



UNIVERSITY OF  
**LIVERPOOL**  
**MATHS SCHOOL**  
EDUCATION FOR 16-19 YEAR OLDS

# Admissions Policy

**University of Liverpool  
Mathematics School**

**September 2025 enrolments**

Edited date	Changes made	By who
1 March 2023	Moved ratification table to top of document Updated dates in section 12	D Haigh
8 Feb 2024	Changed physics requirement to grade 7 / 77 in combined  Dates updated  Corrected 3.1  Reworded two bullet points in 5.2  5.4 changed to prioritise students eligible for PP funding  Failure to accept a place within 2 weeks could result in applicants losing their place to someone on the waiting list.  For reasons of test security the number of additional sittings will be kept to a minimum and the admissions test may contain different questions to previous sittings.	D Haigh

<b>Status</b>	<b>STATUTORY</b>
<b>Delegated to</b>	Headteacher, ULMaS
<b>Responsible Person</b>	Chair of Trustees, ULMaS
<b>Last Updated</b>	1/3/2023 for 2023 enrolments
<b>Ratified Date</b>	Full Board of Trustees Approval for recent updates was noted on 23/3/23
<b>Next Review</b>	2 Yearly review (dates will be updated annually) Next review: September 2025 unless significant changes re proposed before then

## 1. Introduction and Overview

- 1.1. The *University of Liverpool Mathematics School (ULMaS)* aims to recruit students who will benefit most from a challenging preparation for the study of advanced mathematics and related courses at university. We will implement an admissions policy that identifies the most suitable students in terms of their current performance and their potential to grow in response to the teaching we will provide. We aim to select students who are developing a fascination for mathematics and have a strong desire to pursue this interest far beyond A-level, and who will find it beneficial to be challenged to think deeply and reason with clarity.
- 1.2. Our intention is to recruit a significant number of students from groups who would not otherwise have access to high quality mathematics provision and also to increase the total pool of high-achieving young mathematicians in the local community. Our mission to widen participation in mathematical degrees and careers is reflected in this admissions policy and we envisage an increase in socio-economic diversity in undergraduate intake to degrees in the mathematical sciences as a result.

## 2. Key Principles and Values

It is our policy to:

- 2.1. operate a clear, fair and transparent admissions process which is based on valid and reliable assessment;
- 2.2. assess and consider the needs of each applicant individually, on an impartial and unbiased basis;
- 2.3. consider not just the current academic performance of applicants, but also
  - the potential for a place at ULMaS to be of particular benefit to the applicant, and
  - the potential for the applicant to contribute positively to the ethos and curriculum of ULMaS;
- 2.4. provide expert pre-entry advice and guidance in order to ensure that students know what type of school they are applying for and make an informed judgement about whether it is suitable for them;
- 2.5. ensure that all students, parents and carers have sufficient opportunity to find out about the school and what it might offer them.

## 3. Planned Admissions, Eligibility Criteria and Assessment

- 3.1. The school has capacity for 160 students aged 16-19.
- 3.2. We have a planned admission of 80 Year 12 students each academic year.
- 3.3. Students whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names the school will be offered a place. The admissions test and interview process will still take place in order to ensure that the student will be able to succeed with our curriculum, to provide assessment information on the candidate for future purposes and to facilitate the careers advice that forms part of the process.
- 3.4. Applicants will normally be in Year 11 and have their sixteenth birthday during the academic year in which they apply.
- 3.5. Potential applicants who do not fit this description are advised to contact the school for advice via our website.
- 3.6. In 2025 we plan to admit students primarily to Year 12; in exceptional circumstances students who have completed Year 12 elsewhere may be admitted where places are available. Normally our preference will be for such students to retake Year 12. Year 13 entry will require that the students admitted
  - have already met the minimum entry requirements set out below, and
  - have studied the content included in our Year 12 curriculum at another school or college, and
  - would particularly benefit from completing Year 13 with us in preparation for a high level mathematical sciences degree course.

Suitability for this exceptional entry route will be determined by interview and an appropriate

written test and the final decision will be made by the admissions panel.

## 4. Minimum Entry Requirements

4.1. General minimum entry requirements for the ULMaS are set out below:

<b>Criterion 1</b>	Performance in the admissions test and interview process which suggests the student will thrive in the educational environment at ULMaS.
<b>Criterion 2</b>	<b>Grade 8 or above</b> in GCSE* Mathematics
<b>Criterion 3</b>	<b>Grade 7 or above</b> in GCSE* Physics or <b>grade 7-7 or above</b> in GCSE Combined Science
<b>Criterion 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b> or above in GCSE* English Language or in GCSE English Literature (this may be waived where students do not have English as their normal home language)
<b>Criterion 5</b>	At least 4 further GCSEs* at <b>grade 5</b> or above

