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# THE ADVENTURE ACADEMY



52-IN-52

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**PATHFINDER**  
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

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# THE ADVENTURE ACADEMY

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Whether you're an apprentice learning the ropes of your adventuring trade or an expert researching your tome on the mysterious ruins of a lost civilization, adventure academies are an effective way to advance your adventuring career. In some lands, academies are rare and even sometimes mistrusted collections of lore and power, while in others civilizations they are where the society's lore is preserved and passed on to future generations, handed by educated experts to an eager generation to be further analyzed and refined until it is ready to be passed on again.

This book begins with an overview of how academies generally work. Then it contains suggestions on how GMs can implement academies as a core part of their campaigns, whether as a backdrop for an overarching campaign or as a core mechanic that players must navigate as part of their adventures. After that are some rules systems designed for adding the demands and benefits of life in an academy into a campaign, and finally it presents sample Adventure Academies you can use as inspiration for building your own, or that you can drop as-is into your campaign setting.

## ACADEMY OVERVIEW

Academies are institutions where your character gains essential education for furthering their knowledge and skill. In some realms, there is but a single academy, which teaches everything the rulers of the realm think worth teaching. In others, academies might specialize in teaching developing minds or helping adults earn academic degrees. For an Adventure Academy-focused game, their impact on characters should largely be determined by the needs of the campaign. Below is a brief summary of what academies are and how they work.

- Before you can begin attending an academy, you must first enroll with them. Enrollment varies from academy to academy. In some feudal realms attendance at an academy is mandatory for those seen to have an aptitude

### HOW MODERN IS AN ACADEMY?

In a game that generally has a feudal or medieval aesthetic, even if not a true technological or social structure drawn from history, it's reasonable to ask how 'modern' the idea of a community of scholars and academics teach students for pay is. While most fiction set in something akin to an Adventure Academy are more-or-less modern, history has plenty of examples that can be drawn on for less current academies.

The Hekademia, or University of Athens, was founded by Plato in circa 387 BC, and lasted for centuries. Aristotle studied there for twenty years and then founded his own school, the Lyceum. The University of Constantinople could trace its origin back to the Pandidakterion, a Byzantine school was founded in 425 AD with chairs in law, philosophy, medicine, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music, rhetoric, among other subjects, which lasted until 15<sup>th</sup> century. The University of Al Quaraouiyine was founded in Morocco in 859, and is arguably the oldest degree-granting university in our world.

During the Islamic Golden Age (from roughly the 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries) the importance of the study of scripture in Islam led to the development of religious institutions of learning (madrasas) which taught law, theology, medicine, and science. Those who proved their mastery of such subjects could be granted an *ijazah*—a license to teach the subject to others—by an instructor who already held such a license.

While it is beyond the scope of this product to detail the practices and methods of all these historic examples of institutions of higher learning, these are just the tip of the iceberg that can be used as inspiration for pre-modern Adventure Academies.

for a talent useful to the realm, and out of reach for anyone else regardless of wealth or influence, while in others the academies are all connected to a guild or church, or even a proving ground for apprentices in all walks of life, with attendance a benefit given to priests and guild members in good standing.

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For campaigns where an academy is run more like a modern university, enrollment is more likely to be a matter of passing tests and paying tuition, with public academies generally being easier to get into than private ones. In these campaigns, acceptance into a primary or secondary academy generally requires a brief assessment to determine your prior skills and abilities so you can be placed into an appropriate curriculum, while universities generally have you attempt an enrollment examination to determine whether you meet the university's academic criteria. Similar procedures might exist in a variety of forms, from passing an oral test given by a single instructor, to proving aptitude in a craft or skill by demonstrating it under practical conditions.

- For public academies not funded by the state or some guild, once you've been enrolled you must immediately pay your first academic term's tuition, if any. Public schools generally have more affordable tuitions than private schools, with public primary and secondary schools being free to most citizens.

- You begin each academic term with a grade of 100. Each week, you must attempt a special skill check for each course that you're enrolled in called a maintenance check. The skill you use for your maintenance check is determined by the course. The DC for your maintenance checks is determined by how often you use the study downtime action (see below).
- Your academic curriculum consists of 4 to 7 courses that are either mandated (meaning you have to take them to graduate) or elective (meaning you get to choose which courses you take). Generally, 25% of the courses in a curriculum are electives while the rest are mandated.

# RUNNING AN ACADEMY CAMPAIGN

If you're reading *The Adventure Academy*, chances are you're at least considering running a campaign where a major focus of the adventure is the players attending an academy of some kind. This section is designed to offer you some helpful tips that will enhance your character's school day experience.



