

Student Academy of Excellence

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1.0 Purpose

This document sets out the selection, entry, and membership conditions for the Student Academy of Excellence.

2.0 Scope

The protocol applies to:

- prospective student applicants to the Student Academy of Excellence;
- Student Academy of Excellence secondary school initiative members;
- current student members of the Student Academy of Excellence;
- Student Academy of Excellence alumni; and
- Student Academy of Excellence staff and partners.

3.0 Local protocols

The University established the Student Academy of Excellence (SAE) to:

- support and attract high achieving students to study at Griffith University;
- facilitate the success of high achieving students through the provision of support and additional benefits; and
- promote the University to the public, secondary schools and potential students as an institution that is committed to academic excellence.

The Manager, Student Academy of Excellence is responsible for the administration of the SAE. Each year the previous year's membership and the funding available for the Academy in the following year is reviewed and it determines:

- student cohorts for whom entry to the Academy is available; and
- number of places available in the Academy.

The maximum numbers for new admissions to the SAE for each student cohort will be determined annually based on resourcing and the SAE's ability to deliver high-quality activities and opportunities.

3.1 Eligibility

3.1.1 Undergraduate level

To be considered for entry to the undergraduate level SAE program, an applicant must meet one of the following general eligibility criteria:

- commencing an undergraduate degree as a domestic or international student and has an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) of 95.50 or above, or equivalent entry score;
- continuing an undergraduate degree as a domestic or international student having achieved a cumulative career grade point average (GPA) of or above 6.5 out of 7 (or equivalent), completed a minimum of 20 credit points and demonstrated a likeliness to engage in Academy events and activities (typically through prior examples of community engagement);
- received a Vice Chancellor's Academic Achievement Scholarship; or
- received a New Colombo Plan Scholarship.

Current university applicants who meet all eligibility requirements but hold a cumulative GPA lower than 6.5 and can demonstrate mitigating circumstance or exceptional personal achievements will be considered and assessed for entry to the SAE on a case-by-case basis.

Secondary School level

To be considered for entry to the secondary school level SAE program, an applicant must meet all of the following general eligibility criteria:

- Currently enrolled in senior secondary school in Australia.
- Have a demonstrated academic achievement equivalent to B or above as per ACARA standards.
- Have support and endorsement from their school.
- Have signed parent/guardian consent.

3.2 Application and assessment

Applications for the SAE are assessed against the eligibility and selection criteria.

Application responses must meet a minimum standard for the applicant to be considered eligible for selection. To meet the application minimum standard, applicants must receive an endorsement from an academic referee and applicant responses must:

- directly respond to and clearly answer application questions;
- provide sufficient context and detail so that an impartial assessor may understand the meaning and significance of the response;
- not exceed the stated word limits.

Applications must be made on the designated application form and must provide relevant documentation and information to demonstrate eligibility.

Students who submit an application that meets the minimum acceptance standard and who meet all eligibility requirements will be offered a place in the SAE, where availability allows. In instances in which applications exceed places available, applications will be assessed competitively.

Current university applicants who meet all eligibility requirements but hold a cumulative GPA lower than 6.5 and can demonstrate mitigating circumstance or exceptional personal achievements will be considered and assessed for entry to the SAE on a case-by-case basis.

In instances of competitive or special consideration selection, applicant selection will be based on:

- academic merit;
- written statements;
- personal qualities (motivation towards university study, career aspirations, likelihood of success in university study);
- personal achievements;
- strength of references; and
- likelihood to engage in the SAE's suite of programs.

3.3 Participation and conditions

Student Academy of Excellence membership is dependent on students meeting several participation conditions, as specified below:

3.3.1 Acceptance of Offer

A person who is given an offer of entry to the SAE must accept the offer by the date indicated on the letter of offer (when applicable), or the offer of entry may be withdrawn and directed to another applicant.

All Vice Chancellor's Academic Achievement Scholarship and New Colombo Plan Scholarship recipients will be made an offer of entry to the SAE. Recipients must have accepted their scholarship offer and be enrolled at Griffith to participate in Academy activities.

3.3.2 Enrolment Conditions

A student who is excluded from study under any University or school policy will be unable to continue in the Academy.

Undergraduate students may remain in the SAE for the period of their undergraduate degree including an undergraduate Honours degree.

An Academy member may take leave of absence in accordance with University policy. Academy benefits are not available during any period of leave of absence or deferment and students on Leave of Absence are not eligible to participate in Academy activities except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Manager, Student Academy of Excellence.

An Academy member who is not enrolled and is not on an approved leave of absence will lose their place in the Student Academy of Excellence.

Secondary school students may remain in the SAE for the period of their senior secondary schooling on the condition that they are enrolled in a partner school and meet eligibility criteria and annual progression requirements.

3.3.3 GPA and Grade Conditions

To remain in the Academy, each undergraduate student must maintain a cumulative career Grade Point Average (GPA) of 5.5 or higher. Students whose career GPA falls below 5.5 for more than a full academic trimester will have their membership in the Academy withdrawn. Should students who have had their membership withdrawn raise their career GPA average to or above 5.5, and notify the Student Academy of Excellence, they will have their membership re-instated.

