

Admissions Policy

2026-2027

Reviewed by Ann Meisner and Steve Boyes: 8 December 2025

Approved by the Board: 16 December 2025

Next review: December 2026

Summary

This policy concerns admissions to the college for GCSE, A Levels and NCUK. It does not cover support tuition, Easter Revision, Energise My Learning or Summer School. MPW selects on the basis of academic suitability, previous educational record (including prior school references), entrance tests (if appropriate), performance at interview and assessment of special needs. No prospective student is offered a place at the college without attending an interview.

MPW is committed to equal opportunities for all as outlined in our Equal Opportunities Policy. We welcome applicants from all backgrounds and will not discriminate unlawfully on the basis of any protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Human rights and freedoms are respected but must be balanced with the lawful needs of our college community and the rights and freedoms of others. We consider each application involving disability, medical needs, special educational needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) individually. We will make reasonable adjustments where it is reasonable to do so and will assess, in consultation with parents, the student and relevant professionals where appropriate, whether we can meet the student's needs while ensuring the safe and effective education and welfare of all students.

There are limits to the number of students that can currently be admitted to the college, to individual year groups (particularly at GCSE) and to individual classes, where there is an absolute maximum of nine students in any one group. The exception to this is NCUK where the maximum is fourteen students in any one group. For students seeking admission close to one of our entry points, there may also be timetabling constraints imposed by the combination of subjects being sought, though for those applying in good time there are no such restrictions.

Please note that in this policy, the term "parent" should be understood to mean "parent or educational guardian".

1 About the college

- MPW is a co-educational, day school.
- The college is non-denominational.
- The maximum college roll is 250.
- The age range is normally 14-20, with natural entry points for pupils who have just completed Years 9, 10, 11, 12 or 13. The college also admits a small number of mature students each year.
- The GCSE school (Years 10 and 11) comprises 15-25 students. Approximately 100 students are studying A levels with MPW over two-year courses. The remaining students are studying A levels with MPW over eighteen-month, one-year or shorter courses or following university foundation programmes.
- Our principal entry point is in September and there is a smaller entry in January. However, subject to place availability, students are also accepted at other times of the year as late joiners. Where possible, such late joiners are integrated into appropriate existing teaching groups and may receive supplementary tuition to facilitate the transition.
- The College does not have boarding. However, there are boarding facilities nearby that are run by KSS

2 Aims of MPW's admissions process

- To identify and admit students who will benefit from the academic provision available at the college.
- To ensure that prospective students understand, and are in sympathy with, the ethos and aims of MPW.
- To provide educational advice leading to an academic programme tailored to each student's specific needs.

- To identify and recruit students who are keen to achieve academically and are prepared to work hard to achieve this goal.

3 Application procedure

- Domestic applicants who contact us are sent links to information online. They are offered a visit to the college
- If a student wishes to proceed to the next stage of the admissions process, they are asked to fill in an application form and an interview is arranged by the Admissions Team. Prospective students should usually be accompanied by a parent; this is an entry requirement for students aged under 16 at the start of the academic year.
- Prospective students may attend “taster days”, when they sit in on lessons to experience first-hand what studying at MPW is like and, for prospective sixth-form students in particular, to get a flavour of what studying certain subjects involves.

The process preceding the offer of a place at the college has four elements:

1. Interview.
2. Assessment of performance in previous examinations; entrance assessments (for students where English is not their first language and some GCSE students); scholarship exams.
3. Reference from the applicant’s previous school(s) (or education provider).
4. Assessment of special educational needs (if applicable) to determine any reasonable adjustments that are required.

3.1 Interview

The purposes of the interview are to:

- Explain the academic and extra-curricular provision available at the college;
- Assess the suitability of the student for their chosen course(s);
- Provide advice about careers and/or entry into Higher Education;
- Provide an opportunity for the student and parents to look around the college;
- Establish whether MPW can offer a suitable academic programme; and
- Answer any questions the student/parents may have about the college.

Interviews are conducted by senior members of staff and in many cases include input from the relevant Heads of Department.

3.2 Assessment of performance in examinations and entrance tests

- Prospective GCSE (Year 10 and 11) students may be required to sit a Mathematics and English Language entry assessment (to allow for possible streaming).
- Students whose first language is not English and who have not achieved a pass in GCSE English Language are required to provide evidence of their baseline English using our Password test or IELTS (or equivalent).
- Prospective A level students are normally expected to have achieved at least six GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C) or an equivalent qualification. Under certain circumstances we may require specific grades in certain subjects at GCSE where these subjects are to be continued at A level (especially in Mathematics and Modern Languages).
- Prospective NCUK students should be aged 17 before the start of the courses and have passes in a minimum of four separate subjects at GCSE (or equivalent) which determines their suitability for either route one or route two entry into NCUK. They are also required to demonstrate a satisfactory level of English; for example, Band 5.5 in IELTS as the first term focuses on developing proficiency in English.

