

Contents in this Policy

Page	Section
2	Introduction and Admissions Criteria
3	Equality, Inclusion and Transparency
4	The Application Process (and In-year Applications)
5	Pre-Enrolment and Baseline
6	Exceptional Extensions to our Programme
7	Maintaining the Placement at Team Domenica (Attendance and Behaviour)
8	End of Placement Procedures

Associated Guidance and Legislation

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2003](#)
- [Mental Capacity Act 2009](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#)
- [Skills and Post -16 Education Act 2022](#)

Associated Documents

- *Policy for Promotion of Positive Behaviours and Relationships*

Introduction and Admissions Criteria

Team Domenica is a specialist provision for young people with additional needs aged 19-24, and the specific primary task of our provision is to move our candidates into paid work via our Supported Employment and Supported Internship Programmes. Embedded into our programme are opportunities for candidates to build and extend their social, personal and independence skills as well as literacy. A unique feature of our programme is that much of training and development work is done in our cafés, the workplace, and the community.

Team Domenica Admissions Criteria

Candidates for our programme must:



Be aged 19-24 on admission



Have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) valid for the entirety of their placement



Show that they understand the outcomes of the programme of study and demonstrate their intention to work towards paid work



Have funding arrangements in place, usually via the relevant placing Local Authority, but alternative independent arrangements may be accepted.

Equality, Inclusion and Transparency

Our candidates have diverse and individual abilities and needs, and their journeys reflect this. Therefore, the start of the journey must have a focus on the individual while being transparent and fair. In order to achieve this, all aspects of our admissions process will be underpinned by the following principles:

- No candidate will be discriminated on the grounds of their gender, gender identity, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, marital or parental status or other protected characteristic. Age is limited by the provision of education, health and care plans under the Special Education Code of Conduct 2015.
- Team Domenica's aim is to support those with a learning disability to enter paid work, therefore a fundamental part of our application process is to make a fair assessment of whether the type of practical skills and workplace offer we make is an appropriate route to overcoming the barriers presented by an individual's disability or additional needs.
- Where the primary need is a severe learning disability; or the primary category on the EHCP is a physical or sensory disability; or there is a pattern of behaviours that challenge and manifest through aggression and violence, it maybe that the placement is not in the best interest of the young person. In such cases, the admissions team at Team Domenica will share their assessment openly with the candidate and those supporting them. Proportionate efforts will always be made to see if reasonable adjustments can be made, in partnership with other agencies where appropriate. Team Domenica cannot offer to meet personal care needs or administer medications.
- A final overarching principle is that Team Domenica has a duty to maintain the safety and wellbeing of other learners, staff, employers, and the public who use our cafés. If our reasonable assessment is that a placement is likely to be detrimental to this, then we will be unable to offer a placement.

Team Domenica works on the assumption that the candidate has the capacity to understand and participate in the process and will center the candidate in discussion and correspondence. While active support of parents, carers, families and communities is something that we support and facilitate, our relationship is primarily with the young person.

The Application Process

The admissions team at Team Domenica is made up of Deborah Rayner Grey, Pastoral and Curriculum Lead; Penny Calvert EHCP Manager and Lisa Campbell-Squires, Programme Director. Guidance on the application process is available on our [website](#). A completed application form should be sent to info@teamdomenica.com alongside the latest version of the Education, Health and Care Plan.

The admissions team will look at the information and the outcomes stated on the plan. If the information provided indicates that placement is possible the candidate, their parent/carer/supporter will be invited to visit Team Domenica if this has not happened prior to the application.

The team may also request additional information related to prior attainment, education and employment history and additional needs where they are relevant to this decision-making process. Information may be sought from the candidate or from other education and training providers.

Potential candidates will be required to attend an interview at Team Domenica, and if successful they will be asked to attend an assessment session in our café on Preston Road Brighton. If the assessment session is successful, Team Domenica will request that the local authority carries out a formal consultation.

Team Domenica will respond to consultation papers within the legal allocated timeframe of 15 days. This will only be extended when further information is required from the Local Authority to support the consultation.

