ISLINGTON COLLEGIATE SIXTH FORM

Islington Collegiate Sixth Form (ICS)

Admissions Policy

2026-2027

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026 - 27

Introductory statement

Islington Collegiate Sixth Form aims to provide outstanding A level education and exceptional examination outcomes for the most able students which will enable them to progress to the best and most competitive universities, including Oxford and Cambridge and other prestigious universities world-wide. These arrangements should be read alongside the sixth form prospectus, which is available on our website.

Capacity

Islington Collegiate Sixth Form will have a total capacity of 240 places (full-time equivalent) for students in the age range 16-19.

It will admit up to 120 students to year 12 in September 2026. Priority for admission will be given to Year 11 pupils on roll at COLA-HH Academy who meet the general criteria outlined below. Remaining places will be allocated to qualifying external applicants.

Minimum Study Programme

All students will be expected to enrol on a programme of study comprising a minimum of 540 planned hours per year.

Minimum Entry Requirements

The Islington Collegiate Sixth Form is academically rigorous and challenging, as such places will be offered to applicants who are assessed to meet our minimum entry criteria. All conditional offers are based on a student's predicted grades and/or actual GCSE grades submitted on their application form.

General Criteria

In order to study A Levels, students need a minimum of 56 points from their best 8 GCSEs (vocational courses e.g. BTEC and community languages will not be included in the best 8) Students must also have at least a GCSE grade 6 in English Language and Mathematics to study A levels. Subject specific entry criteria will also apply to individual A levels, as outlined in the prospectus. In addition, where GCSE grades are not available for the specific subjects, Islington Collegiate Sixth form reserves the right to administer additional tests and/or assessments to assess students' level of academic ability and suitability for the A level courses chosen. This would apply in exceptional circumstances, for example illness, bereavement or recent arrivals to the UK.

Applications with non-standard qualifications

In case of applicants with non-standard qualifications (e.g. International Baccalaureate, BTEC Level 2), the academy will use nationally accepted benchmarks from QCA and/or the DfE, which are available on their websites, to assess GCSE equivalence.

Applying for places

The application process opens on **Wednesday 19th November 2025** and the closing date for applications is **Monday 23rd February 2026**.

Oversubscription criteria
After the admission of students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), where Islington Collegiate Sixth Form is named on the EHCP, the following criteria will be applied in this order:

1. Looked after children or children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order provided they meet the entry criteria.

2. Applicants already attending Year 11 of COLA, Highgate Hill at the time of application provided they meet the entry criteria.

3. An applicant whose parent is (a) a member of staff at Highgate Hill for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made or (b) a member of staff recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage provided they meet the entry criteria.

4. External applicants provided they meet the entry criteria and for whom places on their chosen courses are available.

Tie-Break
In the event where two or more applicants fulfil the entry criteria and where giving a place to both / all of them would mean a course becoming oversubscribed, then the place will be offered to the applicant with the higher/highest predicted GCSE grades in the subject(s) relevant to the application and any additional entrance test or assessments. Where applicants have the same grades and there is only one place remaining a computer-generated random allocation will be made.

Notes
Places will only be offered to those who have met or who are predicted to meet the minimum entry requirements at the point they apply and at any time where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.

Applicants whose actual or predicted GCSE grades meet or indicate that they will meet the entrance criteria for all of their chosen A level subjects.

Applicants whose actual or predicted GCSE grades meet or indicate they will meet the entrance criteria for all four of their A level subject choices, but where there is no space on one of their chosen courses and where the applicant is willing to accept a place on an alternative course i.e. one where there is space and they meet the entrance criteria. Where this is not acceptable the applicant will be placed on the waiting list.

Late Applications
Late applications will only be considered if there are places remaining, or on a specific course once the oversubscription criteria have been applied.

Applications with non-standard qualifications
In case of applicants with non-standard qualifications, the academy will use nationally accepted benchmarks from QCA and/or the DfE, to assess GCSE equivalence on a case by case basis.

Waiting lists
It may be that some applicants do not achieve their predicted grades or decide not to attend the academy following acceptance of their offer. We will therefore establish a waiting list, with applicants prioritised in line with our over subscription criteria. The waiting list will operate up to the end of the first half term of any academic year (31 December).

Withdrawal of Places
Applicants should be aware that the academy carries out checks to confirm predicted/actual GCSE grades with secondary schools. Where the predicted grades submitted on the application form differ from the ones provided by the school we will take the school's predicted grades when making offer decisions. We reserve the right to rescind an offer where the school's predicted grades for the applicant fail to meet the entry criteria.

Confirmation of Enrolment
Although enrolment meetings do not determine admission, when a conditional offer holder receives their GCSE results, they must attend an enrolment meeting with an academy member of staff on GCSE results day (or a different date determined by the academy) to confirm their place. No offer is confirmed until the student or their adult representative has enrolled on GCSE results day (or a different date determined by the academy).

Where a student or their representative fails to attend enrolment day then their place will be offered to another student. It is unlikely that an offer holder will be enrolled on to a course where they have missed the minimum entry criteria.

The academy reserves the right to enrol a student where there is evidence of exceptional academic performance in a subject or group of subjects but who may have failed to achieve one or more of the entry criteria.

The academy also reserves the right to reduce the minimum entry criteria for students who wish to study an A level subject or group of subjects where there are sound educational and/or organisational reasons to do so.

An example may be where a student has secured 8s & 9s in maths and sciences but has not achieved a 6 in their English Language but wishes to study maths and the sciences only. Students who wish to change subjects from their original offer will be placed on the waiting list.

Appeals
Applicants who have been declined a place to study through this process and believe that the academy has failed to follow the admission policy have a right to appeal the decision following enrolment on GCSE results day. An appeal should be put in writing to the Clerk to the Appeals Panel and sent to the academy within 30 of the published September start date on the academy's website. The appeal must be in writing, addressed to:

The Clerk to the Appeals Panel
Islington Collegiate Sixth Form
City of London Academy Highgate Hill
Holland Walk
London N19 3EU

Review
This policy will be reviewed annually and any amended policy for the following September will be determined by the MAT by 28 February, and published on the Academy's website by 15 March. The policy will remain on the website throughout the year.

Objections
You can make an objection to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) if you think that the admissions arrangements of an academy do not comply with the 'School Admissions Code' (the Code) or other legislation relating to school admissions. Certain exceptions apply as set out in paragraph 3.3 of the Code.

If you are unhappy with any aspect of the admission policy or appeal process you may outline your concerns to the ESFA at Academy.QUESTIONS@education.gsi.gov.uk. However, you should first raise any concerns with the academy at the address above or the contact details below:

Email: enquiries@ics.cola.org.uk
Telephone: 020 7281 3526