- Pre-programme students can join with a minimum IELTS entry level of 4.0 and can progress to a suitable academic programme subject to them meeting our IELTS entry criteria.
- A small number of academic scholarships may be available each year (see Section 10 below). These are normally awarded to students starting a two-year A level programme and occasionally to students studying a one-year programme

3.3 References

- The offer of a place at the college is conditional upon a satisfactory reference being obtained from the previous school.
- Reference requests include a pro-forma reference form, which requests information about safeguarding, academic ability, motivation and behaviour. We also request copies of recent sets of reports. In some cases, we also obtain telephone references from a senior teacher at the previous school.
- At certain times of year, particularly in the period mid-August to early September when a large number of students are admitted, it is often not possible to obtain references in advance of a place being offered because many schools are closed. However, references are followed up as soon as is practicable and the college reserves the right to revoke an offer of a place should the reference contain relevant information which was not disclosed during the interview.

3.4 Disability and special needs

- MPW currently has limited facilities for the disabled. However, the college will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the SEN and Disability Code of Practice 2015 (updated in 2024) (relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014), in order to accommodate the needs of applicants who have disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the college can cater adequately. The college needs to be aware of any known disability or special educational need which may affect a student's ability to participate in the admissions procedure and take full advantage of the education provided at the college. Parents of a student who has any disability, or special educational needs should provide the college with full details prior to or during the admissions process before accepting the offer of a place.
- Where a student has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), parents should inform the college before an admissions meeting is arranged. The college will usually arrange a discussion with the family and the SENCO to consider the student's needs and the support available at MPW. If the family wishes to name MPW in the EHCP, the local authority will consult the college in accordance with the statutory process. The college will respond to the consultation by setting out whether it can meet the student's needs and whether any necessary provision can reasonably be made.
- If a disability or special educational need becomes apparent after admission, the college will consult with parents about reasonable adjustments that can be made to meet the student's needs.
- Every registered student who has additional exam provisions also has an Individual Learning Plan which lists their strengths and potential barriers for learning and outlines strategies for helping them access the delivery inside the class as well as equip them with techniques to study effectively independently. The SENCO produces a bespoke plan together with each student and shares these with the family, Personal Tutor, subject teachers and the student themselves. These plans can change at any time according to the student's needs.

4 Offer of a place and registration

No student will be accepted without having attended an interview. After the interview, a letter will be sent to parents summarising our best educational advice and confirming whether or not we are able to make a formal offer of a place. If the college offers a place, the offer is to be considered unconditional unless stated otherwise in writing by the college. If a student under 18 years old attended the interview on their own, a further conversation or communication with a parent is required prior to registration.

When an offer is made, parents will be issued with the relevant registration forms. Once the registration forms are completed, returned and subsequently acknowledged by MPW, the enrolment process is deemed to be complete (the registration fee is part of the enrolment process though non-payment will not render the signed contract void). At this point, both the fee payer and the student become bound by the college's terms and conditions (see registration form and prospectus). Fees are due before the start of each academic term.

An offer of a place is valid only at the time that it is made. Applicants who decide to register after some delay are advised to check with the college that the place remains available.

Students are allowed, with the agreement of the interviewer, to adjust their academic programme, provided the college is notified of such changes in good time prior to the start of the proposed course and only if the college can provide for such changes.

5 Withdrawal of an offer of a place

MPW reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place under the following circumstances:

1. Information is received, including through references, reports or other checks, which was not disclosed during the admissions process and which is relevant to the student's suitability, safeguarding, welfare, behaviour, support needs or the college's ability to meet those needs.
2. The student arrives with an EHCP, Educational Psychologist report, safeguarding report or disability which was not previously declared and for which the college is unable to provide reasonable adjustments.
3. Non-payment of fees.

6 International admissions

MPW welcomes applications from international students. It is not always possible for international students to attend interviews in Cambridge, so we work with the British Council and a network of carefully screened agents in organising a series of in-country presentations and interviews. As with UK-based international students, applicants are interviewed and assessed by a senior member of staff. Prospective students may also be interviewed via Teams, or another suitable video platform.

A student visa will be required if the applicant does not hold a British or Irish passport, unless they are in the UK under another immigration status that permits studies. For academic courses over 6 months in duration, applicants will need to apply for a Student visa. There are 2 categories – Child Student and Student, which are issued based on the age of the student and level of the course they are intending to study.