At the end of the consultation process Team Domenica will be named as the placement on the plan. This means Team Domenica has ascertained it can meet the needs of the applicant and feels the programme is likely to lead to a successful outcome. It also means that funding is agreed for the core programme and at this point (or the equivalent point if independent funding has been sought) an offer of placement is made.

In year applications

Applications made for in year enrollment will be considered on a case-by-case basis and only if there is space within the relevant cohort.

Notes

If local authorities send consultations that have not been requested by Team Domenica, the potential candidate will be invited to interview, unless it is obvious that we are unable to meet the needs outlined on the Education Health and Care Plan.

All decisions not to offer a placement will clearly state the reasons why and if an applicant wishes to appeal a decision not to offer a placement, this should be addressed in writing to Lisa Campbell Squires, Programme Director.

The intension is that each candidate will follow a two-year programme unless at the end of year one, it is deemed that the second year may not be appropriate for the candidate. In this case the candidate may end their time with Team Domenica. In exceptional circumstances, such as those associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, there may be an opportunity for the candidate to repeat the first year. This will be subject to a funding agreement from the Local Authority.

Successful candidates will start at the beginning of the academic year which is September.

Pre-enrolment and Baseline

Pre-enrolment

Over the summer preceding enrolment, there will be an information evening for candidates and supporters. Team Domenica will also undertake a collection of all necessary data on the candidate, including evidence of previous qualifications and eligibility to study in the UK.

From September 2023, Team Domenica will be piloting candidate/college agreements to bring even more clarity to our expectations and the offer that we are making.

Data will be handled in accordance with our relevant policies on data protection and confidentiality. Some data is a necessary component of our funding and a delay in providing this may impact on Team Domenica's capacity to start the placement.

Baseline

The first half term on programme constitutes our Baseline Assessment Period. Over this period, we confirm the level of ability the candidates have in Numeracy and Literacy and that they are in the correct group.

We also develop our individual risk assessment and ensure all support and therapy needs are met as appropriate. If this period reveals significant information about the individual's capacity to succeed on the programme, then Team Domenica reserves the right to call and emergency review of the EHCP to determine if the placement is still viable or if additional funding is needed to cover additional learning support costs.

Exceptional Extensions to our Programme

When Team Domenica has offered a candidate a two-year learning programme, the expectation is that, on completion of the programme, the learner will be prepared to be in paid work with an employer. By prepared we mean that the young person has:

- Undertaken all necessary elements, including completion of relevant coursework, unit/credit accumulation.
- Been supported in identifying areas of interest in employment with the aim that a successful transition plan can be followed.
- Been made aware of various future options and supported to make choices about what they want to do.
- Been able to communicate those choices, and have those choices understood and respected.

Team Domenica's Senior leadership team (SLT) will only consider extensions to placements (i.e., beyond two years) in exceptional circumstances. Those circumstances may include (but are not limited to) a learner being absent from college for a considerable period of time, either due to illness or accident, that significantly impacts on their programme of learning.

To be considered for an extension, candidates or their families or representatives should write to Team Domenica Programme Director (lisa@teamdomenica.com) and copy in the Pastoral and Curriculum Lead Deborah Rayner-Grey (deborah@teamdomenica.com) to make known their intention. The letter/email should include clear reasons why the placement should continue, risks associated with not continuing the placement, and describe what benefit continuing the placement would have for the candidate. Team Domenica will acknowledge receipt of a written request within 10 working days within term time (however this may take longer in holiday time).

Team Domenica admissions team will provide multidisciplinary advice to the Senior Leadership Team who will make the decision on suitability to extend their placement. SLT's decision will be based on the application made, the learner's personal situation in relation to the above-mentioned circumstances, and other available information (such as discussing with keyworkers, families, and other involved professionals). SLT must also consider:

- Available vacancies - including places that have already been offered to other candidates.
- Best interests of the candidates – including the candidates' views and aspirations, any protection or safeguarding considerations, personal /family circumstances
- Programme content - including suitability, availability, and level of accreditation
- Suitable peer group
- Availability, capacity and suitability of continuing therapeutic intervention
- Support levels – understanding the expectation from Local Authorities that support levels should reduce over a programme, and that during an extension period support levels may be reduced further.

