



EXCEPTIONAL MINDS

A Non-Profit Vocational Center & Animation Studio
For Young Adults On The Autism Spectrum

Exceptional Minds Full-Time Vocational Program Admission Policy and Procedures

The Exceptional Minds full-time vocational program is designed for people with autism who are motivated and capable of learning the technical and work-readiness skills necessary to become employed in competitive settings after completion of the program in the fields of animation and visual effects. The program is inappropriate for students, who are not independently engaging in exploration of art, media and learning computer software, and who do not demonstrate a basic level of social and independent living skills or who have frequent or intense disruptive and/or violent behaviors. (See Exceptional Minds Full-Time Vocational Program Admissions Policy - Behavior for more details on the latter.)

Assessment. In order to select the best candidates for its program, Exceptional Minds has established an intake process. Prospective applicants are encouraged to take a tour in order to determine their level of interest in our program. Upon application, Exceptional Minds conducts a record review, surveys parents and professionals who have worked directly with the individual. Additionally, Exceptional Minds does its own experiential assessment of potential candidates for open classroom positions. After the entire assessment process is completed and the results are scored, Exceptional Minds will accept the best candidates for the available positions. Students enrolled in other Exceptional Minds programs must settle accounts prior to being considered for admissions. Students, who were previously assessed or rejected, may re-apply and be re-assessed for admission.

Admissions Criteria. Exceptional Minds' criteria for admission includes adequate employment pre-requisite skills in the following:

- **Independence:** transportation, hygiene, scheduling and punctuality, work completion, safety, money etc., as evaluated by the Exceptional Minds Life Skills Scale, filled out by at least 3 people other than the applicant and may include a family member and 2 professionals with whom they have studied or worked. Applicants may not be conserved.
- **Computer Fluency Skills:** basic working knowledge of Microsoft Word, typing skills of at least 25 words per minute, hot keys and shortcuts, saving and naming files, basic menu and search engine, navigation and e-mails, etc. as demonstrated in the Exceptional Minds Experiential Assessment.
- **Executive Function:** planning, decision-making, time management, organization, etc. as demonstrated in the Exceptional Minds Experiential Assessment.
- **Ability to Follow Multistep Directions:** presented both orally and in writing, as demonstrated in the Exceptional Minds Experiential Assessment.

- **Flexibility:** ability to receive and incorporate feedback and supervision, change direction with little notice, use multiple modes of design to create a project, ability to try novel programs and methods, ability to work on non-preferred tasks, etc. as demonstrated in letters of reference as well as in the Exceptional Minds Experiential Assessment.
- **Artistic Ability:** ability to create figurative and abstract drawing, design and composition skills, creative ideas, etc. as demonstrated by the portfolio, required for evaluation as part of the initial assessment process and which can include electronic or paper work samples, website, etc.
- **Basic Work-Related Social Skills:** listening, promptness, appropriate hygiene and dress, greetings and salutations, appropriate volume and tone, ability to work and learn in a group, and showing interest in coworkers, etc., as demonstrated in letters of reference as well as in the Exceptional Minds Experiential Assessment.
- **Motivation:** takes pride in quality work, meeting deadlines, performing at or above the level of peers, able to work for periods without prompting or praise, etc. as evaluated by the Exceptional Minds Student Motivation Scale, filled out by the applicant as well as at least 3 other people and may include a family member and 3 professionals with whom they have studied or worked, as well as demonstrated in the Exceptional Minds Experiential Assessment.
- **Minimum educational level:** evidence of high school diploma or G.E.D., and a minimum of sixth-grade academic skills as evidenced by transcripts, formal testing results, such as state testing (Star, CAT, etc.) IEP Assessment and Present Levels of Performance, etc.

Notification of Admission. Every effort will be made upfront to ensure the highest likelihood of a match prior to assessment. In some instances, however, applicants who still need substantive improvement may be assessed. When the results of the assessment indicate that an applicant is not a good match for the Exceptional Minds program, he/she may be notified immediately. Applicants that are being considered for the full-time program will be notified by April 1st of the results and admissions decisions. All applicants will be provided with a rationale for the admissions decisions.

Once applicants are notified of acceptance into the full-time program, Exceptional Minds will mail a contract and tuition/deposit information to the responsible parties. Exceptional Minds must receive a completed and signed contract and a \$1,000.00 deposit by May 1st in order to reserve a spot for the fall semester. First semester tuition is due by August 1st; second semester tuition is due December 1st.

Assessment Fee. Prior to conducting an initial assessment, a one-time charge of \$350 will be collected. This fee is nonrefundable. If an applicant is assessed for the full-time program, but is not admitted, no additional fees will be charged for future assessments.

The EM Admissions Committee makes the final decision regarding student admissions. EM does not guarantee employment to students or graduates at any time in either outside facilities or at our EMS studio.