



**The R.E.A.L. Certificate
FALL 2023
Application and Admissions Process**

The **R**aising **E**xpectations for **A**cademic **L**earning or REAL Certificate offers students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities the opportunity to participate in a post-secondary academic-, vocational- and social inclusion-focused program. Applicants will have received extensive special education services in their secondary schools and are not able to access college by meeting typical entrance criteria. The REAL certificate is a two year program that requires four (4) full semesters of study. Students in the REAL Certificate audit traditional undergraduate courses and participate in inclusive vocational and social experiences. Students have the option to live on campus or commute. An individual plan for college participation is developed for each student. Students must follow the University Code of Conduct and 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.

The REAL Certificate is **NOT** an accredited college degree program and graduating students will receive a certificate of completion.

The REAL Certificate is a Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program approved by the U.S. Department of Education. Eligible students are therefore able to [apply](#) for certain types of federal aid. See the *Student With Intellectual Disabilities* eligibility section of the Federal Student Aid website (studentaid.gov) for further information. Consolidated or Person/Family Directed Supports (PFDS) waiver and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation funding may be used to pay for the REAL Certificate program.

Fall 2023 Applications must be postmarked by February 15, 2023.

If you need additional information or have questions about the application, please contact:

Jessica Mattis, REAL Certificate Director

real@arcadia.edu

REAL Certificate Eligibility Criteria:

Upon application, it is expected that students will demonstrate the following minimal requirements:

- Be between the ages of 18-26 at the start of the program.
- Provide documentation of intellectual and/ or developmental disability.
- Demonstrate active participation throughout the application/interview process.
- Express desire and motivation to complete a postsecondary education program.
- Have proof of eligibility for IDEA while in school (i.e., the student had an IEP).
- Demonstrate ability to communicate with staff, faculty, and mentors.
- 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).
- Have sufficient emotional and independent stability to participate in all aspects of the REAL Certificate program and campus environment.
- Be able to handle and adapt to change; not overly stressed when schedules or people change.
- Express desire to be part of the workforce
- Be able to provide transportation to and from campus
- Have proof of health insurance (Medicaid, Medicare, private).
- Be able to follow the University Code of Conduct and to behave respectfully towards others

Due to space limitations, not all applicants who complete the application and meet the criteria for admission will be accepted in the REAL Certificate.

Application Process

Important Dates

February 15, 2023- Completed Applications Submitted

February/March 2023- Student/Family/ Supports Interview

March 31, 2023- Student notified of application status

May/June- Students and family participate in Person-Centered Planning meeting

August 23, 2023- Fall Orientation begins

Application Process

To apply for the Fall semester, complete and submit the application, supporting documents, and teacher reference form. After submitting the required application packet, students may be invited to participate in an interview. Following the interviews, the application screening committee will review all of the applications and select students for admission. 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.

Please do not call about the status of your application, as we will not be able to provide this information for you over the phone. You will receive an email notifying you of the status of your application. Since a limited number of applicants will be admitted each year, interested candidates are welcome to re-apply the following year.

Application Packet

Part 1: Application	Part 2: Supporting Documents	Part 3: Teacher Reference Form
-Contact Information -Program Information -Detailed Personal Information -Mailing Address -Demographics -Family -Education Details -Extracurricular Activities -Short Answer Questions	-High School Transcript -Most recent IEP -Educational evaluation conducted within the past 3 years, such as. <ul style="list-style-type: none">● School re-evaluation● Woodcock Johnson● PIAT● KTEA	-Use the REAL Certificate Reference form to ask for a recommendation from one of your teachers (Printable PDF or online form available)



Fall 2023 REAL Certificate Application

Contact Information

Legal First Name: _____ Legal Middle Name: _____

Legal Last Name: _____ Email Address: _____

Different first name that you go by: _____

Other/Former Name(s): _____

Home Phone Number: _____ Student Mobile Phone Number: _____

Preferred Phone- please select: Home Mobile

Program Information

The REAL Certificate is a program for students with intellectual disabilities and/or developmental disabilities who are motivated to complete a post-secondary education program and join the workforce after graduation.

