



AMDG

GONZAGA COLLEGE SJ

Admissions' Policy for Entry 2023

I. Introduction

This Admission Policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1998, the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 and the Equal Status Act 2000. In drafting this policy, the Board of Management of Gonzaga College SJ has consulted with school staff, the school patron and with parents of children attending the school.

The policy was approved by the patron in June 2022. It is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy, on request, to any person who requests it.

The relevant dates and timelines for the admissions' process are set out in the College's Annual Admission Notice which is published annually on the College's website at least one week before the commencement of the admissions' process for the school year concerned.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Annual Admission Notice for the school year concerned.

The application form for admission is published online and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

2. Characteristic spirit and general objectives of Gonzaga College SJ

Gonzaga College SJ is an all-boys private school founded in 1950 and situated at Sandford Road, Dublin D06 KF95. Gonzaga is a Catholic school which admits boys committed to the Catholic and Ignatian ethos of the school. It is a Jesuit school which aims to be a community of growth, service and faith, in which young people are able to develop the full range of their talents and abilities in a balanced and integrated way. The Jesuit motto *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* ("To the Greater Glory of God") summarises the overall ethos of the school which operates in the context of the Characteristics of Jesuit Education.

A central concern of the school is quality teaching and learning. Gonzaga enjoys a justified reputation as a centre of academic excellence and in promoting this we aspire to teach in accord with individual learning aptitude. We aim to promote qualities of critical thinking, interior knowledge (*sentir*) and capacity for reflection in our pupils.

Based on our conviction that human fulfilment is to be found through faith in Jesus Christ and in service of the world in imitation of Him, we seek to form pupils of competence, conscience and compassion who will strive to give Christian leadership through the quality of their lives and their commitment to work for a more just, cohesive and caring society.

Mission

Founded as a Catholic School in 1950, Gonzaga College continues a tradition of education in accordance with the Characteristics of Jesuit Education under the trusteeship of the Society of Jesus.

In Jesuit education the criterion of excellence is applied to all areas of school life and therefore our mission is the fullest possible development of every dimension of the person. In particular, we seek to foster a sense of values and a commitment to the service of others. Thus we pledge ourselves to an ever renewed faith which actively promotes the struggle for greater justice in the world.

This leads to the following objectives:

1. Gonzaga will aim to develop a school community which is based on respect, love and service.
2. In the pursuit of excellence, the educational process will be collaborative and reflective with openness to growth.
3. An understanding of the Gospel and its implications for action will be an integral part of the education offered to students at Gonzaga.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Gonzaga College SJ shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

Parents and Pupils

Because of its nature as a Catholic, Jesuit school Gonzaga expects that parents and pupils will accept and support the ethos of the school in a positive and active manner.

Pupils

To this end, all pupils are expected to participate positively in the classroom and in the co-curricular and religious activities proposed by the College. These include retreats, liturgies, prayer groups, outreach and faith formation programmes.

Parents

The College needs the fullest cooperation of parents and envisages attendance at parent-teacher meetings, information meetings and other events. Parents are also invited to participate in the Parent Fora. The College welcomes the support and contribution of the Parents' Association and Council.

The acceptance of a place in Gonzaga implies the agreement of parents and pupils to fulfil the expectations expressed in these paragraphs.

Finance

Gonzaga is a fee-paying school and in addition to such funding as is provided by the Department of Education and Skills towards the employment of teachers, the finances of the school are provided by fees and by contributions from the Irish Jesuit Province.

Development Programme

Since the college opened in the 1950s the Jesuit value of **Magis** - the challenge of the pursuit of excellence - has inspired continual development of the school. The Board of Management believe future planning and strategic capital development are crucial to ensure Gonzaga students benefit from a high standard of facilities enabling them to fulfil their greatest potential.

This Jesuit ethos of striving for 'greater' is what drives development in Gonzaga, promoting the culture of philanthropy that is so deeply embedded in Jesuit education. We are fortunate that our community of parents and alumni are cognisant of the impact of philanthropy in education and take pride in the fact that many of our alumni have been responsible for creating positive change in society through their generosity.

