, Salesforce.
- 4.2 Conditional offers can be made, subject to an international student gaining the appropriate IELTS qualification, as often timelines for this (invigilated by the British Council) may be longer. Once all the conditions of the offer have been fulfilled, the Registrar sends an unconditional offer to the student, via Salesforce automated email templates.
- 4.3 Offers made to ALL international students would include reference to demonstrated levels of proficiency in English Language, usually with a minimum IELTS or equivalent level of 6.5 for A level September entry, 6.0 for A level August entry and 5.5 for GCSE. The received copy of their IELTS Test Report Form is verified on the online IELTS Test Report Form Verification Service. Students are required to bring original copies to their enrolment session. IELTS levels are reported to the Head of English and Modern Foreign Languages and the Academic and Data Manager.

## **5.0 Acceptance**

- 5.1 A candidate is accepted, and their place confirmed when the acceptance form has completed successfully via Salesforce and the deposit has been cleared through an integration from Xero to Salesforce. Admissions staff then change the stage to Accepted and an automated email is sent to the parents/agent to confirm acceptance.
- 5.2 When an applicant notifies the Registrar of a transfer of funds for a deposit, this is verified by the Finance Department and matched with Xero and fed through to Salesforce.
- 5.3 Once the Acceptance Stage has been activated on Salesforce, an automated email response is sent to the parents and a receipt is sent directly from Finance confirming receipt of deposit. Dukes Student Immigration Department will then make contact regarding the preliminary CAS and visa application. New joiners' documentation will normally be sent in April or within a week if after this date.

- 5.4 Any documentation received in the process of the applicant fulfilling their conditions is added to their prospective student file and entered into the Salesforce database.
- 5.5 Admissions staff then change the stage on Salesforce to “Transfer to ISAMS” which automatically sends all data over to ISAMS, the college MIS (management information system). Additionally, all documents are then uploaded to ISAMS directly and grouped in terms of Admissions, Entrance Assessments and UKVI Information.

## 6.0 New joiners' documentation

- 6.1 New joiners' documentation will be sent by the Registrar to the student/parents/agent and online forms uploaded onto the school website to include:
  - Initial letter for parent event including time and date
  - Pre-Arrival Guide
  - Medical Questionnaire
  - Insurance Form
  - Guardianship information
  - Photographic permission form
  - Travel and contact form for students arriving by plane
  - Uniform Guide
  - Textbook List
- 6.2 Parents are informed that CAS will not be requested until **all** forms listed above have been returned to the Registrar.

## 7.0 Visa Application

- 7.1 For all non-UK/Ireland applications, a CAS request form is sent to the Dukes Student Immigration Department by the Admissions team via Salesforce.
- 7.2 A CAS is issued where relevant via the Dukes Student Immigration Department in line with our visa policy.

## 8.0 Post-Acceptance

- 8.1 The Admissions Data Specialist transfers all student data to the Academic Data Manager for input into ISAMS. All accepted students' data and files are transferred via Salesforce to ISAMS, and documents are uploaded directly.
- 8.2 Student data is now available to other members of admin staff:
  - 8.2.1 Senior Houseparent – to allocate accommodation;
  - 8.2.2 Finance Department – to issue an invoice;
  - 8.2.3 Academic Data Manager – to create a timetable.



## 9.0 Pre-Arrival

- 9.1 A confirmation of the issue of a visa/eVisa is received by the Admissions team from Dukes Student Immigration Department.
- 9.2 The Travel Coordinator manages and finalises arrival arrangements.
- 9.3 The Admissions Manager finalises accommodation with the Head of Boarding, and room preparations.
- 9.4 The Nursing team processes all relevant medical information, preparing any risk assessments or adjustments, as appropriate.
- 9.5 The Academic Data Manager finalises the student's timetable and notifies tutors.
- 9.6 The student's timetable is issued on the first day of the course.
- 9.7 The Finance Department confirms payment of the first term's fees to the Admissions Manager, the Principal, the Academic Data Manager & the Head of Boarding,
- 9.8 The Administration Team send out Enrolment information and the Admissions team send out an invitation letter for the initial Parent Event.

