



Admissions Policy and Procedures 2019/2020

This policy is reviewed yearly to meet the requirements of the Dutch Education Authorities and Dutch International Secondary Schools (DISS)

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1. School Vision and Mission

It is the vision of the Rotterdam International Secondary School, hereafter referred to as RISS, to educate students for self-awareness, curiosity and integrity in a changing world.

Our mission is for all students to enjoy their youth. We do this by providing innovative approaches to learning, encouraging achievement, fostering international mindedness with local and global engagement, modelling ethical behaviour and acting respectfully and with honesty.

We aim to instil the embodiment of our core values: respect, responsibility, relationships and courage, in all students, that they may demonstrate these values during their time at RISS and on into their futures.

2. Admissions Department

It is the mission of the Admissions Department to recruit, inform, and admit new, qualified students to RISS in a professional and forthright manner, maintaining the integrity of the school, the students and their families.

We aim to ensure that prospective families understand the RISS vision, mission and values.

We strive to provide an adequate understanding of the academic programmes offered at RISS and the requirements, responsibilities and commitment required of each student.

Subject to the conditions below, admission is non-discriminatory and open to all students without regard to race, gender, religion, physical ability, sexual orientation, nationality, or ethnic origin in accordance with International Child Protection and Safeguarding expectations.

The Admissions Department and Senior Leadership Team determine admission and continued enrolment in RISS.

3. DISS Policy

It is the responsibility of RISS to provide international students with a quality education, which will further enable them to transfer to other international schools or transition to institutions of higher education.

As a member of the Dutch International Secondary Schools Foundation (DISS), RISS adheres to the DISS guidelines concerning eligibility for enrolment. RISS provides international education to international students between the ages of 11 and 18, provided that they fulfil the DISS criteria. According to DISS guidelines students must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Student is a foreign national who will reside in the Netherlands for the period of time their parent(s)/ guardian(s) is employed in the Netherlands;
- Student is a Dutch national who has received a minimum of two years of international education while their parent(s)/guardian(s) has been employed overseas;
- Student is a Dutch national who is planning to receive international education overseas within two years for a minimum of two years due to their parent(s)/guardian(s)'s employment outside of the Netherlands. The employer must provide documentation of the overseas employment.

4. Admissions

4.1 General Information

RISS utilizes a rolling-application process; applications for admission are accepted throughout the year. All applications must be made online via <https://riss.openapply.com>. **Applications will only be reviewed upon completion** and no official decision on an application is given until all the relevant documents have been received and, if applicable, an compulsory interview.

In the event that certain application fields cannot yet be filled in (i.e. no current Dutch residence) those fields may be left blank, upon informing the Admissions Department. This does not apply in regards to the Required Application Materials.

No applications will be considered more than two years prior to the entry date.

Families seeking admission are advised to apply as early as possible as classes have set limits for the number of students they can take. All are encouraged to visit the school's website to learn more about the programmes offered and complete the online application.

November 1 of each academic year is the last possible entry date for entry into the two-year IB program.

Students seeking entry into the IB program after this date will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Head of Section and/or IB Coordinator. A Preparatory year is allowed only to students whose level of English Language does not allow them to access the IB curriculum, therefore, requiring time to master the language of instruction (English) to perform at their best.

All prospective RISS students must have a legal guardian who resides in the Netherlands. Any applicants who will turn 18 before they start school must provide proof of visa before a place can be offered. Parents of existing students are responsible for arranging visas as soon as the student turns 18. These documents are needed for curriculum-related trips, hence are a requirement.

All RISS students, including those over the age of 18, **must reside with their legal guardian** as it is a pastoral concern since 18 year olds living on their own is not conducive to the rigours of the academic programmes.

Intake from the Blijberg International Department will be based on the recommendations of the Head of De Blijberg responsible for the International Department.

4.2 Application Procedure

All prospective students must meet the DISS admission criteria as stated above. No special requests or exemptions will be made.

All applications must be online via <https://riss.openapply.com> and completed by the prospective student's parent/guardian.

