

Studio Schools

Full application guidance

To be submitted by 5pm 26 September 2011 to:
StudioSchools.applications@education.gsi.gov.uk

Department for
Education

Guidance on full application for proposed 2012 Studio Schools (for submission by 5pm 26 September 2011)

Introduction

This guidance is suitable for use for proposals to establish a Studio School. Studio Schools are an innovative new model of 14 to 19 year-old educational provision. They are small schools - typically with around 300 pupils - delivering mainstream qualifications mainly through project based learning.

Students work with local employers and a personal coach, and follow a curriculum designed to give them the employability skills and qualifications they need in work, or to take up further or higher education.

Further information about the characteristics of a Studio School can be obtained from the Studio Schools Trust (SST) (<http://studioschoolstrust.org/>). SST promotes Studio Schools and assists DfE in the management of this applications process. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their application with SST, who can provide advice and support.

This guidance:

- details the information you must provide in each part of your application;
- sets out the criteria against which your application will be assessed; and
- lists the minimum requirements which all Studio School applications must meet in order to be considered.

Please send your application, with a minimum font size of 12, by email in a pdf format to StudioSchools.applications@education.gsi.gov.uk . You should also send two hard copies to be received by the deadline.

It should consist of:

- The Application, which must not exceed 20 A4 pages in length (excluding appendices).
- Appendix 1 – Letters of support from partners
- Appendix 2 – Catchment area and travel plan (if required)
- Appendix 3 – CVs of key people
- Appendix 4 – Site plan
- Appendix 5 – Financial plan

Applications that exceed 10MB (including attachments) will be delayed by the Department's email system – if you can avoid this then we will be able to deal with your application more quickly. If your application exceeds this limit, you may wish to break into sections and send them in separate emails. Please indicate this in the email title, e.g. 'Studio School application form xx, 1 of 5'.

Applications that exceed 25MB (including attachments) will not be allowed through the Department's firewall. If your application exceeds this limit, you will definitely need to break it into sections and send in separate emails. Please indicate this in the email title, e.g. 'Studio School application form xx, 1 of 5'.

There are 3 different models that may be proposed, namely Studio Schools as free-standing Academies; Studio Schools as schools within Academies; and, Studio Schools within maintained schools.

For proposals to establish a free standing Studio School, before submitting your application form, please ensure you have:

- Formed a Company Limited by Guarantee and registered it with Companies House (not the Charity Commission) - guidance can be found at the links below¹
². This Company is commonly known as an "Academy Trust". It will eventually enter into a Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State whereby it receives the funding enabling it to operate the Studio School, and then becomes a recognised charity owning or leasing the land and buildings of the Studio School. The majority of its directors will be appointed by the sponsors.

For proposals to establish a Studio School within a maintained school you should:

- provide evidence of engagement with your local authority (as LAs remain responsible for funding maintained provision).
- consider the statutory implications of any changes you are proposing (<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/schoolorganisation>)

For all proposals, before submitting your application form, please ensure you have:

- Completed the templates at sections 1 and 2:
 1. Applicant details
 2. Outline of the Studio School

Full completion of these two sections is part of the minimum assessment criteria

- Submitted information on ALL remaining sections of the application, using the numbering and titling consistent with the guide below:
 3. Educational vision and identity of the Studio School
 4. Educational plan and employer engagement

¹ <http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk/>.

² The model Funding Agreement and Memorandum and Articles of Association for Studio Schools are under development. We expect them to be broadly similar to the Free Schools Memorandum and Articles of Association at <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/freeschools/a0074737/free-schools-model-funding-agreement>

5. Evidence of demand and marketing
5. Organisational capacity and capability
7. Premises
8. Initial costs and financial viability

You may also find it helpful to use the same sub-headings as this guidance, for each of these sections.

Your application (excluding appendices) must not exceed 20 A4 pages in length with a minimum font size of 12. Your application must be sent electronically from the mailbox of the main contact named in Section 1. Two hard copies must also be received by the deadline. Hard copies should be sent to:

**Studio Schools Team
3rd Floor, Sanctuary Buildings
London SW1P 3BT**

What happens when?

