



Admissions Policy

2023/2024

Admissions Policy

SLT Responsible for this Policy

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This policy has been approved by SLT and adopted on behalf of the Governors, and is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and is available on the school's portal. It is available to parents on request. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working, including when this involves being away from the school.

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1. The Admissions Team

Admissions is a vital part of the international student recruitment process and plays a large part in helping agents, agent managers, parents and students to work through the whole application process from enquiry stage to the visa application process.

The admissions team are there to help guide students and agents through the various stages of the application process. This includes handling enquiries, processing applications, arranging interviews and tours, creating offer letters and helping parents to prepare for visa applications. Once students arrive at the college the admissions team carries out registration duties and helps students with letters to open a bank account, to prove their student status or to invite their parents over for a visit.

Abbey College Cambridge is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a candidate's race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or social background.

2. Enquiries

- From any person or organisation who expresses interest in the college
- They can come via telephone, email, post or through marketing staff on visits overseas
- Our responses should be sent the same day

Enquiries are handled by:

- College admissions staff*
- Agent managers – at home and overseas*
- Principals and senior staff*
- Agents
- International Admissions Centre (IAC)

All the above in-house* staff must be well-versed in the following aspects of the college:

- The college's vision and values
- The academic offering of the college, including details of subjects and study programmes
- Accommodation
- Welfare
- Fees
- The application process

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3. Handling individual enquiries from students, parents and agents

Whenever possible, replies to enquiries should go out on the same day as they are received.

UK enquiries should be invited to visit and tour the college and boarding accommodation, and to attend a student interview. International enquiries should be sent immediately to the IAC for them to respond and to process.

4. Admissions policy for SEND

We are firmly committed to inclusivity and to giving every child the best possible start in life. Irrespective of their special educational needs or disability (SEND), we consider all children for admission to the college who have the ability and aptitude to access an academic curriculum. Pupils whose SEND are suited to the curriculum are welcome provided that we have the appropriate resources and facilities to provide them with the support that they require.

Before a place is offered at the college (and preferably prior to application):

- Parents must disclose to the college any known or suspected circumstances relating to their child's health, development, allergies, disabilities and learning difficulties. The college reserves the right to subsequently withdraw any place offered based on incomplete disclosure of known or suspected SEND circumstances.
- Based on such disclosure, the school/college will confirm whether or not it is able to fully meet the needs of the child.

Where a child's SEND is identified, or develops, after the child has started at the college, we will endeavour to continue support the child as long as:

- a) we have the appropriate resources and facilities to provide them with the support they require, and,
- b) we believe it is in the best interest of the child and of the college community to remain at the college

Where, in our judgement, either of these conditions no longer apply, we reserve the right to withdraw a place at the college. In such circumstances, we will use our reasonable endeavours to support parents in finding alternative arrangements.

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5. Interview

All students who wish to enrol at the college must be interviewed. Admissions interviews are conducted by an Abbey DLD Colleges Sales manager or one of the following members of Abbey Cambridge:

- Principal or Vice Principal
- Director of Operations

An interview can be conducted with a prospective student either:

- Face-to-face
- By an online video system, such as Skype, Zoom or WeChat
- By telephone

The interview must determine:

- a student's intended programme of study
- a student's qualifications and history of study
- a student's level spoken of English (where a student has no Secure English Language Test – SELT, he/she must also sit an internal test under exam conditions – this can be arranged at a separate time)
- a student's competency to study his/her intended programme at Abbey Cambridge

Interview notes must be completed in full in all cases.

Following a successful interview, the person who conducted the interview can confirm the student's suitability for a place at Abbey Cambridge to the student.

The interviewer must inform the student that if they have not yet applied, then to formally do so they should:

- Submit a completed application form to the IAC
- Provide copies of any qualifications achieved to date, stamped and verified both by the issuing body and an official translator if applicable
- Provide a copy of the identification page of his/her passport or if this is not available at that time, a copy of their identity card
- Provide copies of any current UK visa that the student may hold, or may have held in the past

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It is the responsibility of the IAC obtain all of the above paperwork either directly from the student or via an agent. If any of the required documentation is not supplied, the student's application will not be allowed to progress. In some circumstances a conditional offer may be issued with conditions that the missing information must be submitted before the application can progress further.

Following the submission of the above, the student will be given a conditional offer by the IAC.

6. Applications

- Applications may be received by email, in person, by post, or through marketing staff on visits overseas
- The IAC should handle the individual application and following a successful interview, produce the offer, signed by a senior member of staff

Applications may come via an agent, an in-house marketing or sales manager, or direct from parents/students (*hereafter referred to in this document as the 'contact'*), before or after interview.

Each application should be handled by the IAC who have the overall responsibility for admissions. At least one other staff member at each college must have a comprehensive understanding of the admissions process.

All data received as part of the application is processed in line with the college's [privacy notice](#).

The IAC process the application on SIMS.

7. Conditional Offer Letters

A member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) from the college must make the final decision on the application and advise whether or not a 'Conditional Offer' can be made.

Conditional Offer letters can be written without all of the information having been received, but they must detail what is missing as part of the condition for making the offer 'unconditional' and/or 'accepted'.

The second page of the Conditional Offer should be the Statement of Fees, which includes a breakdown of the deposit and registration fees to be paid in order to secure the place, the tuition and accommodation fees for the first year and bank details of the college in order to facilitate payment.

