

Supported Application Scheme Policy for 2021 entry

The Supported Application Scheme is part of the School's commitment to Access and Participation, and offers a free undergraduate application, workshops, advice and guidance and invitations to performances to eligible applicants. The aim of the Scheme is to encourage, and support, 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 feel ready for the audition and interview process and provide multiple opportunities to interact with students and staff.

Places

1. 350 places will be offered for entry in September 2021 for all undergraduate programmes.
2. Places on the Supported Application Scheme will be offered to applicants who meet the specified eligibility criteria, and applicants are able to apply directly, or be referred by their school, college or youth organisation.
3. We welcome applications and referrals from any UK location, providing the applicant meets the relevant criteria.
4. Place on the Scheme will be awarded to eligible participants on other projects funded by the School's Access & Participation Plan (e.g. Participation Bursary recipients), on request, without the need for a referral or application.

5. Places on the Supported Application Scheme will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis from the Scheme opening date. We will guarantee an agreed number of places for committed participants on the Open Door, Breakthrough Actors and Playing Up programmes.

Eligibility

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

Applicants **must meet all** of the following four 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 living in a household with an annual income of below £33,000 or which receives means tested benefits **and/or** in receipt of Free School Meals, a 16-19 bursary or a means tested bursary in a GYA Centre.

**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.*

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).
- Be Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic
- 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.

***A full list of eligible schools and organisations can be found on our website.*

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

7. 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 three free applications across any number of years.

Promotion

8. The Supported Application Scheme will be advertised between July 2020 and March 2021 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

Applications and referrals

9. Applicants may apply directly to the Scheme or be referred by their school, college or youth organisation. Applications and referrals to the Scheme will be made via an online form.
10. Where a school or organisation is referring a small number of applicants, we ask that they do so via the application and referral form. If a school or organisation has agreed in advance that 10+ referrals can be made, a template spreadsheet will be provided. All information requested at application or referral is required for processing, monitoring and evaluation purposes.
11. If an applicant is applying directly to the Scheme, they must provide supporting evidence via email to wp@gsmd.ac.uk to demonstrate that they meet the criteria. Guidance on accepted evidence will be detailed

on the relevant webpages and guidance. If an applicant is referred to the Scheme, we will trust the word of the referee, though we may, on occasion, request further information or evidence.

12. 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
13. All referrals will be processed by the Access and Participation Officer, and queries regarding referrals should be made to wp@gsmd.ac.uk.

Confirmation

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

Participation

16. 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.

17. Workshops will be offered online and on-site (where possible). They are not compulsory, but participants will benefit most from the Scheme by participating in activity. Once a participant has signed up to an event, they are expected to attend, and should communicate if they cannot in advance.
18. For Acting activity, priority on events will be given to applicants who remain in the audition process, though invitations will be extended to unsuccessful applicants where space allows. At least one activity will be offered pre-audition for all Acting applicants.
19. 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

20. 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.

Evaluation

21. Participants in the Supported Application Scheme will be asked to complete evaluations for all activity they attend, and the end application cycle survey, which will also collect destination data. Robust evaluation is essential to the success of Access and Participation activity, and a key requirement of the Office for Students.

Ashleigh Hope – Access and Participation Officer

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