



ADMISSION POLICY FOR PLUME COLLEGE (MALDON'S COMMUNITY ACADEMY) FROM SEPTEMBER 2026



Section 1 – General Principles

We aim to offer a range of academic and vocational qualifications to our College students and some of these require minimum grades at GCSE. Our policy is to ensure that students accepted into the College can be placed on appropriate courses where they are likely to succeed. For this reason, we offer first choice internal and external applicants an opportunity to attend a Guided Discussion Meeting (GDM) to discuss the most suitable courses to study.

All students from our Year 11 will also be positively encouraged to apply for the College. Although we have a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 0 for external admissions, we do accept applications from students wishing to transfer from another school if we are able to offer appropriate courses and they have met the same entry requirements as our internal applicants.

Having a PAN of 0 does not mean that the academy cannot accept external applications but that the academy does not actively seek to recruit them at this point.

Section 2 – Definitions and Details

College Open Evening

Internal candidates should apply by the appropriate date stated in the current College prospectus. Applications to the College must be made on the College's application form. Late applications will be placed on a waiting list.

Applications from external candidates should, if possible, comply with the date given in the prospectus to enable us to plan courses effectively. External students will also require references from their previous school to demonstrate their academic suitability for their chosen courses and this will form an integral aspect of their application.

As a direct requirement from the Department for Education students undertaking 16-19 study programmes from September 2013 **must continue** with English Language and/or Mathematics if they have not achieved a Grade 4 at GCSE by the end of Key Stage 4.

Staff

Under the oversubscription criteria in Section 3, the word 'staff' will mean:

All staff employed by the academy for the purpose of working as one of the following:

- all full-time teaching staff;
- all full-time support staff defined as those on a 37 week and above contract
- all part-time teaching staff with a 50%+ timetable
- all part-time support staff who work more than 15 hours per week for 37 weeks or more.

The definition does not include contract staff. If a service has been 'in-house' and is subsequently 'contracted out', children of staff will no longer be eligible for priority admission under this criterion. The definition does not include peripatetic staff either.

Academic Requirements

Applicants for A/AS level courses are required to achieve a minimum of 5 GCSEs at Grade 4 including English Language and ideally, Mathematics. Students must also meet the specific subject requirements as published in the College Prospectus available from the College and the academy's website. Plume College reserves the right to vary offers dependent on the particular circumstances of an individual student and the programme they are applying to follow. Students who do not meet the minimum attainment will be advised to undertake a Level 2 programme.

Many of our BTEC vocational courses have subject specific entry requirements which can be found on our website and we will be pleased to discuss any individual concerns about meeting these. However, meeting the requirements of any course is no guarantee that the applicant will automatically be offered a place on his or her preferred courses.

Successful applicants will be required to sign Plume College's Student Agreement which represents an agreed working contract. Offers will be made according to places available in the relevant teaching groups. Applicants will be refused where the academy considers the size of the teaching groups would be detrimental to the education of the groups. Year 12 applicants wishing to transfer to Plume College from another college/sixth form will not normally be considered as from **30 September 2026**.

Entry into Year 13 for external applicants will depend on the courses required, the availability of a place within that group and the applicant's results from any modules taken in Year 12. We require evidence that the applicant will go on to complete the course successfully. To continue with a course during Year 13, students will normally need to achieve a pass (at least a Grade E) at AS level unless there are particular exceptional circumstances.

Section 3 - Oversubscription Criteria

Applications will be considered as follows:

As required by the Regulations of 2012, the academy will give top priority to applications on behalf of children in public care (Looked After Child) in accordance with the definition below:

- 'Looked After Child' or a child who was previously Looked After Children (PLAC) but immediately after being looked after, became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order.

A Looked After Child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). This may include Children Previously Looked after from outside England (IPLAC)¹

- Applications from internal candidates who meet the academic requirements will be considered next.
- Where a particular course is heavily oversubscribed, and we cannot run a parallel group, the places will be offered to those internal candidates who have the better grades at GCSE or subject specific requirements. This will form a major part of the discussion referred to above to determine the most appropriate course for an individual. We will offer alternative courses to any student affected by this criterion.
- Applications from children of staff as defined above, who are transferring from a different school to enter at Year 12 will be considered with applications from internal candidates.
- For external applications, the remaining places available on a particular course, will be offered to those who have the better grades at GCSE or subject specific requirements.

External Applicants

External applicants will be admitted provided they have met the minimum entry requirements and where the availability of places in subject courses, the availability of teaching staff, the suitability of group sizes and the pastoral capacity of the academy permit. Applications will be refused where the academy considers the size of teaching sets or tutor groups necessary would prejudice the efficient education of the group and where it is not financially or educationally desirable for the Trustees to alter the balance of the academy's staffing or to appoint additional staff.

The entry requirements apply equally to internal as well as external applicants. However, internal students will be offered places (provided they meet the entry requirements) before places are offered to external applicants.

Year 12 Applicants

Year 12 applicants wishing to transfer to Plume College from another Post 16 provider to restart their Year 12 studies will only be considered at the end of August provided they have met the the minimum entry requirements and where the availability of places in their chosen courses permit. Priority for admission to Year 12 will be given to Year 11 internal students and then Year 11 external students, therefore, there is no guarantee that the applicant will be offered a place on his or her preferred courses at the end of August. Year 12 external applicants will also require references from their previous school to demonstrate their suitability for their chosen courses and this will form an integral part of the application process.

¹ School Admission Code (September 2021) Sec 1, paragraph 1.7 [page 10]. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society

Interviewing does not form part of our admissions process but we may invite students for a Guidance Discussion Meeting (GDM) where necessary. The closing date for applications is detailed on the academy's website.

Right to appeal

If an application is refused entry to Plume College, there is a statutory right of appeal to the Independent School Appeal Panel. Further details of the appeal procedure will be provided with the letter explaining why the application has been refused. Appeals may be lodged by either the parent/carer or the student.

Possible Prospectus Information

We require internal candidates to make a formal application for College courses. There will be a full programme of mentoring and discussion to ensure that all students are aware of the opportunities available to them with guidance as to the most appropriate courses. External applications should also be received by this date if possible. We will, however, try to offer any interested student who meets the requirements of a given course the opportunity to study at our college if the application is submitted after this date.

This Admissions Policy was reviewed and ratified by the Chair of the Trustees on 16 December 2024.