

CCSS Admissions Policy

This policy concerns admissions of students applying for of all short and long-term 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 college and provides both boarding and day places, for up to 200 students. It offers a range of courses, including one-year GCSE, two-year and one-year A Level programmes. 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 consider other students 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. 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 two year programme and November for the one year programmes. Where possible, such late joiners are integrated into appropriate groups and receive support to facilitate the transition if taking examinations at GCSE and A Level. Other courses may start at different times and have separate entry arrangements.

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 is aware of its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 regarding discrimination and reasonable adjustments. 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 and 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. If reasonable adjustments need to be considered, the applicant should make the College aware of them in good time.

CCSS operates a system of having dedicated subject classrooms, so that specialist materials and equipment can be located in one place. This entails pupils moving between classrooms and across sites during the course of the day. CCSS teaching facilities are housed in old and listed buildings. Due to the layout of the various sites, problems of accessibility may be encountered by disabled pupils from time to time, which will place those pupils at a disadvantage.

Improving accessibility for disabled pupils across the site would require major physical alterations - some of these alterations are impossible due to the nature of the buildings themselves. CCSS has drafted an accessibility plan, which covers certain aspects regarding access. Where possible, CCSS will make reasonable adjustments to improve physical access, but such matters will always be viewed in the light of budgetary considerations.

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, relevant supporting documentation must be provided before the application can be processed.

In order to comply with Home Office immigration 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 or Deputy Principal. There may also be input from other relevant 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 video 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. The College undertakes a range of testing and assessment with prospective students. The tests are not the overriding determinant of an offer of a place.

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.

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. 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.

English level

Students for whom English is not a first language will be required to achieve a minimum level of English to enrol upon their chosen course of study -

GCSE – equivalent to IELTS 4.5

A Level (two-year) – equivalent to IELTS 5.0

A Level (one-year) – equivalent to IELTS 6.0

Candidates seeking to join A Levels in the September intake who have an IELTS score of 6.5 (minimum 6 on each component), GCSE English as a First Language (grade C or above), or GCSE English as a Second Language (grade A or B) may be considered eligible for UK fees (exempt from English as a Second Language lessons).

Should a student gain IELTS 6.5 during the first year of study at A Level, they may be considered for UK fees from the start of the next academic year.

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 be required to attend for interview and should have achieved a minimum of five GCSE or equivalent passes at grade A or B. 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.

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 be required to attend for interview and should have achieved a minimum of five 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.

One year GCSE programme

The one year GCSE course is suitable for those looking to re-structure and re-focus their GCSE studies. The course is also offered as suitable preparation for A Levels for international students.

Entry to the course is through interview. Those students achieving five 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 five passes at Grade A or above.