

ADA SIXTH FORM ADMISSIONS POLICY

September 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out Ada, the National College for Digital Skills' policy for admitting students to the Sixth Form and explains the process followed when deciding which applicants are offered a place. It also sets out the circumstances when a decision made under this policy can be reviewed and the process that must be followed.

The College is committed to equal opportunities and will educate students across the full spectrum of academic ability, subject to the admissions criteria.

The College aims to recruit students that broadly reflect the communities it serves and support all its students into the digital sector so that the sector better reflects the diversity of society.

All students have equal access to the curriculum and there is a learning support programme for students with special educational needs.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 Age

Students can be admitted to the Sixth Form at 16 or 17 years of age (after KS4/GCSE). Applicants who would be 18 years of age at the start of the Sixth Form academic year cannot be considered for a place.

2.2 Eligibility

The college admits students nationally.

An application can be accepted from parents residing overseas for a young person not yet resident in the UK, as long as (i) the young person is an EU National or (ii) the parents intend to relocate and work in the UK. In such circumstances, the College will consider when the young person is expected to be resident in the UK and whether the parent's application to enter the UK has been or will be successful. In order that places offered are not wasted because they cannot be taken up, the College will not make an offer to any student resident overseas unless they have a right of residence in the UK or it is clear beyond reasonable doubt that the parent's application to enter and stay in the UK will be successful. It is the responsibility of the applicant's parent(s) to ensure this is the case.

2.3 Accommodation

The College is a day College. It is not responsible for the supervision of students outside of College hours. It has a national catchment area and its day is longer than many Colleges'.

Students may live away from home if necessary, but parents must take responsibility for their accommodation being satisfactory, and make sure that the day-to-day support for the student is in place.

2.4 College year

The College year for Post 16 students consists of 6 terms, in line with the local authority. The College does not give permission for College students to take vacations during term time.

3. ADMISSION CRITERIA

The criteria that must be satisfied before applicants can be enrolled at the College are set out below.

Applicants must:-

- (i) aim for a life in the digital sector or related fields
- (ii) demonstrate (with evidence) an aptitude for and commitment to the digital world and its associated technologies
- (iii) demonstrate, during the application process, a real determination to study, practise and succeed
- (iv) have the stamina and drive for the demanding schedule
- (v) demonstrate to the teachers and practitioners they meet or work with during the application process, that they would benefit from the education that the College has to offer
- (vi) have achieved the College's GCSE entry requirements:
 - (a) complete 5 or more GCSE qualifications by August of the year of the candidate's enrolment at the College (alternative qualifications may be accepted at the College's discretion).
 - (b) achieve an average grade of a 5 or above in their GCSE qualifications by August of the year of the candidate's enrolment at the College, including at least a grade 4 in English Language and Mathematics.
 - (i) Where a grade 4 in either English Language or Mathematics is not achieved, the College will permit a student to complete a resit in order to achieve this. Please note that students cannot resit both English Language and Mathematics GCSE at the College.

The above criteria are referred to in this policy as the Admission Criteria.

4. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

The College recommends that all prospective applicants attend an open event and/or read our prospectus before applying for a place. This will enable parents and applicants to understand the way in which the College works and decide whether the College is right for them.

Students or parents/guardians may obtain a prospectus in any of the following ways:

- by visiting the College's website at www.ada.ac.uk
- by phone (020 3105 0125), written request (Ada. National College for Digital Skills, Broad Lane, N15 4AG) or by visiting the College; or
- from careers conventions that we attend at their college/school or by attending a College Open Evening.

Application will always be online through the website, with the new prospectus available in October. The deadline for applications will be communicated on the website.

Application forms completed and submitted online will be acknowledged automatically on submission. Applicants are encouraged to keep this email as proof of application.

Applicants who submit incomplete applications will be sent an email informing them that their application is incomplete and requesting the information that is still required. The application will not be processed until this information is supplied.

Applicants who do not submit a complete application in time to be processed by the deadline may find that all places have been allocated. The application will be placed on a waiting list without being assessed.

If places become available before the start of the academic year, applicants on the waiting list may be invited to continue the process as outlined below.

Applicants who have been home tutored and therefore do not have a school report must contact their Local Education Authority for an assessment showing their educational progress. Without this information the application will not be processed.

The College reserves the right to reject or expel any application that provides false or misleading information.

All applications received by the relevant deadline will be dealt with entirely on their merits.

It is very important that applicants read the application form carefully and ensure all information is complete and the relevant documents enclosed to avoid disappointment.

