

## **SELECTION POLICY**

### **Nominations for Admission to United World Colleges**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

UWC Trinidad & Tobago (UWC TT) is the National Committee that represents the United World College (UWC) education movement in Trinidad and Tobago and is responsible for the selection and nomination of students to its Colleges. Students are selected based on their character, compassion and potential and our generous supporters help us provide scholarships for those who need them.

UWCTT policy and procedures for selecting nominees for admissions to UWC and the Movement are designed to:

- Ensure that the best local applicants are available and prepared for the unique UWC experience
- Provide a process that is fair, equitable, transparent and is aligned with UWC goals
- identify eligible youth who are able to represent our country in a dignified and integral way and are capable of not only tolerating difference and diversity, but also appreciating its importance and richness.

#### **2. CRITERIA**

##### **Minimum Eligibility Criteria:**

Individuals meeting the following criteria are eligible to apply:

- citizens or permanent residents of Trinidad and Tobago for no less than 3 years,
- currently studying for CSEC (or equivalent) or in at least your 5th year of high school,
- students aged between 15 and 17 years old at the time of applying and are at least 16 years old by school entry.

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#### Exceptions:

- a) Applications from students who meet the above-mentioned age criteria, but who are only in their 4th year of high school, as well as younger students who are in at least their 5th year of high school may be considered at the discretion of the Selection Officer if their academic performance and school recommendations suggest that they will be able to meet the challenges of the IB curriculum. Such applicants will be advised that the Selection Committee's ability to nominate them for a place will be dependent on whether the schools offering places are willing to accept students who would have spent less than 5 years in high school at the time of entry.
- b) Applications from older students with documented evidence of delayed / disrupted schooling due to circumstances beyond their control (e.g. significant learning disabilities, serious medical problems, wars, natural disasters) may be considered at the discretion of the Selection Officer.

These applicants will be advised that the Selection Committee's ability to nominate them for a place will be dependent on whether the schools offering places to the National Committee are able to accept students who are older / younger than normal.

The Selection Committee may request further assurances from candidates' schools and or parents/guardians/references regarding academic capability and the emotional maturity of students who are younger than normal

#### Core Criteria

An applicant who strongly demonstrates the following core criteria is more likely to succeed. This would mean that you consistently:

- Demonstrate **intellectual curiosity**, a learner mindset towards the world, both inside and outside the classroom. This may include at least one academic area that you are passionate about and would like to explore further. You are able to recognise global and local issues and articulate and analyse them critically.

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- Show **active commitment to your own values and those of UWC** with alignment to UWC's values and to willingness to follow UWC's Code of Conduct; the humility and ability to listen to, and value, other people's opinion and appreciation for differing points of view; promotion of UWC's values and will act as a global citizen of the world.
- Display **social competence, respectful interaction, understanding and appreciation** of differing viewpoints and perspectives, and ability to work within a team to find solutions to problems; ability to express yourself appropriately in different situations and to different people.
- Show **resilience, self-awareness and independence** and is able to look after yourself physically and emotionally during challenging situations, for example in a boarding school environment. You have developed good coping strategies, and are not easily overwhelmed. You also know when to ask for help for yourself, and for others.
- Show **personal responsibility and integrity** by expressing and examining your own values, and are ready to contrast and reflect on them in comparison to the values of others. The way one behaves within their family and community reflects their values and beliefs. You can communicate your own needs and are mindful of those of others, demonstrating a sense of communal responsibility
- Exemplify **academic robustness** and you have the potential to meet the rigorous demands of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme or the International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme which are significantly challenging.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITY OF UWC-TT

#### The Selection Committee

The Committee is responsible for identifying the individuals to be nominated for most deserving UWC places based on the criteria set forth. The Selection Committee is convened and chaired by the Selection Officer.

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**The Selection Officer** is appointed by the CEO and is responsible for the areas identified below including but not limited to:

- a) Convening and chairing the Selection Committee.
- b) Preliminary screening of applicants to identify those who meet the minimum eligibility criteria.
- c) Communicating with applicants (and their parents/guardians) throughout the application and selection procedures.
- d) Organising Selection Day (i.e. select date, identify and invite selection committee members, invite shortlisted applicants, prepare materials).

**The Selection Committee** shall comprise of the Selection Officer and normally no less than 4 other individuals all of whom endorse and support the values and mission of the UWC. The committee shall include:

- a) at least three UWC committee members and / or alumni.
- b) at least one (and preferably two) individuals who are not members of the UWC-TT National Committee and who are prominent and respected members of society with experience in education / working with young people.

In comprising the Selection Committee, the Selection Officer should seek to ensure diversity and balanced representation in terms of gender, race, religion and age.

Relatives of applicants will be excluded from membership of the Selection Committee. For the purpose of these policies, a person shall be deemed to be related to the applicant as a parent, child, legal ward, legal guardian, grandparent, grandchild, step-parent, step-child, sibling, spouse, fiancé, fiancée, or cohabitee, or any offspring of the above.