Preparing and submitting your application – up to 26 September 2011

- Read this guidance carefully;
- The Studio Schools Trust is able to provide advice and guidance to help you prepare your application; and
- **Please note that any applications received by the Department after 5pm on 26 September will not be considered.**

Assessment of your application – after 26 September

- We will assess your application against the criteria set out in this document;
- Any applications that do not meet the minimum criteria will be rejected;
- All applications that meet the minimum criteria will:
 - be ranked on a comparative basis, using both the minimum and comparative criteria set out in this guidance;
 - be subject to due diligence checks - this means that we will use the personal information you provide to ensure your application is suitable to be submitted to the Secretary of State for his approval; and
 - undergo viability and cost assessments of your preferred site by Partnerships for Schools.

Section 1: Applicant details

Name of proposed Studio School:	
Model (i.e. free standing Academy or school within school/Academy)	
For free standing Academy proposals only, name and registered company number of Academy Trust:	
School within a school model – insert name and DfE number of existing school / Academy	
Details of Proposer(s) Letters of support should be attached at Appendix 1	
Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
Main contact – this is the person with day to day responsibility for establishing the Studio School	
Name:	
Address:	
Email address: Applications should be sent from this mailbox	
Telephone number:	
Members	
If new Academy Trust, please confirm any directors of the Governing Body/Academy Trust appointed to date and list them below. Please also confirm who the proposed Chair of the Governing Body is.	
Name:	
Position:	
Name:	
Position:	
Name:	
Position:	
Name:	
Position:	
Other key partners (i.e. local authorities, employers, schools and colleges)	

Section 2: Outline of the school

Age range:	14-19																																																
Proposed numbers in each year group at point of opening and explanation of how pupil numbers will expand to fill the school over time.	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;"></th> <th style="width: 10%;">2012</th> <th style="width: 10%;">2013</th> <th style="width: 10%;">2014</th> <th style="width: 10%;">2015</th> <th style="width: 10%;">2016</th> <th style="width: 10%;">2017</th> <th style="width: 10%;">2018</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 10</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 11</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 12</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 13</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>18-19 year olds</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </table>		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Year 10								Year 11								Year 12								Year 13								18-19 year olds							
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Local authority area in which the school would be situated (and if near to a LA boundary please include names of neighbouring LAs).																																																	
Define the catchment area (and local authority areas it includes) from which you expect to draw pupils to the Studio School																																																	

Section 3: Educational vision and Identity of the Studio School

The educational vision should describe why you are setting up the Studio School and its defining features and ethos. This is your opportunity to tell us in your own words about the overarching vision for your school.

Information required

- Set out why you are establishing your school – why this new provision is required for this age range/curriculum offer/location/pedagogy – and how it will meet local needs;
- Identify what will make the school distinctive in its vision and ethos. Please demonstrate your understanding of the distinctive characteristics of a Studio School, including (but not limited to):
 - The 14-19 age range
 - Strong engagement by local employers;
 - Commitment to the curriculum framework and other educational standards recommended by SST; and
 - How the proposer(s) are working to develop and deliver the vision for the project, including information about the individuals leading the proposal, and what support local employers are able to offer the Studio School.

Evaluation Criteria

Minimum Criteria

- A clearly focused vision and rationale that underpins the application;
- A clear identity for the Studio School, which is separate to that of the proposer or host school/Academy;
- Strong employer engagement.

Comparative Criteria

- The quality of the proposal including:
 - The clarity of proposer(s) vision for the project;
 - The seniority of those leading the proposal, including key project lead(s) and respective position(s);
 - The level of commitment from the proposer, including the amount of time and any assistance, financial or in kind; and

- The degree to which proposers are working jointly (where applicable)

Section 4: Educational plan and Employer Engagement

The educational plan should describe the structure of the Studio School and the experience that pupils will have whilst attending it. You should set out what pupils will achieve, how they will achieve it and how the school will evaluate performance, both of individual pupils and the Studio School as a whole. Key to this will be successful engagement of local employers and provision of work experience, placements and projects.

Information required

Admissions

Set out your admissions policy, including the criteria to be used to prioritise places if your school is oversubscribed.

Describe how you will admit students for a September 2012 opening.

Be clear about how your plans meet the School Admissions Code.

Define the catchment area and/or from where your school will draw its pupils.

Curriculum and organisation of learning

Set out expectations around the length of the school day, term and year.

Describe the curriculum, setting out how it will be broad and balanced and meet the different needs and interests of all pupils including the range of qualifications which might be offered.