Applications will only be reviewed upon completion of the online application once all required documents have been submitted. All application files are confidential and will only be made available to the Admissions Department and Senior Leadership Team.

4.3 Required Application Materials

All of the required materials must be submitted online via upload to the prospective student's individual application at <https://riss.openapply.com>. These are:

- **A completed application form.** All fields must be completed with full disclosure of any information pertinent to the student's academic success.

Any information regarding a student's Special Educational Needs must be disclosed on the application form. Failure to disclose concerns or problems that were already evident before this application was made, may be grounds to

refuse admission and withdraw your child's place at RISS. All information will be confidential but will be taken into consideration during the admissions procedure by the relevant Head of Section.

- **A passport scan of the prospective student** (if applicable, the necessary visa); however this is not necessary if the BSN is known.
- **A passport scan of both parents/guardians**; however this is not necessary if the BSN is known.
- **Two full years of school transcripts or reports.** These should cover two complete years (the most recently completed academic year and the previous one) as well as the year in progress, if applicable. All transcripts must bear a visible official school stamp.

School transcripts must be submitted **in English**. An official translation must be provided if the originals are written in another language;

- **Acknowledgement of the School Fees Booklet.** Confirmation that the parent/guardian has read and agrees to the information provided in the School Fees Booklet;
- **The School Fees Declaration Form.** Completed and signed by the prospective student's parent/ guardian.
- **Digital Data Protection Form.** Acknowledgement of the school's Data Protection Policy completed and signed by the prospective student's parent/ guardian.
- **The Student Profile Form.** Completed and signed by a teacher/ representative of the school who knows the applicant well in a social/pastoral capacity and has reliable experience of the applicant's academic performance;
- **The Principal Recommendation Form.** Completed and signed by the prospective student's current principal/ head of school.

For students wishing to enter IGCSE:

- **A completed IGCSE subject form.** Available online via OpenApply.

For students wishing to enter IBDP:

- **A completed IB subject form.** Available online via OpenApply.

RISS does not offer all available IB subject choices.

Note: Subject forms are not binding. Decisions regarding subjects available to the student, as well as the level will be discussed and advised by the Admissions Team. The student's preferred subject choices will be taken into consideration.

IGCSE and IB packages will be discussed with the Head of Sections who must sign the Subject Forms.

In cases where it is impossible to obtain a given application document, the Admissions Team will make a collective decision as to whether or not they have sufficient information in the documents presently available to make an informed decision on the candidate's admission. Information from other sources may be requested in such instances (i.e. work samples, obligatory interview).

RISS staff members wishing to enrol their children at the school must follow the usual application procedure. Further information, please discuss with Admissions.

4.4 Admissions Procedure

Upon completion, the application will be reviewed by the Admissions Department and subsequently forwarded to the appropriate Senior Leadership Team member for review.

Although through the rolling-application process applications for admission are accepted throughout the year, high numbers of applications may lead to backlog. At busier times, it may take up to two weeks for a completed application to be submitted for review.

For Foundation Years (Grade 6-8):

The **Admissions Department** upon receipt of the completed application:

- Contacts the student with the possibility of an **interview** (in person or via Skype) to determine whether the student is compatible based on:
 - Their embodiment of the ethos of RISS
 - Whether they fit school vision and mission
 - Comprehension of core values
 - If the student demonstrates a true reflection of character assessment as provided by the Principal Recommendation Form and Student Profile Form
- Assesses the student and provides a recommendation for grade placement. This is based on:
 - Previous school transcripts or grade reports
 - The Principal Recommendation Form and Student Profile Form
 - Internal Student Assessment Tests for English and Math (if applicable)
- Shares the application folder with the appropriate Head of Section

The **Head of Section** will then:

- Review the application folder containing student information, grade reports, confidential forms, and internal testing results
- Review the recommendation for grade placement made by the Admissions Department

At this point the Head of Section approves or denies the application

Approval:

- The Head of Section will select a class group, tutor, student buddy, and house
- The Head of Section returns the application folder to Admissions Department

The **Admissions Department** will:

- Issue an acceptance letter
- Passed the application folder to the Administration Office for input and distribution to Central Administration at Wolfert

Denial:

- The Head of Section will provide the outcome and return the folder to the Admissions Department.