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#### Declaration of interests:

Committee members must declare potential conflicts of interest regarding their relationships with applicants. The Committee recognizes that as Trinidad and Tobago is a small country it is sometimes difficult to convene committees where members have no other direct or indirect relationships with applicants. The nature of declared relationships will therefore be considered by the Chair, who may seek advice from other committee members, in deciding whether the member should be excluded from all or part of the Selection Day activities.

**UWC-TT National Committee does not discriminate positively or negatively against selecting relatives of UWC students or alumni.**

#### 4. PROCEDURES

##### A. Selection Procedure

The UWC-TT selection procedure shall adhere to the criteria for **selection of candidates set forth by UWC International and is merit based.**

The financial situation of a student's family is only considered once the potential nominees have been selected and **is needs based.**

##### *Before Selection Day*

1. The Selection Officer, in consultation with the CEO, decides on the date for the selection day(s) and deadlines for submission of applications.
2. If necessary, the Selection Officer invites National Committee members to submit names of potential selection committee members (with justifications for their inclusion).
3. The Selection Officer invites individuals to serve on the committee and provides them with relevant information on UWC policies and procedures.
4. The Selection Officer screens applications, shortlists those who will be invited to Selection Day and communicates results of shortlisting to the applicants and their parents/guardians, notifying those who have been shortlisted of the date for selection day.

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All applicants who meet the minimum eligibility criteria will usually be invited to selection day, **except** when the number is too high. In these circumstances the Selection Officer, in consultation with at least two other members of the selection committee, will rank applicants based on the information on their application forms and decide on a cut-off.

5. The Selection Officer will convene a pre-selection day meeting at which members of the selection committee will:
  - be familiarized with the applications, selection day schedule, selection criteria and procedures;
  - agree on the points awarded for academic achievement (based on student transcripts / report cards / stated grades);
  - declare any conflicts of interest.
6. Applicants with missing recommendations or documentation to support their stated grades (i.e. school transcripts / official report cards) will be advised to bring their documents on Selection Day (in a sealed stamped envelope in the case of transcripts/ recommendations).

#### ***On Selection Day***

1. Applicants will normally participate in group activities, essay writing and at least one round of individual interviews by a panel (normally 3 – 5 interviewers)
2. Applicant's performance will be rated by individual committee members using the UWC-TT selection rubric which gives equal weighting to academic achievement/potential and the UWC criteria.
3. Essays will be marked blind (ideally by at least two individuals).

#### ***Ranking of applicants is based on selection day activities, information on application forms and school transcripts.***

The Selection Committee will meet after the applicants have completed their Selection Day activities.

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1. Marks awarded to each applicant by the individual assessors will be compared and discussed, and a final mark (for each of the activities) will be agreed by consensus.
2. The final (consensus) marks for each activity will be tallied and applicants will be ranked according to their total marks.
3. Only the highest-ranking students whom the committee deems suitable UWC candidates will be nominated. The Committee is not obliged to nominate students for all of the UWC places available in a given year.
4. If a nominee cannot accept a nomination, the next highest ranked applicant (who has been deemed a suitable UWC candidate by the committee) may be nominated.
5. Where there are more suitable nominees than places available, the Selection Committee may identify candidates to submit through the UWC Clearing Procedure.
6. The Selection Officer will consider the Students College Preference Form where the applicant and the parents/guardians have indicated those Colleges that are preferred and the order of preference for these Colleges.
7. The Selection Officer will write to potential nominees informing them that the committee would like to nominate them and asking them to submit completed:

#### **Student Information Form**

for the purpose of financial assessment of the family with relevant supporting documentation. These will be handled confidentially and viewed by the Selection Officer or a nominee and CEO only. Information provided will be used at the discretion of the Selection Officer and CEO to determine the **financial need** of each candidate. In calculating the financial information provided by the potential nominees, the UWC Financial Assessment tool will be utilized, and the decision will be weighed based on the supporting documentation, the nature of the expenses and other information provided.

To maintain confidentiality only the relative financial need will be shared with other Committee Members.

Candidates who choose not to submit a financial assessment form will be assumed to be able to pay full fees.

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#### Health Information/General Medical Form

All information provided will be held in confidence as part of the candidate's health record and will be shared with the relevant UWC College staff members. The content may be shared with medical professionals or organisations to the extent necessary to provide appropriate medical assessments, care and treatment for the student.

#### B. Nomination Procedure

1. The UWC-TT nomination procedure will provide a match of the potential nominees with the college places on offer based on (in order of priority)
  - (i) selection day ranking,
  - (ii) financial need (taking into consideration the amount the family indicates that they are able to contribute),
  - (iii) college preference.
2. The suggested placements and justification will be presented to the Selection Committee members for majority approval.
3. Having identified potential nominees and matched them to college places, the Selection Officer will ask applicants and their parents/guardians to confirm whether they accept the nominations.
4. Colleges generally accept the nominated candidates on the recommendation of national committees. However, **Colleges reserve the right to make the final decision**
  - **on every candidate** and in some cases may decline to enrol a nominated candidate after having reviewed the relevant nomination documents
  - **about the level of financial assistance** that nominees will be offered.
5. The Selection Officer will then submit the nominations to the colleges as prescribed by UWC International.

**Dated: 2017 and amended November 2024**

**APPROVED BY: UWC TT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**