Set out your curriculum model, that shows what proportion of learning is given over to each subject or area of learning for each year group, including how much time will be spent with employers and/or on community projects.

Set out your approach to disabled pupils and pupils with Special Educational Needs, who may or may not have a statement, and set out how you will have regard for the SEN Code of Practice.

Set out how your school will stretch the most able students.

Set out how your school will cater for students with English as an additional language

Set out any extended activities which will form part of the school.

Employer Engagement

Describe the employers who are engaged with the Studio School proposal, including any details of the work experience and/or placements they will offer to students.

Demonstrate the strength and sustainability of employer engagement with the Studio School.

Organisation of pupils

Explain how pupils will be organised, for example through year groups, tutor groups or other class structures.

Describe the role of the personal coaches at the Studio School.

Pupil development and achievement

Show how your school will define, measure and hold governors and senior management accountable for the success of: i) the whole school; and ii) individual pupils.

Behaviour and Attendance

Show how the school will promote good behaviour, positive relationships and good attitudes to learning; and show how the Studio School will maintain high levels of attendance.

Evaluation Criteria

Minimum Criteria

- Commitment that the Studio School will adopt practices and arrangements that are in accordance with the School Admissions Code, the School Admissions Appeal Code and admissions' law as it applies to maintained schools

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmissions>

- A broad and balanced curriculum³;
- Strong employer engagement, to ensure there are sufficient work placements, work experience and community projects available to students at the school;
- A viable curriculum plan with appropriate focus on core areas of learning, including but not limited to the core subjects of English, mathematics and dual science;
- A clear strategy for ensuring that the needs of pupils with different abilities are met, including gifted and talented pupils, disabled pupils and pupils with Special Educational Needs, and pupils with English as an additional language;
- A clear definition of success and how it will be measured;
- A sound approach to behaviour management and attendance;

³ For Studio Schools within maintained schools, in line with National Curriculum requirements.

- Fostering good community relations and promoting an active contribution to modern British society, in line with the Equality Act.

Section 5: Evidence of demand and marketing

You must demonstrate that you will have sufficient need and demand for the Studio School among (a) parents and children in the catchment area and (b) employers in the area. You should also demonstrate how you have engaged with the wider community, particularly any 14-19 education providers, and local employers. You should also outline your considered impact on other providers. Wherever possible, you should demonstrate the support of local authorities, local schools and FE providers for your proposal.

Information required

Evidence of demand

Provide information that shows clearly demand for your Studio School, from parents and pupils; and from employers (as set out above).

Provide evidence of engagement with, and support from, other schools and colleges.

Tell us about any consultation that has taken place which demonstrates demand from parents and pupils, including the questions that you asked in your survey - which should be specific to the Studio School.

Demonstrate how you have - or how you intend to - make the school known and attractive to pupils from all backgrounds including deprived or disadvantaged families.

You may consider providing wider demographic data and evidence about local need in the area to add context to the data from your survey findings.

Consultation and equality of opportunity

Please set out your plans, where relevant to your Studio School model, for consultation, as set out under Section 10 of the Academies Act 2010. In doing so, you will want to consider your wider responsibilities under equalities legislation.

Marketing strategy

Provide a plan for how you will market the school to prospective students. You will need to be able to achieve the demand you have identified for your school, over a reasonable period of time, so that places will be filled in each intake year going forward.

Include details of any discussions you have had with the local authority about arrangements to admit pupils.

Evaluation Criteria

Minimum Criteria

- Evidence of demand from parents and prospective students.

- Evidence of demand from employers on the basis of skills needs.

Comparative Criteria

- Evidence of engagement with, and demand and support from, other schools and colleges;
- Demonstrate how you intend to reach out to the wider community, including children from a range of backgrounds and across the ability spectrum;
- A clear plan for the statutory consultation, where relevant;
- A robust marketing strategy built on your educational vision and plan, taking into account your proposed intake and the demand that you have already gathered.

Further Guidance

Statutory consultation:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/32/section/10>

Equality Act 2010: http://www.equalities.gov.uk/equality_act_2010.aspx

Section 6: Organisational capacity and capability

You must demonstrate to us that the proposer(s) have the capacity and expertise to set up and run a Studio School. Governance arrangements will differ between Schools within existing schools/Academies and Studio Schools which will be free-standing Academies.

