

MPW Cambridge Admissions Policy

Summary

This policy concerns admissions to the college of students applying for term-time GCSE and A-level courses. It should be read in conjunction with the college's:

- Prospectus.
- Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Disability Policy.
- Accessibility Plan.
- Special Educational Needs Policy.

This policy does not cover our admissions criteria for Easter Revision courses or programmes of Support Tuition. Students applying for these extramural options should consult the specific information published on our website.

MPW selects students for term-time courses on the basis of academic need, academic ability, previous educational record, performance at interview and, if appropriate, entrance tests and assessment of special educational needs. No prospective student is offered a place at the college without first attending an interview.

We welcome applicants from all backgrounds, irrespective of nationality, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. However, not all age ranges are catered for and our facilities and abilities to deliver appropriate programmes for students with various kinds of disability (including special educational needs) are not all encompassing and are developing. There are also limits to the number of students that can currently be admitted to the whole college, to individual year groups and to individual classes where, even in the case of multiple classes running at the same subject/level, there is an absolute maximum of eight students in any one class. 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. For those applying in good time, there are no such restrictions.

About the college

- The college is co-educational and aims to have approximately equal numbers of boys and girls.
- The college is non-denominational.
- There are approximately 150 students on roll.
- The age range is normally 14-19, with natural entry points for students 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 cohort (Years 10 and 11) comprises approximately 20 students. Approximately 100 students are in the lower sixth (Year 12) or upper sixth (Year 13) studying A-levels conventionally over two years. The remaining students are studying A-levels on courses of shorter duration (one year or less).
- Our principal entry point is in September. There is also a smaller intake in January. However, subject to place availability, students are sometimes accepted at other times of the year as late joiners. Where possible, such late joiners are integrated into appropriate groups and receive supplementary tuition to facilitate the transition.

Aims of the 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 college's ethos and aims.

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- To provide educational advice leading to academic programmes that are tailored to students' specific needs.
- To identify and recruit students who are keen to succeed academically and are prepared to work hard to achieve this goal.

Steps in the admissions process

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

1. Initial contact with the college.
2. Interview.
3. Testing and assessment (if appropriate).

Initial contact with the college

- Upon contacting the college, a prospective student (or the person contacting the college on his/her behalf) is sent a pack containing the college prospectus, the most recent college newsletter, summaries of recent results/university destinations and, if appropriate, materials specific to those students who wish to study Art, Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Business, Physiotherapy, Psychology or Law at university or who wish to apply to either Oxford or Cambridge.
- If a prospective student wishes to proceed to the next stage of the admissions process, an interview is arranged via the College Administrator. We normally expect a prospective student to be accompanied to interview by his/her parents or guardians.
- The college organises a number of Open Days throughout the year. Prospective students may attend Open Days prior to or subsequent to their interviews. Open Days give prospective students the opportunity to tour the college during a typical working day, sit in on relevant lessons and meet with senior and specialist members of staff.

Interview

The purposes of the interview are to:

- Provide an opportunity for a prospective student and his/her parents or guardians to look around the college.
- Explain the academic and extracurricular provision available at the college.
- Assess the suitability of a prospective student for his/her chosen courses.
- Provide advice about careers and/or entry into Higher Education.
- Answer any questions a prospective student and his/her parents or guardians may have about the college.
- Establish whether MPW can offer a suitable academic programme.

Interviews are conducted by a senior member of staff, namely the Principal, the Deputy Principal, a Director of Studies, the Head of Maths or the Head of GCSE. In some cases, there is also input from relevant teaching staff.

Testing and assessment

The college undertakes testing and assessment with the following students:

- Prospective GCSE students are required to sit diagnostic tests in English and Mathematics to ascertain whether they need additional support in these subjects.
- Prospective students whose first language is not English are required to sit an entrance test to determine their English proficiency unless they are able to provide certificated evidence that they already possess a Grade A*-C in GCSE English or the following overall IELTS Band score: 5.5. for those seeking to embark on GCSE courses, 6.0 for those seeking to embark on

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two-year A-level courses and 6.5 for those seeking to embark on one-year (or shorter) A-level courses.

