

Admissions Policy and Procedures

The vision of Albanian College is to transform teaching and learning in Albania. Our mission is to create knowledgeable, responsible and internationally-minded citizens. The focus of Albanian College admissions is a student's ability to be academically successful and to positively contribute to the school environment. Albanian College does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, mother tongue, or social or cultural background. Albanian College is officially licensed by the Albanian Ministry of Education.

Aims

Albanian College aims to:

- Admit qualified students who will contribute positively to and enrich the educational community on a first-come-first-serve basis.
- Implement thorough, fair, and balanced admissions procedures.
- Communicate clearly with applicant families through the admissions and enrolment processes.
- Accept as many students as we are capable of meeting the needs of within the established programmes and facilities.
- Recognise the importance of and embrace the diversity of students' background, talents, skills, and viewpoints.
- To maintain a system of rolling admissions throughout the academic year, space permitting.

Essential Agreements

Albanian College commits to:

- Limit class sizes to 20 or fewer students per section and that, when the limit is reached, additional staffing will be sought to accommodate the creation of additional sections.
- Process applications and provide feedback on admissions decisions to families in a timely manner.
- Respectfully communicate admissions decisions.
- Respect confidentiality of applicants.
- Safely return any original documentation to the applicant's parents/guardians.
- Treat all applicants equally.
- Provide opportunities for all enrolled students to pursue studies at the IB Diploma Level.
- Ensure that all class sections are well-balanced with regards to student needs, gender, personalities, and other factors.
- Work in partnership with parents/guardians to support students reaching their full potential.

Parents/guardians and students who are enrolled commit to:

- Upholding the school's mission and values (see Mission Statement).
- Working in partnership with the school to address student needs and offer support, including academic and behavioural support, as needed.
- Continually striving to embody the attributes of the Learner Profile (see *IB Learner Profile*, 2013)

Class Placement

Student Age

Age is a consideration for grade level placement at Albanian College. Our guidelines are in reference to those of the Albanian Ministry of Education in that students must be 6 years old at the start of the academic year for admission to Grade 1. As this date changes annually, Albanian College uses 15 October and/or the start of the Albanian government school year as the cut-off date for enrollment for Early Years and 1 October for students in Grades 1 and above. As a result of this requirement, the following table indicates ages for enrollment in each of the grade levels:

Age as of Established Cut-Off Date	Grade Placement
3	Early Years 1
4	Early Years 2
5	Early Years 3
6	Grade 1
7	Grade 2
8	Grade 3
9	Grade 4
10	Grade 5
11	Grade 6
12	Grade 7
13	Grade 8
14	Grade 9
15	Grade 10
16	Grade 11
17	Grade 12

Previous Grade Level Completed

Students who have successfully completed a grade level at another school will be accepted into the next grade level, regardless of age, except in Early Years. Families will need to provide appropriate documentation indicating the completion of the prior grade during the admissions process. This is an Albanian Ministry of Education requirement.

Parent/Guardian or Student Requests

The school will not consider parent/guardian or student requests for placement in class sections or grade levels. All decisions are based on documentation provided by the parents/guardians, the school's language assessments upon application, and ensuring appropriate class balances (see Essential Agreements).

When there are multiple sections in the same grade, students, both new and re-enrolling, are randomly assigned to a section although gender and English language skills may be considered.

Required Applications Materials

- Grade reports for the two previous school years from the school(s) most recently attended, if applicable
 - Feature an official school stamp
 - Recognised by a government or other accrediting body
 - Indicate student performance
- Birth certificate
- Family certificate (Albanian nationals)
- Two passport-sized pictures of the applicant
- Photocopy of parent/guardian official identification (eg. passport or national ID)
- School's student information form
- School's medical form
- Court documents regarding custody (in the case of divorced parents/guardians)

Additional Documents

In certain instances, additional documentation may be requested which may include:

- Teacher and/or school counselor recommendation(s)
- Personal statement
- Sample essay or other student work (eg. art portfolio)

Personal Interviews and School Visits

It is expected that student applicants will conduct a personal interview with a school admissions representative. In cases where this is not possible, this should be communicated by the parents to the admissions representative and alternative arrangements will be pursued.