## ESTABLISH THE “ADVENTURE” IN THE “ACADEMY”

If you’re just doing a short aside in an academy, or beginning there and then moving on to a more typical campaign, it’s reasonable for the adventures the PCs get up to in their school days to just be an exception to the normal course of events. If the academy is going to be a long-term part of the campaign, however, you should establish why it’s considered acceptable for students to be put in potentially life-and-death adventuring situations on a regular basis. (You should also consider if the campaign you are considering is appropriate for the characters the PCs are making. Not everyone is comfortable putting younger characters in some kinds of adventures, for example. It’s a good idea to have a discussion with your players to make sure they aren’t expecting cute investigations of stolen candy bars when you plan for them to face a horrific, nonstop onslaught of cannibal zombies.)

Some suggestions on how to establish adventure potential as part of the background are listed below.

### THE ADVENTURE COMES FIRST

Rather than the campaign be presented as primarily an academy, with adventure as an apparent sideline, the adventure takes front-stage. The PCs might be new members of a literal Adventurer’s Guild, being sent out to guild-approved adventure sites and only getting time for classes in-between battles, investigations, and exploration. Perhaps the education is what graduates them from probationary “Copper” guild member to full “Silver,” members, or even promote up to the elite “gold” status. Or maybe the academy itself is first and foremost a warship, fortified colony at the edge of enemy territory, or even just a single instructor who is themselves an adventurer, taking on the PCs as apprentices. The idea of this set-up is that it’s closer to traditional adventuring, with the academy element as an interesting B-plot that most occurs during downtime and in-between adventures.

### IT’S A KNOWN RISK

Some academies could just be known for having terribly dangerous things happen to some portion of the students, and the players are asked to make

characters who end up there anyway. The academy could be run-down (with old safety protocols that have failed every year) but still have significant prestige making graduation worth the risk. It could be famous for its “school of hard knocks” teaching style that results in a few deaths every year or so, but produces galaxy-famous skilled elite. It could have undergone a recent change in management for the more-dangerous (in which case proving the risks the PCs are being placed in could be avoided might be part of the campaign), or a re-education center for criminal offenders who are taught how to perform dangerous tasks to help pay off their debt. If driven by religious or royal decree, some adventuring may be a required part of the duty of each student to justify the resources spent educating them. Or it might be placed in an area where significant risk has just become commonplace, such as a kingdom world where ancient undead tombs have begun opening up all over, making the PCs no less safe at the academy than anywhere else.

### IT’S PART OF THE CURRICULUM

One easy way to explain why PCs in the academy keep going adventuring is for that to be considered part of the learning process. If the academy is explicitly one designed to produce competent and experienced adventurers (whether that’s squires for Knights of the Realm, members of the Wayfarer’s League, licensed Gladiatorial Schools, or literally just getting a Bachelor’s of Adventuring), then it stands to reason students will be sent on adventures from time to time. Some of these might be “safe” adventures in carefully-controlled conditions (ranging from fake dungeons full of nonlethal traps, weakened constructs, and illusions of greater dangers, to having a chaperone tag along, but only get involved if the PCs are in serious danger) to sending them on real field-missions that should be within their area of expertise (such as exploring areas with known, but low-level and well-documented, threats).

### IT’S THE PCs’ FAULT

It might be the academy is normally perfectly safe, it’s the PCs that are the source of their own constant adventuring. If the PCs are the scions of the next High Thegus, and thus targets of political assassination, or are the Chosen Ones destined

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to end the threat of the Sluagh Restoration (and thus doomed to engage in specific predestined, dangerous events), or are just the kinds of students who can't help investigating the Forbidden Sections of the old academy building, they may get drawn into adventures and threats most students don't have to worry about.

## EMPHASIZE SLICE OF LIFE EVENTS

It's common for a roleplaying game to be largely built around combat and exploration, but if you're looking to sell your players on the fantasy of being students at an academy of adventure you need to sell them on the experience of being a student at your school. To do this, the students and staff of the students must become characters in their own right. The following tips are intended to help GMs give character to the experience of school life.

- **Focus on Interactions:** There's a reason why *The Adventure Academy* chooses to simplify school work into a few easy skill checks that your character attempts once or twice a week; spending hours roleplaying lectures and studying can be monotonous if overused, so instead of roleplaying every moment that your characters are in school, focus on the important interactions with major characters. Show your players their PCs being confronted by a bully, being called to face the headmaster, or needing to overcome a required trial of skill, but don't make your players sit through every history course they take that year (even if their PCs have to).
- **Popularity:** As with any setting where characters are stuck together for much of the time, rivalries and social pecking orders arise in an Adventure Academy. Especially if students are following a strict regime and have little freedom in how they spend their time and limited money, reputation and popularity become crucial forms of social currency among their peers. A student's popularity within the school is a huge motivator for many of the happenings at the school. This need not be a complex system—tracking the attitude of a few key NPCs and student cliques is enough to make this important. When a character aids or entertains a group, a Charisma check can be made to see if their attitude improves toward that student, while any major blow to a group's power of popularity is likely

to result in a decrease of attitude. In some cases, groups will never be truly helpful or hostile, but even knowing who is friendly and who is unfriendly can be important.

