

## Senior Academy

### Programme

The Senior Academy supports students who have the potential to gain a place at Queen's University regardless of economic or social background. The two year programme offers young people from non-selecting schools sixth forms and further education colleges the chance to take part in a range of activities aimed at preparing them for university life, including academic skills workshops, lectures, seminars. In addition students will take part in two university residential experiences. Current undergraduate and post graduate students are closely involved in the programme, offering both general and academic support throughout. Students are also entitled to up thirty hours of one-to-one tuition.

Being part of this two year academy programme increases knowledge and understanding of what it's like to be a student at university supporting the transition to becoming a Queen's undergraduate.

In 2015/16 we have 50 places available and in order to be eligible to apply to the academy applicants must be:

- In full time education, currently studying a two year, level 3 qualification e.g. A' Levels or acceptable equivalent BTEC/OCR.
- Attending a Northern Ireland non-selecting School or College of Further Education.
- Have at least 5 A\*- C grades at GCSE (or equivalent e.g. GNVQ, BTEC) including English Language and Maths.\*
- From a family with little or no experience of Higher Education. For example **neither parent has attended university and obtained an undergraduate degree or equivalent in the UK or abroad**. If a parent is currently studying for their first degree or they graduated in the last five years, applications will still be considered. Applicants with brothers/sisters who have completed a higher education course or who are presently going through higher education are still eligible as are applicants who have family members outside of the immediate family (e.g. grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles).

\*students can be retaking one or both of these subjects and still be part of the programme

In addition applicants **must** also meet at least **two** of the following eligibility criteria:

- Be in receipt of Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)
- Have an annual household income of less than £19,203
- Currently living in care or are care experienced
- Have a registered disability or additional learning need (please see further information on application form)
- Is the main carer for a family member or dependent

### **Our Role: Supporting Students**

Queen's Senior Academy is aimed at supporting students who show the motivation and commitment to achieve their academic potential. We aim to provide the best environment for students to learn about university life, as well as developing the academic skills needed for undergraduate study. One of the major aspects of university life is independent study. Academy students will be given the opportunity to develop skills that will help them take responsibility for their own learning as well as manage time to meet deadlines. Having an individual tutor will further develop knowledge of their subject(s) by means of regular one-to-one tuition.

### **Our Expectations: Personal Commitment and Responsibility**

To ensure that you get all the benefit of being part of the Academy we do require a high level of commitment from students. There are a number of compulsory activities that students must attend, these are detailed below. Students are also entitled to a maximum of thirty hours A Level tuition at a time and venue that suits their own personal circumstances. Students can also take advantage of a subject mentor, a Queen's undergraduate who can provide first-hand knowledge and experience of what it's like to study at the university. Whereas the tutoring and mentoring are not a compulsory element of the programme it is strongly advised that this opportunity is utilised by each academy member as competition for university places is extremely high and making use of these resources helps with both exam preparation and performance.

### **Programme: Compulsory and Opt in**

In order to successfully complete the programme students must attend all elements of our compulsory programme. These activities will be held in April, June and August 2015 as well as a revision session preparing you for A-Level exams in 2016. It is important that all students ensure that they are available on the compulsory dates we have highlighted on the next page before applying. If a student is offered a place on the programme and later informs us of a family holiday, sporting event or extracurricular school/college activity which clashes with any of our compulsory dates, they won't be able to complete the programme

and their place will be forfeited. We will always do our best to support students and extenuating circumstances will of course be taken into account.

## **How to Apply:**

### **Applications for Senior Academy 2015**

Applications to the Senior Academy will open on **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015**. The application form will be available for download from our Senior Academy web page, an application pack has also been sent to each participating school and college and can be copied.

Completed application forms will need to be submitted by **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2015**. We will use the information you provide on this form in the selection process for a place on Queen's Senior Academy.

When shortlisting applications we will be looking at the following:

- That you are studying the necessary level 3 qualifications for your chosen subject.
- That you meet the GCSE entry requirements for your chosen subject, or showing evidence that you are doing this.
- Motivation to study at Queen's University.
- Suitable comments supporting your application from your school/college referee.

### **The Personal Statement**

The personal statement will allow you to tell us why you want to be part of the Queen's Senior Academy, what you are planning to achieve by being part of it and how you will contribute to it. This is your chance to tell us all about you.

The application form must be supported by a member of staff in your 6<sup>th</sup> form or college. This could be a head of year, subject teacher or another member of staff but they must be able to provide the following information to the application:

- Which of the eligibility criteria you meet.
- Comments on your academic suitability for the programme and if possible, your predicted grades.

Applicants will be contacted by the Senior Academy team to confirm their application has been received. We will shortlist all applications. Successful applicants will meet the team between 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> March in their school/college to discuss the programme in more detail.

The Senior Academy will meet altogether for induction on **17<sup>th</sup> April 2015**.

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## Compulsory programme

Activity	When	Duration	Description	Key points
Application deadline	13 <sup>th</sup> February 2015		Students return completed applications	Return application form by 13 <sup>th</sup> February 2015
Meetings with potential academy students	25 <sup>th</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup> 27 <sup>th</sup> March		Academy Co-ordinator meets with potential students to discuss programme and answer any queries.	Programme overview Demonstrating understanding of programme and commitment to it
Queen's Academy launch event	17 <sup>th</sup> April 2015	11.00 am – 15.00 pm	This is our launch event	Programme overview – recap Code of conduct Orientation
Residential 1	24 <sup>th</sup> – 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2015	2nights 3 days	2 night residential experience staying at Queen's Hall of Residence, the Elms.	Lectures Seminars Research skills Academic writing Referencing University Life
Residential 2	26 <sup>th</sup> – 28 <sup>th</sup> August 2015	2nights 3 days	2 night residential experience staying at Queen's Hall of Residence, the Elms.	Independent research UCAS application Student Finance NI Student Guidance and Support Get to meet your mentor
Preparation for Exam success	23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2016	10.00 – 15.00	Revision skills session	Time management Stress relief Eating and drinking for the brain