ROTTERDAM
INTERNATIONAL
SECONDARY
SCHOOL

2024/2025

ADMISSION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

ROTTERDAM INTERNATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL

RISS

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

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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, so that they may demonstrate these values during their time at RISS and on into their futures.

Admissions Department

It is the aim of the Admissions Department to recruit, inform, and admit eligible new students to RISS in a professional manner, whilst maintaining the integrity of the school and supporting the students, and their families.

We aim to ensure that prospective families understand the RISS vision, mission, and values and school offer. We strive to provide an adequate understanding of the academic programmes offered at RISS and the requirements, responsibilities and commitment required of each student.

RISS is a Dutch International Secondary School funded by both the government and parental contributions. The school will adhere to all expectations and regulations for admission protocols for Dutch International Schools (IGVO).

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: this in accordance with International Child Protection and Safeguarding expectations and the Dutch law.

The Admissions Department, with the Leadership Team, determines admission and continued enrollment at Rotterdam International Secondary School.

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DISS Policy

It is the responsibility of RISS to provide international students with a quality education, which will 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. Students must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Student is a foreign national who will reside in the Netherlands for a provisional period of time while their parent(s)/ guardian(s) are employed in the Netherlands.

- Student is a Dutch national who has received a minimum of two years of international education while their parent(s) or guardian(s) have 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) or guardian(s)'s employment outside of the Netherlands. The employer must provide official and formal documentation of the potential overseas employment.

Admissions

General Information

RISS utilises a rolling application process: applications for admission are accepted throughout the year. Prospective applicants are encouraged to visit the school's website to learn more about the programmes offered and complete the online application. 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 the relevant documents and interview process have been completed. (NB: Students transferring from Harbour International Primary School have a separate process. Intake from the Harbour International will be based on the recommendations of the Harbour International Team).

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 to the Required Application Materials.

No applications can be considered more than two years prior to the proposed entry date. Families seeking admission are advised to apply as early as possible as each grade has a limit to the number of students which can be accommodated.

November 1 of each academic year is the last possible entry date for entry into the two-year IB programme (DP or CP). Students seeking entry into an IB programme after this date will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Head of Section and/or IB Coordinators. For the IB DP or CP programme, a preparatory year is allowed only to students whose level of English Language does not yet 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 and, hence, are a requirement. All RISS students, including those over the age of 18, must reside with their legal guardian. This is a pastoral concern since 18-year-olds living on their own is not conducive to success considering the rigours of the academic programmes.

Criteria for Admission

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

- Meet the age requirements of the school (11-18).
- Meet the DISS IGVO requirements.
- Be motivated and determined.
- Be able to cope with the academic rigours of our programmes.
- 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, 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 programme. This is evaluated during the Admissions Process.)
- The parents/guardians can meet the financial requirements of the school.

Before admission, it must be reasonably certain that RISS will be able to offer education 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 programme at an age-appropriate level.

The school will also consider:
- The views of the parents/ guardians
- The ability of RISS to provide the student with special educational needs (if applicable).

Application Procedure

All prospective students must meet the DISS admission criteria as stated above.

All applications must be done online via https://riss.openapply.com and completed by the prospective student's parent or legal 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, Leadership Team and, if applicable, Head of Learning Diversity and/or Head of Counselling.

Required Application Materials

All the required materials must be submitted online via upload to the prospective student's individual application at https://riss.openapply.com. The documents are:
- A completed application form. All fields must be completed with full disclosure of any information pertinent to the student's academic success.
- Please note: in order for RISS to best support each student, any information regarding a student's Learning Diversity (Special Educational Needs and/or Abilities) must be disclosed on the application form. If existing or known concerns or needs are not disclosed during the application process, this may be grounds to

reconsider a student's place at RISS.

- 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. A 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 must be completed and signed by the prospective student's parent/guardian.
  Digital Data Protection Form must be completed and signed by the prospective student's parent/guardian.
- The Student Profile Form must be 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 School Recommendation Form must be completed and signed by a leadership representative of the prospective student's current school.