- **Academies as Characters:** No GM can expect to detail every single person who attends an academy, but understanding the student body's general reaction to things that happen in the school is very important when you're trying to detail life at a school; academies are thick with social hierarchies and social norms, and knowing what the student body likes and dislikes can help inform their general reaction to the PCs and important NPCs.

## MAKE CLASSMATES MATTER

Schooling is an incredibly social experience, so it's important to give faces to the people that your PCs see every day. While full-on interactions with every person in every class your characters take isn't necessary, having a name, appearance, and a short list of likes and dislikes can go a long way to making your school feel like a lived-in place. That way, your PCs can choose which classmates to interact based upon their players' curiosities while you also have an established cast of characters to instigate plots with. You might want to consider making a class roster with a general list of information that everyone knows about each classmate and hand it to the PCs for their reference.

## OFF-CAMPUS ADVENTURES

When you're running a campaign based on an Adventure Academy, you might decide that everything important that happens in the campaign should happen at the academy. Don't fall into this trap. A good story is one that takes the protagonists out of their comfort zones, and if the protagonists are students then to some extent school is their comfort zone. Whether or not the PCs like school, it's everyday life for them. As a result, important events and milestones are ones that subvert everyday school life with special events like school festivals, field trips, work studies, and similar off-campus events. This isn't to suggest that something important should happen every time your characters go off-campus; you don't want to be predictable after all! As long as *The Adventure Academy* feels like an important part of the campaign, it can serve just as well as a base of operations without having to also be the location of all adventuring.

## PLAN AROUND YOUR TERMS

Many campaigns are fast-paced, occurring over the span of a few months. When you're running an academy campaign, however, it will feel odd to your players if the major conflict of your adventure is resolved when there's still two or three more terms to go in the academic year. When you're planning your adventure, take the time to sketch out the plot along with the term. Try to plan your campaign's events around the academic year; for example, if you're going to close out a major storyline, having that storyline resolve around the end of an academic year lends a feeling of closure to the storyline, with the graduation acting as a natural departure from the previous storyline and the culminating event as a sign of maturity befitting a proper graduation.

## TIE THE ORDINARY TO THE EXTRAORDINARY

When you're designing an academy campaign, it can be tempting to keep the two sides of your PCs' lives (school and adventuring) separate. While you might want to do this at first in order to establish the nuance of each setting, as your adventure goes on your stories will become increasingly engaging if these two sides of the PCs' lives start to collide, especially if they do so in ways that add tension and stakes to your story. For example, if the PCs pick a fight with an enemy mercenary group and that group later arrives at the PCs' school and places the building in a lockdown situation, the players now get an opportunity to see how their PCs' classmates and teachers react to an extremely dangerous situation, which can offer a different side to those character's personalities and give the PCs something worth fighting for. That being said, you don't need to have the player's classmates interact with their adventuring colleagues only in dangerous encounter-style situations; giving the players an opportunity for these two sides of their lives to intermingle in a more slice of life avenue can similarly allow the PCs to see their high-action allies and enemies in different settings, which can help flesh them out into multi-dimensional characters. Plus seeing a threatening foe in a slice of life scenario can be high tension if the PCs know that the social hierarchy prevents them from acting against their enemy until they make the first move!

## ACADEMY RULES

In addition to the game's standard rules, an Adventure Academy campaign may find some rules for how an Academy works useful. All of these are options—if you and the players are happy to ignore rules for study, enrollment, and grades, that's fine. Or you can grab just one or two of these to support elements of the campaign you consider important. They work well together, but you can take as much or as little of this material as you wish.

## ENROLLMENT AND TUITION

For those academies with enrollment and costs of learning measured in coin, enrolling in an academy typically takes one day, during which you perform the actions necessary to enroll yourself into the academy. For most academies, you attempt a skill check with every skill associated with each of the courses in your curriculum. The DC is noted in the enrollment section of your academy's stat block. Some academies have special circumstances that allow you to bypass some of these requirements.

If an academy lists a tuition cost, you pay the indicated cost at the start of each academic term to be enrolled there. Failing to pay this cost causes your studentship at the academy to become automatically suspended for that academic term.

## OPTIONAL ENROLLMENT AND TUITION

If you're using *The Adventure Academy*, chances are you're planning a campaign that's largely based around the concept of your players being students at an institution of some kind, which can mean using skill checks for the enrollment process can impede the flow of your campaign. After all, if your big concept for your campaign is that your players are students at a school, then it's rather anticlimactic for a member of the party to fail to make enrollment and essentially be unable to participate in your campaign. Similarly if the game depends on characters being part of the academy, having one fail to pay tuition and get kicked out isn't a useful part of the narrative unless it's built in to some plot point the GM wants to introduce, in which case it should just happen rather than depend on a PC failing to have the space money.

