



Admission Policy

Document Control

Item	Details
Document Title	Admission Policy
School	Grace Academy High School
Governing Entity	Grace Academy Foundation
School Type	Co-educational independent English-medium Christian values-based school
Grades Offered	Grades 8–12
Effective Date	24 September 2024
Approved By	Governing Board / Board of Directors
Approval Date	23 January 2025
Review Cycle	Every 3 years, or earlier if required by law or operational need
Next Review Date	24 January 2028
Policy Custodian	Executive Principal

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the principles, criteria, procedures, and administrative requirements governing admission to **Grace Academy High School**. Its purpose is to ensure that admissions are handled lawfully, fairly, consistently, and transparently, while supporting the school's educational mission, Christian values-based ethos, and operational capacity.

This policy must be read together with:

- the governing framework of **Grace Academy Foundation, a Non Profit Company**;
- the school's code of conduct and parent/learner agreement;
- applicable South African education law and constitutional principles; and
- any approved internal procedures relating to records, learner support, fees, and safeguarding.



2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all applications for admission to Grades 8–12;
- transfers from other schools;
- conditional or provisional placements;
- re-admission applications where applicable; and
- all staff involved in admissions, learner support screening, interviews, enrolment administration, and records management.

3. Guiding Principles

Admissions at Grace Academy High School are guided by the following principles:

- **Fairness:** every application must be considered consistently and on relevant criteria.
- **Non-discrimination:** the school does not unfairly discriminate on grounds prohibited by law.
- **Best interests of the learner:** admission decisions must take account of learner welfare, educational fit, and the school's ability to provide appropriate support.
- **Transparency:** requirements and procedures must be communicated clearly to parents and guardians.
- **Values alignment:** applicants and families must be willing to respect the school's Christian values-based ethos, code of conduct, and discipline framework.
- **Educational integrity:** admission does not guarantee promotion, certification, or exemption from academic and behavioural expectations.
- **Capacity realism:** admission is subject to available space, staffing, timetable constraints, and resource capacity.
- **Proper governance:** this policy is implemented under the authority of the school leadership and subject to the governance framework of Grace Academy Foundation.

4. School Identity and Ethos

Grace Academy High School is an **independent, English-medium, co-educational secondary school** serving learners in **Grades 8 to 12**. The school is operated within the governance framework of **Grace Academy Foundation**, whose constitution records a Christian ethos, a public-benefit educational purpose, and a commitment to structured, disciplined, and affordable education.

The school's ethos is expressed through values such as:

- discipline;
- academic excellence;
- integrity and accountability;

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- respect and dignity;
- character, leadership, and service.

Admission to the school is therefore open to learners whose parents or guardians are willing to support the school's ethos and comply with its policies, even where the learner or family may come from a different faith or cultural background.

5. Admissions Authority

5.1 Governance

The Governing Board / Board of Directors of Grace Academy Foundation retains ultimate oversight of admissions policy as part of its governance responsibility for the school.

5.2 Operational Responsibility

The **Executive Principal**, supported by designated administrative and learner support staff, is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy, including:

- receiving and reviewing applications;
- conducting interviews or placement processes where required;
- verifying documents;
- making or recommending admission decisions;
- communicating outcomes; and
- maintaining admission records.

5.3 Reservation of Final Decision

The school reserves the right to make the final admission decision in accordance with this policy, applicable law, and the school's operational capacity.

6. Admission Criteria

Admission may be granted where the school is satisfied that the applicant:

1. seeks admission to a grade offered by the school;
2. meets the age, academic, and progression requirements for the relevant grade;
3. has submitted a complete application with the required supporting documents;
4. has a satisfactory previous school record, including attendance and conduct where relevant;
5. is reasonably likely to benefit from the school's academic programme and structure;
6. is willing, together with the parent or guardian, to comply with the school's rules, ethos, and contractual requirements; and
7. can be accommodated within the school's available places and support capacity.