## 10.0 Induction, Registration and Enrolment

- 10.1 During this process, the student will be made to feel welcome and provided with all the relevant information and support to enable them to settle in quickly to Cardiff Sixth Form College. The following events will take place during this stage:
  - Full student induction
  - Parents' welcome event
  - Register with the College
  - Receive student handbook
  - Complete international Student Data Form
  - Immigration check/visa/passport/birth certificate
  - Student ID Card issued and photograph taken
  - Speak with IELTS and Careers representatives
  - Collect Uniforms
  - Complete enrolment with College administration (who take copies of all the documents stamps and organise student signing of permission forms)
  - Assistance to open a bank account
  - Tour of the building
  - Introduction to key staff and at least one other student
  - Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Fire Evacuation briefing
  - Meet senior members of staff
  - Receive an up-to-date timetable
  - Team building activities
  - Environmental orientation

# Compliance with UKVI requirements

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is guided by, and should be read in conjunction with, the UKVI sponsor's guidance for educators (revised from time to time to implement changes to the UK Immigration Rules) which can be found on <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators#sponsorship-policy-guidance>
- 1.2 In order to recruit students who are non-UK/Ireland students to study full-time academic programmes in the UK, CSFC must hold a valid Sponsorship Licence with Student Visa sponsor status, which is issued and approved by UKVI under the direction of the Home Office and UK Government.
- 1.3 Cardiff Sixth Form College Student Sponsor status is reviewed and approved annually by UKVI who carry out a Sponsor Basic Compliance Assessment every 12 months. In addition, CSFC must provide evidence of compliance with its UKVI sponsor duties, if requested, by way of an UKVI visit or audit. Failure to do so can result in the immediate suspension or revocation of Sponsor Licence.

## 2.0 Compliance

- 2.1 In recognition of the continuously changing demands on Sponsors to meet the UKVI compliance regime – not least the challenge of adhering to the permissible refusal rate for student visa applications (currently 10%), the College has contracted with Dukes Student Immigration Department and Director of Immigration to act on its behalf and assist in compliance.
- 2.2 The College's admissions team must ensure that when making an offer of study, the applicant meets the following UKVI requirements:
  - 2.2.1 Academic suitability (varies depending on the chosen course of study)
  - 2.2.2 Proof of identity and parenthood.
  - 2.2.3 English language proficiency (if the student applying from overseas and has not previously studied and completed a course of study in the UK).

## 3.0 Dukes Immigration Department Responsibilities

- 3.1 Issue all CAS
- 3.2 Maintain the College's licence
- 3.3 Engage with the UKVI on the College's behalf as and when necessary
- 3.4 Report any changes or student absences on the SMS
- 3.5 Liaise with consultants, students and parents to ensure that only visa applications that meet the immigration rules are submitted
- 3.6 Maintain all the College's recording data in a format that meets the compliance requirements of the UKVI
- 3.7 Attend any announced inspection of the College by UKVI
- 3.8 Operate a policy of attendance online in the case of unannounced visits (see section 6)
- 3.9 Ensure that the College is visa compliant at all times

- 3.10 Visit the College at least twice every academic year

## 4.0 Process for issuance of CAS

- 4.1 Upon a student's acceptance of the College's offer of place, the College will, within a reasonable timeframe (normally April onwards), send the CAS Request Form to the Dukes Student Immigration Department Senior Account Manager via Salesforce.
- 4.2 Dukes Student Immigration Department will immediately contact the consultant/parent to introduce themselves
- 4.3 So as to protect the College's refusal rate, Dukes Student Immigration Department's starting point is to advise and guide on all student visa applications.
- 4.4 Some consultants are known to be very competent and can be trusted to ensure that only compliant applications are submitted. In these cases, CAS can be issued to the trusted agent as long as the application form and documents are checked by Dukes Immigration Department. This decision is made by the College.
- 4.5 Where a consultant is unknown, a parent is acting directly or is operating in a high-risk area and insists on submitting the application themselves without any guidance, Dukes Immigration Department will intervene to ensure that the application is handled accurately.
- 4.6 All correspondence will be copied to the College
- 4.7 If a student has been found to have provided the College with false documentation at registration they may be asked to leave the College and the UKVI will be notified
- 4.8 Where consultants/parents are uncooperative, Dukes Student Immigration Department will refer the matter to the College for a final decision.
- 4.9 Boarding students under College sponsorship for Child Student Visas are required to provide full guardian details and supporting documentation. This is a UKVI requirement introduced on May 29th, 2025, and must be met to ensure visa applications are processed in compliance with current immigration regulations.
- 4.10 If the guardian is an independent individual, the following must be submitted:
  - 4.10.1 Completed Guardian Agreement and Nominated Guardian Letter
  - 4.10.2 Proof of Address
  - 4.10.3 Proof of Immigration Status
  - 4.10.4 Proof of ID
- 4.11 UKVI will only accept guardians who are either settled in the UK or hold British Citizenship.
- 4.12 If a Guardian Agency is being used, the following must be submitted:
  - 4.12.1 A Letter of Intent from the agency
  - 4.12.2 A signed Guardian Agreement