5. HOW APPLICATIONS ARE CONSIDERED

There is a three-stage process that is followed when applications are received by the College.

(i) Preliminary review

At this stage all completed application forms received on time will be processed and invited to an Assessment Centre.

Applicants who clearly do not satisfy the Admission Criteria may be told they are unsuccessful at this stage.

(ii) Pre-Assessment Tasks

Prior to the assessment centre, applicants will complete an online structured assessment task, which will be shared with 7 days notice. Applicants are expected to complete the task alone and within the prescribed time limit. If there is evidence that these rules have not been followed, the candidate may be expelled from the application process.

Applicants will also submit their predicted or final GCSE grades and attendance record from their current or most recent educational provider. There should be some evidence that these documents have been provided by their current or most recent educational provider (e.g. printed on headed paper).

If a candidate fails to complete the Pre-Assessment Tasks by the allocated deadline, they will not take part in the following Assessment Centre. In these circumstances, it will be at the College's discretion whether they are invited to a future Assessment Centre.

(iii) Assessment Centre

Candidates who meet the Admission Criteria and have completed the Pre-Assessment Tasks will participate in an Assessment Centre. This entails two interviews, conducted by two different members of staff. One assesses the candidate's interests, aspirations and motivations for studying at Ada. The other is based on the structured assessment task and assesses the candidate's reasoning and problem-solving skills. All applicants will go through an identical Assessment Centre process.

Applicants will be given advance warning of the Assessment Centre (usually two weeks or more) and informed whether they have to prepare or bring anything with them.

The date given for an Assessment Centre cannot be changed unless the student: has a previously arranged hospital appointment or public exam, is unwell on the day or is prohibited from attending by their current educational provider. Applicants should include any dates and supporting documentation concerning non-availability with their supplementary application form by return and the college will do all it can to accommodate them.

The decision to offer a place following an Assessment Centre will be based on the professional judgment of the staff involved, who will consider: (i) the applicant's performance during the

Assessment Centre; (ii) the supplied predicted grades, in order to judge the likelihood that the candidate will achieve the GCSE entry requirements; and (iii) the extent to which the applicant satisfies the Admission Criteria.

6. OUTCOME OF APPLICATION

Applicants will be notified of one of the following outcomes to their application by email:-

- (i) an offer of a place (see note (a) below)
- (ii) an offer of a place with special medical conditions (see note (b) below)
- (iii) a decision not to offer a place

Note (a): Offers of places at the College are subject to the Key Stage 4 having been completed.

Note (b): If there is doubt as to the student's medical capacity to undertake a course, an offer may be contingent on the results of a medical assessment.

It is important that the applicant, having been offered a place at the College, does not drop their current standards of work and commitment at the Education Provider they will be leaving.

Brief written feedback to assist in understanding the decision reached following an initial Assessment Centre can be provided **on written request** only after the application process has been completed. Where an applicant has requested a Second Attempt Assessment Centre (see below) brief written feedback will be provided ahead of this.

Requests for feedback must be received in writing within 14 days of the decision being communicated to the applicant. As the admissions process may still be continuing for other applicants, feedback may take some time to provide. The College will endeavour to respond to a request for feedback within 6 weeks.

Applicants will receive a final decision on their application for a place at the College within six weeks of their final Assessment Centre..

In all cases the decision of The College is final, subject to the internal appeals process.

7. CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN A DECISION CAN BE REVIEWED

If an applicant or parent/guardian is dissatisfied with a decision made under this policy there are certain circumstances where such a decision can be reviewed. The decisions that can be reviewed are set out below.

All applications for reviews must be received at the College within 14 days of notification of the relevant decision. Applications should be submitted via email to the following email address: sixthformadmissions@ada.ac.uk.

(i) A decision not to invite an applicant to an Assessment Centre following a preliminary review of the application

Applicants not invited to an Assessment Centre following a preliminary consideration of their application, because they are considered not to have met the Admission Criteria can request a further review of the decision. This means that the application will be looked at again against the Admission Criteria by a member of the Senior Leadership Team not involved in the original decision.

If successful, the applicant will be invited to participate in an Assessment Centre and the application process will continue as set out in this policy.

There is no further right of review or appeal for those applicants who are unsuccessful following a further review of their application.

(ii) A decision not to offer a place at the College following an Assessment Centre

An applicant who is invited to an Assessment Centre but is then not offered a place at the College may apply for a Second Attempt Assessment Centre.