Following admission:

- For students in the Foundation and Middle Years, a Language Profile and Foreign Language Selection Form will be shared for completion.
- For students wishing to enter IGCSE, IBDP or IBCP, a link to Edval will be shared with the family, to gather subject choice information.
- Each student is required to complete an online Admitted survey, which asks them about what they like the most about the RISS, their hobbies, favourite subjects, how many languages they can speak, etc.

PLEASE NOTE:

- RISS does not offer all available IB subject choices.
- RISS does not offer all available IGCSE subject choices.
- 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 Department. The student's preferred subject choices will be taken into consideration.
- RISS maintains a maximum number of students per class, and if a class is full (on a first come first placed basis) the student may have to

choose another subject in lieu.

- In cases where it is impossible to obtain a given application document, the Admissions Department will make a collective decision as to whether they have sufficient information from 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. For further information, please discuss with the Admissions Department.

Admissions Procedure

Upon completion, the application will be reviewed by the Admissions Department and subsequently forwarded to the appropriate Leadership Team member in preparation for an admissions interview.

The Admissions Department, upon receipt of the completed application:

- Assesses the student and provides a recommendation for grade placement. This is based on:
  - Previous school transcripts or grade reports
  - The Student Recommendation Form and Student Profile Form
  - Internal Student Assessment Tests for English and Maths (if applicable)
- Contacts the family with the possibility of an interview (in person or via a virtual meeting).

Personal Interviews

While it is not always possible for overseas families to arrange a visit to 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 to discuss a candidate's application in more depth for a decision to be made. Parents/Guardians and student(s) jointly attend the 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 a virtual meeting.

At this point, after the interview and review of the application documents, the Head of Section approves or denies the application. The Admissions Department then communicates the decision to the family.

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 a waiting list until the appropriate placement is available, at which time the family will be contacted.

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 in English and Mathematics.

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

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

Grade Placement

The Admissions Department and appropriate Leadership Team members will assess grade placement for each student. Grade placement is not strictly based on the age of the student, but also 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 card from the previous year demonstrating exceptional academic performance and social skills.
- Comments received on the Student Profile and Student 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.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Requirements

Addendum Entry Requirements for students applying for RISS admission from Dutch Secondary schools in the IBDP and IBCP.

The Dutch authorities have created a wider option for local Dutch students who wish to continue their senior years within an international context by allowing them to apply to Dutch international schools.

The conditions are as follows:

1. The school (RISS) is allowed to admit a student with Dutch nationality to the IBCP if the student has successfully passed the third year of HAVO and can prove that their level of English is adequate to follow education in the medium of English.
2. The school (RISS) is allowed to admit a student with Dutch nationality to the IBDP if the student has successfully passed the fourth year of VWO and can prove that their level of English is adequate to follow education in the medium of English.
3. The school (RISS) can make the final decision on admission.

RISS Priorities and Further Conditions for Admission to the Senior Years

In considering admission for Dutch students to the IBDP or IBCP, RISS will exercise the following non-negotiable conditions:

1. Priority will always be given to international students leaving or coming from abroad as stipulated in this document and as per the expectations of service as a Dutch International School.
2. Local students must adhere to all applicable conditions, processes, and regulations as per any normal international application. Where discrepancies occur, it will be up to the school leadership to clarify for further action.
3. RISS Handbook expectations and RISS key policies and regulations are applicable to any Dutch student wishing to join our school.
4. The Interview process will be a compulsory stage for applications to establish if the student will be able to access the Senior Year curricula and fulfil our pastoral programme, general behaviour expectations and obligations.
5. Any Dutch local student wishing to apply to our school will be expected to contribute to the life of the school and demonstrate commitment to our guiding statements.
6. If the student opting for IBDP or IBCP has solely the Dutch Nationality, Dutch A is a compulsory subject
7. The decision to reject or accept a student will be delivered as per the same conditions stipulated in this document. Please note item 3 in the previous section.

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IBDP - International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Requirements

RISS offers the well-known academically rigorous and respected IBDP as one of the options in the Senior Years.