It was with the generous support of the Jesuit community, alumni, parents and corporate partners that the last development campaign - **Campaign for Excellence** - was finally completed in 2017. This campaign spanned 10 years of successful fundraising and delivered the **Coulson Theatre, the Sutherland Library, Dining Hall, 16 new classrooms**, the upgrading of sports' facilities (including new weight training equipment and additional changing rooms) and various other short-term science and technology refurbishment projects.

Our recently launched initiative, **Building for Tomorrow**, focusses not only on campus growth but also nurtures the idea of equality and inclusion in a real and tangible way. This campaign aims to deliver the following projects by 2030 – an **All-weather Astro Pitch**, the further development of the **Fr. John Sullivan Access Programme**, a new fit for purpose **Science, Maths & Technology Centre**, an **Interactive Teaching & Learning Hub** and additionally a **Creative Arts' Space** with studio and rehearsal rooms for drama, music and dance.

We encourage all incoming parents to join existing parents and the wider Jesuit Community in supporting the strategic and capital development plans at Gonzaga College SJ. Information relating to fees and other expenses will also be provided at the Parent Information Evening (see below) which forms part of the ordinary Application Process.

Management

The Board of Management consists of eight members appointed by the Jesuit Provincial who is Patron of the school. Of these, two members are nominated by the staff of the school and two by the parents.

3. Admission Statement

Gonzaga College SJ will not discriminate in its admission of a student to the school on any of the following:

- (a) the gender ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (b) the civil status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (c) the family status ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (d) the sexual orientation ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (e) the religion ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (f) the disability ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (g) the ground of race of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned,
- (h) the Traveller community ground of the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned, or
- (i) the ground that the student or the applicant in respect of the student concerned has special educational needs

As per section 61(3) of the Education Act 1998, 'civil status ground', 'disability ground', 'discriminate', 'family status ground', 'gender ground', 'ground of race', 'religion ground', 'sexual orientation ground' and 'Traveller community ground' shall be construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000.

1. Gonzaga College SJ is an all-male student school and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit a female student applying for admission to this school.
2. Gonzaga College SJ is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes Catholic, Jesuit values.
3. Gonzaga College SJ is a school whose objective is to provide education in an environment which promotes Catholic, Jesuit values and does not discriminate where it refuses to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic and it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

4. Admission of Students

This school shall admit each student seeking admission except where –

- a) the school is oversubscribed (please see Section 5 below for further details)
- b) a parent of a student, when required by the Headmaster in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student.
- c) Gonzaga College SJ provides education exclusively for male students and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not of the gender provided for by the College.
- d) Gonzaga College SJ is a Catholic school and may refuse to admit as a student a person who is not Catholic where it is proved that the refusal is essential to maintain the ethos of the school.

Applications

At its meeting in Spring of each year, or at such other time as the Board deems appropriate, the Board will determine the number of places available to be allocated to those applying to enter First Year at the commencement of the academic year in the year following, pursuant to the provisions of Paragraph (5) below. The Board will also at this time determine the number of places (if any) to be allocated in accordance with paragraph (5a). Upon the Board determining that a place or places will be available for allocation in a given year pursuant to Paragraph (5a), the Board will provide that information in the school's Annual Admission Notice. An application may be made for enrolment under paragraph (5a) or (5b) but not both.

Information Evening

Preliminary expressions of interest for entry to First Year should reach the College on or before 1st September in the year prior to the year when the student intends to start secondary school.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) of all applicants are invited to the Information Evening in the College in September (by mail to the last address advised to the College). At this meeting the ethos of the school is outlined and all relevant information is made available to parents. Should a parent not be in a position to attend the meeting, details can be posted out on request.

5. Oversubscription

5(a) In the event that the school is oversubscribed, the school will, when deciding on applications for admission, apply the following selection criteria in the order listed below to those applications that are received within the timeline for receipt of applications as set out in the school's Annual Admission Notice.