Team Domenica will communicate whether the request is agreed in principle or whether it is rejected. This will be done as soon as all relevant information has been collected.

No formal offer of extending a candidate's placement will be made to the candidates without first holding an Annual review where the Local Authority will be invited for them to make comment on the request. Any offer made will be copied to the appropriate professionals within the Local Authority.

N.B. The decision to agree to extend a placement beyond the expected end date lies with the Local Authority. Team Domenica runs a planned two-year programme with progression built in at the end of each year.

Maintaining the Placement at Team Domenica

Attendance

Successful candidates need to attend the full programme, so that all components of the curriculum can be accessed. In addition, good attendance is a necessary workplace skill. Therefore, Team Domenica has a clear set of expectations around attendance.

Candidates and/or their families and carers are responsible for reporting all absences and the reason for this to the Team Domenica reception on a daily basis. Where absences are infrequent, well-explained and there is little impact, then the candidate's mentor will maintain an overview and support the candidate in any necessary actions.

Our expectation is 100% attendance but allowing for illness and other unavoidable events, we have set a **target of 92% attendance based on our data** over the last four years, and an acknowledgement of the continuing impact of Covid-19 on our learners. An attendance rate of 90% is concerning and an attendance rate of 88% or below is very concerning.

When attendance is concerning, the Curriculum and Pastoral Lead needs to ensure that the candidate is informed of this and consider informing the parents/carers/supporters of this so that improvements can be made. A range of low level interventions based on supporting and encouraging better attendance will be discussed and implemented.

When attendance is very concerning the Curriculum and Pastoral Lead will call a Placement Meeting involving the candidate and those who support their attendance. This will result in a SMART improvement plan that will be reviewed. Persistent attendance at or below this rate could trigger end of placement procedures via and emergency EHCP review and/or a decision from Team Domenica not to carry a candidate to the next stage of our programme.

Behaviour

Team Domenica works to create a respectful, empowering and developmental training environment that models successful workplace behaviour and attitudes, and this is detailed in our Policy for Promotion of Positive Behaviours and Relationships. We fully recognise the challenges many of our candidates face in understanding and showing conventional pro-social behaviours as they work through the steps of our programme.

Teaching and training staff at Team Domenica understand that getting things wrong is an important part of learning and that through this built resilience is an integral part of moving to independence. Our one-to-one mentoring allows candidates the space to explore and evaluate their choices safely, and this (combined with the annual review of the EHCP) should provide for the necessary support from the correct agency or person.

However, there are some behaviors that cannot be accepted at Team Domenica, and these include **violence, the use of weapons to harm or make threats, interpersonal aggression, sexual violence or harassment, persistent acts of hate-based discrimination and harassment, and fire setting**. Incidents of such behaviours could lead to the immediate end of placement.

End of Placement Procedures

The Pastoral and Curriculum Lead for Team Domenica keeps an overview of any incidents or patterns of behaviour or concern and will support teachers, mentors and other staff in appropriate strategies or interventions to support candidates in overcoming these. Where there is not a pattern of improvement they will (in consultation with others on the team) call a Placement Meeting. In exceptional circumstances the candidate may be requested to not attend until the meeting has happened. This meeting will involve the candidate, key staff from Team Domenica and the workplace where appropriate, and other agencies and individuals that are in a position to support the candidate. The result of the meeting will be an action plan to support change - this plan should center on the candidate understanding their choices and being empowered to make realistic change. If the plan (or as necessary, a series of plans) is unsuccessful, Team Domenica will call an emergency review of the Education, Health and Care Plan with the intention of ending the placement.

In the case of persistent, concerning or extreme unacceptable behaviour, there will be an Extraordinary Placement Meeting held to inform the candidate the placement has ended, and when necessary, this will be via an online meeting or telephone call.

All placement meetings will be coordinated by the Pastoral Lead, currently Deborah Rayner Grey, who will be responsible for the recording and communication of plans and decisions. Any concerns regarding these should be directed to our Programme Director, Lisa Campbell Squires (lisa@teamdomenica.com).