The **Admissions Department:**

- Issues denial letter. The resolutions are based on fully completed applications, fulfilling the requirements to attend a DISS school, students' recommendations, parental/students' interviews (Online or face to face) and in consultation with members of the Leadership Team and Admission Officer. We want students to enjoy their time in our school and we need to ensure that this is the right place for them. All information provided to us from other schools and their staff is managed in the strictest confidence and in line with privacy laws.

For Middle Years (IGCSE) & Senior Years (IBDP):

The **Admissions Department** upon receipt of the completed application:

- Contacts the student with the possibility of an **interview** (in person or via Skype) to determine whether the student is compatible based on:
 - o Their embodiment of the ethos of RISS
 - Whether they fit school vision and mission
 - Comprehension of core values

- o If the student demonstrates a true reflection of character assessment as provided by the Principal Recommendation Form and Student Profile Form
- Assesses the student and provides a recommendation for grade placement. This is based on:
 - Previous school transcripts or grade reports
 - The Principal Recommendation Form and Student Profile Form
 - Internal Student Assessment Tests for English and Math (if applicable)
- Shares the application folder with the appropriate Head of Section

The **Head of Section** will then:

- Review the application folder containing student information, grade reports, confidential forms, package selection and internal testing results
- Review the recommendation for grade placement made by the Admissions Department

At this point the Head of Section approves or denies the application

Approval:

- The Head of Section will review the package choices
- The Head of Section will select a class group, tutor, student buddy, and house
- The Head of Section returns the application folder to Admissions Department

The **Admissions Department** will:

- Issue an acceptance letter
- Passed the application folder to the Administration Office for input and distribution to Central Administration at Wolfert

Denial:

- The Head of Section will provide the outcome and return the folder to Admissions Department.

The **Admissions Department:**

- Issues denial letter. The resolutions are based on fully completed applications, fulfilling the requirements to attend a DISS school, students' recommendations, parental/students' interviews (Online or face to face) and in consultation with members of the Leadership Team and Admission Officer. We want students to enjoy their time in our school and we need to ensure that this is the right place for them. All information provided to us from other schools and their staff is managed in the strictest confidence and in line with privacy laws.

4.5 Personal Interviews

While it is not always possible for overseas families to arrange a visit of the school, it is always preferable to do so. The school reserves the right to request to meet in person any applicant in cases where this is considered necessary.

A **compulsory interview** is part of the admissions process in order to discuss a candidate's application in more depth in order for a decision to be made. Parents/Guardians and student jointly attend initial interview(s). If the student is unable to visit the school or attend an interview in person, arrangements can be made to conduct the interview via Skype.

4.6 Criteria for Admission

Each candidate's application materials are carefully studied in order to assess suitability for admission. Prospective families must:

- Meet the age requirements of the school (11-18)
- Be motivated and determined;
- Have an average to excellent academic performance;
- Possess an overall positive record of conduct;
- Show respect to others;
- Be internationally-minded;
- Be willing to integrate into and actively become part of the international community at RISS;
- Be able to benefit from the RISS curriculum;
- Possess qualities that would enrich the RISS community and be a positive addition to it;
- Commit to the RISS mission and vision and hold the core values at heart;
- Have parents/guardians committed to the RISS mission and vision and philosophy
- Have an adequate understanding of English at the level required to follow non-language academic courses; (Language requirements differ depending on the grade and program. This is evaluated during the Admissions Procedure.)
- The parents/guardians are able to meet the financial requirements of the school.

The school will also take into account:

- The views of the parents/ guardians;

- The ability of RISS to provide the student with special educational needs (if applicable);

Before admission, it must be reasonably certain, as determined by the Admissions Team, that RISS will be able to educate and facilitate the development of the student to achieve their greatest potential in line with academic and social standards. The student must have an academic approach and skill-set that will allow the student to succeed. The prospective student must be able to follow the curriculum of the determined program at an age-appropriate level.