If a student is admitted without having completed a personal interview and/or school visit, the school reserves the right to cancel enrollment if it is determined that full disclosure of any special educational needs was not made at the time of application and the school is not able to accommodate specific needs of the student given current resources, facilities, and/or staffing (see Special Educational Needs Policy).

Special Educational Needs

The following is an excerpt from Albanian College's Special Educational Needs Policy with regards to admissions.

Applicants Below Age 12

Albanian College operates within the bounds of Albanian Ministry of Education guidelines and Albanian legal code. According to these guidelines, no testing may be conducted on students to diagnose special educational needs, such as learning disabilities including autism, before age 12. Therefore, Albanian College relies on parent/guardian-supplied information and the observations of its admissions staff when making enrollment decisions.

Applicants Age 12 and Above

For students age 12 and above, the school reserves the right to require a professional assessment by a licensed, school-approved outside provider in the case of suspected special, non-physical educational needs. If the family refuses to conduct the requested assessment, the school reserves the right to deny enrollment.

Currently Enrolled Students

Additionally, while the school is able to meet the needs of some students with special needs, it is unable to accommodate others. If a student is enrolled who requires accommodation for a special learning or physical need and the school is either unable to continue the accommodation or the student's needs change, the school reserves the right to not re-enroll.

Applicants with Physical Special Needs

Albanian College strives to accommodate students with physical special needs, but reserves the right to not enroll a student if the school campus prevents ease of access to classrooms and other facilities. Physical special needs will be managed on a case-by-case basis.

Requirements for Specific Grades

Early Years 1 (EY1) Students

General Requirements

Students in EY1 will be admitted after the submission of all application documents and proof of tuition payment. Additionally, all students in EY1 should participate in a personal interview with admissions staff to ensure the school is able to meet their academic and physical needs. There is no English-language requirement for EY1. It is recognised the students may speak no English upon enrollment in this grade.

By the first day of school students must be able to:

- Use the toilet unassisted. No child should ever be brought to school in a nappy or diaper nor should they need one during naptime.
- Use a fork and spoon to eat independently.
- Enjoy and be willing to try a range of foods, including soup, fish, meat, and fruit. Any special dietary needs that are exceptional need to be presented in the form of a paediatric doctor's note to the school. These must be medically related. If dietary requirements are beyond the means of the school, a student's admission may be denied. If there are religiously inappropriate foods, please communicate this to school administration during registration.
- Hold and use a cup with no handle.
- Take off and put on Velcro fastening shoes.
- Attempt to take off and put on a jumper and coat.

Early Years 2 (EY2) through Grade 3

General Requirements

Students in EY2 through Grade 3 will be admitted after the submission of all application documents and proof of tuition payment. Additionally, all students in these grades should participate in a personal interview with admissions staff to ensure the school is able to meet their academic and physical needs. There is no English-language requirement for EY2 through Grade 3. It is recognised the students may speak no English upon enrollment in these grade levels.

Grade 4 through Grade 10

General Requirements

Students in Grade 4 through Grade 10 will be admitted after:

- Submission of all application documents

- Proof of tuition payment
- Participation in a personal interview with admissions staff to ensure the school is able to meet their academic and physical needs.

Additional Requirements

Students in Grades 4 through Grade 10 must meet established minimum English-language competency levels in order to be admitted as represented in the following table:

Grade Level	CEFR*	Admission Decision
4	Beginner A1 and above	Enrollment**
5	Beginner A1 and above	Enrollment
6	Beginner A1 and above	Enrollment
7	A1	Conditional Enrollment***
	A2 and above	Enrollment
8	A2	Conditional Enrollment
	B1 and above	Enrollment
9	B1	Conditional Enrollment
	Advanced B1 and above	Enrollment
10	Advanced B1 and above	Conditional Enrollment
	B2 and above	Enrollment

* Common European Framework (CEFR) is a framework of guidelines for identification of English-language skill levels.

** In some cases of enrollment, it may be suggested that a student attends one or more summer school courses or other intensive program offered by the school or an outside provider.

*** Conditional enrollment refers to a student whose enrollment is contingent upon their completion of specific, outlined requirements to be completed within a specified schedule and/or timeline. These may include: successful completion of one or more summer school course(s) or attendance in Flex Time and/or after-school English as an Additional Language support sessions.