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As a result, campaigns that largely center on the academy rules might be better served having the game elements of enrollment requirements and tuition be waived, instead using narrative backstories to explain how the players secure and maintain their spots in the academy. These can become an interesting part of a character's backstory. Some suggestions on ways to do this are presented below.

- Despite their performance on the enrollment exams, a teacher or staff member of the school sponsors the PC's admittance into the academy, perhaps due to blood relations or because they were impressed by something the PC said or did that wasn't tested during enrollment.
- The academy agrees to enroll a PC because their talents are well-suited to an extracurricular activity. So long as the PC remains an active member of that extracurricular activity and is in good disciplinary standing, they can remain enrolled at the school.
- A PC is asked to perform a service to the academy in exchange for enrollment or tuition there. An entire group of PCs could be brought together for the same service, such as investigating and reporting on smuggling relics through the school, monster slaying, or a similarly important (and potentially dangerous) occurrence.
- The PC or someone sponsoring the PC makes a considerable donation to or perform a service for the academy in order to ensure the PCs is admitted and allowed to remain. This could be money from a source the PC does not have access to, or could be something less concrete such as bringing famous scholars to the academy for lectures, or providing excellent PR opportunities and promoting the academy's reputation.
- The PC could be given a place at the academy by someone with authority to give the academy orders, such as a government figure, headmaster, or major alumnus. This might be a reward for some act the PC performed, or for some act an ancestor of the PC's performed, or a way to make up for some injustice the PC suffered (such as losing their family in a war, or being accused of a crime they are proven innocent of).

## CURRICULUMS

Most academies organize the courses that their students are expected to complete into curriculums. A curriculum is a year-long academic program that's designed to impart a predetermined set of skills onto students who partake in the curriculum's course. While different terms and organizational standards might be used for schools focusing on producing young guild-members, or instructing junior nobles on all that they need to know to rule someday, it's useful to consider what categories of knowledge are considered important, and which are merely allowed or seen as useful but not mandatory, which maps neatly to the general rules on curriculum.

The courses that comprise a given curriculum are organized into two general categories: mandatory courses and electives. Most of the courses that you take at a given academy are mandatory; they are listed by name in the academy's stat block and you must enroll in them to graduate from the academy's program. If an academy notes that it has one or more electives, you get to work with the GM to decide what course you're taking as an elective and, most importantly, which skills you can use to attempt maintenance checks with for that school.

- A curriculum is the sum total of academic study that is offered by an academy.
- A course is a single area of study within a curriculum.
- An academic week consists of 5 consecutive days (typically the equivalent of Monday through Friday).
- A semester is one of two 15 to 18 weeks long academic periods offered by an academy.
- A trimester is one of three 12 to 13 week academic periods offered by an academy.
- A quarter is one of four 7 to 9 week academic periods offered by an academy.
- An academic term is a single semester, trimester, or quarter within an academy.
- An academic year is a year's worth of academic terms. For example, an academic year at an academy that uses semesters consists of 2 academic terms, while an academic year at an academy that uses quarters consists of 4 academic terms.

You can, of course, create new terms and curriculum standards to fit the needs of your campaign. Perhaps Winter School only occurs when it is too cold for squires to be at war, guild apprentices to be journeying for supplies, and powerful landowner's children to be seeing to farms. In that case the duration of a term might even be variable, beginning a week after the first frost and ending when ice no longer blocks the main port. You should adapt these rules to work for the tone and feel of Adventure Academy you want to run.

## GRADES

Certainly not every academy is going to have a form 1-100 grading system. In some, classes may just be pass/fail. On others, you may need to complete a specific trial to prove you have mastered the lessons. In others, the opinion of your teacher may simply determine if you are allowed to be taught more. But while it may be useful to have one game system for checking how well students are doing with their

studies, it would certainly be excessive to have five of them. If a GM wants to have some way to track what the Adventure Academy's staff thinks of a student's mastery of learning (which may well be different than the student's actual mastery level), this system can be used to give a general overview of the perceived level of competence, as a percentage.

You begin each academic term with a grade of 100 out of 100. Each week, you must attempt a maintenance check for each of your classes to determine whether your grade maintains, increases, or decreases. At the end of each academic week, you must attempt a maintenance check for each of your courses. The base DC for this check is outlined by the academy and is further modified by how many times you used the attend school and study downtime activities during that week (see below). If you succeed at your maintenance check, your grade improves by the amount you succeeded by. Likewise, if you fail your maintenance check your grade deteriorates by the amount you failed by.



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For example, Hansune and Chosuy are two students at The Quay, a rough school officially in neutral territory where noble houses and major families around the world send their scions for training in the tough lessons of politics, dueling, and power struggles. At the start of the semester, both adolescents have a grade of 100. Both Hansune and Chosuy attended school on all five academic days, but Chosuy used the study downtime activity twice while Hansune elected to use the adventure prep downtime activity instead. The base DC for maintenance checks at the Quay is 20, and is modified by each student's study habits.