4.7 Internal Student Assessment Testing

If applicable, students may be required to take placement tests for certain subjects to assess their current level in that particular subject. Internal assessment tests are most often conducted to determine the student's level for English and Mathematics.

Internal Student Assessment Testing is only conducted at the school and the student must be present, on-campus, in order to take the tests.

Course-level and grade placement are both dependant on the results of internal assessment tests.

4.8 Grade Placement

The Admissions Department and appropriate Senior Leadership Team member will assess grade placement for each student. Grade placement is not strictly based on the age of the student, but rather on their academic ability and maturity. When considering placement of a student, the stage, not the age of the student is the determining factor. Factors to be considered during grade placement include:

- The child's successful completion of the equivalent grade elsewhere;
- A transcript or report cards from the previous year demonstrating exceptional academic performance and social skills.
- Comments received on the Student Profile and Principal Recommendation Forms

Initial grade placement is tentative, and the school may advise a change of grade after the students' abilities have been thoroughly observed. Any change of grade would normally take place within the first two months after the student's entry into the school. The same applies to course-levels within programs.

4.9 International Baccalaureate Requirements

RISS focuses on preparing students for the IBDP and guiding them through the programme to provide them with the best possible opportunities for their futures, enabling multiple opportunities for transition to institutions of higher education.

Through IBDP, RISS is able to develop students who:

- Have excellent breadth and depth of knowledge
- Flourish physically, intellectually, emotionally and ethically
- Are competent in two languages.
- Excel in the offer of academic subjects.

The curriculum is made up of the DP core and six subject groups. Different courses are available within each subject group.

A limited number of IBDP Subjects are available at RISS. RISS offers fixed-option subject packages. There is no opportunity to change subject areas within the predetermined fixed packages. For more information refer to the IBDP subject offer in our website.]

IB transfer students may be required to redesign their IB package to match RISS offer.

Students who choose another Group 1 language (with the exception of English or Dutch) will have to pay for the tuition charges of the tutor, unless it is their own language SL self-taught. A tutor may only be hired for HL languages.

Students who lack the level of English proficiency required to follow the IBDP may be placed in IB-prep, at the discretion of the IB Coordinator or Head of Section. IB-prep is a preparatory academic year allowing the student to improve their level of English proficiency while following the six subjects they have selected for the IBDP, at standard level, with the omission of Theory of Knowledge and Community, Activity and Service requirements.

5. English Proficiency

All non-native English-speaking students applying for Grades 6-12 will be assessed for their English proficiency. Depending on the assessment results, a student may be required to enrol in one or more of the School's EAL courses and/or placed in a different grade than the one for which they applied. **Further information regarding the School Language Policy and EAL Policy can be found in "Policies and Documents" section of the RISS website.**

6. Post-review Procedure

6.1 Acceptance

If an applicant is accepted, a formal email of acceptance will be issued.

Upon acceptance, each student is required to complete a *Student Introduction Letter* in their own handwriting, including what they like the most about the RISS, their hobbies, favorite subjects, how many languages they can speak, etc.

The student Introduction Letter will be added to a Student Introduction Form by the admissions Department, to be sent to all relevant staff members.

6.2 Denial

If an applicant is denied a place, a formal letter or email is sent to confirm this. Information will be provided.

6.3 Limited capacity

Due to facility capacity limits at RISS, if an applicant is admissible but no space is available in the appropriate class, his/her information will be held on file until the appropriate placement is available, at which time the student will be contacted.

7. IGCSE & IBDP Transfer Policy

Students may not enter into the second year of either IGCSE (Grade 10) or IBDP (Grade 12), without having successfully completed the first year of the relevant program elsewhere. The completed program and coursework must be in compliance with the standards for advancement required for RISS students, as stated in the Student and Parent Handbook, to be evaluated by the relevant Head of Section. Both IGCSE and IBDP require a considerable amount of coursework to be completed throughout the course of the program, and as grade 10 and 12 are exam years, no transfer students new to either program will be admitted under any circumstances.

