

# Admissions Policy

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## **1. Admissions Policy Statement**

WE Bridge Academy (the academy) is dedicated to the delivery of the best support and the development of its students; thus, it operates with the principal aim to bring success to all students of the academy irrespective of gender, age, nationality, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, physical capability or social background.

WE Bridge Academy offers several different types of courses. How the academy deals with entry into each course depends on the level and length of the intended course of study.

The minimum age that a student can be admitted into the academy is from the age of 16 years. The academy will consider the applications of all students provided they are eligible for study in the UK, including those that require the academy to provide a Confirmation of Acceptance of studies (CAS) or a visa letter.

Prospective students are encouraged to visit the school, although the Academy realises that for international students, this is not always possible. Many of the overseas admissions are made via agents/partners/tour operators. The Academy also encourages visits from agents and the marketing/admissions team will always endeavour to meet the agents during visits to discuss courses and admission procedures. Whilst we welcome collaboration with international agents, the decision regarding recruitment will always rest with the Academy. Alongside this student admissions policy the Agent Policy is a related document.

## **2. Courses and Admissions Requirements**

### **2.1 International Foundation Programme (IFP)**

**Sept to June (Full Programme)**

**January to June (Intensive Programme)**

**January to August (Full Programme)**

The IFP at WE Bridge Academy can be awarded either by NCC Education or by our internal brand of examinations. The level of the course is equivalent to NQF Level 3 of the national qualification framework.

Students are accepted onto this course from the age of 17, although on occasion an exception may be granted to a 16 year old if they are gifted or have completed the secondary school early. The academic team (Director of Studies/Assistant Director of Studies) or Admissions Team will authorise such cases.

There are different entry points on this course as listed above and the course offered will be dependent on the student's background, English Level and point of application.

WE Bridge Academy accepts students from many different countries all with different qualifications. To ensure that students are at the appropriate level for study of the International Foundation Programme (IFP) and not at a disadvantage, admission onto the IFP is conditional on the following:

- Completion of Academy application form either in paper format or by completing the online application form
- Copy of passport data page
- For Visa applicants - Copy of any previous visa(s) used to study in UK (immigration history). If the student has ever been refused entry to the UK, they should submit full details of any refusal.
- Evidence of the student's successful completion of their secondary school education. The student needs to have successfully completed all their high school education in their country (at least 12 years of school in total). Exception may be considered on certain occasions on occasion for example 'the student has special circumstances for finishing High School early or the student is a gifted and talented student'.
- International students having previously completed a course of study in the UK as a Tier 4 student will be expected to show progression of study in line with UKVI rules and requirements
- Evidence of English Language Ability as follows:

Non-EU students who require a Tier 4 General Visa must complete a UKVI IELTS (Or SELT as listed by the UKVI). The overall IELTS score must be at least 4.5 with a minimum of 4.0 in each component for September entry. In addition, an intention to study interview will be conducted in person or online with the Director of Studies, or an appropriate member of the senior management team. The admissions team will check all UKVI SELTS using the IELTS online verification system.

Non Tier 4 students will be assessed by their academic background showing any previous English results they have or any often acceptable English Exam Certificates. These do not have to be a secure UKVI IELTS. The academic team may request in cases where the English Level is not transparent that the student have an interview over the telephone or by skype.

## **2.2 Pre-sessional (Pre-Foundation)**

For those students who do not meet the requirements to be offered a place on the IFP programmes (section 2.1 above) a Pre-sessional/Pre-Foundation course can be offered. This course is up to 12 weeks between September to December. On satisfactory completion of this course students can automatically be offered a place on either the January to June Intensive IFP or the January to August full IFP

Usually students who are offered this course have a slightly lower English or Academic Level than expected or they require some preparation for the IFP programme or studying in the UK in general. It is a separate course to the IFP and it should not be confused as being part of the IFP, although in most cases students do go on to study IFP. For the case of visa applicants a separate visa will be issued. Firstly, a short-term study visa will be issued for the Pre-sessional course. Upon successful satisfactory completion of the Pre-sessional course, the student will be issued a further study visa if he/she joins the IFP.

## **2.3 English language courses**

For the purposes of the Academy's English language courses, the admission policy considers students as two distinct groups: Tier 4 students and Non-Tier 4 students. The requirements for entry onto an English language course are an Academy completed application either on paper or online. The application is completed and returned with a copy of the passport page and:

### **Tier 4 students**

A secure English Language Test (SELT) in the form of IELTS or any of the approved qualifications on the UKVI's approved list, with an overall score appropriate to the level of study with the minimum acceptable level being CEFR level B1 (IELTS score of at least 4.5 overall with a minimum of 4.0 in each component). The academy will not accept any student who has not achieved the minimum B1 level of English language proficiency required by the UKVI to study in the UK under the relevant Tier 4 category.