Grade 11 through Grade 12

Admissions to Grades 11 and 12 take into consideration the rigour of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP). Albanian College encourages all students to

pursue the full IB Diploma. The school will take every opportunity to support students in this endeavour including:

- Offering a broad range of IBDP subjects.
- Providing qualified teaching staff.
- Ensuring that there is a broad range of resources available to students such as access to online databases through the school's library.
- Making available the services of a University and Careers Counselor.

All students in Grade 11 are admitted as full IB Diploma candidates and work towards completion of all associated requirements, including:

- Courses in each of the six groups with at least three courses studied at higher level
- Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS)
- Theory of Knowledge (TOK)
- Extended Essay (EE)

At the beginning of Grade 12, a student's performance in the previous year, with relation to requirements listed above, is evaluated and final decisions about official IBDP registrations will be made by the programme coordinator. A student's enrollment in IBDP is considered final after the IBDP 15 November registration deadline.

Albanian College understands that in some cases, students will not qualify for the full IB Diploma. In such cases, students may complete one or more IBDP courses for which they will receive official IB recognition if passed.

General Requirements

In the case of an applicant for Grade 11 or Grade 12, specific requirements must be met which include:

- Submission of all application documents.
- Proof of tuition payment.
- Sample(s) of student work from one or more subjects.
- Participation in a personal interview with programme coordinator to ensure that:
 - The school is able to meet their academic and physical needs
 - The student possesses adequate levels of interest, commitment, and knowledge of the Diploma programme
 - An appropriate plan of courses to be studied is established in line with the student's interests, probable course of study in university, and academic ability.

Albanian College accepts students from multiple educational systems and programmes to study in Grade 11 and Grade 12. These include, but are not limited to, the Albanian College Middle Years, IB Middle Years Programme, Albanian National Curriculum, British National Curriculum, and American curriculum.

Parents of students entering Grade 11 IB Diploma Programme must be aware that students may have difficulty transferring to other Albanian National Curriculum schools due to differences in courses studied in Grade 11 and Grade 12.

Albanian College Middle Years and IB Middle Years Programme Students

Students who have demonstrated success in the Albanian College Middle Years and IB Middle Years Programmes will be permitted to pursue study of one or more IBDP courses in Grade 11. Success in the Middle Years is determined by evaluating the grades earned by the student in all courses completed in Grade 10. An average grade of 4, as well as successful completion of the Personal Project, is the established minimum requirement for enrollment in one or more IBDP courses. Eligibility for study at the IBDP level of students who have met the minimum average of 4, but have earned a grade of 2 or lower in one or more courses in the Middle Years, will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Albanian National Curriculum

Students must have obtained an average of 7 on their Grade 9 and 10 school reports in the following subjects:

- Albanian language
- English language
- Mathematics
- Sciences (combined)

British National Curriculum

Students must have obtained a minimum of three B grades and two C grades on their GCSE or IGCSE examinations.

American Curriculum

Students must have obtained at least a B grade, defined as 80 percent, in each of the following subjects in Grades 9 and 10:

- English language arts
- Other language
- Mathematics

- Sciences (combined)
- Social studies

As American curriculum differs greatly throughout the world and in the United States, applicants that fall outside the above-stated boundaries will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Additional Requirements

Students in Grade 11 through Grade 12 must meet established minimum English-language competency levels in order to be admitted as represented in the following table:

Grade Level	CEFR*	Admission Decision
11	Advanced B2 and above	Enrollment
12	Advanced B2 and above	Enrollment

* Common European Framework (CEFR) is a framework of guidelines for identification of English-language skill levels.

Grade 12 Transfer Admissions

Students coming from other schools who have successfully studied one or more IB Diploma Courses in Grade 11 at another school will be considered for admission to Grade 12. Students transferring from a non-IBDP school who seek admission for Grade 12 will not be considered.

