

CCSS ADMISSIONS POLICY

This policy concerns admissions of students applying for GCSE and A-level courses and should be read in conjunction with the CCSS Prospectus and other policies. The policy applies to both boarding and day places at CCSS.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CCSS

CCSS is a co-educational independent Sixth-form College and provides both boarding and day places, for approximately 200 students. It offers two-year and one-year A level programmes and a one-year GCSE programme. It is a not-for-profit charitable organisation, meaning that all surpluses are re-invested in the educational provision of the college.

CCSS is “British-International” in nature and is characterised by exceptional levels of academic and pastoral support at all stages. The age range is mainly 15-21 although the College is pleased to admit a number of more mature students each year according to their individual circumstances.

The main entry point is in September. However, if places arise, students are sometimes accepted at other times of the year as late joiners. In such circumstances, applications will be considered on a case by case basis but places will not normally be offered beyond January for those on a 2 year course and November for the one year programmes. Where possible, such late joiners are integrated into appropriate groups and receive supplementary tuition to facilitate the transition.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

Subject to real limits on student numbers imposed by boarding places and resources, the College will admit applicants who have the potential to achieve success through the curriculum offered. In particular, applicants must:

- Demonstrate a strong commitment to further study and to the ethos of the college
- Satisfy the requirements for admission to an agreed programme of study
- Agree to adhere to the Rules of the College

The college aims to welcome students from all backgrounds, irrespective of nationality, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. However, we are not able to cater for all kinds of disability (including special educational needs) and any such requirements or needs must be declared to the College from the outset so that proper assessment can be made.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process has three elements:

1. Application. Applications must either be made in hard copy on the official College form as provided with the Prospectus or electronically via the CCSS website. In both cases the relevant supporting documentation must be provided before the application can be processed.

In order to comply with UK Border Agency requirements, students requiring visas must provide copies of school reports and references, transcripts and any examination certificates. The originals will have to be presented for scrutiny as part of their visa applications.

2. Interview. Interviews are conducted by a senior member of staff, usually the Principal, one of the Vice Principals or the Head of GCSE. There may also be input from relevant teaching staff. The purposes of the interview are to:

- Explain the academic, pastoral and extracurricular provision available at the College and provide advice on appropriate course choice.
- Assess the suitability of a prospective student for a place at CCSS and for his/her chosen courses. Entry criteria for courses are given at the end of this document.
- Provide an opportunity for a prospective student and parents /guardians to look around the College.
- Provide advice about careers and/or entry into Higher Education.
- Answer any questions a prospective student and parents/guardians may have about the College.

Although we prefer to interview prospective students in person in Cambridge it is not always possible for international students to attend. In such cases we will arrange to conduct Skype interviews on-line direct to the applicant, through the offices of an established agent or through any other portal that is workable and convenient to the applicant. If an interview is not possible, the College reserves the right to seek broader testimony to confirm an applicant's suitability for their intended course.

3. Testing and assessment (where required). The College undertakes testing and assessment with prospective students whose first language is not English. This is to determine their English proficiency (unless able to provide certificated evidence that they already possess the English language qualifications indicated below) and also to determine their ability to succeed with the academic demands of the courses they propose to take

Disclosure. Parents or guardians are required to disclose any particular known or suspected circumstances relating to their son/daughter/ward from the outset of the application process. These circumstances may relate to the following:

- The student's physical, mental or emotional 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.

REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT

Offers and enrolment

On completion of the selection process, applicants will be advised of the outcome and, where appropriate, formal offers will be made. All offers will be conditional upon a satisfactory reference being obtained from a student's most recent school or college. In some cases, other conditions may apply, such as when minimum entry qualifications have not yet been achieved or verified. Final enrolment will only be confirmed once all the necessary registration documentation and payments have been completed as detailed in the College's Terms and Conditions of Acceptance.

Grounds for Rejection

The following list details possible grounds for not being offered a place at CCSS but is not exhaustive:

- Insufficient academic ability for the programme applied for.
- Exclusion from the previous school.
- Unsatisfactory reference.
- Unsatisfactory disciplinary or attendance record.
- Insufficient capacity to accommodate a student's entry point or chosen courses.
- Failure to provide the necessary supporting documentation and evidence in reasonable time.

The College will write to rejected applicants explaining the reasons for rejection, if requested.

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. Where appropriate, these factors will be taken into account and the College may request additional information to be provided such as an Education Psychologist's report, medical certificates or samples of work to assist us in the assessment of the student's suitability.

IELTS

Those students enrolled on A Level courses and for whom English is not a first language will be required to achieve a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 as soon as possible. Students who cannot provide satisfactory evidence of a pass at this level or above will be required to have IELTS lessons alongside their academic subjects until this is achieved and these will be delivered by CCSS staff. The fees for IELTS lessons will be charged separately and are additional to the stated A-level fees.

SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS

One year A Level programme

The one year A Level programme is an intensive, fast-track programme and is suitable for students who have already completed one or more years of A Level study, or who have graduated with good grades from a high school system abroad. It is appropriate for students seeking to retake complete subjects or those who need additional subjects to be eligible for undergraduate courses in medical sciences and other professionally based courses of study.

Applicants will normally be required to attend for interview and be able to demonstrate a good level of academic ability. A pass at Grade A*-C in GCSE/IGCSE English Language / IELTS 5.0 / PET or a satisfactory pass on the CCSS English Test will be required for those students whose first language is not English.

Two year A Level programme

The two year A Level programme is suitable for those who have completed GCSE/IGCSE or equivalent courses of study.

Applicants will normally be required to attend for interview and should have achieved a minimum of 5 GCSE or equivalent passes at grade C or above. Where there is no equivalent national examination programme in place, students will be required to demonstrate a good level of secondary or high school education through supporting school reports and references. A pass at Grade A*-C in GCSE/IGCSE English Language / IELTS 5.0 / PET or a satisfactory pass on the CCSS English Test will be required for those students whose first language is not English.

Applicants wishing to join the Upper 6th year of the programme will normally be expected to have achieved a pass at AS level in their chosen subjects. In order to continue with their A2 studies, lower sixth students at CCSS will also need to have achieved at least a pass at AS level in their chosen subjects.

One year GCSE programme

The one year GCSE course seeks to attract UK students and is particularly suitable for those looking to re-structure and re-focus their GCSE studies. The course is also offered as a fast track pre-A Level foundation programme for international students.

Entry to the course is normally through interview and IELTS 4.0 / KET or a satisfactory pass on the CCSS English Test will be required for those students whose first language is not English.

Those students achieving 5 GCSE passes at grade C or above will be encouraged to continue their A Level studies at CCSS. Sixth Form Scholarships may be available for those achieving a minimum of 5 passes at Grade A or above.

S Nicholson
February 2010