To remain in the Academy, each secondary school student must maintain grades that meet the annual progression requirements. Should students fall below the grade requirements due to special circumstances, their membership status will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

3.3.4 SAE Notation on Academic Transcript

All Academy undergraduate members graduating with a minimum cumulative career GPA of 5.5 or higher will have the following notation on their Official Academic Transcript:

Student Academy of Excellence Scholar (Academic Excellence, Leadership, and Community Engagement).

3.3.5 Specific Conditions

In addition to the general participation conditions above, the following specific conditions apply to undergraduate members:

- An Academy member is required to participate in the following compulsory components:
 - Orientation

- SAE Development Series
- Annual Symposium
- An Academy member offered a place may defer taking up their place for up to two trimesters, if deferring their admission offer.
- An Academy member may transfer between undergraduate degree programs in accordance with University policy, without affecting their Academy membership.
- Should the University know or have reason to believe that a member who has been offered a place in the Student Academy of Excellence has provided false or misleading information in relation to their application, the application will be reassessed, and the member will be advised of the outcome. Members may also be assessed under the *Student Conduct, Safety and Wellbeing Policy*.
- An Academy member who is on approved cross-institutional study will continue to remain eligible to participate in Academy activities. Academy members will be required to provide documentation to prove cross-institutional study and academic load.
- An Academy member who cannot attend a compulsory component must advise the Academy prior to the event to negotiate a substitute activity. Substitute activities will be negotiated between the Manager Student Academy of Excellence and the member on an individual basis to ensure the member achieves the aims of the compulsory component.

3.3.6 Conditions of SAE Component of Vice Chancellor's Academic Achievement Scholarship

All Vice Chancellor's Academic Achievement Scholars will have \$2,000 available to them within the SAE budget as part of their Vice Chancellor's Academic Achievement Scholarship. These funds are used to support and facilitate activities related to leadership, development, discovery, and Griffith-approved global experiences. While students can request that their allocated funds be used for specific experiences (both SAE provided and otherwise), the ultimate decision on the allocation and distribution of these funds lay with the Student Academy of Excellence team. Scholarship funds will become unavailable to students if they undertake one or more of the following:

- transfer their studies to a different university;
- defer from Griffith University and/or the Student Academy of Excellence (for the period of the deferment);
- graduate;
- withdraw membership from the Student Academy of Excellence; and
- have their membership withdrawn from the Student Academy of Excellence (for any reason or reasons outlined in Section 3.4).

3.4 Withdrawal of membership

3.4.1 Circumstances Under Which Membership May be Withdrawn

An Academy member who does not attend compulsory components and does not negotiate an approved substitute activity may have their membership withdrawn.

An Academy member who does not meet the cumulative career GPA or grade conditions in [Section 3.3.3](#) may have their membership withdrawn.

An Academy member who does not represent the spirit of the Academy or brings the Academy into disrepute will have their membership withdrawn.

3.4.2 Procedure for Withdrawal of Membership

In the interest of fairness, the following procedure will be followed:

- The Manager, Student Academy of Excellence will contact the member via their Griffith University or school email address, advising of the concern in relation to the student's membership and inviting the student to respond to, and discuss the issue. Students will be made aware that should they not respond, their SAE membership will be withdrawn within five working days.
- Within five working days of this contact the Manager will assess special circumstances or other student submissions and confirm/stay withdrawal of membership. If a student has not responded to SAE's contact, their membership will be withdrawn. A stay of membership withdrawal may be made at the Manager's discretion based on student contact responses and/or special circumstances, and is to be reviewed in the subsequent academic trimester.

3.4.3 Review of Decision to Withdraw Membership

An undergraduate member who has had their membership status withdrawn may apply for review of this decision using the *Review of a Decision* form in accordance with the University's *Student Review and Appeals Policy* and *Student Review and Appeals Procedure*.

4.0 Definitions

For the purposes of this local protocol and related policy documents, the following definitions apply:

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) is an independent statutory authority with a vision to inspire improvement in the learning of all young Australians through world-class curriculum, assessment and reporting.

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) A score (expressed as a rank from 99.95-0) allocated by a Tertiary Admissions Centre to represent the educational order of merit of an applicant who has completed Year 12 and used to determine the applicant's eligibility for an admission offer and to rank applicants for merit-based selection.

Equivalent entry score is a recognised and provable merit that demonstrates the same level of aptitude as the primary means of assessment.

Grade Point Average (GPA) is a summary statistic that represents the average performance of a student over a defined period of time (e.g. Trimester, Program or Academic Career).

Senior Secondary student is a student enrolled in Year 10, 11 or 12 at a partner school in Australia.

5.0 Information

Title	Student Academy of Excellence Local Protocol
Document number	2024/0000036
Purpose	This document sets out the selection, entry, and membership conditions for the Student Academy of Excellence.
Audience	Staff; Students
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Subcategory	Student Services
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Policy advisor	Manager, Student Academy of Excellence
Approving authority	Registrar

6.0 Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents

Legislation	N/A
Policy	Admission Policy Student Conduct, Safety and Wellbeing Policy Student Review and Appeals Policy
Procedure	Student Review and Appeals Procedure
Local Protocol	Calculation of Graduate Point Average
Form	Review of Decision Form