### **Non-Tier 4 students**

Upon arrival at the academy, all students are issued an English placement test to place them onto the appropriate level course in the academy. During the application process students are also asked about their current English level, which also gives the academic staff an idea of the level.

## **2.4 Teacher training and teacher refresher courses**

The academy offers several courses that are for professional clients.

- **Teacher refresher courses**

Participants should have a level of English of at least CEFR level B1 and should provide all documents required for general admission.

- **Trinity Cert TESOL**

Participants should provide the following (which are in line with Trinity College London requirements): Trinity CertTESOL application form, copy of passport/ID, proof of level of education (minimum of A level or equivalent).

Participants must also attend an interview (in person, over the telephone or online). As part of this interview, participants need to complete a pre-interview questionnaire.

Participants on this course must be at least 18 years old (21 is recommended) and have a level of English of CEFR level C1. The level of English will be assessed during the interview.

## 2.5. Further conditions

For students requiring a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS), this will only be issued once a student has met the admissions requirements of the academy, and has provided the necessary paperwork as per the offer letter from the academy.

Tier 4 students must be able to demonstrate in advance that they can finance themselves (e.g. through parental funds) or demonstrate that they have financial sponsorship for their entire course without needing to undertake paid work. Students requiring a visa for study (Tier 4 or other) should also read the academy's terms and conditions.

The academy reserves the right to verify any information provided during the application / admission process with the appropriate organisational / accrediting bodies.

Although the aim of the academy is to provide students access to all the courses it delivers there may be times when there is insufficient student subscription to a course. In this instance, the academy may not be able to offer the required programme and may either withdraw the course completely for that session or offer an alternative.

The academy will expel a student, should it find that the student has acted in a dishonest manner during the admission and enrolment process. In this situation, any fees paid to the academy may not be returned. The relevant authorities such as UKVI will also be informed.

The academy reserves the right to make exceptions to the entry requirements and additional criteria for any of its courses under exceptional circumstances and this will occur on a case-by-case basis. However, the academy will always operate in line with the requirements of its accrediting bodies and the UKVI.

## 3.0 Admissions Procedures

An application to study at WE Bridge Academy is usually preceded by an enquiry either from the student or representative. Information should be provided by the academy within 24 hours of receiving an enquiry. If a request for a brochure is made this is usually sent via email. If a student or representative requests a brochure via post, this is usually dispatched within 24 hours; however, the time to receive it will vary.

### **Once the student has made the initial application:**

The administration team enters the student details into the student checklist spreadsheet and the current management information system CLASS.

Before any offer letter or booking confirmation is issued by the Academy, all application documents are checked and students must meet the conditions of section 2. If all conditions are met for then a unconditional offer will be made (UOL), if all conditions are not met the a conditional offer will be made (COL). For short term study courses, such as general English programmes, a booking confirmation or acceptance visa letter will be issued.

For International Foundation Programmes the student must accept the offer and meet any conditions required. All documents will be checked before issuing any visa letter including Tier 4 CAS.

**Under 18 students must also in addition provide:**

- A completed copy of the academy's Parental Permission and Medical Consent Form. This form must be completed by the student's parent or legal guardian
- Homestay application Form (\*unless they have a direct relative in Cardiff i.e. brother, sister, aunt, uncle or parent)
- Proof of identity of parents/guardian who have sole responsibility

For students requiring a CAS, for the International Foundation Programme (IFP), the academy arranges the following:

- A credibility interview either by telephone or online.
- Proof of Finances as per UKVI policy rules

The credibility interview should be carried out by the Director of Studies (DOS), Assistant Director of Studies or the Registrar.

If a student fails to satisfy the academy's questions during the credibility interview the academy will withdraw its offer for the programme.

Once all of the relevant documents have been received, checked and the student has satisfactorily met the academy's admission criteria, the student is informed of their successful application.

The student's visa letter or CAS is then issued.

The student's information is updated on the academy's management systems by the administration team.

### **3.1 CAS**

Tier 4 of the Points Based System is the primary immigration route for non-EEA students who wish to study full-time in the UK. An education provider that holds a Tier 4 licence must sponsor these students. We-Bridge Academy holds a Tier 4 Sponsor Licence and can sponsor students under the Tier 4 (General) student route. This route is for migrants aged 16 or over who come to the UK for their post-16 education.

