Admissions Criteria for Entry into the Sixth Form 2027-2028

Criteria for admission into the Sixth Form

The Board of Governors delegates to an Admissions Panel, comprising of the Principal and three Vice-Principals and Senior Teacher with responsibility for School Admission, the application of the admissions criteria to the Lower and Middle Sixth Forms.

1. GENERAL POLICY

The School determines the appropriate number of possible admissions so that:

a. the total enrolment figure remains at or below the number permitted by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland; or

b. in the event that there are more applications meeting the criteria for admissions to the Sixth Form than places, the School may apply to the Department of Education for approval for additional places. Only if additional places are granted will offers be made to candidates in excess of admissions numbers. Please refer to the Addendum.

c. In all cases, the total number of pupils enrolled in the year group will not exceed the School's resources and facilities to provide appropriately for their curricular and pastoral needs.

2. ADMISSIONS TO LOWER SIXTH FORM – INTERNAL

Priority for entry to Sixth Form courses will be given to pupils already enrolled at Belfast Royal Academy. All pupils enrolled in Form V at the school who meet the following criteria will have a right to a place in the Sixth Form:

- Pupils will require a minimum of 12 points at GCSE in subjects which are an appropriate foundation for academic study at Advanced Level (on a scale where A* = 4 points, A = 3 points, B = 2 points, C* = 1.5 point and C = 1 points). Short Course GCSEs carry a tariff of one half of a full GCSE (A* = 2 points, A = 1.5 points, B = 1 point, C* = 0.75 points and C = 0.5 points): please note that pupils with 11.75 points will not be admitted into the Sixth Form. The following points will be awarded to take account of the English scoring system:

GCSE score	CCEA Grade	Points awarded
9	A*	4
8/7	A	3
6	B	2
5	C*	1.5
4	C	1
3-1	D-G	0

This scoring system is applicable for OCR Computer Science and Latin.

- Pupils will normally be expected to have at least a grade C in both GCSE English Language and GCSE Mathematics.

- Pupils should display a high level of competence in the AS subject chosen. If the AS chosen was taken at GCSE, then a B grade is a minimum requirement (except in Mathematics*, Biology, Chemistry and Physics where the minimum requirement is grade A).

  * Achieved through M4/M8 CCEA Modules (or other board equivalent)

- For all new AS subjects (either not studied at GCSE or not offered at GCSE), please consult the Sixth Form Subject Choice Booklet for details of the minimum requirement to access a subject.

- Pupils must have a proven record of good citizenship. This includes at least 95% attendance in Forms IV and V (in normal circumstances) up to the start of Study Leave in Form V - in cases where special circumstances apply, parents should provide medical and/or other reports in support of their application - and not more than one Level 5 or 6 suspension in Forms IV and V.

- Pupils must study a minimum of 3 AS subjects. Candidates wishing to study 4 AS-levels are required to gain over 24 points across 5 or more subjects.

- In exceptional circumstances a final decision to admit a pupil, who does not meet the minimum requirements for entry to Lower Sixth, will be referred to the Principal and/or Board of Governors.

3. ADMISSIONS TO LOWER SIXTH FORM- EXTERNAL

- Pupils from other schools applying to Belfast Royal Academy, who have satisfied the above academic admissions criteria will be considered for admission to the Sixth Form if there are additional places available. (Please note, however, that pupils with a GCSE in Double Award Science, choosing to study a Science subject at AS should have achieved A*A* in Double Award Science at GCSE or AA in Double Award Science and a GCSE points score greater than 24.

- In addition to satisfying the academic admissions criteria, pupils transferring from another school will be required to demonstrate a proven record of good citizenship. This includes at least 95% attendance in Forms IV and V (in normal circumstances) up to start of Study Leave in Form V - in cases where special circumstances apply, parents should provide medical and/or other reports in support of their application - and not more than one suspension in Forms IV and V. A copy of the candidate's most recent school report will be required.

- *Pupils coming from other countries which do not use GCSEs will have to provide evidence from an independent source of having achieved at an equivalent academic standard.*

- Pupils are encouraged to complete a Declaration of Interest Form before the publication of the GCSE results.

  The link to the online form is: https://forms.gle/rH9Z9zZ98gQeBQxK8

4. ADMISSIONS TO REPEAT LOWER SIXTH

Pupils of Belfast Royal Academy who meet all of the following criteria will be considered to repeat Lower Sixth:
Pupils who -
(i) have extenuating circumstances (i.e. medical or other problems which may have affected a pupil's performance in Lower Sixth);
(ii) the Principal recommends would benefit from repeating Lower Sixth at the Academy.
(iii) have a proven record of good citizenship. This includes having: displayed a positive attitude and commitment to AS studies; having attained (in normal circumstances) a minimum overall attendance of 95% or above up to the start of Study Leave (in cases where special circumstances apply, parents should provide medical and/or other reports in support of their application); and not more than one Level 5 or 6 suspension in Lower Sixth.

In exceptional circumstances a final decision to admit a pupil to repeat Lower Sixth may be referred to the Principal and/or Board of Governors.