Please write your name and initial here to confirm that you meet the program entrance requirements listed on page 2 _____

Students in the REAL Certificate are required to take Foundations of College Writing and a First Year Seminar Course. After the first semester, students enroll in any 100 and 200 level courses across the university. Some students in the program choose to focus on one area of study while others explore courses in a number of different departments. Some examples of the types of classes students have taken include Criminal Justice, Art, Education, Psychology, etc.

Please list three areas you are interested in studying:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Students in the REAL Certificate have the option to reside in on-campus housing or to commute to campus daily:

Please select if you plan to be a residential or commuter student.

Residential Commuter Undecided

Transportation services are NOT provided by the university. If you plan to commute, what is your transportation plan?

Detailed Personal Information

Date of birth (Students must be 18-26 at the start of the program): _____

Gender: Female Male Nonbinary Another Gender

Legal sex: Female Male

Pronouns: He/him She/her They/them Other pronouns

Are you the first member of your family to attend college? Please select- Yes No

Which disabilities do you have? Circle all that apply.

Intellectual disability	Speech or language impairment
Autism	Developmental disability
Orthopedic impairment	Emotional disturbance
Deaf-blindness	Traumatic Brain Injury
Other health impairment	Hearing Impairment
Deafness	Visual Impairment, including blindness
Specific learning disability	Other; please specify: _____

Which types of benefits do you receive? Select all that apply.

	None
	Consolidated or Person/Family Directed Supports (PFDS) Waiver
	SSI (Supplemental Security Income)
	SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance)
	Unemployment Insurance
	TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families)
	OVR

Which of the following best describes the curriculum and educational setting you experienced in high school? Select one.

	Fully included in general education curriculum in general education classes
	Partially included in general education curriculum with the majority of classes in general education.
	Student spent half of their time in general education and half of their time in special education.
	Partially included in general education curriculum with the majority of classes in special education.
	Not included in general education curriculum or classes/ only in special education classes (e.g. life skills).
	Other; please specify:

What, if any, type of statewide assessment did you take while in high school? Choose one.

	Regular with or without accommodations
	Alternate
	Waived
	None
	Other; please specify:

Do you have a legal conservator or guardian? Yes No

If yes, please indicate who: _____

Mailing Address

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Country: _____

Demographics

Are you Hispanic/Latino/a/x? Yes No

Regardless of your answer to the prior question, please indicate how you identify yourself. (You may select one or more or none)

<input type="checkbox"/>	American Indian or Alaska Native
<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian
<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or African American
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hispanic of any race
<input type="checkbox"/>	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
<input type="checkbox"/>	White

Family

Parent/Family member/Guardian:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Relationship- Please circle. Parent Family Member Legal Guardian

Parent/Family member/Guardian:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Relationship- Please circle. Parent Family Member Legal Guardian

Do you have a sibling, parent, grandparent, great grandparent that is attending or has graduated from Arcadia? Yes No

Are you related to a University employee? Yes No

Education Details

Current or most recent high school: _____

School Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Entry Date (mm/yyyy) _____

Graduation/ exit date (mm/yyyy) _____

Please list any other secondary/ high schools/colleges you have attended. (Include school name, location and dates attended.)

Have you ever been found responsible for a disciplinary violation at any educational institution you have attended from the 9th grade (or the international equivalent) forward, whether related to academic misconduct or behavioral misconduct, that resulted in a disciplinary action?

Yes No

Extracurricular Activities

Please share some activities that you participated in at your school or in your community. Activities can involve clubs, sport teams, volunteer events and paid employment.

