

LIPA SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Guidance notes on completing the Application Form for September entry

Introduction

Before completing the application form, please take some time to read through these notes, which are designed to help you provide all the information we need to begin to build a picture of you, your interests, abilities and ambitions. There are no 'trick' questions on the application form – each question is intended to give you the opportunity to tell us about yourself in your own words, and there are no right or wrong answers.

However, it might be useful to consider when completing your application form:

- **Don't rush your application form** - you have plenty of time before the 31st of January deadline to complete and return it to us.
- **Think about what to put in the application form** – talk to friends, parents and teachers, and think about why you want to study with us: what can you give us and what can we give you? Make notes whenever something occurs to you, so that you can include it later on.
- **What makes you different?** – Probably everyone applying has always wanted to act/dance/sing/create/design, so stating this won't necessarily make your application stand out. Think about what makes you different – your inspirations, your influences, your ambitions: these are just as important as your experience in helping us make our decisions.
- **Be honest** – with yourself and with us when completing the form. Don't be tempted to exaggerate any experience you have in the hope that it might strengthen your application – this could backfire in an interview or audition setting. As we are looking for potential, motivation, enthusiasm and raw talent among our potential students, you will not be penalised if you haven't had much practical opportunity in your discipline in the past. Equally, please don't submit an application for several courses in the hope of gaining a place on one unless you feel that you could perform well in an interview or audition setting.
- **Practice makes perfect** – When completing the application form, for example, it may help to make a photocopy so that you can practise completing it before starting on the real thing.
- **Don't get stressed** – applying for any Sixth Form College is a big step but staying calm and spending some time on your application before submitting will help a lot. The same advice goes for interviews and auditions – think of it all as useful life experience.

Completing the application form

Use the following notes below to help you complete each section of the form in full.

Applicant's personal details

Please ensure you complete this section fully and accurately, as we will need the correct details to be able to contact you in relation to your application. A telephone number and email address are vital, as we may need to call or email you information relating to auditions or interviews. **Please note that applicants for September entry must be currently in Year 11 and taking GCSE (or equivalent) exams in the summer.**

Parents(s)/Guardian(s) information – please provide the contact details for at least one parent or guardian living at the same address as you. This will be our main point of contact with regard to your progress with us, should your application be successful. **Please make sure that your parent/guardian knows that you are putting their details on the form.**

Additional information

All information will be held in the strictest confidence, so please answer the questions honestly, giving further details on a separate sheet where appropriate:

- **Local authority care** – applicants who have ever been in the care of a local authority will have priority over other applicants if our oversubscription criteria needs to be applied
- **Learning support needs** – if you have any support needs (however mild and regardless of whether or not you've had a formal diagnosis or statement), please give details here. This will help us to make appropriate arrangements to ensure that you are able to fully access the admissions process at all stages
- **Disability or health/medical condition** – if this applies to you, please let us know so that we can ensure that appropriate arrangements can be put in place to support your application at every stage of the process

Agreement

Please make sure that you complete this section which shows that the information given on your application form is accurate and that you consent to college staff acting on your behalf in case of an accident or emergency.

Educational and Reference information

Please complete your school's details in full, so that we can contact them with questions regarding your past or predicted exam results. Please make sure your named referee is from an educational setting. Character references can be uploaded to your application yourself, but the official online Lipa Sixth Form reference must be requested by us once you have submitted your application form.

Qualification/Awards already gained

Please give brief details of any qualifications or awards you already hold that might be relevant to the course you have applied for. These might be GCSEs or other exams taken early or related to interests and activities outside school. Achievements such as dance or music awards are appropriate, as are details of any participation in activities such as Duke of Edinburgh Awards (good for demonstrating teamwork and commitment), but your 50-metre swimming certificate probably is not.

Details of any previous practical or creative experience

Please give brief details here, as we are simply looking to assess your level of formal experience to date. You don't have to have taken exams or participated in competitions (if you have, please just summarise what you've done), but it's useful for us to know if you've attended Saturday singing classes for two years, worked backstage on a school play, played in a band in your parents' garage, been a bedroom DJ, filled sketchbook after sketchbook with designs, choreographed your own dance routines, or rehearsed your *Hamlet* in the bathroom mirror. However, do not panic if you haven't done anything like this – previous experience isn't a prerequisite for a successful application.

