

South Bank University Academy Admissions Policy 2025/2026

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 South Bank University Academy is a mixed comprehensive secondary academy located in the London Borough of Southwark. It is part of the South Bank Academies Trust, a multi academy trust.
- 1.2 Admission to all state funded schools is governed by the School Admissions Code 2021 (Code). Under the Code, the Trust is the 'Admission Authority' for the Academy, and has a legal duty to formally determine the 'admission arrangements' for each year's intake in accordance with the requirements of the Code.
- 1.3 For South Bank University Academy, the relevant Local Authority is Southwark Council.
- 1.4 The Trust Board delegates the task of determining the admission arrangements each year to the Governing Body of the Academy. Thereafter, the Academy's admission arrangements are determined and implemented by a committee of three Governors called the Admission Committee.
- 1.5 This policy and all other admission related documents referred to herein and used during the admission process, together form the Academy's admission arrangements. Any proposed changes to the admission arrangements are subject to statutory consultation before they can be determined. Determined admission arrangements can only be varied in specific circumstances, and usually only with Secretary of State consent.
- 1.6 In addition to the main school, the Academy also has a sixth form. The admission arrangements for the sixth form are also set out in this policy, insofar as they relate to external candidates. All references to 'child' (and plural derivatives) in this policy should be taken to include references to 'external candidates' (and plural derivatives).

2. Definition of a 'Parent'

- 2.1. In this policy and in education law, the definition of a 'parent' includes a natural or adoptive parent of the child (regardless of whether the child lives with them, has contact with them, or they have parental responsibility for the child). It also includes a person who is not a natural or adoptive parent of the child, but who has care of and/or parental responsibility for the child

3. Inclusivity and Equality

- 3.1. The Academy is fully inclusive and welcomes applications for the admission of children with special educational needs (SEN), physical, mental or behavioural disabilities and other protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010. The Academy's admission arrangements are determined and implemented with its equality duties in mind, including the public sector equality duty (PSED).

4. Children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

- 4.1. Children with an EHCP are admitted to school under separate statutory procedures set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. These procedures are managed by the child's home Local Authority, not under the school's determined admission arrangements. Parents of children with an EHC plan should therefore liaise with their child's home Local Authority's SEN team if they want the Academy to be named in their child's EHC plan as their child's school.
- 4.2. Where this happens in the normal admission round (i.e. entry to Year 7 in September) these children will be allocated places before all other children, reducing the number of places left within the published admission number (PAN).
- 4.3. At all other times, children with an EHCP naming the Academy will be admitted even where this means the PAN will be exceeded.

5. Published Admission Numbers (PANs)

- 5.1. The PAN for Year 7 is 150 pupils, open equally to girls and boys.
- 5.2. When applying parents/carers should understand that the intake is required to reflect the full range of attainment and as far as possible the social, economic and cultural character of the catchment area.
- 5.3. Each applicant is given equal consideration in line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy
- 5.4. The PAN for Year 12 is 40 pupils. This figure relates to external candidates for Year 12 places only, as the Academy's existing Year 11 pupils will simply transfer to Year 12 in the usual way if they meet the Minimum Academic Entry Criteria (see below) and want to continue their education in the sixth form.
- 5.5. Once the total number of places allocated to internal pupils and external candidates within a year group are known, it may be possible to admit further external candidates until Year 12 reaches capacity.

6. Oversubscription Criteria for Year 7

- 6.1. Where there are more applications than places available, the order in which places will be allocated will be as follows:

- 6.1.1. Looked after children¹ and previously looked after children

Applications in this category may need to be supported by documentary evidence confirming the child's status, such as a signed letter from the child's social worker or

¹A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions, in England. A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after in England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order, as well as a child who appears to the Admission Committee (on behalf of the Trust) to have been in state care outside of England (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society), but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.

former social worker confirming their current or previous status, an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. In the case of children adopted from state care outside England (as defined above), evidence of having been in state care outside England and of being adopted will be required. Ideally, this should be received by the application deadline in the normal admission round. When assessing the evidence provided, the [DfE's guidance](#) will be followed. Where the Virtual School Head has already verified the child's status, parents should let the Local Authority/School know, as there should be no need for further evidence to be provided in this case.