Transfer students for IGCSE or IB will be accepted on the condition that their packages comply with IGCSE subjects or IB Diploma Program subjects offered at the RISS and acceptance by the relevant Senior Leadership Team.

7.1 IGCSE Grade 9 Entry

Students may be admitted after the start of the academic year into IGCSE Grade 9. However if arriving after March, there is no guarantee that the student will fulfill the advancement requirements for that year. There is a high likelihood they may need to repeat the year due to the amount of coursework and content missed from various syllabi. This will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Head of Section.

8. Digital Data Protection Policy

The **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** came into force on 25 May 2018, and represents a major change to data protection. The privacy rights of individuals are protected more robustly, and there are three articles of the legislation that are of particular relevance:

- **The right to be informed** (articles 13 and 14). Clear context of how the data is being used. For example you could not use photos for social media if permission had only been given for printed brochures.
- **The right to access** (article 15). Individuals have the right to access their personal data (photos) on request, and receive confirmation regarding how these are being used.
- **The right to erasure** (article 17). Individuals have the right to request photos be removed from websites, social media or future versions of printed materials.

Parents must be made aware of these regulations of protection and either authorize or deny consent via the **Digital Data Protection Form**. Administration will then inform all relevant parties of the parent's decision. It is imperative that this information is shared with the marketing and communications department.

RISS regularly uses photographs and video recordings of students for school promotions on the RISS website, on RISS social media and in various publications and brochures. Parents must be aware of the regulations of protection and either authorize or deny consent via this form. Administration will inform all relevant parties of the parent's decision.

9. Re-enrolment

To secure student placement for the next academic year, all students must be re-enrolled. At the end of Term 2, the Administration Office will issue a re-enrolment packet along with the Term 2 Report. The re-enrolment packet will include the School Fee Form and The Digital Data Protection Form for the next academic year. The deadline for re-enrolment and return of the re-enrolment packet is April 22, 2019.

10. Fees

Information regarding the School Fees can be found in the annual School Fees Booklet, please check website.

11. Starting Procedures

11.1 General

Prior to the student starting at RISS, all new student files are handed over to the relevant administrative assistant(s).

All relevant staff members are provided with the Student Introduction Form including general information regarding the student as well as the personal Student Introduction Letter, in which the student is introduced, in their own words, to the staff.

The admissions department may be contacted for specific information regarding a new student at any mutually convenient time.

The files of any new students with specific needs are discussed with the Learning Diversity Unit on an individual basis, as part of the admissions process.

11.2 Students Beginning at the Start of the Academic Year

There will be a special orientation day for all new Secondary School students (and parents) just prior to the first day of full classes. The Principal and Heads of Section will introduce the students to the school, its rules and regulations, and the various buildings, and will orient the students to life at RISS in order to prepare them for a smooth transition into their new school.

11.3 Students Arriving during the Course of the Year

The relevant Head of Year or tutor will provide orientation to new students who arrive during the year. At this time the Head of Section will assign a buddy to the new student.

12. Conduct

The social conduct of the student is extremely influential in admission as well as in the security of a student's enrolment at RISS. The school operates a Zero-tolerance environment and any breach of conduct, as defined by the Student and Parent Handbook as well as the RISS Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, will be dealt accordingly. RISS requires parents and students to read and take note of all school policies including:

- Drugs Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

13. Exit Interview

Upon the completion of a program at RISS and/or the transfer of a student to another school or an institution of higher education, a request will be sent to the family to complete an online Exit Interview Survey.

The importance of the Exit Interview Survey is not only an indication of departing families' reflection of the school, but also provides pertinent information required by Dutch educational authorities.

A member of the Administration Team will contact the Financial Office and authorize the refund of the security deposit upon the return of the textbooks and completion of the Exit Interview Survey. Information gathered through Exit Interview Surveys will be compiled and shared with the Leadership Team.