Information required

Capacity and capability to set up a school

Show that you have considered the resources, people and skills that you will need to set up a Studio School, and in particular demonstrate that you have educational and financial expertise on your long-term team. You should provide short (one page maximum) CVs of key people leading your project, at Appendix 3.

Set out plans for recruiting your school's Principal Designate⁴ and the role you envisage him/her playing in the pre-opening phase. Indicate what other capacity you will need during this phase and from where you will obtain it.

Set out plans for appointing a committed and independent governing body or Trust (depending on your model) with the breadth of skills needed to oversee both the pre-opening and post-opening phases.

School within a maintained school/Academy model: Where your proposal is for a Studio School within a maintained school/Academy, tell us about your whole-school governance arrangements and what special arrangements will be made for governance of the Studio School.

Capacity and capability to govern and manage a Studio School

Please define the roles that you envisage being taken by the governing body of the Studio School, in setting the strategy, monitoring performance and holding the Principal Designate⁴ and senior team to account for achievement of targets.

Set out how you will have appropriate financial expertise to oversee the financial management of the Studio School.

Set out your plans for the leadership and staffing of the Studio School. This should reflect both the arrangements upon opening and as the school develops to full capacity, with clear delineation of roles and responsibilities.

Evaluation Criteria

Minimum Criteria

- Plans for leadership and organisation of the Studio School, including the

⁴ Principal Designate applies to new freestanding Studio Schools only. For Studio Schools within maintained schools/ Academies this should be the existing head teacher.

recruitment and role of the Principal Designate⁵;

- Access to appropriate and sufficient educational and financial expertise;
- An adequate staffing structure to deliver the planned curriculum, building up from year 1 to when the Studio School is at full capacity.

Comparative Criteria

- The experience of the individuals involved in the project;
- A robust and realistic set of plans for recruiting high quality staff in accordance with your proposed staffing structure and educational plans;
- High quality governance arrangements including role of Principal Designate⁶, assistants, governing body and what they oversee and do;
- Clear understanding of the respective roles of the proposer(s), Governing Body or Trust (depending on Studio School model) and Principal Designate⁶.

⁵ Principal Designate applies to new freestanding Academy Schools only. For Studio Schools within maintained schools/ Academies this should be the head of the Studio School.

⁶ Principal Designate applies to new freestanding Academy Schools only. For Studio Schools within maintained schools/ Academies, set out your plans for the role of the existing head teacher and the role of the head of the Studio School.

Section 7: Premises

You will need to set out the details of the Studio School site. State whether you plan to open the school initially in temporary accommodation, and set out details about assessments you have made of its suitability.

Set out the total capital cost of the Studio School. If you did not indicate in your initial proposal a need for DfE capital funding, tell us how your school will be funded. Please set out the range of funding sources for your school. If you indicated in your initial proposal that you wish to bid for DfE capital funding, please be clear about what proportion of your total funding this will constitute. Also set out the amount of capital you are seeking and as much detail as possible about how you would spend capital funding.

Partnerships for Schools (“PfS”) will assess proposed sites for their suitability, procurement plans, and consideration of any work required. PfS will submit a site report on this basis which will be used in support of the selection process. PfS will assist Studio School applicants to secure sites (where applicable).

Proposers should clearly articulate when the building work is expected to be delivered, the building programme that gets to that delivery date and the delivery vehicle that the proposer intends to utilise. PfS will work with Studio School projects to ensure that this process is comprehensive and that the delivery route proposed by the sponsors is appropriate.

We will make an overall cost and value for money assessment of your application. You should bear in mind that those applications that are able to achieve the best overall cost and best overall value for money will naturally be prioritised for approval over those that do not.

Information Required

Details of your Studio School site

Include a site plan at Appendix 4, clearly marked to show the area for use by the Studio School

Please set out (where you can):

- your reasons for choosing this site;
- the address of the proposed site, including postcode;
- the current use of the proposed site;
- the current freeholder of the proposed site;
- a brief description of the site including size (in sqm) and the proposed pupil numbers; and
- the availability of the site and the nature of the tenure.
- details of any temporary accommodation that will be used initially.

For those applying to establish a Studio School within a school/Academy, it is only necessary to demonstrate the last three bullet points.

Capital investment

Please detail any sources of funding available to you to support the Studio School.