The Headmaster is responsible, in the first instance, for the implementation of the 'Admissions' Policy.'

The College is a Catholic, all male student voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of the Society of Jesus. 'Catholic Ethos' in the context of a voluntary secondary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Catholic Church, which aims at promoting:

- a. The full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil. including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; and
- b. a living relationship with God and with other people; and
- c. a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and
- d. the formation of the students in the Catholic faith,

and which school provides religious education in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Catholic Church, and in keeping with the ethos and characteristic spirit of the College. The College will have regard to such advice as may from time to time be given by the Irish Episcopal Conference in respect of the maintenance of the College's ethos.

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998 the Board of Management of Gonzaga College SJ shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school.

In general, students will have been baptised and confirmed in the Catholic faith. Students who are members of other Christian denominations and other religions may apply for enrolment.

Parents of non-Catholic applicants seeking enrolment of their son to the College are advised that the College cannot provide for the specific denominational or other religious education of the non-Catholic student nor can it provide for his religious liturgical calendar and rituals. It is the norm that students attend Religion classes, Rites and Retreats although no effort will be made to proselytise – the underlying thrust being a mutuality of respect for diversity of values, beliefs, traditions and ways of life and languages insofar as practicable and in compliance with the Education Act 1998, as amended.

An applicant must be committed to the Catholic and Ignatian ethos of the school. Since the number of applicants normally exceeds the number of places available, places will be allocated to in the following order:

- I.
 - i. Brothers of present or past pupils;
 - ii. Sons of members of Gonzaga's permanent staff;
 - iii. Nephews and great-nephews of Jesuits;
 - iv. Sons of past pupils;
 - v. Grandsons of past pupils;
(the total number of places in sub-categories iv **and** v taken together will be limited to a total of 25% of the number of places available in the intake year. Places will first be allocated to applicants who come within sub-category iv. Should any places remain available within the 25% referred to, such remaining places will then be allocated to those in sub-category v. Any applicants who

are unsuccessful in obtaining a place despite their coming within sub-categories iv or v will be treated as coming within category 2.)

2. Applicants who do not fall within the above category.

Should there be insufficient places left available for all applicants who come within one of the above categories or sub-categories, any places available for that category or sub-category will be offered **on the basis of a lottery.**

Important/ Please Note:

For the purposes of this Admission's Policy, any selection determined by a lottery process will be appropriately managed by the College and shall be overseen by the Headmaster, Chair of the Board and an independent observer appointed by the Board of Management

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to inform the school, in writing, on the Application Form, that their son falls into one of the above categories, including sub-categories, and in the case of sub-categories I(i), I(iv), I(v), above, to both specify the years of attendance of the brother / father / grandfather at Gonzaga College SJ, as the case maybe, and to complete the requisite declaration verifying same. The College also requires written confirmation from the Society of Jesus that an applicant falls within sub-categories I(iii) which must be submitted at the time of application as specified on the application form. Any application which does not assert that the applicant satisfies the criteria for inclusion in any of the sub-categories of Category I will automatically be considered under Category 2.

No other documentation should be submitted, nor will it be considered as part of an application.

An applicant's parents will be required to submit proof of address by uploading an official document to the online application form. Acceptable documents will include utility bills, bank documents or official letters from a government department dated in the last six months prior to application. All correspondence relating to the offer of a place, applications for a review or appeal will be by post to this address only.

Reference to "days" in this policy means calendar days.

5 (b) In addition to places allocated in accordance with the foregoing criteria 5(a) the Board of Management, in accordance with Paragraph (4 - Applications) above, has determined that four additional places be made available in First Year in the academic year 2020/21. These places will be allocated to the four boys who have successfully applied to be included on the Fr John Sullivan SJ Programme. Further details of this bursary programme are available on request.