Hansune's minimum effort (5 total uses of academic activities) doesn't increase his DC, but they don't lessen it either. Chosuy, on the other hand, lowers his maintenance DC by -4 because of his additional studying. The boys' Common course uses Culture for its maintenance checks, so at the end of the academic week they both attempt Culture checks to maintain their Culture grade. Hansune's total Culture bonus is +6 against DC 20 while Chosuy's is +2 against DC 16. Hansune rolls a 15, making his total result a 21, while Chosuy rolls a 13, making his total result a 15. Hansune succeeds by 1, so his grade remains unchanged (you can't have a grade higher than 100, after all). Chosuy fails by 1, so his grade decreases to 99.

It's easier to maintain a lower grade than a higher one. For every 10 your grade is below 100, you gain

a +1 bonus to your maintenance check. Characters who end up with a grade of less than 70 can expect a discussion with staff about studying more. Those with a grade of less than 60 may risk being put on probation, and if a second term results in a grade that low possible expelled (or, at least, tasked with some extraordinary adventure-based task to prove they should be allowed to stay).

## DOWNTIME ACTIVITIES

Life in the Adventure Academy revolves around 3 major "downtime activities" that occur on days when students aren't off adventuring: attending school, preparing for school, and studying. PCs must choose between these activities and other potential demands on their time, such as crafting, making magic items, and learning new spells. These downtime activities are detailed fully below.

### ATTEND SCHOOL

Attending school is crucial for staying up to date on your academic studies.

**Activity:** You spend about 8 hours attending an academy and learning what you can from them. If your academy is brick and mortal, you must be physically and mentally present in that location to use this downtime activity. If your academy is distributed, you must be able to access the academy's lessons and teachers wherever they may be on a given day. You cannot benefit from the attend school downtime activity more than five times per 7-day academic week.

**Results:** You total each use of the attend school and study downtime activities to determine the DC of each maintenance check you made at the end of the academic week to determine your grade.

### PREPARE FOR ADVENTURE

There's only so much school and study are going to do for you once you're delving into an ancient dungeon infected with slugh spawnpods.

**Activity:** You spend about 4 hours specifically getting ready for the next step in an ongoing adventure (if known), or making general preparations for real threats in the field. This may include some scholastic activities, such as looking into the weaknesses of a specific foe, memorizing the tumblers of the most lock styles, or talking to experienced adventurers for practical field tips, but

TABLE: STUDY DC MODIFIERS

# of Uses of the Study Activity	Maintenance DC Adjustment
0	+10
1	+8
2	+6
3	+4
4	+2
5	+0
6	-2
7	-4
8	-6
9	-8
10	-10
11	-12
12	-14

those are focused on practical issues that sit outside your current academy classes. But mostly this is about sparring, checking your equipment, exercise, meditation on your ki flow and/or eldritch powers, and otherwise being ready to face life-and-death conflicts and split-second decisions at a moment's notice. This activity is separate from academy schoolwork, but can still only be performed in the academy (or a guildhouse or base with similar resources for fine-tuning your preparations to match the most common encounters you may experience).

**Results:** Only the prepare for adventure activities you performed in the week prior to going adventuring are recent enough to have a result. Of course most people can't guarantee the exact day they'll go adventuring, so many characters spend a lot of time preparing for adventure "just in case." On your first day adventuring, make a special d20 check, adding only the number of times you prepared for adventure in the preceding week. If your result is 20 or more, you get 1 reroll you can use in your current adventure, for any 1 attack roll, saving throw, or skill check. If your result is 25 or more, you get 2 rerolls. If you performed the activity 5 or more times in the week before adventuring, you receive 1 bonus reroll regardless of your d20 check.

## STUDY

You study coursework after school to cement your study of the materials.

**Activity:** You spend the day studying your coursework to cement your understanding of it. While you typically don't spend all of your 24-hour downtime day studying, the mental exertion of your study session is sufficient that you're unable to gain any benefit from any other downtime activity while studying (except for the attend school downtime activity).

**Results:** You total each use of the attend school and study downtime activities to determine the DC of each maintenance check you made at the end of the academic week to determine your grade.

## GRADUATION

You graduate from an academy after you successfully pass a number of academic terms. To pass an academic term, you must end the term with a grade of 70 or higher. Once you meet an academy's graduation requirements, you graduate and receive a diploma suitable for your achievements. The benefits conferred by a diploma vary based on the total amount of education received, as follows:

- **Primary and Secondary or Vocational School:** You double the income you can earn with a Profession check.
- **University:** Upon earning a university degree, you can use every maintained skill for your curriculum's courses to earn money as if it was a Profession, and double the amount of coin you earn when doing so. If you have multiple degrees that include the same skill, these effects stack (two degrees triples the amount you earn, four degrees quadruples the amount you earn, and so on).

## ACADEMY SAMPLE STAT BLOCK

The following is a sample stat block for an academy. Each section of the stat block is described further in detail after the stat block.