- Prospective students who are known to have a specific learning difficulty (SpLD) are assessed by the college's Specific Learning Difficulties Co-ordinator. This member of staff advises the interviewer on whether MPW has the facilities and expertise to accommodate a particular student and, if so, the nature of the academic support we would need to provide. If the student subsequently registers at the college, the Specific Learning Difficulties Co-ordinator collates all relevant information from a variety of sources (e.g., school reference, medical reports and educational psychologist's report) to produce an academic support plan (ASP).

Testing and assessment takes place within two weeks of the interview and invariably is combined with the interview on the same day.

Offer of a place and registration

- After the interview and, if appropriate, testing and assessment has taken place, the interviewer sends the prospective student a letter summarising the college's best educational advice and confirming whether or not we are able to make a formal offer of a place. The letter is copied to the student's parents or guardians.
- In some cases, a formal offer of a place is conditional on a student meeting certain entrance criteria. This typically applies to a student whose first language is not English needing to obtain a particular IELTS score, or to a UK-educated student who is applying for two-year A-level courses who needs to satisfy the college's GCSE requirements, which are as follows: at least six GCSEs at A*-C grades (or equivalent) with at least B grades in those subjects to be continued to A-level, with the exception of Mathematics where an A* or A grade is required.
- When an offer is made, the parents or guardians of the student are issued with a student registration form, which in some cases must be returned by a deadline. Once the registration form is completed, returned and acknowledged by the college, the enrolment process is deemed to be complete. At this point both the fee payer and the student become bound by the college's terms and conditions, which are detailed on both the registration form itself and in the rear of the college prospectus.
- Students enrolling for a September start are allowed, with the agreement of the interviewer, to make adjustments to their academic programme provided that the College is notified of such changes before the end of August.

School reference

- The offer of a place at MPW is always conditional upon a satisfactory reference being obtained from a student's previous school.
- When taking up references, we request information about academic ability, motivation and behaviour. We may also request copies of recent sets of reports. We normally issue written reference requests, but in some cases we also obtain telephone references from a senior teacher at the previous school.
- References are normally sought close to the interview stage of the admissions process, in advance of a place being offered. However, at certain times of year, particularly in our busy recruitment period from July to early September, it is often not possible to obtain references in advance of a place being offered because many schools are closed. In such cases, references are followed up as soon as is practicable after a place has been offered 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.

International admissions

MPW welcomes applications from international students. About 20% of our students have been educated overseas immediately prior to joining the college. It is not always possible for such international students to attend interviews here in Cambridge, so we work with an international agent

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(ISCU) and the British Council in organising a series of in-country presentations, interviews and tests to students in China, Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, Kazakhstan and Korea. As with UK-based international students, applicants are interviewed by a senior member of staff and sit the MPW entrance test. The interviews and tests take place in October and in March. Students who have been offered places and have not yet attained an appropriate IELTS score of 6.5 are required prior to joining MPW to follow an English language course for one, two or three months, depending on their proficiency. They may also be required to have IELTS lessons alongside those for their academic subjects.

Disclosure

Parents or guardians are required to disclose any particular known or suspected circumstances relating to their son/daughter/ward at or before the student is interviewed by the college. These circumstances may relate to the following:

- The student's health.
- The student's disability or disabilities.
- The student's learning difficulties.
- Any disciplinary issues at the student's previous school(s).

The college reserves the right to terminate the studies of a student for whom it becomes obvious that information pertaining to the above was withheld during the admissions process.

Special Circumstances

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

- If he/she has been unwell when sitting examinations or tests, 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 Education Psychologist's report, medical certificate or samples of work to assist us in the assessment of the student's suitability.

Grounds for Rejection

The following list details possible grounds for not being offered a place but is by no means exhaustive:

- Insufficient academic ability for the programme applied for.
- Lack of fit with the ethos and general character of the college.
- Exclusion from the previous school for drug-related offences, bullying or theft.
- Insufficient capacity to accommodate a student's entry point or chosen courses.

Appeals Procedure

An appeal against a decision not to offer a place must be submitted in writing to the Principal within four weeks of an applicant being notified of the college's decision. The decision will then be reviewed under the procedures outlined in the college's Complaints Procedure.