- 6.1.2. Children who are eligible for the Pupil Premium
- 6.1.3. Children for whom it is essential that they be admitted to the school because of a significant medical or social need²
- 6.1.4. Siblings of students who will be registered students at the school on the first day of the term when the applicant student would be joining the school³
- 6.1.5. Children who live nearest to the school⁴
- 6.1.6. Children of staff members employed at South Bank University Academy⁵
- 6.1.7. All other children - this category will include all children who do not fall into any of the oversubscription categories above.

² For inclusion in this category, either the child or a close family member living with the child at the child's home address, must have an exceptional social and/or medical need which means that only Harris Academy Bermondsey is suitable for the child to attend, and no other local school is suitable, supported by an appropriate professional. For the purpose of this category, a 'close family member' is a parent (as defined by this policy), or a sibling (as defined by this policy) or grandparent who, in either case, lives with the family as a dependent of the applicant child's parent. Supporting evidence to substantiate that the child or their family has a medical, social or psychological need must be provided at the time of application. The evidence must be in a written format and should set out the reasons why, in their view, a particular school is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. This evidence must be current and either from the child's registered general practitioner or any another relevant qualified professional that the child has been referred to and/or who is providing direct care/support/treatment to the child on an ongoing basis in their professional capacity e.g. a child or educational psychologist, a child psychiatrist, an orthopaedic consultant or a social worker.

³ For the purpose of this category, a 'sibling' is a full sibling (sharing both parents), a half sibling (sharing one parent), an adopted sibling, a long term foster sibling (i.e. not a temporary placement), a step sibling (one child's parent married to the other child's parent), or a child of their parent's cohabiting partner. In all cases, the sibling must live at the child's home address (as defined by this policy) as part of the same core family unit. For the avoidance of doubt, a child of a friend or extended family member (e.g. cousin) will not be a 'sibling' for this purpose, even if they live at the same address as the applicant child.

⁴ The determination of distance. Measurement from the main entrance of the Academy to the main entrance of the child's main place of residence. A child's home is considered to be the child's permanent residence. If custody of a child is shared, the address given should be that of the parent or carer with whom the child spends most of the school week.

⁵ For inclusion in this category, the staff member must be permanently based at South Bank University Academy for more than 50% of their normal working hours each week during term time, and have been: (a) Employed for at least two years at the time of application; and/or (b) Recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage, as confirmed by their HR Manager. For the purpose of this category, a 'child' of a staff member is: (a) their natural or adopted child, whether they live with the staff member or elsewhere; and/or (b) their stepchild or child of their cohabiting partner, who lives and sleeps with the staff member at their home address for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Friday night during term time. For the avoidance of doubt, a stepchild or child of a cohabiting partner, who lives elsewhere, will not be eligible for a place under this category.

- 6.2. Where fewer than 150 applications are received, the school will offer places to all those who have applied.

7. Minimum Academic Entry Criteria for Entry to Year 12 (Sixth Form)

- 7.1. All current Year 11 pupils at the Academy wishing to transfer to Year 12, and all external candidates applying for admission to Year 12, must meet the minimum academic entry criteria set out in the table below:

Programme of Study	Entry requirements
A-Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of five subjects, with '5-9' grades awarded in full course GCSE subjects , including Eng/Mat • Minimum of '6' grades in relevant GCSE subjects continuing to A-Levels • Minimum '7' for STEM A Level subjects (Biology, Chemistry, Maths, Physics and Further Maths)
Vocational Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 4 '4-9' grades in full course GCSE subjects including one of Eng/Mat
Vocational Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 3 '3-9' grades in full course GCSE subjects

