

Admissions and Continuing Enrolment Policy (Qatar)

Please note:

In countries where ACS International Schools is operating outside of the United Kingdom the UK regulatory framework will provide the foundation for best practice as far as this policy is concerned. All ACS schools will operate in compliance with the relevant legislation of the country in which they are operating.

ACS International Schools is committed to protecting individual's personal data, and aims to remain at all times fully compliant with data protection laws and guidance from the relevant regulators. ACS further commits to ensuring that the planning and writing of all policies and procedures that involve the handling of personal data are guided by the principle of privacy by design, and that individuals' rights to have their data safeguarded are a paramount consideration in ACS' pursuit of all its operational and strategic practices.

Document Status & RACI

Document Name:	Admissions and Continuing Enrolment Policy
Document Status:	Final
Document Owner:	Director of Advancement
Responsible:	Compliance, Accreditation and Policies Officer
Accountable:	Education Sub-Committee
Consulted:	Deans of Admissions
Informed:	Heads of School Committee
Next Review Date:	January 2020

Change Control

Date Produced	Version
24/10/2016	4
17/01/2018	4.1
29/01/2018	4.2
09/03/2018	4.3

Policy Statement

ACS International Schools (henceforth referred to in this policy as ACS) is committed to ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all individuals seeking to study at one of the ACS Schools, and welcomes applications from all individuals. In accordance with the Vision, Values and Philosophy of ACS International Schools (www.acs-schools.com/Who-we-are-vision-and-values), the admissions process is student-centred.

Policy Guidelines

Aims of the Policy

This policy governs the admission of individuals as students to ACS. ACS aims to provide:

- a fair admissions process;
- a process whereby, through a review of the application and supporting documents, individual needs (for example, academic, physical, medical, social, emotional and behavioural) are identified, and through which an evaluation is carried out to determine whether such needs can be met within the school, and specifically whether these can be accommodated within the profile of the relevant existing cohort;
- effective support mechanisms for applicants and enrolled students;
- a process which is consistent with the schools' need to ensure their obligations regarding child protection and safeguarding are met and that ACS' duty of care to staff, students and third parties is discharged;
- a process which is consistent with ACS' commitment to equality and diversity, and which embraces ACS' core values.

Scope of the Policy

This policy is relevant to individuals (and their parents/guardians) who are seeking admission for a place at one of the ACS schools including Qatar, including existing students who apply to re-enrol. In this policy "applicant" refers to the prospective student for whom the parent/guardian is seeking admission.

Information and guidance for applicants, parents and guardians

Information about ACS, the relevant entry criteria and other useful information is available from the following sources:

- The ACS website www.acs-schools.com
- The ACS application webpage: <https://www.acs-schools.com/Apply-now>

- The Admissions teams
- Prospectuses
- Open mornings

A Qualified Applicant

The school to which the family applies will evaluate an application based on these requirements and in accordance with the school's resources, programmes, and place availability.

A qualified applicant is one who, based on the information received:

- meets the requirements of this policy based on a review of completed application materials;
- is likely to demonstrate an ability to access content, knowledge and skills in the curriculum;
- can integrate with, and be accommodated within, the profile of the relevant existing cohort; and
- meets the appropriate school age and grade/year placement requirements (<http://www.acs-schools.com/grade-placement>).

ACS will offer places to qualified applicants subject to the availability of places. Qualified applicants for whom a place is not available will be notified that they will be placed on a waitlist.

The language of instruction is English. Applicants to grade 8 and above must demonstrate a sufficient level of English to access the curriculum, which may be tested by means of an external assessment, as part of the application process.

If, during the review of the application, ACS identifies that additional testing is required in order to review the application, this will need to be arranged and paid for privately by the parents, before a final decision is made.

How to apply

A visit by the family is highly encouraged, but not necessary, prior to applying. The objective is to ascertain whether the school's environment and academic programmes are appropriate and suitable for the applicant's learner profile.

Details regarding the application process and procedures can be accessed on each school's webpage referenced here: <http://www.acs-schools.com/apply-now>. Applications are considered for admission on a rolling basis, throughout the year.

Applications and enrolments are bound by ACS' Terms and Conditions which can be viewed on <http://www.acs-schools.com/Terms-and-Conditions>.

Admissions Decision

The final decision whether to offer a place at the school, with or without conditions, to place the applicant on a wait list, or decline an applicant for admission resides with the Dean of Admissions at the campus applied to. This decision will follow consultation with administrators and staff in the relevant campus and

division. The following list of grounds for declining an application is offered for guidance purposes only and is not intended to be exhaustive. The term “admissions team” used in this list is intended to describe those who are consulted by the Dean of Admissions before a decision is reached.