- i. Such application shall be made on the form prescribed which may be obtained from the secretary, Gonzaga College SJ, Sandford Road, Ranelagh, Dublin D06 KF95. The form must be fully completed and should be returned to the school by the date prescribed.
- ii. Upon admission to the Fr John Sullivan SJ Programme, one of the available places provided for under this paragraph will be offered to the boy concerned. No tuition fees shall be charged for the duration of the pupil's time in the school, which duration shall be up to six years. At the discretion of the Board of Management this may be subject to an annual review of family income.

6. What will not be considered or taken into account

In accordance with section 62(7)(e) of the Education Act, the school will not consider or take into account any of the following in deciding on applications for admission or when placing a student on a waiting list for admission to the school:

- (a) a student's prior attendance at a pre-school or pre-school service, including naíonraí;
- (b) a student's academic ability, skills or aptitude;
- (c) the occupation, financial status, academic ability, skills or aptitude of a student's parents;
- (d) a requirement that a student, or his parents, attend an interview, open day or other meeting as a condition of admission;
- (e) a student's connection to the school by virtue of a member of his family attending or having previously attended the school excepting siblings of a student attending or having attended the school and / or a father or grandfather of an applicant having attended the school. (In relation to fathers and grandfathers having attended, the college may only apply this criterion to a maximum of 25% of the available spaces as set out in the school's Annual Admission Notice).
- (f) the date and time on which an application for admission was received by the school. This is subject to the application being received at any time during the period specified for receiving applications set out in the Annual Admission Notice of the school for the school year concerned.

7. Decisions on applications

All decisions on applications for admission to Gonzaga College SJ will be based on the following:

- The College's Admissions' Policy
- The College's Annual Admission Notice
- The information provided by the applicant in the school's official application form received during the period specified in our Annual Admission Notice for receiving applications

(Please see [section 13](#) below in relation to applications received outside of the admissions period and [section 14](#) below in relation to applications for places in years other than the intake group.)

Selection criteria that are not included in the Admissions' Policy will not be used to make a decision on an application for a place in the College.

8. Notifying applicants of decisions

Applicants will be informed in writing as to the decision of the school, within the timeline outlined in the Annual Admission Notice.

If a student is not offered a place in the College, details of the student's place on the waiting list for the school year concerned will be communicated in writing.

Applicants will be informed of the right to seek a review/right of appeal of the school's decision (see section 16 below for further details).

9. Acceptance of an offer of a place by an applicant

In accepting an offer of admission from Gonzaga College SJ you must indicate,

1. in writing acceptance or otherwise within 10 school days of the posting of the offer, along with a **non-refundable** deposit of €1,500 (to be set against fees for the coming year). Failure to comply with this will result in the offer being withdrawn without further communication.
2. whether or not you have accepted an offer of admission for another school or schools. If you have accepted such an offer, you must also provide details of the offer or offers concerned and
3. whether or not you have applied for and are awaiting confirmation of an offer of admission from another school or schools, and if so, you must provide details of the other school or schools concerned.

Applicants should be aware that failure to disclose this information on the acceptance of a place may lead to an offer being withdrawn by the school.

10. Circumstances in which offers may not be made or may be withdrawn

An offer of admission may not be made or may be withdrawn by Gonzaga College SJ where—

- (i) it is established that information contained in the application is false or misleading.
- (ii) the applicant fails to confirm their address by uploading the requisite proofs
- (iii) an applicant fails to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission on or before the date set out in the Annual Admission Notice of the school and pay the requisite deposit of €1,500 (to be set against the 1st year's fees)
- (iv) the parent of a student, when required by the Headmaster in accordance with section 23(4) of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, fails to confirm in writing that the Code of Behaviour of the school is acceptable to him or her and that he or she shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such Code by the student; or
- (v) an applicant has failed to comply with the requirements of 'acceptance of an offer' as set out in Section 9 above.
- (vi) The Board of Management has a duty of care to ensure as far as practicable the health and safety of the students and staff of the school. In addition, the Board of Management is required under section 15(1) of the Education Act 1998 to provide, or cause to be provided, an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility. An application for admission may be refused, therefore, where the admission of the applicant would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the applicant or students and staff of the school, or risk significantly interfering with the right of other students to an appropriate education.