Additional factors that may be considered include:

- the applicant's academic readiness for the grade sought;
- subject choice availability in the FET phase;
- the school's ability to timetable the learner appropriately;

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- whether prior support needs or behavioural concerns have been properly disclosed; and
- whether the parent or guardian accepts the school fee obligations or has formally applied for fee support where such a process exists.

7. Fairness and non-discrimination.

7.1 General Rule

Grace Academy High School is committed to lawful, fair, and non-discriminatory admissions.

7.2 Prohibited Unfair Discrimination

The school will not unfairly refuse admission based on:

- race;
- ethnic or social origin;
- colour;
- sex;
- gender;
- language;
- religion;
- culture;
- disability;
- family or social background; or
- any other prohibited ground under South African law.

7.3 Lawful Differentiation

The school may apply lawful and relevant admission criteria, including:

- grade readiness;
- academic placement;
- behavioural and disciplinary suitability;
- available space;
- subject availability;
- safety considerations;
- the school's ability reasonably to meet the learner's educational needs.

8. Capacity Limitations

Admission is always subject to the school's capacity. Capacity may be affected by:

- classroom size limits;
- educator-to-learner ratios;
- subject combination availability;

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- specialist resource availability;
- health and safety considerations;
- timetable constraints; and
- the school's ability to provide reasonable support without compromising educational quality.

Where applications exceed available places, the school may place applicants on a waiting list. Placement on a waiting list does not constitute admission.

9. Support for Learners with Barriers to Learning

9.1 Commitment to Inclusion

The school supports inclusive education principles and will consider applications from learners with identified barriers to learning.

9.2 Reasonable Support

Admission may be granted where the school can **reasonably accommodate** the learner's needs within its staffing, programme, and resource capacity.

9.3 Required Disclosure

Parents or guardians must disclose any known:

- diagnosed learning difficulty;
- behavioural or emotional support need;
- medical condition affecting schooling;
- previous accommodations;
- psycho-educational recommendations; or
- disciplinary or safeguarding concerns relevant to the learner's placement.

9.4 Assessment of Supportability

The school may request additional information, reports, or meetings to determine whether appropriate support can reasonably be offered.

9.5 Limit of Support Obligation

Where the school, acting reasonably and in good faith, concludes that it cannot meet the learner's needs adequately or safely, it may decline admission or propose conditional admission subject to further review.

10. Conditional Admission

The school may grant **conditional admission** in appropriate cases, including where:

- final reports or transfer documents are still outstanding;
- subject placement must be confirmed after assessment;
- fee arrangements must be concluded;
- behavioural or attendance concerns require a monitoring plan;
- support needs require observation during an initial placement period; or
- A learner is transferring mid-year.



Conditional admission must:

- be confirmed in writing;
- state the conditions clearly;
- specify the review period; and
- indicate the consequences if the conditions are not met.

A conditional placement does not create an indefinite right to remain enrolled where the stated conditions are not satisfied.

11. Application Procedure

11.1 Submission of Application

Applications must be submitted on the school's prescribed admission form together with all required supporting documents.

11.2 Preliminary Review

The admissions office will conduct a preliminary check to determine whether:

- the form is complete;
- supporting documents have been submitted; and
- The application falls within the grades and entry periods managed by the school.

11.3 Further Assessment

The school may require one or more of the following:

- an interview with the learner and parent/guardian;
- placement or baseline assessment;
- a review of school reports and conduct records;
- discussion with previous educators or school officials, where appropriate and lawful;
- consultation with learner support personnel.

11.4 Decision

After review, the school may:

- offer admission;
- offer conditional admission;
- place the applicant on a waiting list; or
- decline the application.

11.5 Communication

The outcome will be communicated in writing to the parent or guardian.