When the Academy is satisfied that an applicant meets the requirements of sponsorship, the Academy will assign the student a CAS. The CAS is not a paper certificate or document, but a virtual document, like a database record.

The CAS is assigned through the Sponsor Management System (SMS), which is the UK Border Agency's online tool. This allows sponsors to assign a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) to students who wish to come to the UK to study. It is also the tool used to fulfil the Academy's reporting duties for sponsored students.

Only the Academy's SMS users can issue a CAS. The SMS users are persons in the school who have access to the SMS. The SMS allows users two levels of access – 'Level 1' and 'Level 2'. The level decides the type of access (permissions) the user has to the system and the functions they can perform.

Assigning a CAS involves working through a short online form giving information about the student that the school wants to sponsor and the course of study they will follow.

Once the student has been assigned a CAS, the SMS system will produce a CAS number for the student.

The admissions team will then put this CAS number on a CAS Letter (see Appendix C for example) and this letter is sent to the student. (See Appendix D- CAS Cover letter)

Once the student has received the CAS they can then apply for their visa.

The admissions team will then keep in contact with the agent/student and will monitor the visa progression.

### **3.2 Short Term Visa Letters**

When the Academy is satisfied that an applicant meets the requirements and the required fees have been received for short term courses, the admissions team will issue a visa letter. We issue 6 or 11 month letters dependant on the type and length of the programme. (Example of short-term visa letter at Appendix E. The visa letter will be issued no longer, than 3 months before the course start date due to UKVI regulations).

## **4. Arrivals and registration**

Students must start their course on the start date given on the offer letter, or by the latest start date agreed.

If for any reason, there is a delay in a student starting at the academy, the student, or their representative, must inform administration team as soon as possible.

If an exception is made, the academy can issue a new COL with a revised start date; however, this does not apply to Tier 4 students.

The administration team updates any late arrivals on CLASS and the Director of Studies (DOS) can check this information on CLASS when required. They can then ensure teaching provision is adjusted accordingly.

The administration team also ensures that the housing officer is informed of any changes to arrivals where applicable.

The administration team in most cases decides if the change of start date is acceptable. However, if the situation is deemed complex or for a prolonged period, then the senior management team is consulted.

## 4.1 Registration

Upon the student's arrival at the academy, the administration team follows one of three procedures:

### Students – EEA(Europeans)

- Check and copy the student's ID/passport to make sure it corresponds with the initial application.
- Sign and date the copy of the ID/passport used in the student's application.
- Complete the student registration and induction forms, ensuring that the student has received relevant briefings and documents from the relevant members of staff.
- Input on class all the information confirming passport/visas details, personal contact details and emergency details. If any medical condition would be reflected on class too.
- On the student checklist spreadsheet, transfer the student from prospective students to current students.
- Ensure all applicable fees have been paid.
- For sponsored students, check and make a copy of the financial guarantee letter.
- Inform the finance department of arrivals

### Students – Short Term Study Visa(SVV)

- Check student's passport and visa to ensure it corresponds with the initial application.
- Copy, Sign and date the copy of the student's passport/ID used in the application.
- Verify the student's visa:
- ensure the visa vignette/ passport is stamped accordingly.
- The academy will take a copy of the visa and/or BRP, sign and date the copy and place it in the student's file.
- Complete the registration and induction forms, ensuring that the student has received relevant briefings and documents from the relevant members of staff.
- Input on class all the information confirming passport/visas details, personal contact details and emergency details. If any medical condition would be reflected on class too.
- Make sure if the student needs to register with the police and if needed a police registration letter would be issued for the student to register or Ensure the student registered with the police where applicable
- On the student checklist spreadsheet, transfer the student from prospective students to current students.
- Ensure all applicable fees have been paid
- Inform the finance department of arrivals
  
- For sponsored students, check and make a copy of the financial guarantee letter

### Students – Tier 4 General Visa

- Copy, Sign and date the copy of the student's passport and BRP (all pages)
- ensure the visa vignette and BRP details are correct
- The academy will take a full copy of the visa BRP and passport, sign and date the copy and place it in the student's file.
- Complete the registration and induction forms, ensuring that the student has received relevant briefings and documents from the relevant members of staff.
- Ensure the student registered with the police where applicable

- Copy flight arrival details and entry/exit stamps
- On the student checklist spreadsheet, transfer the student from prospective students to current students.
- Ensure all applicable fees have been paid
- Inform the finance department of arrivals
- For sponsored students, check and make a copy of the financial guarantee letter
- Proof of address copy
- Tier 4 agreement

All the above are recorded on CLASS or in the paper file

## **Under 18s**

WE Bridge Academy takes special care when dealing with students who are under 18. During the registration process, students who are under 18 are given specific advice in line with the academy's Safeguarding policy and procedures.