- 7.2. The pupil must have taken at least eight GCSE examinations to meet the minimum academic entry criteria. Vocational courses equivalent to more than one GCSE will count as a maximum of one grade.
- 7.3. 'Subject Specific Requirements' means the additional entry requirements for specific subjects/courses, as set out in the Minimum Academic Entry Criteria - Subject Specific Requirements document] which is published in the Sixth Form Course Guide.
- 7.4. The Minimum Academic Entry Criteria is the same for Year 11 pupils and external candidates. Once met, Year 11 students will transfer to Year 12. All external candidates meeting the minimum threshold will be on an equal footing for places, with the oversubscription criteria being applied where there are more eligible applications than places available. Those achieving higher grades will not have higher priority.
- 7.5. A pre-application meeting may take place between members of the sixth form team and Year 11 pupils/external candidates to discuss course options and entry requirements. Parents/candidates should note that this meeting is not an interview, and its outcome will play no part in the transfer/application process.
- 7.6. Parents/candidates should note that the Academy cannot make exceptions to the determined Minimum Academic Entry Criteria, except where it is necessary for the Academy to adjust this criteria to comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Exceptions cannot be made in other circumstances, and parents/candidates should refrain from asking.

8. Oversubscription Criteria for Year 12 (Sixth Form)

- 8.1. Where there are more applications than places available, the order in which places will be allocated will be as follows allowing for subject availability to accommodate the options detailed by the applicant:

8.1.1. Looked after and previously looked after candidates

A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions, in England. A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after in England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order, as well as a child who appears to the Admission Committee (on behalf of the Trust) to have been in state care outside of England (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society), but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.

Applications in this category may need to be supported by documentary evidence confirming the child's status, such as a signed letter from the child's social worker or former social worker confirming their current or previous status, an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. In the case of children adopted from state care outside England (as defined above), evidence of having been in state care outside England and of being adopted will be required. Ideally, this should be received by the application deadline in the normal admission round. When assessing the evidence provided, the DfE's guidance (accessible here) will be followed.

Where the Virtual School Head has already verified the child's status, parents should let the Local Authority/School know, as there should be no need for further evidence to be provided in this case.

8.1.2. All other candidates

This category will include all candidates who do not fall into any of the oversubscription categories above and will be selected by waiting list order and subject availability.

9. Tie Breaker (All Year Groups)

- 9.1. Where there are more applications than places remaining in any of the oversubscription categories, the order in which places will be allocated will be determined by the distance between the child's home address (as defined by this policy) and the Academy, with those living nearest receiving highest priority.
- 9.2. Distance will be measured in a straight line from the eastings and northings grid reference for the child's home address to the eastings and northings grid reference for the Academy's site, using the London Borough of Southwark's Capita database.

- 9.3. Where the child lives in a multi-dwelling building (for example, an apartment block), distance will be measured from the same point in the building so that the distance will be the same for all children living there.
- 9.4. Where two or more children live an equal distance from the Academy (including where they live in the same multi-dwelling building), the order in which places are allocated will be determined by random allocation supervised by someone who is independent of the Academy.

10. Child's Home Address

- 10.1. The child's home address is the residential (not business) address of their parent (as defined in this policy) at which they live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night during term time. It will usually be the address at which they are registered with their GP, hospital, dentist and/or optician, and/or where Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit (if eligible) is claimed, at the time of application.
- 10.2. Where any uncertainty arises in respect of the child's home address, the Academy reserves the right to seek documentary evidence to determine which address meets the definition stated above. For the avoidance of doubt, it is the address which meets this definition that will be used to process the application, which may not be the address given by the parent.
- 10.3. Where the child/child's family is/are not living in the area of the Academy at the time the application is submitted, the application will still be accepted and processed. However, the address used will be the child's current address unless the application is supported by documentary evidence of the future new address which will meet the definition set out above (for example, a signed tenancy agreement, formal mortgage offer, HMLR title deed/document etc.)

11. Children of UK Armed Forces Personnel/Crown Servants

- 11.1. Applications for the admission of children of UK Armed Forces personnel with a confirmed posting or Crown servants returning from overseas will be accepted and processed in advance of the family's arrival in the area, as long as the application is accompanied by an official letter giving a relocation date.
- 11.2. The address at which the child will live will be used to apply the oversubscription criteria, provided parents provide some evidence of the intended address (for example, a signed tenancy agreement, mortgage offer, HMLR title deed/document, official letter confirming exchange of contracts, etc). Alternatively, where requested by parents, a Unit or quartering address will be used for this purpose.