Subject-Specific Requirements

In the case of the following subjects, specific, additional requirements must be met:

- IBDP Language and Literature (Group 1), IBDP Literature (Group 1), and IBDP Language B (Group 2) standard or higher level
- IBDP Language ab initio (Group 2) standard level
- IBDP Physics higher level
- IBDP Math higher level

IBDP Language and Literature (Group 1), IBDP Literature (Group 1), and IBDP Language B (Group 2) Standard or Higher Level

All Albanian nationals without a second nationality will be required to study IBDP Albanian Literature.

Typically, study of a language at the Language B (Group 2) level is appropriate for students whose skill levels are at phase 4 or below, equivalent to CEFR Phase B2, for the language to be

studied. Albanian College uses the guidelines featured in the IB Middle Years Programme *Language acquisition guide*, 2014 to determine language phase levels. The table below indicates the language phase equivalents with the Common European Framework of language phase.

MYP Phase	CEFR Phase
MYP Phase 1	A1
MYP Phase 2	A2
MYP Phase 3	B1
MYP Phase 4	B2
MYP Phase 5	C1
MYP Phase 6	C2

IBDP Language Ab Initio (Group 2) Standard Level

Study of a language at the ab initio (Group 2) level is appropriate for students whose skill levels are at phase 1 or CEFR A1 for the language to be studied. Albanian College uses the guidelines featured in the IB Middle Years Programme *Language acquisition guide*, 2014 to determine language phase levels (see table above).

IBDP Physics Higher Level and IBDP Math Higher Level

Previously enrolled Albanian College students must meet the following requirements:

- A grade of 6 or higher in both physics and math extended in Grade 10
 - Students who study maths standard in grade 10 are typically not eligible to study IBDP math higher level in grade 11. Specific cases, however, where students complete a school-approved enrichment course outside of their studies at Albanian College may be considered for enrollment.
- Completion of a physics and maths diagnostic assessment and attainment of a minimum-required score.

Students transferring from other schools must have studied physics and maths as discrete subjects within the last two years. They will also be required to complete a diagnostic assessment and attain a minimum-required score.

Exceptional Enrollment

In certain instances where a student applicant cannot provide all of the required documentation outlined above, the school Director may recommend consideration for enrollment to the Executive Director. Examples of cases that may qualify a student for exceptional enrollment include:

- Severe health issues of the student or immediate family member.
- Significant family events such as divorce, custody disputes, or death of an immediate family member.
- Challenges such as war, terrorist acts, or government instability.
- Homeschooling.

Boarding Programme

In addition to the above-mentioned admissions requirements, students in Grades 6 and above who seek admission to the school's boarding programme must complete additional application documents. Those seeking more information should contact the school's Admissions staff. Boarding is only an option on certain Albanian College campuses.

Admission Procedures

The following steps are taken when a prospective parent/guardian demonstrates an interest in enrolling their child in the school:

1. The parent/guardian expresses interest in school and requests more information.
2. An Admissions Office representative presents general information to the interested parent(s), including brochures, and directs people to the website, making appointments when appropriate and encouraging visits to Albanian College.
3. When visitors arrive, the Admissions Office immediately gathers information on the Interest Form, logging the information into the appropriate database for future contact.
4. An Admissions Office representative introduces the visitor(s) to the Director or another designated leadership team member for face-to-face discussions about programmes and conducts a tour of school, when appropriate.
5. Student applicants for Early Years 1 through Grade 3 should be met by Admissions staff and/or leadership team members to screen for any observable special educational or physical needs (see Special Educational Needs Policy).
6. Students in Grade 4 through Grade 12 must have their English language assessed by a designated staff member only.

- a. This may require a separate appointment to be established by the Admissions Office with the designated staff member.
 - b. Once the English language assessment is complete, the Executive Director determines enrollment status and specifies whether enrollment will be offered with or without conditions which may include summer school or other, additional requirements.
 - c. Results are entered by the designated staff member into the Admissions Sheet for each campus of Albanian College for the Executive Director's review.
 - d. No assessment results are shared with anyone outside Albanian College staff.
7. Families are informed of the school's decision regarding enrollment in writing by email and/or hard copy letter by a representative of the Admissions Office.
8. If it is deemed that a student is eligible for enrollment, parents/guardians are required to submit the following documents:
- a. Grade reports for the two previous school years from the school(s) most recently attended, if applicable
 - b. Birth certificate
 - c. Family certificate (Albanian nationals)
 - d. Two passport-sized pictures of the applicant
 - e. Photocopy of parent/guardian official identification (eg. passport or national ID)
 - f. School's student information form and Student Language Profile form (see below)
 - g. School's medical form
 - h. Court documents regarding custody (in the case of divorced parents/guardians)
 - i. Receipt of bank transfer for tuition payment

In some cases it may not be possible to provide all of the required documents listed above and the Director may recommend that an exception be made (see Exceptional Enrollment).