Activity 1: _____

Describe the activity and your involvement:

I intend to participate in a similar activity in College Yes No

Activity 2: _____

Describe the activity and your involvement:

I intend to participate in a similar activity in College Yes No

Activity 3: _____

Describe the activity and your involvement:

I intend to participate in a similar activity in College Yes No

If you would like to include additional activities, please submit the information on another sheet or paper or include your resume.

Short Answer Questions

Please answer ALL of the following questions so that we can learn more about you and why you would like to be part of the REAL Certificate. *Each answer must be 250 words or less.*

1. Why are you interested in attending Arcadia University?
2. Describe your academic strengths and challenges and how you learn best.
3. Describe your work/volunteer experiences and your long-term career goals.
4. Please share any additional medical, psychiatric, behavior, and/or physical conditions that may affect your participation in the classroom, social or vocational activities on campus. Describe accommodations or supports that have been helpful in educational and/or work settings.

Disclosures

Statement of Civility

The diversity of the University community adds to the richness of campus life, and Arcadia University expects all members of the community to respect both differences and commonalities. The University acknowledges every individual's constitutional right to freedom of speech and freedom of inquiry.

Arcadia University also affirms every individual's right to an environment that is free from harassment of any kind. The University will not tolerate the subjection of another person, group or class of persons to inappropriate, abusive, threatening or demeaning actions at any time.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Arcadia University is committed to ensuring equal opportunity to all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, race, color, religion, creed, sex/gender, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity, military and military veteran status, age, or disability in its educational programs, activities, admissions or employment practices as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and other applicable statutes. Discriminatory conduct and harassment, including sexual harassment, violates the dignity of individuals, impedes the realization of the University's educational mission, and will not be tolerated.

Inquiries concerning Title IX, Section 504 and ADA compliance and information regarding accessibility should be directed to the Affirmative Action Officer, Arcadia University, 450 S. Easton Road, Glenside, PA 19038-3295; phone: 215-572-2947 and/or the University's Title IX Coordinator, Arcadia University, 450 S. Easton Road, Thomas Hall, Room 002, Glenside, PA 19038-3295; phone: 215-517-2659.

Fingerprinting and Background Check

Prospective students are advised that some internship placement sites require students to submit to fingerprinting and criminal background checks and receive appropriate clearances before they will be permitted to participate in internship programs at those institutions. Students who do not submit to fingerprinting and/or do not receive appropriate clearance may be unable to fulfill their academic requirements at Arcadia University, and therefore may not be able to complete their educational program. Unless otherwise paid for by the internship site, students will be required to bear the expense of such screening. Arcadia University does not pay for or reimburse for the expenses related to background checking or fingerprint clearance.

Harassment

Arcadia University also affirms every individual's right to an environment that is free from harassment of any kind. The University will not tolerate the subjection of another person, group or class of persons to inappropriate, abusive, threatening or demeaning actions at any time.

Mandatory Reporting

Under the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law (23 Pa.C.S.6301 et seq)., Enrollment Management staff, as school employees, are mandated reporters. As such, staff are required to make a report of suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse.

Letter of Recommendation

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, you have the right to review letters of recommendation after you enroll in the university, unless you waive your right to access them. Waiving your right lets recommenders know you will never see the recommendation and may lead to a more candid and truthful recommendation. If you choose not to waive your right, some recommenders may decline your request.

Please select if you waive your rights to review the letter of recommendation. A yes response means you waive your rights. A no response means you do not waive your rights.

Yes

No

I understand that withholding information requested in this application or giving false information will make me ineligible for admission to, or continuation in, the REAL Certificate of Arcadia University. I furthermore pledge to submit any future changes, including those related to grades or discipline issues, to the REAL Certificate office and understand that an offer of admission may be rescinded based upon updated information. I certify that the information given is correct and complete.

I have read, I understand, and I agree to the above statement.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

You have now finished Step 1 of the application process. Please remember that in order for your application to be complete, all required supporting documents and the Teacher Reference Form must also be submitted.
