



MAGDALEN COLLEGE SCHOOL

Admissions at 16+

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Who can apply?

MCS welcomes applications from boys and girls from any school to its Sixth Form. The field of applicants is varied, and includes pupils from day and boarding schools, the independent and the maintained sectors, and from local schools.

When does the admissions process take place?

Sixth Form admissions take place between November and February. You need to register with the school, and registrations close on the 31st October each year. Bursary information can also be requested at this time.

How can I find out about the school?

Come to an Open Morning, an Open Afternoon or to a Sixth Form Open Evening; these are advertised on the school website.

Those who have registered with the school are invited to the A-Level Options night (at the beginning of November) where they will have the chance to meet Heads of Departments and discuss A-Level choices.



How is admission to the Sixth Form decided?

Sixth Form candidates are admitted by an interview with a senior member of the Sixth Form team and two subject specialists, and on the strength of their predicted results at GCSE. HMC guidelines recommend that we ask for a reference from your current school and we will let you know before we do this.

How will I find out about the interview?

Following registration you will receive further details of the application process, including practical details about the interviews, from the Registrar. Interviews usually take place at the end of the school day, and you will be given at least a week's notice of the interview date.

How well do I need to do at GCSE?

All applicants are expected to gain A*/8 (or equivalent) in the subjects they intend to study for A-Level. If you are offered a place, this will be a conditional offer based on your performance at GCSE. These offers are made on an individual basis, and there is no fixed standard for performance at GCSE, though most candidates will expect to achieve at least six A*/8 grades, including A*/8s in the subjects they wish to study at A Level.

Sixth Form applicants whose first language is not English are required to have obtained IELTS level 7 (for further information please go to www.ielts.org and choose Academic option). They, and those who are not sitting GCSE/IGCSE English (Language), should discuss their circumstances with the Registrar.

What should I do if I have a question?

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Registrar at any stage of the admissions and applications process (01865 253430) or registrar@mcsoxford.org.

AT INTERVIEW

What to wear and what to bring

Candidates should wear whatever they feel comfortable in. A-Level Art candidates should bring their GCSE portfolio.

What to expect at the interview

You will have three interviews: one with a member of the Sixth Form team and two with teachers of your chosen A-Level subjects.

The interview with a member of the Sixth Form team is a general interview, which will focus on your academic and extra-curricular interests; your GCSE predictions; your ideas for A-Level choices and perhaps also for your Waynflete Studies. The interviewer may also ask you about your career aspirations. You will also have the opportunity to ask questions.

The subject specialist interviews will depend on your likely focus for Sixth Form – science or humanities – and is likely to be academic in focus.

What is the purpose of the interviews?

We are keen to look for potential, not simply current attainment. The interviews are designed to explore the ways in which each candidate thinks, helping us to assess overall promise.

The discussion gives the interviewer a personal insight into your academic interests and capabilities, which helps us to see beyond your performance record and to assess your ability to learn. The ability to engage with new ideas is important, as is self-motivation and enthusiasm for your chosen subjects.



We are also interested in finding out what motivates and interests you beyond academic study. This will help us assess the contribution you will bring to the broader life of the school, and to ensure MCS is an environment in which you will flourish.

We want to be yourself at the interview. The interviewer will do his or her best to make you feel at ease, so that you can show us your skills and interests as best you can.

Ask if you do not understand a question, and listen carefully to the guidance your interviewer offers. Even if you find a question difficult, do your best to say what you think.

Will I have to sit any written tests?

You will be asked to sit a Verbal Reasoning test, as this helps to give every pupil at MCS a standardized reference point. The Verbal Reasoning test is a paper-based test lasting 45 minutes. There are no multiple-choice questions. We do not ask applicants to sit any other exam except in exceptional cases (e.g. an application from overseas).

In the Maths interview, the teacher was trying to test my ability at Maths, since I wanted to do double Maths.

It was nerve-wracking because it was an interview, but quite related at the same time. The teacher was very happy to give me a hint if I needed it

The interview was quite relaxed. He asked me a lot about hockey, and was interested in what I did inside and outside school. I think he was interested in what I would bring to the school aside from study. The subject interview was very rigorous and academic.

I felt the Master was interested in finding out about me as a person, and whether I would fit into the school. It was much more than a question of my academic results

Are extra-curricular activities taken into account?

Discussion of extra-curricular activities and interest forms an important part of the interview, and your ability to contribute to the varied extra-curricular life of the school is an important factor in the selection process.

In assessing a candidate's future potential, we also take a keen interest in the school reference and any other applicable information.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

When will I find out if I have been offered a place?

Following your interviews, we will let you know if we are able to make you a conditional offer. We expect to make the first round of offers mid-December.

What form will the offer take?

Your offer of a place in the Sixth Form will be dependent on your performance in your GCSEs. The offer is certain to include A*s/8 (or equivalent) in those subjects you are likely to wish to take to A-Level.

Offers are made on an individual basis, and with the individual's capabilities and circumstances in mind. We do not intend to make offers that applicants cannot obtain, and we will only give offers to those whom we are confident will thrive here.

Offers of Academic Scholarships will be made once we have been informed of your GCSE results.

What happens next?

In November there is an A-Level Options Evening for both prospective and existing pupils. You will hear from the Master, Director of Studies and Head of Sixth Form, and have the opportunity to meet the Head of Department for four A-Level subject choices.

In March, there will be a quiz evening where you will have the opportunity to meet current Fifth and Sixth Form pupils. You will also meet Sixth Form teachers and senior members of staff. After this we leave you to concentrate on your GCSEs!



You will be invited to an Induction Afternoon in June and the MCS Arts Festival. We hope you will want to come to one or more events.

Just before term starts there will be an informal induction day for all new pupils to help you get to know each other, followed the day after by the Sixth Form Induction. This takes place the day before term official starts.