A Second Attempt Assessment Centre is an opportunity to attend an Assessment Centre for a second time and be considered by different staff to those who were involved at the first Assessment Centre.

It is important that applicants applying for a Second Attempt Assessment Centre provide reasons why they consider that they should be given a second attempt. They should also refer to the Admission Criteria and demonstrate how such criteria is satisfied.

A Second Attempt Assessment Centre is not automatically granted. The College will review carefully the reasons given for requesting a Second Attempt Assessment Centre and will refer again to the extent to which the applicant satisfies the Admission Criteria.

Applicants who are unsuccessful in seeking a Second Attempt Assessment Centre can be provided with written feedback relating to their first Assessment Centre. There is no further right of appeal in these circumstances.

Applicants who are successful in seeking a Second Attempt Assessment Centre will be invited to the College and their application will be considered by two members of staff who were not involved in the original Assessment Centre.

The decision to offer a place following an Assessment Centre will be based on the professional judgment of the staff involved, who will consider: (i) the applicant's performance during the Assessment Centre; (ii) the supplied predicted grades, in order to judge the likelihood that the candidate will achieve the College's grade requirements; and (iii) the extent to which the applicant satisfies the Admission Criteria.

The date given for a Second Attempt Assessment Centre cannot be changed unless it is for a previously arranged hospital appointment or public exam.

(iii) A decision not to offer a place at the College following a Second Attempt Interview or a decision to offer a place with special conditions

If, following a Second Attempt Assessment Centre, an applicant is not offered a place they can request that the decision be reviewed, **but only if it can be shown that the College has failed to follow this admission policy.** This is referred to below as “Permitted Grounds”.

A request for a review under this category should be made in writing to the Chair of the Board.

It is important that the letter requesting a review must state clearly the grounds for seeking a review, specifying clearly how it is believed that the College has not followed this policy on admissions.

Following receipt of the email requesting an appeal, it will be forwarded to the Chair of the Board (or other board member nominated by the Chair) for consideration and to confirm that the request for a review has been made on Permitted Grounds.

If the request has not, in the reasonable opinion of the Chair (or such other board member nominated by the Chair) been made on Permitted Grounds, the request will be refused at that point. There will be no further consideration of the matter and no further right of review.

If the Chair of the Board considers that the request for a review has been made on Permitted Grounds, a panel of board members will then consider the matter. The panel may undertake such enquiry into the matter as it considers appropriate and necessary to reach a determination. The panel also may (but is not obliged to) choose to invite the applicant and/or parent/guardian to a meeting if this is considered necessary to better understand the grounds for the request or because the panel wishes to ask questions of the applicant or parent/guardian.

After careful consideration of the request for a review and any representations made by the applicant, parent/guardian and the College, the panel will conclude by:

- upholding the original decision; or
- referring the application for admission back to the College to be considered afresh.

The decision of the panel, which is final, will be communicated in writing. There will be no further right of appeal at this point, including any further appeal after a panel has awarded a fresh application decision and the application process still results in not awarding a place at the College.

8 POST-OFFER PROCESS

All applicants who hold an offer will be requested to complete a set of pre-enrolment forms before an allotted deadline. The forms will be sent to the candidate via email with at least 2 months' notice of the deadline. The College reserves the right to withdraw a candidate's offer should they fail to return the forms in time.

Once the candidate has received their GCSE results in August 2021, they will be invited to enrol at the College (provided they have met the GCSE entry requirements). As part of the enrolment process, the candidate's grades will be reviewed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. This staff member's professional judgement will be used to determine which curriculum pathway the candidate will study. Where a candidate's GCSE attainment is judged as sufficient to study their first choice curriculum pathway, the College will endeavour to enrol the candidate onto this pathway. If a candidate's GCSE attainment is judged as insufficient to study their first choice curriculum pathway, the College will enrol the candidate onto an alternative pathway.

If a candidate does not achieve the GCSE entry requirements, they may still be invited to enrol at the College's discretion. If this is the case, their curriculum pathway will be determined by the same grade review process outlined above.

In the event that the College is oversubscribed (i.e. more students attempt to enrol than the maximum capacity of the year group), a prioritisation process will be used. Spaces will be allocated to those on a priority list consisting of candidates who returned their pre-enrolment forms the earliest and/or engaged the most frequently with offer holder events and activities run by the College. Any remaining candidates will be placed on a waiting list and invited to enrol should any spaces become available in the weeks following enrolment.

9 AMENDMENTS

The College reserves the right to amend the admissions policy at any time without notice to the applicant.