All students

If a student does not have a correct visa or registration documents, the student will not be allowed to complete enrolment and start any course until the issue has been resolved. This will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

If it is found that the student has supplied false information (despite the academy's best efforts during the application stage to ensure that this is not the case) the student will not be allowed to enrol and will be reported to the relevant authorities such as the UKVI. The academy will update all relevant systems including those of the UKVI.

### **4.2 BRP (Biometric Resident Permits)**

All migrants coming to the UK for more than six months will be issued with a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). This BRP will hold the students biometric details and will be the proof of valid leave whilst in the UK. The BRP will only be available for collection once the student arrives in the UK. It will be available for collection from a local Cardiff post office.

### **4.3 Police Registration**

Students of certain nationalities who come to the UK for more than six months may need to register with the Police and receive a Police Registration Certificate. It will say in the student's visa vignette in their passport whether they need to do so. On arrival to registration, the admin team will make an online appointment for students requiring police registration and will issue a letter that is required. As long as the appointment has been made, students can attend classes, but student should bring the registration police certificate as soon as issued by the police.

## **5. Non-arrivals and cancellation procedure**

If a student fails to enrol by the start date (or latest start date), the administration team will cancel the booking unless the delay is agreed/authorised. The student may not be entitled to any refund. The academy will consider each failure to enrol on a case-by-case basis. In the case of Tier 4 visa

the Academy will inform the UKVI accordingly by reporting on the SMS (Student Management System). The administration team makes the cancellation when:

- The student fails to register with the academy and has not satisfactorily responded to any contact from the academy.
- Where a student notifies the school that they wish to defer the commencement of their classes.

Students failing to register on arrival in the UK will be contacted over the next 10 working days, by email and telephone, either directly or through an appointed representative.

On the tenth working day, the administration team will cancel the student's enrolment on CLASS and in the student checklist spreadsheet, transferring them to the cancelled student's tab on the checklist.

\*\*See GDPR Policy regarding keeping student data

## **6. Homestay accommodation procedure**

Students have the option of choosing to stay with one of the academy's homestay providers. Under 18s must stay with a homestay provider, unless they are living with a parent, close relative or responsible adult nominated by the parent / legal guardian, and the academy has received prior written permission from the student's parent/guardian to do so.

Students must complete a homestay application form before the academy can begin to make homestay arrangements.

A request needs to be completed at least two weeks before the student's arrival. If a request is received any later than this, the academy may not be able to offer homestay accommodation in time for the start of the student's course.

Homestay applications are normally received by the administration team along with the student's application. These applications are forwarded to the housing officer once the registration fee to study at the academy is received.

The housing officer will contact the student and/or their representative to inform them that the form has been received. If further information is required or missing, the student or their representative will be asked for the information at this stage.

The housing officer will confirm that four weeks' payment in advance is required for each student prior to the booking being confirmed.

The student will receive accommodation details a week before their start date provided all necessary documents have been received and all relevant fees have been paid.

Payments for homestay accommodation can be made in the following way:

Online

1. Visit [webridgeacademy.flywire.com](http://webridgeacademy.flywire.com) and choose your country & the amount you are paying in GBP.
2. Choose your payment method & make your payment to Flywire.
3. Enter your details and those of the WE Bridge Academy student you are paying for.
4. Track and confirm your payment by email, SMS or by logging into [webridgeacademy.flywire.com](http://webridgeacademy.flywire.com).

Bank transfer – full account details are on invoices, website and offer letters

Proof of payment should then be emailed to the housing officer. Once the payment has been received, the housing officer will process the booking.

The homestay booking will then be added to CLASS by the housing officer and confirmation will be sent to the student and homestay provider. Templates for both confirmation letters are generated from CLASS and stored on the system by the Housing Officer.

For students that have commenced their studies at the academy and decide to apply for homestay during their course:

- Once accommodation has been found, four weeks' payment in advance will be required.
- The housing office will confirm the booking with both the student and the homestay provider once all arrangements have been made.

## 7.0 Ongoing Processes

### 7.1 Change of address, contact and emergency contact details procedure

#### A. Purpose

Students entering the UK using a visa are required by the UKVI to notify the academy of any change to their UK abode and contact details. The Change/confirmation of address form is used for this purpose. The academy's policy sets no distinction between the types of students attending the school. ALL STUDENTS are required to complete a new Change/confirmation of address every time there is a change in their contact details.

