



Somerset College

ADMISSIONS POLICY

(SC-ACA-ADM-001)

Admission to the Senior, Preparatory and Pre-Preparatory School will be governed by the basic principles set out below and must be read in conjunction with the Diversity statement, the Accommodations Policy, and/or the document drawn up for providing education for children with special needs as well as the Policy on Scholarships, Bursaries and Financial Assistance.

This policy does not deal with the financial and contractual obligations of parents / guardians to secure a place at the school.

All applications are to be made on the formal application form, which may be found on the College website, and the relevant supporting documents must be included at the time of submission.

1. Selection Process

The final decision regarding the suitability of a candidate for admission to the Senior School rests with the Executive Head and regarding suitability for admissions to the Preparatory School with the Head of the Preparatory School. They will make the relevant decisions after consulting with the Head of the Student Development Unit (SDU) in all decisions with regard to admitting children with barriers to learning. The Head concerned will be guided in the decision-making process by the following:

1.1 Placement Tests:

Grade 000 – Grade R:

New students entering the Pre-Preparatory School **will not** be required to undergo a placement test. The Head of the SDU in the Preparatory School will screen all reports and relevant documentation of applicants in order to ensure that the educational needs of each applicant can be met. The parents of applicants born after the 15th November may be called for an interview in order to discuss the school readiness of their child.

A Grade R child will be required to go for a school readiness assessment in the following instances:

- All applicants entering Grade R after June;
- All children who are younger than the school's recommended age of entry;

- All Grade R children about whom, after informal assessments and screenings have been conducted, the Class Teacher and the Head of the SDU in the Preparatory School have concerns regarding school readiness levels.

Grade 1-7

All students entering Grade 1 to Grade 7 **will be** required to write a placement test in literacy and numeracy that will be arranged by the Head of the SDU in the Preparatory School. The placement test will be written at Somerset College, under supervision.

Thereafter, the Head of the Preparatory School, or a senior teacher of the Head's nomination, will interview the child and the parents and, in consultation with the SDU, will determine into which grade the child will be placed, depending on the child's level of functioning and the availability of space in the classes.

Grade 8 – 10 & Cambridge AS level:

All applicants in Grades 8 to 10, including Somerset College Preparatory School students, are required to write placement tests in English and Mathematics. The placement tests will be written at Somerset College, under supervision. Applicants who do not reside in the area (Western Cape) will be permitted to write the test, under supervision, at their current school.

Grade 11 and 12: Admission to Grade 11 will only be considered under exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Head. No admission to Grade 12 will be considered.

1.2 Academic and behavioural records

Senior School

All applicants will be required to submit a copy of the most recent academic report from their current school. This is required prior to the placement test.

Depending on the results of the placement test, applicants may be required to be assessed by the SDU in the Senior School. All applicants and their parents will be required to meet with the Executive Head or a senior teacher of the Executive Head's nomination.

Subject choices should be obtained from students entering Grades 9 to 10 and Cambridge AS Level.

A Private and Confidential Report will be requested from the applicant's current school during the admissions process.

Somerset College Preparatory School students will progress to the Senior School subject to the student's ability to cope academically in the Senior School, their behavioural record and the fees payment history.

Preparatory School

The Head of the SDU in the Preparatory School screens all reports from previous schools and relevant documentation of applicants in order to advise the Head of the Preparatory School on whether the educational needs of each applicant can be met. In addition, the

Head of the Preparatory School, or a senior teacher of the Head's nomination, will conduct an interview with the student/s and their parents.

A Private and Confidential Report will be requested from the applicant's current school during the admissions process.

1.3 Age

Pre-Preparatory School

- Entry into Grade 000 will be in the year that the applicant turns four.
- Entry into Grade 00 will be in the year that applicant turns five.
- Entry into Grade R will be in the year that the applicant turns six.

Preparatory School

- Entry into Grade 1 will be in the year that the applicant turns seven.
- Entry into all other grades will be governed by this standard. Any exceptions will be at the discretion of the Head and based on a number of factors.

Senior School:

In general, ages of students entering the Senior School will be age appropriate for the relevant grade but may vary from time to time at the discretion of the Executive Head, in consultation with the SDU and the Deputy in Charge of Academics. Ages will usually be as follows:

- Grade 8 – 13 turning 14 during the year
- Grade 9 – 14 turning 15 during the year
- Grade 10 – 15 turning 16 during the year
- Grade 11 – 16 turning 17 during the year
- Grade 12 – 17 turning 18 in Matric

1.4 Students with special needs

The admission of all students is subject to the Admissions Policy of the College.

The College's physical environment, facilities and resources may limit its ability to provide high quality education to students with special educational needs (whether owing to neurological barriers, hearing impairments, visual barriers, physical barriers, behavioural or emotional barriers or any other medically assessed special need).

If in the reasonable opinion of the Executive Head, the College cannot provide adequately for the student's special educational needs, the College may refuse enrolment or cancel the Contract of Enrolment for that particular child.

Many special needs are detected at a young age and a full disclosure of the extent of such needs must be made during the application process. In cases where this information is not available, the school may seek additional information or testing before reaching a decision on admission. Non-disclosure of such information could lead to cancellation of the contract.

The school will endeavour to implement appropriate accommodations for pupils with special educational needs once the necessary formal assessments have been completed and the required reports submitted to the school. Accommodations will be in line with those granted by the IEB.

Parents of students who make use of the SDU will be responsible for the costs associated with it and the resources it deems necessary to assist the student to best manage the special needs. The SDU costs will be in addition to regular school fees.

The costs of private facilitators will be borne by the parents.

Owing to the nature of the campus, acceptance of pupils with mobility constraints will be discussed on an individual basis.

1.5 Boarding

The final decision regarding the suitability of a candidate for admission to boarding rests with the Executive Head, in consultation with the SDU and the relevant Head of Boarding. The Executive Head will be guided in his/her decision-making process by the following:

- Academic and behavioural record
- Residential address. Preference will be given to students living outside the Stellenbosch/Somerset West area.

Medical Insurance, including medical aid cover and medical insurance cover for any sport or travel done under the control of the college, is a condition of entry for all boarding students, whether from South Africa or any other country.

2. Waiting lists

The Admissions Department will operate a system of waiting lists for all students who apply for a place in the school. The waiting lists in all grades will be based on the date of application and on the applicant meeting the required academic standards of Somerset College as determined by school readiness or a placement test and the approval of the SDU.

The following additional considerations will apply where relevant:

- Siblings of students currently at Somerset College
- Multiple sibling applications
- Students who wish to board (dependent on places available)
- Gender
- Students from diverse backgrounds (in keeping with the Somerset College Inclusion Policy and Diversity Statement)
- Children of Alumni
- Children of Teaching Staff members

3. Acorn Bursary Trust and other financially assisted students

Refer to the Policy on Scholarships, Bursaries and Financial Assistance.