

## **Supported Application Scheme Policy for 2020 entry**

Free applications are offered as part of the School's commitment to Access and Participation, via the Supported Application Scheme. The aim of the Supported Application Scheme is to encourage applications from individuals from groups underrepresented in higher education who may be deterred by the cost of application due to low income. The Scheme will increase familiarity with the Guildhall School, help participants to feel ready for the audition and interview process and provide multiple opportunities to interact with students and staff.

### *Places*

1. 220 places will be offered for entry in September 2020 for all undergraduate programmes.
2. Places on the Supported Application Scheme will be offered to applicants who meet the specified eligibility criteria, once referred by a teacher or youth group worker. We anticipate a significant number of the referrals in 2019/20 being made by schools and organisations already outlined as partners, however we welcome referrals from alternative schools and organisations providing the applicant meets the relevant eligibility criteria.
3. In addition to the 220 places, free applications will also be given to any recipient of a summer school assisted place under the School's Access Agreement or Access & Participation Plan, on request, without the need for a referral.
4. Places on the Supported Application Scheme will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis from the scheme opening date. We will reserve a small number of places for courses with a March application deadline. We will also guarantee an agreed number places for committed participants on Open Door, Theatre Royal Stratford East Acting Course and National Youth Theatre Playing Up programmes.

## Eligibility

5. The eligibility criteria for places on the Supported Application Scheme are as follows:

Applicants **must meet all** of the following five criteria:

- have no previous experience of university \*
- be applying for an eligible undergraduate programme.
- be UK-Domiciled, or have evidence that they have leave to remain as a refugee.
- be referred by a member of staff in their state school, partner school or youth organisation
- be living in a household with an annual income of below £33,000 **and/or** in receipt of Free School Meals or a 16-19 bursary

Applicants **must also meet at least one** of the following criteria:

- Have a home postcode which is classified as Quintile 1 or Quintile 2 in the POLAR4 data ([visit the Office for Students website to find out](#), result is in the first column of the table).
- Have a home postcode which is classified as Decile 1-4 in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Government dataset ([visit the IMD website to find out](#), result is in a downloadable spreadsheet, found in column F – alternatively email [wp@gsmd.ac.uk](mailto:wp@gsmd.ac.uk) with home postcode and we will look into this).
- Be in care, a recent care leaver or estranged from their family.
- Attend one of our partner schools or youth organisations.
- Have a declared disability.

Adhering to these eligibility criteria will ensure that we are working with the underrepresented groups as identified in our Access and Participation Plan and relevant preparation, and working towards improved Access to the Guildhall School.

\*if the applicant has started a university course, but has completed less than one year of this, please contact the Access and Participation Officer to discuss.

6. Only one free application can be given per applicant in an application cycle. In the event that the applicant wishes to apply for two programmes in one year, they will be required to pay for one of the applications. Applicants can receive a maximum of two free applications to the School across any number of years – this includes free applications under the previous branding of ‘Application Fee Waivers’. E.g. if an applicant has previously received two Application Fee Waivers for applications in 2017 and 2018, they will not be eligible for the Supported Application Scheme.

### *Promotion*

7. The Supported Application Scheme will be advertised between July 2019 and February 2020 via:
  - a) The School's website
  - b) The School's social media accounts
  - c) Promotional material sent to identified schools, colleges and youth arts organisations
  - d) Talks and presentations to identified schools, teachers and youth arts organisations

### *Referral*

8. Schools and youth organisations will be asked to refer applicants for a place who meet the relevant eligibility criteria, who are committed to an application to Guildhall School, and who will benefit from the free application and range of support made available via the scheme.
9. Where a school or organisation is referring a small number of applicants, we ask that they do so via the Supported Application Scheme referral form, found in the Teacher and Advisor guidance. If a school or organisation has agreed in advance that a large number of referrals can be made, a template spreadsheet will be provided. All of the information requested is required for processing and monitoring purposes.
10. No formal assessment of eligibility will take place in the first instance, and we will rely on the referee to vouch for the eligibility met. However, further information may be requested in some instances.
11. As the School auditions and/or interviews all undergraduate applicants, and as the processing of each free application requires time and resource, schools and organisations are asked to exercise discernment, and only refer applicants who:
  - a) have a specified interest in the school and will make use of the free application and additional support.
  - b) are at a point in their artistic development where they have the potential to benefit from a conservatoire education
12. All referrals will be processed by the Access and Participation Officer, and queries regarding referrals should be made to [wp@gsmd.ac.uk](mailto:wp@gsmd.ac.uk).

### *Confirmation*

13. Eligible applicants offered a place on the scheme will be notified via email, at which point they should submit their undergraduate application via the unique link generated in the confirmation email. This link bypasses the payment page.

14. If an eligible applicant has already paid an application fee, no refunds will be given.

### *Participation*

15. Participants on the Supported Application Scheme will be offered workshops and events relevant to the course they have applied to, at least one free ticket to a performance or concert at the School and advice and guidance from the Access and Participation Officer throughout the audition and interview process. Additionally, participants who accept a place on an undergraduate course will receive support when applying for scholarships and in transitioning to the School.

16. Participants who become students at the Guildhall School will be invited to contribute to the development of the Supported Application Scheme in future years.

### *Monitoring*

17. Each year we will report on the number of Supported Application Scheme participants, their characteristics and background relevant to the Access and Participation targets, and the outcomes of their applications. This reporting will be anonymised.

*Ashleigh Hope – Access and Participation Officer*

August 2019