Through IBDP, RISS can develop students who:

- Have excellent breadth and depth of knowledge.
- Flourish physically, intellectually, emotionally, and ethically.
- Are competent in the language of instruction, i.e. English.
- Are competent (reading, writing, speaking academic analyses of literary texts) in their Heritage Language.
- 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 on our website.

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

The IBDP programme consists of the following elements:

- six IBDP subjects - three at SL and three at HL level
- IB DP Core Components (TOK, CAS, Extended Essay)

Students who choose another Group 1 language (except for English or Dutch) will have to pay for the tuition charges of the tutor for the SSST programme.

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.

IBCP - International Baccalaureate Career-Related Programme Requirements

RISS also offers the IBCP programme. The IBCP provides students with an excellent foundation to support their further studies as well as ensure their preparedness for success in the workforce.

Through IBCP, RISS students can:

- Develop a range of broad work-related competencies and deepen their understanding in specific areas of knowledge through their Diploma Programme courses.
- Develop flexible strategies for knowledge acquisition and enhancement in varied contexts.
- Prepare for effective participation in the changing world of work.
- Foster attitudes and habits of mind that allow them to become lifelong learners willing to consider new perspectives.
- Become involved in learning that develops their capacity and will to make a positive difference.

The IBCP programme consists of the following elements:

- three IBDP Subjects
- IBCP Core Components (Reflective Task, Service Learning, Personal & Professional Skills, Language Development)
- Career-Related Study: BTEC Business International Level 3 Diploma Award

Please note that a student cannot be registered as both a Career-related Programme candidate and a Diploma Programme candidate.

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 fulfil 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.

IGCSE Grade 10 & IB Grade 12 Transfer Policy

Students may not enter the second year of either IGCSE (Grade 10) or IB programmes (Grade 12), without having successfully completed the first year of the relevant programme elsewhere. The completed programme and coursework must be in compliance with the standards for advancement required for RISS students, as stated in the RISS Handbook, to be evaluated by the relevant Head of Section.

Both IGCSE and IB CP/DP require a considerable amount of coursework to be completed throughout the course of the programme, and as grades 10 and 12 are final exam years, no transfer students new to either programme will be admitted.
Transfer students for IGCSE or IB will be accepted on the condition that their packages comply with IGCSE subjects or IB Diploma Programme/Career-Related Programme subjects offered at the RISS and acceptance by the relevant Leadership Team Member.

English Proficiency

Once admitted, non-native English-speaking students may be assessed for their English proficiency. Depending on the assessment results, a student may be required to enrol in ESL and/or EAL, and/or placed in a different grade than the one for which they applied. Further information regarding the School Language Policy can be found in the "Key Documents" section of the RISS website.

Re-enrolment

To secure student placement for the next academic year, all students must be re-enrolled. This is a process completed at the end of April, via Open Apply. Families must confirm 'yes/no/undecided' and complete a School Fee Declaration Form for the next academic year. The deadline for re-enrolment is three weeks after the start of the process.

Fees

Information regarding the School Fees can be found in the annual School Fees Booklet, please check the "Key Documents" section on our website. Please note: RISS does not charge an admissions fee until the student has been accepted and started attending school.

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 to prepare them for a smooth transition into their new school.

Students Arriving during the Year

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

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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 has high expectations and a zero-tolerance approach to certain behaviours. These are outlined in the RISS Handbook, and policies, procedures and guidelines.

RISS requires parents and students to read and take note of all school policies, which can be found in the Key Documents section of our webpage:

- Academic Integrity Policy
- Acceptable Use of Technology Policy
- Anti- Bullying Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Attendance Regulations
- Data Protection Policy
- Drugs Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Homework Guidelines
- Learning Diversity Policy
- Language Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- RISS Student Charter
- Read the weekly school bulletins.

Leaving Procedures

The family must inform RISS if they wish to de-register their child. In this case, the Admissions Department will contact the family to start the leaving procedure. The following documentation is essential:

- proof of enrolment in a new school or deregistration from the town hall
- deposit refund form
- exit survey.

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 authorise or deny consent via the Digital Data Protection Form. The 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 authorise or deny consent via this form. The administration will inform all relevant parties of the parent's decision.