### ACADEMY NAME

*A brief description of the Academy's history goes here.*

**Qualities** The academy's qualities are listed here in alphabetical order.

**Term** The number of weeks in the academy's academic semesters and trimesters is noted here; **Enrollment** the DC of all skill checks to enroll in the academy is noted here (the skills you have to attempt enrollment checks with to enroll into the academy are noted here)

**Tuition** the tuition you must spent each academic term is noted here; **Scholarships** Any scholarships available to prospective students looking to attend the academy are noted here.

**Curriculum** the base DC of all maintenance checks is noted here; **Courses** The courses you must take while studying at the academy are noted here (the skill you use for maintenance checks for each course is noted in parenthesis after that course)

### ACADEMY NAME

Each academy's name is listed first on its heading line in its stat block. This might be the name of the academy or a specific school that's part of a larger university.

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## ACADEMY DESCRIPTION

The second line of an academy stat block provides a brief description of that academy.

## QUALITIES

The third line of an academy stat block lists every quality that the academy has in alphabetical order. Qualities have few gameplay effects on their own, but they are useful in describing how the academy functions within the larger framework of the academy rules. The qualities described here are merely the most common qualities; when designing your own qualities, you should feel free to add additional qualities as appropriate for your academy.

## DISTRIBUTED

Academies with the distributed trait do not have traditional classrooms for their students. Instead, students gather wherever a teacher is available, be that in a park, a popular tavern, theaters during unused hours, a patron's manor, or even the homes of individual instructors.

## GUILD

Academies with the guild trait specialize in courses designed to teach students a trade.

## MAGICAL

Academies with the magical trait specialize in teaching spellcasters how to properly channel and control their otherworldly powers. Other schools may also have such classes, but normally as electives rather than core curriculum, and likely only for a small number of students.

## PRIMARY

Academies with the primary trait specialize in phase one basic education, and often offer courses tailored to children and preadolescents. An academy that specializes in primary education for children is referred to a primary school in this book, while an academy that specializes in primary education for preadolescents is called a middle school. Of course such schools can also be designed to teach basic education to adults, students new to higher-learning, magical creatures that lack the essentials, as determined by the academy's society, and so on. Primary school programs usually span a total of 8 academic years (Grades 1 through 8).

## PRIVATE

Academies with the private trait are funded by private organizations and do not need to as closely adhere to governmental standards when planning their curriculum as a result. Most private academies require their students to pay a tuition to attend, but this is sometimes waived by the organization in question.

## PUBLIC

Academies with the public trait are funded by governments and are generally available free or heavily discounted to that government's citizens. Public primary academies and public secondary academies rarely have tuitions (and may replace payment in coin for oaths of loyalty, required membership in a guild, vows toward a religious service, and so on), while public universities are often significantly cheaper than their private counterparts.

## RELIGIOUS

Academies with the religious trait are generally funded by religious organizations (typically churches of a specific deity) and their curriculum reflects the core beliefs and values of the church in question. Religious academies normally have the private trait except in theocracies.

## SECONDARY

Academies with the secondary trait specialize in phase two basic education, and often offer courses tailored to adolescent and young adult students. An academy that specializes in secondary education is referred to a high school in this book, but may be called a Apprenticorium, Squirage, Young Guildhall, or anything else in your campaign. Secondary school programs usually span a total of 4 academic years (Grade 9 through Grade 12).

## UNIVERSITY

Academies with the tertiary trait specialize in higher education and offer courses that allow students to earn academic degrees or similar writs of learning and accomplishment. An academy that specializes in tertiary education is called a university. Most universities assume their students are adults, but exceptional younger students may well find themselves learning in a university as well.

## TERM

The first entry on the third line of an academy's stat block notes whether the academy's academic terms use semesters, trimesters, or quarters. Immediately after the word academic term is the number of academic weeks that comprises that academic term.

## GRADUATION

Graduating from an academy takes a number of academic years depending upon the curriculum that you're participating in and the level of education you're looking to acquire, as shown on the following table. Different Adventure Academies are likely to have different titles for those who graduate, from Apprentice, Sojourner, Guildler, and Hall Keeper for guild-based academies to Dagger, Shield, Sword, lance for a general adventurer's academy. Create titles that match the fee of the campaign and world you are running your Adventurer's Academy within.

**TABLE: GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Honors	Requirements
Grades 1 through 12	1 academic year per grade, graduated all previous grades
Associate's Degree	2 academic years, plus graduated Grade 12
Bachelor's Degree	2 academic years, plus an Associate's Degree
Master's Degree	2 academic years, plus a Bachelor's Degree
Doctorate	2d4+2 academic years, plus a Master's Degree

## ENROLLMENT

Following the academy's academic term entry, the enrollment entry notes the skill check DC that you must succeed at in order to enroll at the academy. The skills that you must attempt enrollment checks with are listed after the academy's enrollment DC in parenthesis.