- 4.2. Equivalences apply: in order for a qualification to be treated as equivalent to a GCSE it should be recorded as a Level 2 qualification which is equivalent to a full GCSE and is worth at least 5 points in performance table measures (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-4-qualifications-discount-codes-and-point-score>). iGCSE / Level 2 certificate qualifications which do not count in the school performance tables are treated as follows: A\* = grade 8, B = grade 5.
- 4.3. Applicants with qualifications other than GCSE may provide evidence of equivalence through a UK NARIC Statement of Comparability. If in doubt, please contact us to discuss this.
- 4.4. We may, if appropriate, adjust the minimum entry requirements in the lights of the educational impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 4.5. Applicants who, for exceptional reasons, have been unable to take examinations will be assessed through the interview and admissions test process alone and may not be required to achieve GCSE grades if this is impractical. The interview process will be extended for such candidates to ensure a full assessment of their knowledge and abilities has been possible.

## 5. Application Process

The selection process for students will have four stages.

### 5.1. Stage 1: A written application via the ULMaS website

- This will gather all necessary information about the applicant including:
  - any individual needs they may have which will need to be accommodated during the selection process, and
  - the details of a teacher who can provide a reference about the applicant's suitability for the A-Level courses they have chosen, their capacity to work hard and their record of punctuality and attendance.
  - The school reference will be scored 0 if it does not support the applicant, 1 if it does not provide good evidence of suitability, 3 if it provides convincing evidence of suitability and 2 if it paints a mixed picture.
- In order to be acceptable, an application must be factually correct, contain all the required information, be from an applicant who is eligible for sixth-form funding and be received by the relevant deadline.

### 5.2. Stage 2: Mathematics Aptitude Test

- All applicants who make acceptable applications will be invited to take the aptitude test.
- The aptitude test will be based on mathematics which will largely be drawn from the Key Stage 3 curriculum and will not require knowledge of material which is normally first taught in Year 11.
- The assessment will enable applicants to demonstrate problem solving ability, fluent algebraic skills and the capacity to see the mathematics in superficially unfamiliar situations.

- Sample questions will be published on the ULMaS website, and applicants who apply by the early deadline (below) will be given a briefing to help them to prepare for the test.
- The aptitude test will take between 60 and 90 minutes to complete.
- Where assessment Access Arrangements are approved for an applicant, and the necessary supporting information about these arrangements and the applicant's eligibility are available to us, we will facilitate these.
- The available marks for each question will be stated on the paper and the applicant's test mark will be the sum of the marks earned on all questions according to a well-defined mark scheme used by all markers involved.
- Students will not routinely be informed of their test score but may request it as part of post-interview feedback.
- Where students believe an error may have been made in the marking of their paper they may ask for a review of marking, in which case the application of the mark scheme will be reviewed by a different marker and, where appropriate, a correction made and the offer decision reviewed.

### 5.3. Stage 3: Interview

### 5.4. Stage 4: Decision

- Decisions will be made by an Admissions Panel chaired by the Headteacher. The membership of the Admissions Panel will be determined by the Trustees and will include at least one trustee in addition to the Headteacher. Other staff or volunteers co-opted by the trustees may also be appointed to the admissions panel.
- Any students with an Education Health and Care Plan naming ULMaS will be offered a place.
- The Admissions Panel will then make conditional offers to remaining applicants using the process described below.
  - The Admissions Panel will be presented with the aptitude test and interview scores for each applicant.
  - Applicants' scores from the aptitude test and the total interview score will be aggregated into a single score and this score will then be used to rank the applications from high to low.
  - A threshold will be determined below which candidates are judged to be unsuitable for the education offered at the school. Applicants whose aggregated scores fall below the threshold will not be offered places.
  - All students who are known to be eligible for Pupil Premium funding and whose scores are above the threshold score will be offered a place.
  - The remaining places will then be allocated to the highest ranked applicants in the ordered list who have not yet been offered a place.
- The list of candidates whose scores are above the threshold but who have not been offered conditional places will constitute a waiting list to be used if places become available at a later stage.
- Failure to accept a place within 2 weeks of being made an offer could result in applicants losing their place to someone on the waiting list.

### 5.5. Oversubscription Criteria

Places will be allocated based on the scoring from the aptitude test and interview process, as described above.

## 6. Timeline

- 6.1. The timeline for applications and offers will be published annually as an appendix to this policy.

## 7. Waiting List

- 7.1. The process described in 5.4 above will yield an ordered list of applicants who meet the admissions criteria. If there are more than 80 applicants who meet the admissions criteria, the ordered list of applicants who are eligible for a place but have not been offered one will constitute the waiting list.
- 7.2. Late applicants may be added to the end of the waiting list if they meet the criteria for entry that has been applied in that year's recruitment round.
- 7.3. We will make offers to the applicants on the waiting list if:
  - Any offer holder rejects the offer or initially accepts it and then later informs us that he/she no longer wishes to take up their place.
  - Any offer holder does not meet the conditions of their offer when GCSE results are announced in August 2025.
  - Any offer holder ceases to be an eligible applicant because it becomes apparent that their application was not acceptable on the basis of not being factually correct, or their not being eligible for a place for some other reason outside our or their control.

