

## **Associated Studios Admissions Policy**

### **1 Scope of the Policy**

1.1 These procedures cover the admission of students to Higher Education Courses at Associated Studios.

### **2. General Principles**

2.1 The Admissions Policy and its associated procedures have been developed in accordance with the Office for Students Regulatory Framework and the Expectation of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (August 2018) that: 'The provider has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system'. It also takes account of the Office for Students requirement that 'students are recruited to courses for which they have the capability to achieve a successful outcome'.

2.2 Associated Studios aims to provide education for all applicants who demonstrate the potential to benefit from its provision in line with its mission to widen participation. The admissions process is designed to ensure that it is able to admit a diverse student population who possess the abilities and aptitudes to complete their studies successfully.

2.3 Associated Studios will admit candidates who have the potential to succeed on their chosen course regardless of background. Applicants to Associated Studios are considered on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, age (subject to Associated Studios's policy on the admission of those under 18), disability, religion, sexual orientation or social class.

2.4 Associated Studios will communicate clearly with applicants, and provide clear and explicit information concerning admission to, and enrolment on its courses, as well as associated fee implications.

2.5 Applicants will be selected on the basis of their application, including the evidence of their qualifications and experience and, where appropriate, through the use of interviewing, auditions or other such mechanisms. Consideration will be given to the nature and the purpose of an interview, or any other selection method, the criteria to be used for selection and whether applicants are to be interviewed individually or in groups.

2.6 All recruitment, admissions, enrolment and induction procedures will be regularly monitored for their effectiveness for all categories of applicants. Entry requirements will also be regularly reviewed prior to publication to ensure that they are appropriate. In line with the OfS transparency condition, information will be made available to applicants on application, offer, acceptance and registration data analysed by gender, ethnicity and socio-economic background.

### **3 Entry requirements**

3.1 Applicants to postgraduate degree courses must normally have good degree (2.1 or above) in Musical Theatre or a related subject e.g. Drama, Performance, Dance, Music, Theatre Studies. Applicants with a 2.2 degree may also be considered following a successful portfolio submission and interview.

3.2 Associated Studios welcomes and accepts all qualifications that are part of the UCAS tariff as well as an extensive range of international qualifications.

3.3 Associated Studios will consider mature applicants (aged 21 or over at point of entry) who have relevant work and/or life experience.

3.4 Associated Studios welcomes applications from individuals who have followed nonstandard educational routes, or those who meet entry criteria through experience rather than academic qualification.

### **4 English Language Requirement**

4.1 As all teaching, learning and assessment at Associated Studios is through the medium of English, all applicants will be required to demonstrate that they meet the required level of English language competency for their desired course of study.

4.2 Applicants whose first language is not English will be required to have a recognised English language qualification such as IELTS (International English Testing System), usually requiring a level of 6.5. Any changes will be published on the Associated Studios website.

4.4 Where an applicant's English language competency is below that necessary for their intended course of study, they will be required to successfully undertake a pre-sessional English language course prior to being enrolled on their course.

### **5 Visa requirements including UKVI Tier 4**

5.1 As present Associated Studios cannot offer UKVI Tier 4 Visas so students requiring these will not be able to undertake study at Associated Studios.

### **6 Information provision**

6.1 In accordance with consumer protection law, Associated Studios will provide applicants with information that is accurate, complete, clear, unambiguous, up front, timely and accessible. This includes the provision of clear terms and conditions to applicants and offer holders.

6.2 Information provided will include modes of study, teaching, learning and assessment procedures, learning outcomes, and the extent of flexibility and choice. It will also provide information on which courses are accredited or approved by professional and statutory bodies.

6.3 Information will also be available on the range of learner support, academic or pastoral, available for students. This will include study skills support, information technology and learning resources/library services, personal tutorial support, student welfare, counselling and health services, employment and career services, and personal development planning.

6.4 Clear information will also be provided on tuition fees, and any other costs associated with the course and the availability of scholarships and bursaries.

6.5 Where courses are still subject to approval this will be clearly marked in the prospectus and on the website, as appropriate. Once they are approved, applicants will be informed if there are any changes to the information initially provided.

## **7 Advice and guidance**

7.1 Associated Studios will provide appropriate guidance to enable applicants to make informed decisions about their options, prior to and during their course of study. The information outlined above will be supplemented by advice and guidance as follows: Holding advertised open days/evenings, taster days. Visiting Schools and Colleges to provide information. Outreach work to encourage applications from students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Providing information and advice from a suitably qualified member of staff to applicants. Providing access to information in suitable alternative formats for those applicants with particular disabilities or with particular needs as appropriate.

## **8 Admissions processes**

8.1 Applicants must apply through the appropriate channel as outlined on Associated Studios's website.

8.2 Opportunity will be given on application forms, at any interviews or other selection activities, for applicants to draw attention to relevant qualifications, experience and other information that might support their application.

8.3 Information collected as part of the application process will be used only in accordance with Associated Studios's Data Protection Policy.

8.4 Where courses are full and/or waiting lists are held, or when courses have to be closed for any reason, applicants are informed as soon as practicable with the offer of alternative courses, wherever possible.

8.5 Applicants are responsible for ensuring that Associated Studios is in receipt of all relevant information in order for Associated Studios to make a decision on their application and that all information is accurate. Omission of relevant information, or the supply of inaccurate information, may invalidate the application or the offer of a place.

8.6 Associated Studios will carry out checks on documents supplied by applicants to establish authenticity in order to guard against fraudulent applications. Where an application is found to be fraudulent either prior to or after admission, Associated Studios may cancel the offer or enrolment.

8.7 Where applicants are considered unsuitable for a particular course, then, wherever possible, they will be referred to other appropriate courses.