## EXPULSION

Once you successfully enroll at an academy, you remain enrolled so long as you pay your tuition each semester (if any) and are in good academic standing with your academy. For most academies, this means ending each academic term with a grade of 70 or higher.

- **Behavior:** Numerous schools have codes of conduct they require students to adhere to, with violations a possible cause for expulsion. This often includes expulsion for any criminal act, though schools more interested in reputation than justice might agree to conceal or overlook a crime for the sake of appearances, while a school that teaches criminal activities (such as burglary) might actually insist on a certain number of crimes (of a specific, approved type) be performed by each student.
- **Grade:** If you end an academic term at a private academy with a grade of 69 or, you must immediately attempt new enrollment checks for those courses. If you fail any of these enrollment checks, you are expelled from the academy. Once you have been expelled from a private academy due to your grades, you cannot enroll in any other private academies until you successfully finish a academic term at a public academy with a grade of 75 or higher in all of your choices.
- **Tuition:** If you fail to pay your tuition within 4 academic weeks of the start of a new academic term, you are automatically expelled from your academy, but can attempt a new enrollment check to enroll without penalty at the start of the next academic term.

## TUITION

If an academy has a tuition cost, the cost you must pay at the start of each academic term.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Any scholarships that you can try to qualify for are noted after the tuition entry in an academy's stat block. If you qualify for and accept the scholarship, your tuition is paid for in full for one full academic year. Note that the scholarships listed in this section usually aren't the only scholarships that the academy offers, and the GM is encouraged to invent additional scholarships that serve the story they want to use the academy to tell.

## CURRICULUM

The penultimate line of an academy's stat block notes the base DC that you must succeed at to pass a course's maintenance check. The DC is modified based on how many times during each academic week that you spend using the study downtime action (see below).

# THE ADVENTURE ACADEMY

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## COURSES

After listing the base DC of the academy's maintenance checks, the academy's stat block lists the course names for each of the academy's major courses. Listed after each course's name in parenthesis is the skill that you use to attempt that course's maintenance checks. You use the skill with the lowest bonus to attempt your grades maintenance check each term—one reason many students end up focusing on studies they are already good at.

## ELECTIVES

If the courses entry of an academy's stat block notes that students can take 1 or more electives, an elective's entry will be listed that notes which electives are available for students to take. Each student chooses their electives for the term at the start of the term. This choice can be swapped one time at any point during the academic term by effectively dropping an old elective for a new one.

## PERKS

The final line of an academy's stat block lists the perks you can acquire by completing a full year's worth of semesters, trimesters, or quarters there. In addition to the perks listed in the school's stat block, students attending any academy can choose one of the following perks.

- Gain a +1 enhancement bonus to skill checks with one skill associated with one course you took. You can apply this perk twice to the same skill, stacking the bonus to +2.
- Gain a +1 insight bonus to skill checks with one skill associated with one course you took.
- Gain Skill Focus as a bonus feat. Your skill selection with this feat must be applied only to a skill associated with one or more courses you took.
- Reduce the DC of Knowledge checks on topics related to one course that you took by 1.
- Ignore one non-feat prerequisite for one feat that relates to a course you took. The GM has the final say on what feats relate to

what courses, but a player should be able to determine that before taking a course. You still cannot take feats a character of your class and level couldn't qualify for. For example, a 7<sup>th</sup> level fighter could not take a feat that required spellcasting, or 8 ranks in a skill, but could ignore any requirement for 7 or fewer ranks in a skill, or an ability score of 19 or less.

## SAMPLE ACADEMIES

The following academies are built using the rules outlined above. Many are institutions found in the Blood Space campaign setting, and are named accordingly.

### CHAMPION'S HALL

*Founded by an ancient hero to teach future generations altruism and service, Champion's Hall is a secondary school that focuses on preparing adolescents for life as a hero.*

**Qualities** Guild, Private, Secondary

**Term** Quarter, 9 weeks; Enrollment DC 20 (Diplomacy, any Knowledge skill, Nature);

**Tuition** 250 gp; **Scholarship** You have preternatural qualities that would otherwise put you on a government watch list as a potential threat to society, such as most class features.

**Curriculum** base DC 15; **Courses** Athleticism (Acrobatics, Climb, Swim), Beastery (Handle Animal), Engineering (Craft, Disable Device, Knowledge [engineering]), History of Heroes (Knowledge [nobility]), 1 elective; **Electives** Art (Perform), Chirurgy (Healing), Horsemanship (Ride), Natural Philosophy (Knowledge [nature]), Mastering the Magical Arts (Spellcraft)

**Perks** You've learned techniques for protecting others no matter the cost. You gain Bodyguard as a bonus feat, even if you do not meet its prerequisites. If you already have Bodyguard, you can instead gain a bonus feat that lists Bodyguard as a prerequisite, though you must meet this feat's prerequisites.