The admissions team may in its absolute discretion decline an application on the following grounds:

- if the minimum entry requirements for admission have not been demonstrated;
- if the admissions team considers, in its reasonable opinion, that the applicant may endanger or pose a risk of harm to staff or students of the school;
- if the admissions team identifies that complete or accurate information was not disclosed in the application process by omission, or misleading information was provided;
- if the admissions team considers, in its reasonable opinion, from the submitted application documentation, that there are relevant disciplinary or behavioural grounds for not admitting the applicant;
- if the applicant has specific academic, physical, medical, social, emotional or behavioural needs which the admissions team considers, in its reasonable opinion, that ACS is unable to meet;
- if the admissions team considers there is another proportionate and justifiable reason for refusing admission.

The above is a non-exhaustive list and there may be other reasons or circumstances for the admissions team considering an applicant unsuitable for admission to ACS.

Appeal procedure

ACS shall, at its absolute discretion, be entitled to offer or decline a place to an applicant. An unsuccessful applicant who wishes to raise an appeal against ACS’ decision may do so in accordance with the appeal procedure outlined in the Terms and Conditions.

Continuing Enrolment

ACS will monitor the student’s progress and produce regular reports. ACS will advise the parent or guardian if there are any concerns about the student’s progress, but will not undertake to diagnose special educational needs. ACS reserves the right to require a formal external assessment at the parent or guardian’s expense.

If ACS identifies that complete or accurate information was not disclosed in the application process by omission, or misleading information was provided, then the parent or guardian may be asked to withdraw the student immediately, or at the end of the semester. Complaints against such a decision may be brought under the complaints procedure. (www.acs-schools.com/Policies).

A parent or guardian may be asked to withdraw a student, or be refused permission to re-enrol the student for the following school year, if, in the reasonable opinion of the Head of School, ACS cannot continue to adequately cater for the student from within the resources reasonably available at the relevant campus or if any of the criteria under the heading ‘Admissions Decision’ above are met. Complaints against such a decision may be brought under the complaints policy (www.acs-schools.com/Policies).

Disabilities, Special Needs and Learning Differences

Applicants with disabilities, special educational needs and learning difficulties are considered for admission provided that ACS' education programme is appropriate to the child's age and that his/her learning needs can be accommodated.

For more information parents may refer to the ACS Student Support Services (Including Special Education Needs and Disabilities) Policy at <https://www.acs-schools.com/Policies>.

Equal Opportunity

ACS is committed to the equal treatment of applicants and students under the Equality Act 2010, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Qatar Visa and Immigration

At the time of application, applicants must submit a copy of their passport. Applicants will need to submit a copy of their Qatari Residency Permit on or before the first day of School. All accepted students **MUST** have a valid Qatari Residency Permit to attend the School as per the Ministry of Education requirements.

Bursary Applications (only UK Schools)

Bursaries are available if parents can demonstrate, through a means testing process, that they would not otherwise be able to send their child to ACS because of limited financial means. More information can be found at <https://www.acs-schools.com/bursaries>.

Applications for financially assisted places are reviewed independently of any admissions application and bursary decisions are guided by the ACS Financial Assistance Policy.

Privacy by Design

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Application Document Retention

Applicants' personal information is processed solely by those members of staff involved in considering the information submitted as part of the application or any appeal, or as part of a response to an appeal, or by a member of staff involved in investigating and/or responding to a complaint or formal claim.

All application documentation will be securely disposed of one year after date of:

- admission (in the case of a successful application) or

- closure of application (if the application was incomplete or the parents/guardians did not accept the place offered), or
- the refusal of a place, or
- the resolution of the case (in the case of an unsuccessful appeal),

unless it is reasonable, proportionate and necessary for this information to be retained for longer as a result of a complaint or formal claim being raised.

Deferred and Pending Applications

If an application is left incomplete, and ACS does not receive any communication from the parent within 3 months of the last communication regarding the application and/or the last supporting document being submitted, then the application will be closed within three months of the last date of contact.

A parent can request in writing for their child's application to be deferred for 12 months, but ACS will require updated school reports and references within the 6 months prior to the applicant's expected start date and any new documentation that may be required as part of our application process. No second application fee will be required for one year's deferral.

If a parent applies for their child to start more than 12 months after the original start date, ACS will require a full new application and application fee.