12. Twins, Triplets and Siblings of a Higher Multiple Birth (Year 7 to Year 11 Only)

- 12.1. In Years 7 to 11, where at least one child can be accommodated without prejudicing the efficient education of others or use of resources, their twins, triplet(s) and sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth will also be offered a place to avoid them having to attend different

schools. These additional children are not 'excepted pupils' because the statutory maximum infant class size does not apply to these year groups.

13. Application Procedure for Admission to Year 7 in September

- 13.1. Applications for admission to Year 7 in September are known as applications made 'in the normal admission round'.
- 13.2. Applications in the normal admission round are coordinated by the Local Authority for all schools in its area. This includes late applications (i.e. applications received before the first day of term in September, but not made in time to enable the Local Authority to offer a place on National Offer Day).
- 13.3. Applications in the normal admission round must be made directly to the child's home Local Authority by completing and submitting a Common Application Form (CAF), which is available to download/complete online via the child's home Local Authority's website, by the application deadline. Parents must state a preference for the Academy in the CAF.
- 13.4. Parents should carefully consider the oversubscription criteria stated above to determine whether other documentation must be submitted in support of the application. This documentation must be submitted to the child's Local Authority, to arrive by the application deadline. If not, there will be a significant risk that the child will be placed in a lower oversubscription category because they were not identified as qualifying for a higher one.
- 13.5. The application deadline for admission to Year 7 in the normal admission round is the 31st October, statutory closing date or next working day thereafter.
- 13.6. National Offer Day for admission to Year 7 in the normal admission round is 3rd March.
- 13.7. Late applications (as defined above) will be processed by the Local Authority after all on-time applications have been processed, which will unfortunately reduce the chances of the child being offered a place. Parents are therefore strongly advised to submit their applications on time

14. Application Procedure for In-Year Admission (Mid-Year/Other Year Groups)

- 14.1. An in-year admission application is one for admission to Year 7 submitted after the first day of term in September, or of admission to any other year group. This is also known as admission 'outside the normal admission round'.
- 14.2. Parents should note that the PAN set for Year 7 only applies for the duration of the school year entry (i.e. to applications both in and outside the normal admission round to Year 7 only). Such applications may be refused where there are no places remaining with the PAN set for that intake.
- 14.3. Where applications are made for Admission to any year group, the child will be admitted to the Academy unless admitting an additional child would prejudice the efficient provision of education, and/or the efficient use of resources.

- 14.4. Where there are multiple applicants for a year group, and the Academy has determined that only a lower number of additional children can be admitted without prejudicing the efficient provision of education, and/or the efficient use of resources, the Academy will apply oversubscription criteria to determine which of the children are offered a place.
- 14.5. The admission arrangements that will apply will be those determined for Year 7 that school year.
- 14.6. Applications for in-year admission must be made directly to the Academy, not the Local Authority, by completing an In-Year Admission Application Form via [Applicaa](#).

15. Application Procedure for Admission to Year 12 in September (External Candidates)

- 15.1. Applications for the admission of external candidates to Year 12 must be made directly to the Academy, by completing and submitting a Sixth Form Admission Application Form via [Applicaa](#).
- 15.2. As stated above, a pre-application meeting will take place between members of the sixth form staff and candidates, to discuss course options and entry requirements. This meeting is not an interview, and its outcome will play no part in the application process. Places are allocated solely by reference to the Minimum Academic Entry Criteria and oversubscription criteria set out in the Academy's admission arrangements.
- 15.3. The application deadline for admission to Year 12 in September is 7th February 2025
- 15.4. Conditional offers will be made by 31st May. These offers will be based on the predicted grades stated in the Sixth Form Admission Application Form and will be conditional upon the external candidate meeting the Minimum Academic Entry Criteria for the courses chosen when their awarded grades are known.
- 15.5. As stated above, the Academy cannot make exceptions to the determined Minimum Academic Entry Criteria, except where it is necessary for this criteria to be adjusted in compliance with the Academy's duties under the Equality Act 2010. Exceptions cannot be made in other circumstances.

16. Waiting List

- 16.1. The Academy operates a waiting list for children who are unsuccessful in achieving a place in Year 7 throughout the school year.
- 16.2. The waiting list is ranked strictly in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in this policy, and not by reference to the date that the child's name was added to the list. This means that a child's name can go down as well as up the waiting list as more names are added.
- 16.3. Children placed at the Academy under the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol will take priority over children on the waiting list.