#### B. Procedure

1. The administrator responsible for the monitoring and logging of student contact details should be known to both staff and students. Policy and reporting procedures should be fully explained to staff and students at induction, and the academy noticeboards.

2. The form has been designed to check/monitor student change of address, contact and emergency contact details.

The form includes the following additional information:

a) First name, last name, student reference number, Student class ID, date of birth, date of change, previous/current address, and previous/current email address

b) Student's new details (if required)

New address and post code

New telephone number

New mobile number

New email address

c) Emergency contact details

Contact name

Relationship to student

Do they speak English? Yes/No?

Address

Telephone number

Mobile number

Email address

d) Declaration

e) Signature

f) Date

3. Student change of address information will be monitored by the Admin Team, who will issue Change/confirmation of address form any time that a student change any of their contact details.

Any student on a Tier 4 visa issued by the school and who has changed their address details will be advised to notify the police station where they are registered.

4. It will be the responsibility of the Admin Team to update any of the changes of contact details on class and attach the forms to the student's personal file. Previous address details are not to be removed from the student's file; however, on class we will keep the most recent one. This is required to show a full and complete record of abode and contact details during the student's stay in the UK.

5. It is the responsibility of the administration team to ensure that all new student information is entered onto CLASS. The role is responsibility of the administrator as part of their duties to enter change of address and contact details. This information is completed when a student notifies one of the administration team of any change.

6. During enrolment every student has to complete a "registration form" where they will fill all their contact details and the admin team will input the information on class.

7. All forms should be filed in a secure manner either electronically or in the paper file, complying with the Data Protection Act 1998, and are to be presented to any member of the UKVI upon request. (See separate GDPR Policy)

## **7.2 Monthly UKVI checklist procedure**

### **A. Purpose**

The checklist is used to compile monthly information of student details and ensure required checks are carried out in full.

This is a compliance document and a requirement of the UKVI.

### **B. Procedure**

1. It is the sole responsibility of the administrator, and in their absence, a designated person, to compile the monthly UKVI checklist.

- The list is to be completed every month
- All students are to be entered on to the register regardless of visa status.
- All required student information is to be recorded; there should be no blank entries.

2. The checklist contains sections for the following information:

- Student ID number (CLASS number)
- First name(s)
- Surname(s)
- Age
- Sex
- Country
- Enrolment from date
- Enrolment to date

- Passport number
- Passport expiry date
- Passport checked (Y/N)
- Visa type name
- Visa number
- Visa start date
- Visa expiry date
- Visa checked (Y/N)
- Enrolment booking status name
- Notes (If a reminder visa or passport is issued or any other comments regarding the intention of the student to leave the country).

3. A reminder visa/passport letter will be issued to the student at least 30 days in advance or the administrator will speak with the student in question to confirm their intentions to applying for a new visa/passport. The intention will be record on the monthly checklist in the “notes” section.

4. The checklist and attachments are to be filed in a secure manner, complying with the Data Protection Act 1998, and are to be given to the UKVI upon request.

### **7.3 Tier 4 Compliance**

A significant proportion of students studying at the Academy have “leave to study” under Tier 4 of the UK Visas & Immigration’s (UKVI).

As Sponsors, we are expected to play a part in ensuring that the system is not abused. The Academy must therefore fulfil certain duties, in order to ensure that immigration control is maintained. The Academy must be able to show that it can fulfil, and are fulfilling, these sponsor duties in order to retain their Tier 4 licence.

The Academy has responsibilities in respect of all Tier 4 students from the moment it assigns a CAS to the student until:

it withdraws sponsorship from the student;

the student leaves the UK; or

the student is given permission to stay in the UK with a different sponsor or in another immigration category

#### **Reporting Visa the SMS System**

Any change in circumstance to the student’s course is reported via the SMS system on the UKVI’s website. These changes can be reported by the Level 1 or Level 2 users. These include:

Student does not arrive for their course/fail to enrol (including visa refusals).

Student is absent for 10 consecutive days without permission/student contact stops.

Student leaves the course earlier than expected.

Student is asked to leave the course.

Student moves to a different course but of the same level.

Student moves to a different sponsor.

Significant change in circumstances.

Other changes to be reported on the SMS by the Level 1 user of the Academy include changes to the organisation as listed in the UKVI policy guidance documents.

#### **7.4 Monitoring and Attendance – please see separate attendance policy**

#### **7.5 Maintaining Educational Oversight**

An education provider wishing to be a Tier 4 sponsor must demonstrate it meets acceptable educational quality standards. ISI is the body that inspects We-Bridge Academy and makes this assessment.

We-Bridge Academy must maintain the standard in Educational Oversight throughout the duration of the Tier 4 licence.