Summerhill College, Sligo
Transition Year - Student Acceptance Policy

Students are admitted from the average age of fourteen by way of application, interview and assessment. No special skills are required, but suitability to the Transition Year is a prerequisite for all admissions. All things being equal, age may be a determining factor.

Policy:
Open entry, subject to the Board of Management being satisfied that the education and safety of the students will not be inhibited by the presence of the new student.

Selection Procedure for application into Fourth (Transition) Year: (Taken from our School’s Admissions Policy)
Applications for entry to Transition Year will be accepted for students who are in third year in Secondary School or the international equivalent. Acceptance by the school of a TY Application Form does not guarantee a place on the TY programme. The Board of Management establishes the number of places to be offered in any one year.

The school reserves the right to refuse a place to applicants for the Transition Year Programme whose behaviour or attitude it considers, would be detrimental to the rights of other students who apply to take part in the Transition Year Programme.

The Principal, Deputy Principal and relevant Year Head(s) will review the list of applicants and allow them to move to the next stage of the process if they have demonstrated acceptable standards of behaviour, attendance and attitude while in Junior Cycle. When there is a question over the enrolment of a student into the Transition Year Programme the decision on acceptance will be referred to the Board of Management. Please note that academic performance is not what is measured but more the willingness of a student to be involved and to work hard.

Application forms must be returned by Wednesday 21st March 2018

Equality of Access and Participation
Guided by the principles of the school Mission Statement, Summerhill College will ensure no boy will be refused admission for reasons of religion, ethnicity, special education needs, disability, traveller status, asylum seeker/refugee status, family or social status.

Time Allocation: TY students follow the same full daily timetable as other students in the school for their 4 day week. There will never be an occasion where something is organised in the school that is “optional”. Events organised in school are for the benefit of all Transition Year students.

It is impossible to know, in advance, the definite arrangements for the incoming group of students, until the number of accepted applicants is established. To date, all students have studied virtually all subjects with the aim of broadening their educational experience.

Aims and Rationale:
Transition Year Programmes are intended to facilitate the integrated development of the intellectual, emotional, spiritual, physical, social and vocational capacities of each individual student through a structured learning experience.

- Education for maturity with an emphasis on social awareness and increased social competence.
- Education through experience of adult and working life as a basis for personal development and maturity.
- Promotion of general, technical and academic skills with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and self-directed learning.

Content:
The Transition Year is intended to cater for the needs and capacities of young people within a framework of a broad general education, which includes academic studies, personal development and education for working life. The following is an outline of the main areas covered in our programme.

Induction:
Transition Year begins with an induction session where the aims of the year are explained to all students. The expectations we have for each of our students, and which we hope each student has for himself, are examined.

A “Contract of Learning” is signed by each student, his parent/guardian and the Transition Year Coordinator, once a place on the TY Programme has been confirmed. This signed contract is a mark of each student’s commitment to the success of his Transition Year. From the staff’s point of view, it represents our commitment to treat Transition Year students as young adults participating in a course which we have planned with the goals of developing greater maturity, relevant skills and an orientation to the working world. This contract also contains a section where the student and parent agree to research and secure a suitable work experience location which should be in place by the end of August 2018.

Transition Year Trips:
A number of trips are organised during the year. These trips provide the students with a wonderful opportunity to acquaint themselves with their new classmates. Continued good behaviour is required for students wishing to partake in these trips and other TY activities.

Work Experience:
This involves spending time as part of the Transition Year programme, learning at first-hand about life in a work place. The employer agrees to co-operate with the school, in taking on a student in a Work Experience placement. The employer knows that s/he is taking on a person, as part of a learning experience, not as some form of cheap labour. This will be on a one day per week basis (Friday) for the school year 2018-2019. Further details regarding this will be given later in the school year once your place on the TY Programme has been confirmed.
Work Experience continued...