11. Sharing of Data with other schools

Applicants should be aware that section 66(6) of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018 allows for the sharing of data between schools in order to facilitate the efficient admission of students. Section 66(6) allows a school to provide a patron or another board of management with a list of the students in relation to whom—

1. an application for admission to the school has been received,
2. an offer of admission to the school has been made, or
3. an offer of admission to the school has been accepted.

The list may include any or all of the following:

1. the date on which an application for admission was received by the school;
2. the date on which an offer of admission was made by the school;
3. the date on which an offer of admission was accepted by an applicant;
4. a student's personal details including his name, address, date of birth and personal public service number (within the meaning of section 262 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005).

12. Waiting list in the event of oversubscription

In the event of there being more applications to the school year concerned than places available, a waiting list of students whose applications for admission to Gonzaga College SJ were unsuccessful due to the school being oversubscribed will be compiled and will remain valid for the school year in which admission is being sought.

Placement on the waiting list of Gonzaga College SJ is in the order of priority assigned to the students' applications after the school has applied the selection criteria in accordance with this admission policy.

Offers of any subsequent places that become available for and during the school year in relation to which admission is being sought will be made to those students on the waiting list, in accordance with the order of priority in relation to which the students have been placed on the list.

13. Late Applications

All applications for admission received after the closing date as outlined in the Annual Admission Notice will be considered and decided upon in accordance with the College's admissions' policy, the Education Admissions' to School Act 2018 and any Regulations made under that Act.

Late applicants will be notified of the decision in respect of their application not later than three weeks after the date on which the school received the application. Late applicants will be offered a place if there is a place available. In the event that there is no place available, the name of the applicant will be added to the waiting list.

14. Procedures for admission of students to other years and during the school year

The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school to classes or years other than the school's intake group are as follows:

- i. Admissions at other age levels occur only when vacancies arise in the appropriate classes. Such vacancies are rare but a waiting list is maintained for interested candidates. When a vacancy occurs the relevant candidates are notified.
- ii. The same criteria which apply to First Year entry will also apply to admission to other years.
- iii. The procedures of the school in relation to the admission of students who are not already admitted to the school, after the commencement of the school year in which admission is sought, are as follows:
- iv. The same criteria which apply to First Year entry will also apply to admission to other years.

15. Arrangements regarding students not attending religious instruction

The following are the school's arrangements for students, where the parents or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student has requested that the student attend the school without attending Religious Instruction in the school. These arrangements will not result in a reduction in the school day of such students:

Students so opting will be provided with opportunities for Religious Education.

16. Review of decisions by the Board of Management

The parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may request the board to review a decision to refuse admission. Such requests must be made in accordance with Section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

The timeline within which such a review must be requested and the other requirements applicable to such reviews are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.

The board will conduct such reviews in accordance with the requirements of the procedures determined under Section 29B and with section 29C of the Education Act 1998.

Note: Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Right of appeal

Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998, the parent of the student, or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years, the student, may appeal a decision of this school to refuse admission.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(i) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due to the school being oversubscribed.

An appeal may be made under Section 29 (1)(c)(ii) of the Education Act 1998 where the refusal to admit was due a reason other than the school being oversubscribed.

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **must request a review** of that decision by the board of management **prior to making an appeal** under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Where an applicant has been refused admission due to a reason other than the school being oversubscribed, the applicant **may request a review** of that decision by the board of management prior to making an appeal under section 29 of the Education Act 1998. (see Review of decisions by the Board of Management)

Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 will be considered and determined by an independent appeals committee appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills.

The timeline within which such an appeal must be made and the other requirements applicable to such appeals are set out in the procedures determined by the Minister under section 29B of the Education Act 1998 which are published on the website of the Department of Education and Skills.