12. Required Documents

Applicants must submit, where applicable:

- completed application form;
- certified copy of the learner's birth certificate or identity document;
- certified copies of parent/guardian identity documents;
- latest school report and, where relevant, prior reports;
- transfer card or transfer letter if moving from another school;
- proof of address;
- passport, visa, or study permit documentation where applicable;
- immunisation or health information where relevant to schooling;
- disclosure of any learning, behavioural, medical, or psychosocial support needs;
- any specialist reports relevant to reasonable accommodation;
- proof of payment of the application or registration fee, where applicable.

The school may request additional documents reasonably necessary to make an informed admission decision.

13. Fees and Enrolment Confirmation

An offer of admission is subject to completion of the enrolment process, which may include:

- payment of the prescribed registration fee;
- signature of the parent/learner contract;
- acceptance of the school fee terms;
- agreement to the code of conduct; and
- completion of all registration documentation.

Where a family seeks fee assistance, bursary, or scholarship support, that process is separate from the basic admission assessment unless the school expressly indicates otherwise.

No donation, sponsorship, or external payment may secure **preferential admission** or an unfair private advantage for a named learner.

14. Grounds for Refusal or Withdrawal of an Offer

The school may refuse admission, or withdraw an offer before final enrolment, where there is:

- material non-disclosure or false information in the application;
- failure to submit required documents within a reasonable period;
- lack of available space;
- inability to offer the required subject combination;
- serious prior behavioural, disciplinary, or safety concerns not adequately resolved;
- a reasonable conclusion that the school cannot meet the learner's needs;

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- non-acceptance of the school's ethos, policies, or contractual framework; or
- failure to meet stated conditions of a conditional offer.

Any such decision must be taken fairly and recorded in writing.

15. Appeals

15.1 Right to Appeal

A parent or guardian may appeal an admission decision by submitting a written appeal to the Executive Principal within **5 working days** of receiving the decision.

15.2 Appeal Content

The appeal should:

- identify the decision being challenged;
- set out the reasons for the appeal; and
- attach any supporting documents or clarifications.

15.3 Internal Review

The principal may:

- uphold the original decision;
- amend the decision;
- request further information; or
- Refer the matter for review by a designated admissions committee or governing structure.

15.4 Final Internal Outcome

The outcome of the appeal will be communicated in writing. The internal appeal decision is final within the school's processes, subject to any external legal rights that may exist.

16. Records and Confidentiality

The school must maintain proper admissions records, including:

- applications received;
- supporting documents;
- interview notes;
- placement assessments where used;
- decisions taken;
- waiting list records;
- appeal records; and
- signed enrolment documentation.

Records must be:

- accurate and securely stored;
- accessible only to authorised personnel;
- retained in accordance with the school's records management practices and applicable law; and



- handled with due regard to confidentiality and learner dignity.

17. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Governing Board / Board of Directors	Approves policy and exercises oversight
Executive Principal	Final operational responsibility for admissions decisions
Admissions Administrator	Receives applications, checks documents, and maintains records
Learner Support Personnel	Advises on support needs and reasonable accommodation
Finance Office	Confirms fee and registration arrangements where applicable
Parents/Guardians	Provide complete, truthful, and timely information
Learner	Participates honestly in interviews, assessments, and orientation

18. Relationship with Other School Documents

This policy should be read together with:

- the school's **Code of Conduct**;
- the **Parent/Learner Contract**;
- any **Bursary and Scholarship Policy**;
- the school's **Data Management** and **Conflict of Interest** controls; and
- the governance framework established by **Grace Academy Foundation**.

If there is any inconsistency between this policy and the registered governance instruments of Grace Academy Foundation, the higher governing instrument will prevail to the extent required by law, and this policy must be interpreted accordingly.

19. Policy Review

This policy must be reviewed:

- at least once every three years;
- whenever there is a material change in law or regulatory requirements;
- where the school expands or changes its grades offered; or
- where admissions practice indicates a need for amendment.

20. Approval

Approved by: **[GOVERNING BOARD / BOARD OF DIRECTORS]** Name of Chairperson: **Mr Philani Mchunu**

Signature: _____ Date: **23 January 2026**