17. Statutory Right of Appeal

- 17.1. Parents have a statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a place at the Academy. This applies to all year groups, including the sixth form.
- 17.2. Full details of the statutory right of appeal will be set out in the formal letter notifying parents of the refusal of a place, including the deadline for lodging an appeal.
- 17.3. The Academy will also publish an appeals timetable for appeals against the refusal of a place in the normal admission round (i.e. to Year 7 in September) alongside this policy on or before 28th February in the year in which offers are made.

18. Requests for Admission Outside Normal Age Group

- 18.1. Parents have a right to request that their child is admitted to a year group other than their normal year group at the Academy. This may be to a year group below or above, and there may be a variety of reasons for making this request. For example, the child might be gifted, suffer from long-term or serious illness, or have been educated overseas and/or used to studying at a different level (these are examples only, not an exhaustive list).
- 18.2. However, parents do not have a right to decide that their child will be admitted outside their normal age group. Such requests must be considered by the Academy's Admission Committee, in order to decide whether or not to agree the request in principle, or refuse the request, taking into account the factors set out below.
- 18.3. Requests for admission outside normal age group are not applications for admission, which must still be made in the usual way. Parents are strongly encouraged to make their requests in a timely manner, preferably well ahead of any application deadlines, so that they can obtain a decision in principle which will enable them to make informed decisions when they subsequently apply for admission. A separate request must be made to the Admission Authority for each school being considered.
- 18.4. The Admission Committee will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the parents' views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, the child's medical history and the views of their medical professionals, whether they have previously been educated or attended nursery out of their normal age group, and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group, if it were not for being born prematurely. They will also take into account the views of the Principal of the Academy and, where provided, the Principal of any current or previous school. This is not an exhaustive list, and parents may put forward any matters for the Admission Committee to consider.
- 18.5. Parents should make their requests by completing a Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group Form and submitting it with any supporting documents to the Academy marked for the attention of the Admission Officer. This form is available to download on the Academy's website or in hard copy from the Academy's main office.
- 18.6. In all cases, the Admissions Officer will notify parents of the outcome of their request formally in writing, explaining its reasons in sufficient detail for parents to understand why

it came to that decision. Where the request is agreed in principle, this letter should accompany the application for admission subsequently made for a place at the Academy.

- 18.7. Parents do not have a statutory right of appeal against a refusal of a request for admission outside normal age group, but they may submit a complaint under the Academy's published Complaints Policy if they do not believe the request was dealt with by the Admission Officer properly. Parents do, of course, have a statutory right of appeal if they also applied for admission and a place was refused in the child's normal year group as well.

19. Review and determination of the Academy's admission arrangements

- 19.1. The term 'admission arrangements' means "The overall procedure, practices and oversubscription criteria used in deciding the allocation of school places including any device or means used to determine whether a school place is to be offered". The admission arrangements therefore include not only this policy, but all other admission related documents and any other published information about the Academy's admission processes.
- 19.2. Under the Code, the Admission Authority for a school must formally determine the admission arrangements for the next intake at that school every year on or before **28 February**.
- 19.3. Where no changes (other than changing dates/deadlines) are proposed, there is no need to go to consultation. However, where changes are proposed (other than a proposed increase in PAN), the Admission Authority must carry out a 6-week statutory consultation in accordance with the Code between 1 October and 31 January ahead of determination of the admission arrangements.
- 19.4. Where no changes have been proposed in the intervening period, the Admission Authority must in any event consult on the admission arrangements every 7 years.
- 19.5. Once determined on or before 28 February, the Academy's admission arrangements for that intake must be published and cannot be varied except in very limited circumstances to correct a mistake or give effect to a decision of a Schools Adjudicator. Any other variations will require Secretary of State consent, which will only be granted where there has been a 'major change in circumstances'.
- 19.6. The admission arrangements for the September 2025 intake were determined by the Governing Body at their meeting on **8th February 2024**. They will be reviewed again early in the Autumn term for the next intake.

20. Contacts

For queries regarding this policy, admissions arrangements for the school and the waiting lists and appeals process, please contact:

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