## 8. Appeals

- 8.1. Any applicant refused a place at ULMaS will be offered a right of appeal to a committee of the academy trust operating the school.
- 8.2. The panel will consider the applicant's case and decide whether to uphold the appeal. Please see the ULMaS Pupil Admissions Appeals policy for further details.

## 9. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and any amended policy for the following September will be published on the school website. The policy will remain on the website throughout the college year.

## 10. Complaints

If you are unhappy with any aspect of the admission policy or appeal process you may submit a complaint, outlining your concerns to the ESFA at [Academy.QUESTIONS@education.gov.uk](mailto:Academy.QUESTIONS@education.gov.uk), though you should first raise any concerns with the school via [reception@liverpoolmathsschool.org](mailto:reception@liverpoolmathsschool.org).

## 11. Equality & Diversity

- 11.1. ULMaS will do everything it can to facilitate a process which is fair and free from discrimination. Individual adjustments can be made to ensure that no student experiences a substantial disadvantage in the process. We will create an atmosphere in which each applicant is able to perform to the best of their ability and give a fair and honest representation of their talent and interest in mathematics.
- 11.2. We are keen to encourage applications from all students who feel that ULMaS is suitable for them. We will do everything within our power to ensure that the application process, the school ethos and the school environment is as welcoming and inclusive as possible.
- 11.3. Any reasonable adjustments that are needed, both prior to the entrance exam and/or interview and after admission, will be made. The school building is old, but reasonably well adapted for users with access needs.
- 11.4. Offers will be made free from bias in terms of disability, race, sex, gender orientation/ assignment, religion or belief.

## 12. Appendix 1

- 12.1. The process is divided into two rounds. If all 80 places are likely to be filled from the first round of applicants, the second round may not proceed. Applicants are therefore encouraged to apply in the first round.

<b>September 2024</b>	Applications open Wednesday 1st September with the publication of the 2025 application form at <a href="https://liverpoolmathsschool.applicaa.com/">https://liverpoolmathsschool.applicaa.com/</a> (linked on the school website).
<b>November 2024</b>	Early deadline for first round applications: midnight <b>5/12/2024</b>
<b>December 2024</b>	<b>Aptitude test</b> preparation session/s for those who meet the early deadline will then take place during the week commencing <b>9/12/2024</b> . All early applicants will be invited to attend.
<b>January 2025</b>	Late deadline for first round applications: Sunday <b>12/1/25</b> . The aptitude test will take place on Saturday <b>18/1/25</b> . <b>Interviews for first round applicants</b> will take place during February, by arrangement with applicants. Interviews will normally take place from 4pm to 7pm on weekday evenings or during the day in the February Half Term break weeks. If applicants are unable to attend the first interview appointment offered, they will be offered an opportunity to rebook.
<b>February 2025</b>	A letter will be sent out to those applicants who are given a conditional offer by the end of February. Applicants will be asked to respond within 2 weeks. Failure to accept a place within 2 weeks of being made an offer could result in applicants losing their place to someone on the waiting list.
<b>March to August 2025</b>	Tests and interviews scheduled as necessary for applicants who missed the first round deadline, <b>if</b> places remain. Students meeting the required standard (as applied in the first round) will be given offers within 10 working days of coming for an interview and taking the admissions test. For reasons of test security the number of additional sittings will be kept to a minimum and the admissions test may contain different questions to previous sittings.
<b>August 2025</b>	Applicants holding offers will have places on GCSE results day where they have successfully met their offer in terms of GCSE (and equivalent) results <sup>1</sup> . They will have until the Friday following GCSE results publication to contact us with their notification of results <sup>2</sup> . If they fail to do so they may forfeit their place to another student on the waiting list. Special consideration will be given to those falling just short and these decisions will be influenced by our widening participation agenda. Applicants on the waiting list may be given the opportunity to firmly accept an offer following results day in August if spare places arise. Places will be offered to applicants in the order in which they appear on the waiting list. They will then have 24 hours in which to firmly accept the offer and will be required to present themselves in person <sup>2</sup> at ULMaS with confirmation of their GCSE results. Applications received after the published closing date will be accepted should places still be available after all applicants from the waiting list have been offered a place.

- 12.2. <sup>1</sup> Students who are not taking GCSEs (e.g. Scottish students in the process of moving to Liverpool) will be able to provide confirmation of their results by arrangement, at an appropriate time, according to the date of publication.
- 12.3. <sup>2</sup> Students will need to send us a photograph of their results slip/s including their UCI number, or provide us with a paper copy.