## **9 Changes to courses**

9.1 Associated Studios will ensure that substantial alterations to courses from earlier published information are communicated to applicants holding an offer. This may include changes to the course following validation or professional accreditation, closure of a course, significant changes to cost, location, content or title.

9.2 Where a course is withdrawn prior to admission, Associated Studios will inform applicants at the earliest opportunity in line with Associated Studios's published terms and conditions and the Student Protection Plan available here.

## **10 Applicants with a disability or other learning needs**

10.1 Associated Studios of West London encourages disabled applicants and students to disclose their disability and support requirements at the earliest opportunity, for example on the application form or at any interview, as this helps our staff and partnership institutions to provide students with appropriate information and support.

10.2 Early disclosure enables Associated Studios's team to contact the applicant to consider appropriate support requirements and to identify whether reasonable adjustments can be made prior to the start of term. In the unlikely event that Associated Studios is unable to make the adjustments needed to provide the required support, Associated Studios undertakes to offer the applicant support in submitting an alternative application where appropriate.

## **11 Applicants with criminal convictions**

11.1 Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily be a bar to admission and Associated Studios abides by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1975. Applicants with a criminal conviction will be considered in line with Associated Studios admissions policy.

11.2 For certain courses, particularly in teaching, health, social work and other courses leading to professional registration, applicants will be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which will be considered in accordance with the Regulations for the consideration of criminal convictions for students on courses leading to professional registration available here.

## **12 References**

12.1 For applicants to a course where a reference is required and there has been a significant break since schooling, a personal reference from a professional or employer (not friends or family) may be requested rather than a school reference.

## **13 Interviewing and assessment**

13.1 Applicants will receive clear information on interviews, auditions or any form of assessment applied during the application process. Applicants with a disability or other learning needs should contact Associated Studios to discuss any reasonable adjustments to the interview and assessment process.

13.2 Interviews, auditions and assessments will be conducted and evaluated in a standardised manner for the course and will reflect Associated Studios's commitment to Equality and Diversity. There will be a clear structure for each interview, or other selection method, and selection will be conducted against predetermined criteria.

13.3 Decisions, and the reasons for the decisions, are recorded in writing as fully as possible to facilitate feedback to unsuccessful applicants. These records will be retained by Associated Studios in line with its Retention policies and schedules.

13.4 Where courses require an interview or an audition, applicants will be notified of their appointment within a stipulated timeframe and overall waiting times will be monitored and kept as short as possible.

## **14 AP(E)L and Advanced Standing**

14.1 Applicants with prior experience which is equivalent to parts of the course, can use the process of the Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning to be considered for accessing Higher Education courses leading to Associated Studios's own awards and/or using the Prior Learning as part of these awards. The process is based on a portfolio of evidence to show the equivalence of the normal entrance requirement of a specific course.

14.2 Applicants with a prior qualification or other certified learning may apply for advanced standing (e.g. admission to levels 5 and 6 for an undergraduate course). The prior learning will need to map against the learning outcomes, content, and level of award. Any prior learning must

be considered current in line with Associated Studios's Academic Regulations.

14.3 The amount of APEL or advanced standing that may be claimed is set out in Associated Studios's Academic Regulations which are available here.

14.4 Applicants wishing to claim advanced standing or exemption from particular modules should contact the Admissions Office prior to their admission to the course.

## **15 Making offers**

15.1 Offers will be made as promptly as reasonably possible. Information will be provided to the successful applicant on: any conditions attached to the offer, what the applicant has to do next and by when, when further information e.g. regarding joining instructions including any arrangements for enrolment, registration, or induction for students before the start of the course as appropriate.

15.2 Where a reference has been requested but an interview or other selection activity is conducted before the reference has been received, an offer may be made 'subject to reference'. This condition will be stated in the offer letter. The reference will then be followed up by the admissions team, and when received, a further letter is sent to the applicant either confirming or cancelling the offer.

15.3 Where a request for deferral of entry to a later year has been made, Associated Studios senior management will make the final decision on whether this will be possible on a case by case basis.

15.4 Prompt and clear feedback will be provided to applicants who have not been offered a place where requested, and advice about alternatives and future options will be given, as appropriate.

## **16 Complaints regarding the admissions process**

16.1 At Associated Studios of West London, we are committed to providing fair, transparent and consistent admissions procedures for all of our applicants. We recognise, however, that there may be occasions when applicants are dissatisfied with the conduct of the admissions process. Associated Studios has therefore developed an Admissions Complaints Procedure as set out below.

16.2 The Admissions Complaint Procedure is restricted to complaints about: Interview conduct, The handling of an application including: processing of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and Occupational Health procedures and the admissions process - where it is alleged that an action or decision was inconsistent with Associated Studios's Equality and Diversity statement.

16.3 The Admissions Complaints Procedure may be followed by all applicants.

16.4 An applicant cannot complain or appeal where this is a disagreement with the judgement of an admissions decision, in assessing the merits of application, or in reaching a decision on entry, which has been reached in accordance with the published criteria and processes contained in this policy. Complaints will also not be considered regarding an applicant's failure to meet the non-academic requirements of study specified by particular agencies (e.g. DBS, immigration status matters or occupational health checks).

16.5 Where an applicant has reason to believe that his/her application has not been handled fairly, objectively or in accordance with the procedures described above, they should write to Associated Studios Principal setting out his/her reasons.

16.6 A review of the handling of the application in the light of the student's written statement will be undertaken. Associated Studios Principal may confirm or rescind an earlier decision in the light of this review. Associated Studios Principal will send a written reply to the student within twenty five working days of receiving the request for the review of the application. This decision will be final.