Course selection

Please select the course(s) to apply for and select the box next to it/them - requests to change courses cannot be made once an application is submitted. Please understand that each application will require the same amount of interview and audition/portfolio preparation, and that preparing for multiple assessments will be an added pressure.

Course-related questions

This section is your opportunity to show us why LIPA Sixth Form College and its courses are the right fit for you, and vice versa. When answering these questions, keep in mind the details of the course you are applying for and ensure the information you are giving is relevant. Be specific about your own interests, opinions and experience – do not try and second-guess what you think we want to read – and be honest about your strengths and weaknesses if relevant.

Each of the questions in this section is designed to find out about what and how you think, as well as things you may have done and how you view your discipline. We have identified six key attributes that we feel successful applicants need (or be willing to develop) to give themselves the best chance of success with us – bear them in mind when answering the questions:

- **Knowledge, ability and experience in your discipline** - we would like you to have some experience in your discipline, gained either through opportunities at school or in your spare time. Good examples of this may be through your involvement in school productions (either performing or backstage), through youth theatre, school choir or orchestra, or through developing your own interests in design or technology. Your course is likely to cover a range of creative and performing approaches within your chosen discipline, so you need to be willing to have a go at everything.
- **Commitment to your discipline** - we would like to see that you have begun to develop your interest for your discipline by doing more than just looking for creative and/or performing opportunities either at school or in your spare time. While distance or cost may have stopped you from gaining formal experience, signs that you read about the subject, make efforts to see other people active within the discipline you wish to study and can talk with enthusiasm about your subject will support your application.
- **Ability to work effectively with others** - we would like you to be able to work well with others. While you are with us, you will work with a wide range of people – teachers, industry professionals and other students. We would like to see that you are open to learning from other people, that you can listen to them and see their point of view (even if it is not the same as yours) and that you can offer constructive feedback.
- **Broad interest and engagement** - we would like to see that you are curious about the world around you, that you are keen to share your experience and learn from the experience of others and that you are willing to get involved with the wide range of opportunities we offer.
- **Self-awareness** - we would like to know why you are applying to us - how do you think your course will help you to grow, and what can you bring to your studies? What are you good at, and what would you like to be able to do better, or more of? As we begin to get to know you better, we can help you begin to work more effectively towards your further study and/or career aspirations.
- **A spirit of enterprise** - we want you to be able to work on your own initiative and see that you are interested in creating your own opportunities. Even if you have not had much opportunity to be involved with projects that were not part of your regular school/college curriculum, your ideas and enthusiasm will go a long way.

Monitoring information

As with all other information on the application form, the detail you provide here is held in the strictest confidence and is intended to ensure that we are meeting the needs of, and attracting applications from, all sections of the community. Of particular importance is the question on

eligibility for Free School Meals, as successful eligible applicants will be entitled to receive Further Education Free Meals, and we need to be able to plan our provision for this in advance.

What happens next?

We will confirm receipt of your completed application form and all the supporting documentation **by email**. We will then process your application and contact you directly if we need any further information (by email or telephone).

Interview and auditions (or portfolio submissions in the case of applications for Technical Theatre & Design for Performance) will take place in February. Successful applicants for September entry will be invited for interview and audition/portfolio submission, and we will send you the details of the time and date of your sessions along with guidelines as to how to prepare. Dates for interviews and auditions/portfolio submissions may only be changed in exceptional circumstances, and it may not be possible to reschedule at all – if you find yourself in this situation, please contact us as soon as possible (contact details below).

Interviews and auditions/portfolio submissions will take place in February, after which we will shortlist and send out conditional offers in March. **Please do not contact us until this date has passed** – we will be unable to give you our decision any quicker (and dealing with such enquiries may slow the process down).

If you need any further advice on the application process, please get in touch – otherwise, we look forward to receiving your application to join us in September.

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