9. Once a student is enrolled, an Admissions Office representative ensures that the following details are arranged for each enrolled child:
- a. Uniforms are distributed.
 - b. Calendar and first day of classes are communicated.
 - c. An official student file is created with enrollment documents, former school records, enrollment contract, receipt of tuition payment, and Student Language Profile.
 - d. Transportation requirements and payment receipt, when appropriate.

Student Language Profile

As part of the admissions process, families will provide information to allow the school to develop a language profile for each individual student (See Admissions Policy and Language Policy). Families will indicate the student's:

- Mother-tongue language(s)
- History of exposure to languages other than mother-tongue
- Choice of additional language to be learned at the acquisition level if eligible (see Language Policy)

For students in Grades 4 and above, the school will note the student's CEFR level based on the English-language assessment conducted during the admissions process.

The Student Language Profile informs the school about the student's language abilities and needs to guide decisions regarding placement in language courses and/or specific support provided which may include:

- Assessment accommodations which may include one or more of the following:
 - Modification or and/or definition of command terms and other instructions.
 - Translations and/or use of translation devices or dictionaries.
 - Use of additional visual aides.
 - Support provided by a teaching assistant.
 - Additional time for completion of assessments.
 - Customised formatting of written assessment materials to highlight key terms and concepts.
- Language course eligibility depending on phase level (see Language Policy).
- Language phase development over time.

Student language profile information will be maintained by the programme coordinator, accessible to teachers and will be updated annually.

Early Withdrawals

In cases where parents/guardians withdraw their child(ren) after the start of the academic year, but before the issuance of final grades, the parent/guardian must inform the school in writing of their intention to withdraw their child(ren) at least one week in advance of the withdrawal.

Withdrawal reports and other required documents will be prepared by the school and issued to the parents/guardian within one week of receipt of notification of withdrawal.

Readmission

Students who have withdrawn from Albanian College are welcome to reapply at a future time.

Students who have been asked to leave Albanian College for reasons relating to behaviour or low academic performance may reapply for admission after successfully completing a minimum of one year at another, recognised, educational institution.

In all instances where a student seeks readmission, parents/guardians are required to follow the admissions procedures outlined above.

Denial of Admission

Albanian College reserves the right to deny admission to any applicant if there are reasons to believe that admission would not be in the best interest of the applicant or the school.

The school also reserves the right to postpone or prevent admission if a class is full. In this case, the applicant may be placed on a waiting list. The qualified applicants are then accepted in order of date of application.

Admissions Policy Review Process

The Admissions Policy review process will take place as needed with participation from members of the leadership team, staff, students, and parents.

A report of recommendations will be generated by the school Director and forwarded to the Executive Director for potential action. Policy changes are recommended by the Executive Director to the Board of Governors to implement any desired changes to the policy.

This policy will be made available in the Parent and Student Handbook.

How the Admissions Policy Was Developed

An Admissions Policy Committee first assembled in October 2014 with the task of developing a draft Admissions Policy. Further development of the Admissions Policy has been ongoing, with input from students, parents, staff, Governors and official and unofficial International Baccalaureate consultants. Revisions have been made and the current Admissions Policy has been submitted to the Board of Governors. All members of the Albanian College community will be encouraged to continue to reflect on the Admissions Policy on an annual basis (see Policy Revision Policy).

National education guidelines, as established by the Albanian Ministry of Education, were taken into account in the development and implementation of the Admissions Policy.

Further development work was carried out referring to the following documentation and guidance:

- *Guide to school authorisation: Primary Years Programme, 2016*
- *Guide to school authorization: Middle Years Programme, 2016*

- *Guide to school authorization: Diploma Programme*, 2016
- *IB Learner Profile*, 2013
- *Language acquisition guide*, 2014