Work Experience is an integral part of education for working life and is considered part of the school week. In addition to giving students an insight into the world of work, it also provides them with opportunities for developing their social and life skills. Students are not normally paid during their placements. To be effective, work experience must be planned properly in advance and preferably should not be with a family member. Work experience will be monitored closely by the school to maintain the integrity of the school week.

PLEASE NOTE: In order for you to retain your place on the TY Programme you must have your first work experience placement secured by our return to school at the end of Aug 2018. The first date of work experience will be given to you by the end of May 2018.

Institute of Technology, Sligo:

Students have an opportunity to attend the Institute of Technology Sligo where students experience life at third level and attend specially designated lectures where students see what is on offer in the Institute of Technology. Students also get to participate in many different activities during the year in IT Sligo. Each activity is associated with the different schools within the IT including Recreation, Business, Technology, Engineering and Science.

Gaisce Awards:

Gaisce is the National Challenge Award from the President of Ireland to the young people of Ireland aged between fifteen and twenty-five years. The purpose of the award is to encourage young people to set and achieve a demanding challenge for themselves in each of four different areas of activity. Please see: http://www.gaisce.ie

The Pope John Paul II Awards

The Pope John Paul II Award is dedicated to the memory of the late Pope John Paul II. The Award was launched in Ireland in 2006 and will enable participants to become more actively involved in the life of your parish and community. As well as the feeling of personal achievement that students gain from taking part in the award, participation will help to show future employers and educators that participants are young people who can make an on-going commitment to a task. The award is non-competitive, flexible and voluntary. You can check with your son if he has volunteered to be part of this.

Study/Homework:

Transition Year students do not always get what is traditionally known as ‘homework’. Homework in Transition Year will include project work, research, information-gathering and presentation preparation. The computer programmes which are studied during the year can be accessed from home and should form part of daily, ongoing, self-directed learning.

Students who are committed to the programme find that they have a lot of research work and study to do out of school especially with their computer courses. The new study skills developed throughout the year are very beneficial for the Leaving Certificate and for any student continuing their education to third level.

Transition Year Fees

The cost for doing TY is currently €300 (2018/19). This covers the costs involved with trips, materials for practical classes, guest speakers and administration costs during the year. TY Fees can be fully paid in one amount when signing the Contract of Learning. Two separate payments can be made. Final balances should be cleared by the end of September of TY.

Attendance:

Please note: There will never be an occasion where your son will be allowed home from school early, unless it is as a result of a parent-teacher meeting or some other event that you will be informed of in advance. Students sign a contract that makes them aware of their responsibility to participate fully in all aspects of the Transition Year Programme. If you have any questions about this please do not hesitate to contact me or your son’s year heads to confirm any details.

Absences from Class:

Students should ensure that if they are missing from any class for any reason, they should bring in a note to explain this absence and use the “Sign Out Book” as normal when leaving, and the “Sign in Book” upon returning.

Absences from Work Experience:

Students who are unable to attend their work experience for whatever reason, whether due to illness, a family event or a school sport outing, must make contact with their employer AND their work experience coordinator. Students will need a note in their school journal on their return to school to excuse their absence.

Sanctions from our Code of Behaviour will apply for any unauthorised absences.

Assessment:

When we think of assessment, many of us automatically think of examinations, often where several years’ work is evaluated based on what can be produced in a few hours. Transition Year offers a unique opportunity to assess the overall contribution made by the student to the success of his year.

We are assessing the present Transition Year students using the following criteria: Attendance, classroom behaviour, punctuality, overall standard of work, uniform, cooperation with others, initiative, reliability, work experience, effort/enthusiasm and handing up forms, letters, and money.

A Mid-Year Assessment report is sent out at the end of January to update all parents/guardians about their son’s progress.

Graduation Night:

A “Graduation Night”, is held at the end of the school year where the course will be brought to a close with students, parents and teachers in attendance. Each student will be presented with their Certificates of Participation in Transition Year and their portfolio containing their year’s work will be available to take home. This is an informal evening where students can display work and projects from their various subjects during the year and where parents can meet with teachers and other parents.