Parents should note that examination and other fees applicable during the year to be repeated must be paid by the parent/guardian in advance of the pupil being admitted to the year to be repeated.

5. ADMISSIONS TO MIDDLE SIXTH FORM – INTERNAL

- Pupils must study a minimum of 3 A2 subjects.

- For a pupil to access a course at A2 level, it is strongly recommended that at least a Grade D should have been achieved in that subject at AS level.

- Pupils must have a proven record of good citizenship. This includes: having displayed a positive attitude and commitment to AS studies; having attained (in normal circumstances) a minimum overall attendance of 95% or above up to the start of Study Leave (in cases where special circumstances apply, parents should provide medical and/or other reports in support of their application); and not more than one Level 5 or 6 suspension in Lower Sixth.

- In exceptional circumstances a final decision, to admit a pupil who does not meet the minimum requirements for entry to Middle Sixth, will be referred to the Principal and/or Board of Governors.

6. ADMISSIONS TO MIDDLE SIXTH FORM- EXTERNAL

Admission to Middle Sixth Form, which is the year of the principal Advanced level public examinations, will be considered only in exceptional circumstances and if there are additional places available in Middle Sixth.

- Pupils must satisfy the criteria of a minimum of 3 grade D passes at AS level in order to be considered for admission to Middle Sixth. If a pupil has repeated the Lower Sixth year, a minimum of three Grade C passes at AS level must be achieved.

- For a pupil to access a course at A2 level, at least a Grade D must have been achieved at AS level.

- Proposed A2 courses must be compatible with the pupil's AS qualifications.

- Pupils must have a proven record of good citizenship. This includes: having displayed a positive attitude and commitment to AS studies; having attained (in normal circumstances) a minimum overall attendance of 95% or above up to the start of Study Leave (in cases where special circumstances apply, parents should provide medical and/or other reports in support of their application); and not more than one suspension in Lower Sixth.

- In exceptional circumstances a final decision, to admit a pupil who does not meet the minimum requirements for entry to Middle Sixth, will be referred to the Principal and/or Board of Governors.

7. VERIFICATION OF DATA

The Board of Governors reserves the right to require evidence to support or verify information on any application form. This may be requested when an offer of a place is made. It is important that all candidates understand that the provision of false or incorrect information will result in the withdrawal of the place offered.

8. APPEALS

Issues which arise from the admissions process may be raised through the Appeals Panel, comprising of three members of the Board of Governors, selected by the Education Committee of the Board of Governors. The decision of the Appeals Panel is final.

ADDENDUM TO SIXTH FORM ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

Criteria for **all extra places** made available by the Department of Education for admission into Year 13 (Sixth Form)

The Department of Education may, in response to a request from a school, increase the number of pupils that the school can admit to its Year 13. Places that become available in this way shall be allocated only to pupils who meet the basic eligibility criteria for Sixth Form study (as set out below) and shall be allocated in the order determined by the criteria to be applied in the order set down.

1. Pupils who have most recently completed Year 12 in Belfast Royal Academy.

2. Pupils from other schools where admission has been agreed and additional places granted by the Department of Education.*

*Parents should note how the Department of Education (DE) will, in response to a school's request, temporarily increase a school's enrolment number in order to allow extra post -16 pupils to enrol. DE will only increase the school's enrolment number if it is content that each external pupil for whom a place is requested would not be able to pursue their post-16 course-choices at another suitable school without undertaking an unreasonable journey (i.e. a journey, that by public transport, would be over an hour from where the young person lives or is further than 15 miles distance). If DE finds that no other suitable school may provide all of the post-16 courses that the pupil wishes to pursue - then DE will agree a school's request for an extra place.

NOTES:

1. If the Board of Governors of an 11-18 school wishes to maximise the number of additional places they can be granted under the extra Sixth Form places policy then they should publish the proposed criterion as an appendage to the existing Sixth Form criteria. It is entirely a matter for the Board of Governors of the school to decide if they want to use the addendum. **If they do not publish the addendum, the school cannot apply to the Department for additional Sixth Form places.**

2. The recommended criterion should be appended to the school's existing Sixth Form admissions criteria. **Please note it is only by using the precise wording provided and as an appendage to the existing criteria that the text is recommended.** The wording assumes that the addendum will be listed directly underneath the school's post 16 criteria.

3. The addendum will not affect the basic eligibility criteria that the school applies in order to consider applicants eligible for Sixth Form admissions, prior to any question of admissions priority. It also does not affect the admissions criteria by which the school determines the admissions priority of applicants for places available within the approved enrolment number. It still remains the case that at all times it is entirely the choice of a school whether or not to request any extra places or none.

4. The criteria addendum states that the Department will consider what suitable alternatives are available to a pupil for whom an additional place is sought. To determine suitability, the Department first considers all schools to be one of 4 types: (i) denominational (ii) non-denominational (iii) Integrated; and (iv) Irish- medium. A school requesting an extra place for a post-16 pupil will belong to one of these 4 types and the Department will consider any other school from this same type as suitable for the pupil. The Department will also consider as suitable for the pupil any school of the same type as that attended by the child in Year 12.