MPW holds a Student Sponsor Licence, therefore the college can sponsor both Child Student and Student visa applications. A Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) is issued to apply for a student visa. It will only be issued following successful interview, receipt of registration fee and deposit (£11,000), and once supporting evidence has been received:

- An English language qualification that meets course entry requirements, and for Student Visa applications – it must be UKVI approved;

- Official transcripts of academic results/school reports (dated, stamped and signed). Any documents that are not in English need to be accompanied by certified translations;
- Passport (plus any current or previous UK visas, if applicable);
- Details of Educational Guardianship in the UK;
- A fully completed registration form;
- A parental consent letter (U18 students only).

The issue of a CAS is at the college's discretion and remains subject to UKVI Student Sponsor requirements. The college will undertake right-to-study checks, retain required records, monitor attendance and engagement, and comply with sponsor reporting duties. A CAS may be refused or withdrawn where the college is not satisfied that the requirements for sponsorship are met or continue to be met.

All international students are required to have an educational guardian in the United Kingdom in advance of taking up a place at MPW. Overseas entrants therefore are required to complete our Educational Guardianship Agreement Form as part of the admissions process.

Courses at MPW are taught in English. Students will need to meet the required academic criteria in order to undertake these courses; specifically, they are expected to have reached a minimum level equivalent to IELTS 5.5. Additional English language lessons, alongside those for their academic subjects, are compulsory for students until an overall IELTS score of 6.5 is achieved, with at least 6.5 in the written section. In cases where universities have made offers conditional on a lower IELTS Band, such as 6.0, students may be allowed to drop their IELTS classes, at the discretion of the Principal in discussion with the Head of EAP and the PT. Conversely, where students need a Band higher than Band 6.5 in order to meet their university requirements, they may be asked to remain in their IELTS classes until they reach the required Band. Our advice is that students continue to attend IELTS classes until the end of their academic programme.

Students joining Pre-programme can do so with an IELTS score of 4.0. September entry NCUK applicants need to achieve IELTS score of 5.5.

Further information about entry to the UK under the Student Visa Route can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas>, where the most up-to-date procedures are explained.

7 Disclosure

Parents are required to disclose, at the earliest opportunity, any known or suspected circumstances relevant to the application, including matters relating to the student's physical or mental health, allergies, disabilities, special educational needs, learning difficulties, safeguarding, welfare, behaviour or previous disciplinary history. This information enables the college to assess suitability, identify any reasonable adjustments or support required, and consider whether the college can meet the student's needs. Failure to provide relevant information may result in an offer being reviewed or withdrawn.

Information provided during the admissions process, including safeguarding, medical, SEND, disability and immigration information, will be processed in accordance with the college's data protection policies and shared only where necessary for admissions, safeguarding, welfare, legal, regulatory or educational purposes.

8 Special Circumstances

We recognise that a student's academic history can be affected by circumstances, for example:

- If the student has been unwell when sitting examinations or has been absent for any significant period from the previous school.
- If there are family circumstances such as divorce or bereavement.

- If the student's first language is not English.
- If the student has a disability or specific learning difficulties.

In such cases, the college may request additional information — such as an Educational Psychologist's report, medical certificate or samples of work — to assist us in the assessment of the student's suitability.

9 Grounds for Rejection

The following are possible grounds for not being offered a place, but this is not meant to be an exhaustive list:

- Insufficient academic ability for the programme applied for.
- Lack of fit with the ethos and general character of the college.
- Withholding information at interview.
- Exclusion from a previous school for offences such as drug misuse, violence, serious misconduct, bullying or theft.
- The course required is oversubscribed. If we have to decide between two or more applicants who meet our admissions requirements, preference may be given to a sibling of an existing student or to an applicant with particular skill, talent or aptitude.
- The college is unable to accommodate the requirements of a student's EHCP as the necessary arrangements are beyond the scope of 'reasonable adjustment'.

10 Academic scholarships

MPW may award scholarships to help reduce the fees of gifted and talented students who are likely to gain particular benefit from our academic provision and the more general opportunities the college has to offer. In turn, we expect award recipients not only to contribute to MPW's reputation for academic success but also to participate in broader aspects of college life, such as by being a Student Ambassador. Scholarships are generally awarded on academic merit and in exceptional cases scholarships may be awarded on the grounds of outstanding prior performance (e.g. GCSE grades).

11 Associated policies and other documentation

- The college prospectus
- The college's terms and conditions
- Safeguarding policy
- Curriculum Policy
- EAP Policy
- Educational Guardianship Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Disability Policy and Disability Accessibility Plan
- Academic Support Policy
- Attendance Policy