*NOTE: These measures have been implemented to ensure all visa applications are handled in accordance with UKVI regulations. Failure to meet these requirements may result in delays or issues with visa processing.*

## **5.0 Data recording and reporting duties**

- 5.1 Students are normally advised to arrive 1-2 days prior to the start date of their course by the College. Thus, if their course starts on Monday, their expected arrival date will be Saturday or Sunday. Students arriving before this time must be catered for and accommodated by parents/guardians.
- 5.2 Upon arrival, the College's enrolment team will check the following originals
  - 5.2.1 Student passport
  - 5.2.2 Student visa
  - 5.2.3 Original copies of IELTS and other academic certificates
- 5.3 Dukes Immigration Department will carry out a visa enrolment at the beginning of every term and half term to ensure that all visa students have arrived.
- 5.4 Copies of passports and visas will be kept on ISAMS at all times.
- 5.5 Any visa student whose circumstances have changed will be referred to Dukes Immigration Department as soon as possible so that all necessary reports can be made on the SMS.
- 5.6 Dukes Immigration Department will maintain a compliant master sheet of data at all times.

## **6.0 Attendance and studying**

- 6.1 Visa students must be "genuine" students and must demonstrate progression.
- 6.2 Only recognised and accredited courses – GCSEs and A levels - are offered by the College to visa students.
- 6.3 Attendance is monitored on a daily basis and non-attendance is challenged on the day of absence.
- 6.4 As all of the College's international students are also boarders at CSFC, any absences are identified and tackled at a very early stage through disciplinary discussions with pastoral teams and, where necessary, with parents/guardians.
- 6.5 The College is aware that unauthorised absence must be reported to the UKVI, and ten missed consecutive interactions must lead to the withdrawal of sponsorship, unless a college Pastoral and Academic Review has been set in motion and sound reasoning has been applied. Attendance below 90% is deemed unacceptable, unless evidence to the contrary has been documented.
- 6.6 Students are only permitted to work within the parameters stated on their visa (some students from age of 16 are permitted to work – detailed on their visa – but not all).

## **7.0 Visa Student Responsibilities**

- 7.1 Ensure timely arrival to the College prior to the start date of the course
- 7.2 If a student is unable to arrive and start their course on time, the college will undertake an Pastoral and Academic Review to assess whether the student can access, progress, and complete the course successfully. A Pastoral and Academic Review will be conducted if a student does not arrive within three weeks of the published course start date. The review may be initiated earlier if deemed necessary by the college. Following the review, the college will determine one of the following outcomes:

- 7.2.1 **The Offer Remains in Place:** The student can access, progress, and complete the course as originally planned. The offer will remain in place, subject to any subsequent reviews.
- 7.2.2 **Support Plan Required:** The student can access, progress, and complete the course with additional support. The college will provide details of the required support plan.
- 7.2.3 **Offer Revoked:** The student is unable to access, progress, or complete the course, and the offer will be revoked.
- 7.3 Bring all relevant originals of IELTS certificates, academic reports/certificates.
- 7.4 Maintain an acceptable level of attendance (at least 90% of the scheduled hours in each month) – except where the hours are rearranged or cancelled due to an authorised trip/field visit.
- 7.5 Notify the College administration team of any changes to their contact details.
- 7.6 Comply with restrictions specified on their eVisa.
- 7.7 Not engage in any criminal or indecent/offensive activity which may harm the reputation of the College.