## CUMBERBATCH'S SCHOOL OF SPELLSLINGING AND SORCERY

*Located in the broken, rocky islands of the Lover's Knot archipelago between the twin kingdoms of Eozzata and Ozari, Cumberbatch is a famed academy devoted to teaching young spellcasters to master and control their spectacular power.*

**Qualities** Magical, Primary, Private, Secondary  
**Term** Quarter, 8 weeks; **Enrollment** DC 10 (Knowledge [arcane], Knowledge [nature], Knowledge [religion], Use Magic Device); **Tuition** 250 gp.

**Curriculum** base DC 10; **Courses** Ampules (Craft [herbalism]), Defense Against Dark Magic (Knowledge [religion]), History of Magic (Knowledge [history]), Transmogrification (Knowledge [arcane]), plus 2 electives; **Electives** Alchemy (Craft [Alchemy]), Divination Through Outsider Contact (Diplomacy), Dueling (Bluff), Flying (Fly), Lost Languages (Linguistics)

**Perks** You gain the ability to cast a cantrip of your choice at will as a spell-like ability, from

the one spell list of a class you meet the requirements to take, using your character level as the spell's caster level.

## MONASTERY OF SEVENTEEN

*Located on a mountain near Merothia, the Monastery of Seventeen Stars has long taught the fundamental esoteric mysteries of the occult and personal self-improvement, and many of its students go on to found their own temples or fighting schools.*

**Qualities** Primary, Private, Religious, Secondary

**Term** Quarter, 8 weeks; **Enrollment** DC 20 (Acrobatics, Escape Artist, Knowledge [religion], Sense Motive); **Tuition** 25 gp; **Scholarship** None.

**Curriculum** base DC 15; **Courses** Astrology (Knowledge [arcane]), Medicine (Healing), Common Studies (Knowledge [history], Knowledge [religion]), 1 elective; **Electives** Breath Control (Acrobatics, Climbing, Swimming, Sleight of Hand), Naturalism (Survival), Self-Control (Bluff, Sense Motive), Shadow Steps (Stealth)



# THE ADVENTURE ACADEMY

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**Perks** You've learned the secrets of the stars and have a lesser connection to them. Once per day you can take 20 with a Knowledge skill while able to see the stars and gain a +1 bonus to your total result.

## THE RESOLUTE'S SCHOOL OF ADVENTURING AND ARCHAEOLOGY

*The academy on the exploratory sailing ship Resolute, a ship built and operated by the Reclamation, this school teaches aspiring Reclamation agents everything they need to know to uncover the lost mysteries of the Burning Age.*

**Qualities** Guild, Private, Secondary, University

**Term** Trimester, 12 weeks; **Enrollment** DC 15 (Any Craft, Knowledge, or Profession skill);

**Tuition** 500 gp; **Scholarship** You sign an exclusivity contract to work for one full year as an employee of the Reclamation after you graduate.

**Curriculum** base DC 20; **Courses** Anthropology (Knowledge [Local]), Navigation (Knowledge [geography], Survival), Sea Life (Knowledge [Nature], Swim), Burning Age History (Knowledge [arcane, history]), Physical Sciences (Physical Science), 1 elective; **Electives** Custom Study (any Knowledge skill), Healing (healing), Quartermasting (Appraise)

**Perks** You've honed your ability to cooperate with your companions. Whenever you use the aid another action you gain a +4 bonus to see if you successfully aid another.

## THE QUAY

*Located on a series of buildings built on rock foundations out in the bay of the Great City, the Quay is officially outside any nation's*

*jurisdiction, and thus is a trusted source of training for royals, nobles, and children of the wealthy and powerful families of the world. At the same time it is a small city unto itself, where only crimes against the school are given any attention, and cliques and class rankings can make students immune to the normal rules of society. It boasts a student body with a mindboggling 5,000 students of all cultures and even different species, and is among the most dangerous schools in the world, but the significant prestige that comes with graduation pushes families that are—or wish to become—important houses to send their children there if they can find any way to do so.*

**Qualities** Public, Secondary

**Term** Quarter, 9 weeks; **Enrollment** DC 0 (Bluff, Diplomacy, Sense Motive); **Tuition** None.

**Curriculum** base DC 15; **Courses** Communication (Linguistics), Conflict (Knowledge [history, geography, religion]), Diplomacy (Bluff, Sense Motive), Law (Knowledge [nobility]), 3 electives; **Electives** Assassination (Disguise, Perception, Stealth), Art (any Perform), Courtiership (Diplomacy), Eldritch Powers (Use Magic Device), Equestrianism (Handle Animal, Ride), The Exchequer (Appraise, any Profession), Siege (any Craft, Knowledge [engineering]).

**Perks** Your youth spent at the social meat grinder of the Quay has taught you several important survival tricks that are sure to help you make it anywhere from high court to back alleys. You gain one of the following feats as a bonus feat: Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, or Toughness.

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