

Arcadia University REAL Certificate: Admissions process
October 7, 2016

Program website (<https://www.arcadia.edu/academics/programs/real-certificate>) Each time the form is filled out, we receive an automatically generated email.

The application is filled out online, printed and mailed in. It includes these forms:

- a. Cover page that gives application deadline, states the purpose of the program, and gives the admissions criteria
 - i. Be between the ages of 18-25 at the start of the program.
 - ii. Demonstrate active participation throughout the application/interview process.
 - iii. Express desire and motivation to complete a postsecondary education program.
 - iv. Have proof of eligibility for IDEA while in school (i.e., the student had an IEP).
 - v. Demonstrate ability to communicate with staff, faculty, and mentors.
 - vi. Demonstrate at least 3rd grade reading level, preferably 4th and above.
 - vii. Demonstrate basic mathematics understanding and ability to use a calculator.
 - viii. Have the ability to function independently for a sustained period of time (i.e., able to sit through 90 minute courses and function independently for 1 hour blocks of time (including navigating campus independently).
 - ix. Have sufficient emotional and independent stability to participate in all aspects of the REAL Certificate coursework and campus environment.
 - x. Be able to handle and adapt to change; not overly stressed when schedules or people change.
 - xi. Be able to be successful in competitive employment situations.
 - xii. Have proof of health insurance (Medicaid, Medicare, private).
- b. These forms are requested in the application packet:
 - Student information (including Educational Background and Employment History)
 - Parent/Guardian Information, to be completed by parent/guardian
 - Emergency Contact information
 - Medical Information and History Form
 - Release/Exchange of Information Form
 - Transcript
 - Three (3) Letters of Recommendation from persons who have known the applicant for one year or longer (use form provided in the packet). The recommendations should represent three (3) of the following areas:
 - Education
 - Vocational/Employment
 - Community Involvement and
 - Personal

Letters must be submitted using the Recommendation Forms in this packet and must be returned with the application packet in sealed envelopes with a signature across the seal. Letters of recommendation completed by family members will not be accepted.

Personal Support Inventory and Student Questionnaire

Copies of additional reports:

- Copy of applicant's most current IEP
- Copy of Summary of Performance, if available
- Copy of recent Individual Service Plan (ISP), if applicable
- Educational Evaluation conducted within the past three years, such as:
 - School re-evaluation
 - Peabody Individual Achievement Test (PIAT)
 - Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (KTEA)
 - Woodcock Johnson III or Revised Test of Achievement
- Copy of recent (i.e., within the last year) Functional Behavioral Assessment, if applicable.

2. The deadline for applications is December 15th
3. Applications are reviewed by the program director, coordinator, and faculty mentor over winter break
4. Interviews are scheduled with candidates in January-February (in general, most applicants are interviewed, unless they are clearly not a match for the program). Interviews are conducted by the program director and coordinator (and faculty mentor, if available)
5. At the interview (1 hour):
 - a. The candidate is first interviewed with their family present (the candidate can choose to bring whoever they like along for the interview). Questions focus on:
 - i. Why they want to attend college
 - ii. What they want to learn in college
 - iii. Activities they want to participate in
 - iv. Prior work experiences
 - v. Where they want to work and live
 - vi. Situational questions (what would you do if....?)
 - b. The student then takes a tour of campus with a peer mentor while the family is interviewed. Questions focus on:
 - i. Goals for their son/daughter attending college
 - ii. Understanding difference between high school and college
 - iii. Transportation plans
 - iv. Financial plans
 - v. Any medical or other concerns
 - vi. Any concerns with unsupervised time
 - vii. If both parents are in agreement
 - c. The student returns and is able to ask any other questions.
 - d. Note: we planned to make changes in future years to interview the student without parents present

6. Summaries of applications and interview notes (1 page) are then provided to the Admissions Advisory Committee (members include representatives from key offices on campus: enrollment management, financial aid, student affairs, disability supports, etc). The Admissions Advisory Committee meets to review the candidates and make recommendations about who to accept. If people are the committee are not available at the same time, two meetings are held.
7. In some cases, we need more time with a student to be able to make a decision. Some students (typically 1-2 per year) are invited to spend a half day on campus, attending class and spending time in social activities. This allows us to observe the student to make a more informed decision.
8. We state this in the application:

The decision to offer or deny admission to the program will be made by the admissions committee in their best judgment and in the best interest of the applicant. Admission will be based on the criteria outlined before and the committee's professional opinion about issues such as:

The applicant's desire to attend REAL Certificate and to adhere to the Certificate's policies regarding attendance and participation in coursework and Arcadia University classes.

The applicant's potential to successfully achieve his or her goals within the context of the REAL Certificate's context and setting.

The applicant's ability to accept and follow reasonable rules and to behave respectfully towards others, considering that the REAL Certificate does not have the personnel to (1) supervise students with difficult and challenging behaviors; (2) dispense medications or (3) provide personal assistants.

9. Letters of acceptance are sent to the top 6 candidates. We often have 1-2 students who are on a waitlist in case a place opens up.
10. Students are required to make a \$200 deposit to secure their place (the same as any other undergraduate student).