## 8.0 English Language Proficiency

- 8.1 Prior to making a visa application, visa students must also show competency in English language
- 8.2 Offers made to ALL international students would include reference to demonstrated levels of proficiency in English language, usually with a minimum IELTS or equivalent level of 6.5 (September entry), 6.0 (August entry) for A Level and 5.5 for GCSE as well as an internally set English language test
- 8.3 Students will be expected to take additional tutorials in English if their minimum level of English is insufficient to cope with the academic demands of their chosen programme

## 9.0 Unannounced visits by the UKVI

- 9.1 The UKVI can undertake an inspection at any time. Sometimes the UKVI will call in advance and give notice of their inspection (an "announced" visit). However, increasingly, the UKVI is relying on "unannounced" visits (i.e. without notice)
- 9.2 Inspectors can visit the school even during the school holidays when key staff are away. In the case of an unannounced visit:
  - 9.2.1 The inspector(s) will present themselves at reception. Please check their ID and ask for their names
  - 9.2.2 Reception staff should inform the Authorising Officer, Paul Ludlow (07584012130) and the College Principal, immediately.
  - 9.2.3 A call should be made to Lee Tatum (LT) (+44 (0)20 3953 8470) and to Paul Ludlow (PL) (+44 (0)7584012130), immediately.
  - 9.2.4 Inspectors should be offered refreshments and told that the key staff are being contacted and will be with them shortly.
  - 9.2.5 If PL/LT are in the vicinity, one or both will immediately attend. They will ask to speak to the inspector and explain that they are on their way.
  - 9.2.6 If PL/LT are not in the vicinity, one or both will speak with the inspector and either persuade the inspector to return another day or, alternatively, to allow PL/LT to carry out the inspection online.

- 9.2.7 If the inspector insists on continuing with the inspection, this will have to take place in a room which has online access.
- 9.2.8 Whilst PL/LT should be able to answer all questions posed by the inspector, it would be helpful to have a member of staff physically present in the room in case additional documentation is required.
- 9.2.9 If PL/LT are not present in person, Dukes Student Immigration Department will e-mail all required spreadsheets to the Key Contact or other nominated staff member and / or to the inspector.
- 9.2.10 In the extremely unlikely event that PL/LT cannot be contacted (on a flight, for example), a nominated senior member of staff at Dukes Student Immigration Department will fulfil their roles. In the first instance, we call the Managing Director of Dukes Colleges.
- 9.2.11 PL/LT will follow up any inspection with representations in writing to the UKVI to ensure that any outstanding issues are clarified.

## Fees and refunds

1. Prospective international students receive an offer letter containing information relating to the type of course and the start and completion dates
2. At the point of registration, there is a non-refundable charge of £300 (international boarders). £216 (UK & EU boarders) or £216 (day)
3. Boarding students are asked for a deposit of £9,500 (International) and (UK & EU) £3,000 and (UK/Ireland) £500 at time of acceptance. It is explained that the entire deposit is held until completion of the course when it is returned in full minus any outstanding charges.
4. In line with our classification of international and local students, **any student who has not been continuously resident in the UK for the three years immediately preceding the start of their course will be classified as an international student.** As such, they will be required to pay the **international deposit** applicable at the time of acceptance. This policy ensures consistency with our admissions and fee structures for both local and international applicants.
5. The incidental charges, which are currently £500 per annum, are explained to the parents.
6. UK students are given a conditional offer letter based on their predicted GCSE results and entrance test results.
7. International students, EU and EEA and UK/Ireland students are sent a deposit and acceptance confirmation letter upon receipt of their deposit.
8. Tuition fees are invoiced bi-annually and must be paid by 30 June and 30 November of each year for the following term or immediately following acceptance if after this date. Tuition does not commence until fees are received.
9. Each student is a separate customer within the College's accounting system. This records all invoices issued and funds received, and therefore the balance owed or paid in advance for each student
10. If the student is unsuccessful in obtaining an education visa, or in meeting the conditions contained in their offer letter, a full refund of the deposit will be given upon evidence of the same
11. At the end of the course, a full financial reconciliation is undertaken. The College aims to reconcile all accounts and return any deposit and fees outstanding by 31<sup>st</sup> December following successful completion of an academic course
12. The **annual fee structure** can be found on the College website at the following link: <https://www.ccoex.com/admissions/fees/>.