Provide detail of any DfE capital requirements (*only* where you have already indicated this need in your SOI), including the specifics of how it would be used, why it is needed and the impact on the project of not receiving DfE capital funding. This should include how you would seek to fund capital works deemed essential if your bid for DfE capital is unsuccessful.

Evaluation criteria

- The viability and quality of proposals for premises and equipment; and
- Value for money, making best use of available resources while maintaining the school's educational vision and objectives.

Note: We will make an overall value for money and cost assessment of proposal and DfE capital requirements (where relevant). We will also take into account other sources of capital funding available. Applications which are able to achieve the best value for money and best overall cost will be prioritised for approval over those that do not.

Section 8: Initial costs and financial viability

You must demonstrate that the cost of establishing your proposed Studio School and bringing it to full capacity represents value for public money. It should also demonstrate how you will make best use of available resources while maintaining the school's educational vision and objectives. You will also need to demonstrate that the Studio School will be financially viable in the long term, and sustainable within the per pupil funding which it is likely to receive, the last of these should reflect the lower pupil to teacher ratios and the role of the personal coach.

Information Required

Financial spreadsheet and long-term viability

You will need to demonstrate that your proposed Studio School will be financially viable and sustainable within the per pupil funding that it is likely to receive once it is at full capacity or 'steady state'. This means the first year in which your school takes in no additional cohorts, and no longer receives any start-up funding.

A financial plan should be submitted, **on the appropriate template provided (link below)**, which builds up indicative income and expenditure academic year budgets for the proposed school from opening until pupil numbers are forecast to have reached capacity. You should ensure it covers a minimum of five academic years.

Where there are uncertainties in the budget, you should use your current best estimates. You should clearly state the assumptions which you have made in the appropriate place in the financial template.

You must include the following with your application:

- A full financial plan (on the template provided, link below) attached as Appendix 5;
- Information about whether your proposal requires start-up funding, if so for what and how long;
- The percentage of total income representing staff costs (excluding any start-up funding) once the School reaches 'steady state';
- The pupil to teacher ratios with which your school will operate, both teaching staff and personal coaches;
- A description of any ongoing management charges and the percentage of the school's expenditure on these;
- Any borrowing which will form a part of your school's income;
- An assessment of your school's viability in the following scenarios: lower than anticipated pupil recruitment; lower free school meal percentage per cohort; lower income from third party sources (if applicable). Include illustrative financial plans for these scenarios.

- If you are assuming significant income from sources other than DfE grant, you should provide a detailed assessment of how you would manage your budget and remain financially viable if these contributions were significantly less than expected.

Start-up funding

Start-up funding may be applied for in the (academic year) in which the school opens and in subsequent years until it reaches “steady state”. It cannot be applied for in the (academic) year in which it reaches “steady state”.

Evaluation Criteria

Minimum Criterion

- With reference to all of the bullets above, evidence that the planned school will be financially sustainable within per pupil funding once it is at full capacity or “steady state” (as an expectation, this means generating reasonable in-year operating surpluses and not relying upon borrowing to be financially sustainable);

Comparative Criteria

- Evidence that the proposal to establish the Studio School represents value for money in the use of public funding whilst ensuring that the educational vision of the Studio School can still be delivered and its separate identity maintained. Evidence of the consistency of financial plans with other aspects of the application, based on supportable and realistic assumptions about income and expenditure;
- Evidence of financial resilience of the planned Studio School if there was to be reductions in income caused by failure to recruit pupils to your best estimate recruitment pattern, or failure to receive contributions from third party sources (where these are expected to be significant); and the degree of flexibility in the schools’ budget that would enable the school to change its expenditure in order to stay within reduced levels of income, without detriment to the delivery of the educational vision.

For those applying to establish a Studio School within a school/Academy, costs and financial viability should be based upon existing school funding taking into account the criteria above, as appropriate.

Financial template – to follow

Free-standing Studio Schools

Free Schools ready reckoner tool, and 16-19 funding ready reckoner:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/freeschools/a0073853/advice-on-free-school-revenue-funding-201112>

Further Guidance

Academies Financial Handbook:

http://readingroom.ypla.gov.uk/ypla/ypla-academies_financial_handbook-gn-nov06.pdf

Visit the Schools Benchmarking website to see examples of maintained school finances:

<http://sfb.teachernet.gov.uk/login.aspx>

School Organisation

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/schoolorganisation>