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For international applications, IAC will produce the offer letter and send either to the sales manager to pass onto the agent/student or to the agent/student directly, copying in the relevant sales manager

8. Unconditional/Accepted Offer Letters

- Unconditional/Accepted offer letters serve as a contractual agreement that the student has a place to study
- They can only be provided once the tuition deposit and registration fees (£2,500.00) have been paid, and must list any supporting documents/evidence of language ability that have still not yet been provided. (The student should not be issued with a CAS until the college has seen and verified these final supporting documents)
- The admissions team will be informed of payment by the finance team
- The IAC will produce a Confirmation Letter, to be signed by the Head of IAC

The Finance Officer checks the bank regularly for payments, and emails the Admissions Team daily with any updates/entries.

Once a deposit and registration fee is confirmed, SIMS is updated with the amount received and the applicant's status is changed from 'Conditional Offer' to 'Accepted'.

For international applications, IAC will produce the offer letter and send either to the sales manager to pass onto the agent/student or to the agent/student directly, copying in the relevant sales manager

9. CAS & Visa Application Guide

Three months before the start of the course, the IAC sends out a 'Draft CAS' which contains all the information (including that from any relevant documents sent in support of the application) that the college will be submitting to the UKVI as evidence that the student is a genuine and meets all the language and academic entry requirements. The Draft CAS also shows the first-year's tuition fees and for Boarding students also includes the first-year's accommodation fees.

Once the details of the Draft CAS are confirmed and the student is ready to proceed with the visa application, the IAC will contact all students that are expected for the next intake and send them their CAS statement.

If the student appears to require additional help with the visa application, the IAC can/will offer to check supporting documents before final issue of the CAS to ensure that they are up to UKVI standard.

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The CAS statement will normally reflect the same information on supporting documents, fees and term dates as the offer letters.

The CAS number and date of issue are also entered onto SIMS.

Following issue of the CAS, the contact is asked to inform the IAC about the progress of the visa application and to notify the IAC if they are contacted by the UKVI for any reason.

Once the visa is awarded, we also ask they send us a copy of the travel vignette, which is then saved electronically in the student's file once the details have been checked and added to SIMS and the CAS and Visa Record spreadsheet.

If there are any problems with the visa application or the visa is refused, then the IAC will ask for copies of all contacts/correspondence in order to assist the student and to update the UKVI using the SMS where required.

10. Registration and Induction

- Students arrive at the college for the start of the course on Registration Day
- This is the point to take required documentation from students, such as copies of passports and travel vignettes, and also to hand over BRPs
- Students will receive information about studying at Abbey College, and will be provided with a date and time for police registration on-site (if applicable)

On the student's first day of attendance at the college, the admissions team/Housemasters/Personal Tutors will:-

- Ensure students have completed the online Registration Form (to include submission of their current contact details and addresses).
- Take a copy of a student's identity page, visa/travel vignette page from his/her passport and/or separate BRP. These copies are signed and dated by the relevant member of staff and are also scanned and saved electronically into the student's file.

Note: UK students are also expected to submit a copy of their passport at the time that they make a formal application to the College. A copy is then taken from the original, either on application (if the student attends an interview in person) or on Registration Day.

The above actions will take place PRIOR to the student being given his/her timetable. Only once the above actions have been satisfactorily completed will the student be formally admitted to the College and begin his/her studies.

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Note: Students returning for the second (third, or fourth) academic year are also expected to complete a Returning Student Registration Form in order to ensure UKVI compliance.

If a student fails to attend on the first day, then the admissions team/Housemaster will contact the student/parent/agent concerned within 24 hours of the student's failure to enrol, and identify the reason for the student's non-arrival.

The admissions team/Housemasters will continue with this process until all students are enrolled.

If a justifiable and evidenced reason is given for non-attendance, then this will be marked on the register as authorised/unauthorised leave. The student will be asked for a confirmed arrival date and they will then be subject to the Late Registration process once they land in the UK and/or attend college.

Any student who arrives more than ten days after the start of term should have written authorisation from the college that they are permitted to commence their studies at a later date.

Any student who makes/returns no contact with the college for ten consecutive days of the expected Registration date will be reported to the UKVI.

Any student who makes no contact with the college for ten consecutive days and then arrives afterwards, will be informed they have been reported to the UKVI and advised to return home as soon as possible.

11. Admissions and UKVI Compliance – Quick guidance

11.1. UKVI regulations

- All Admissions staff are expected to access the regulations and guidance notes on a regular basis and when handling applications to Abbey Cambridge.
- Up to date versions of the regulations can be found on the local College network.
- The regulations and guidance notes are updated regularly from the UKVI website.
- Ensure that you are familiar with the content of the application forms in regards to both overseas and UK-based Tier 4 visa applications.

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11.2. Enquiries

- Cover letter/email.
- Send link to website.

11.3. Applications

- All applications logged on SIMS and submitted documents linked to the student record.
- Respond to requests for additional information if required.
- Interviews to be arranged.

11.4. Post-interview

- Conditional Offer prepared when all required documents, interview notes are in place. (If additional documents requested, these must be listed in the offer letter as conditions of acceptance).
- Update student on SIMS to 'Conditional offer' status, and enter the Conditional offer expiry date. Conditional Offer is valid for two weeks from date of issue.

11.5. Enrolment

- Copy of receipt for deposit and registration added to student information held on SIMS if received. If not, confirm receipt of funds with Finance Team before proceeding.
- Student status on SIMS to be updated to 'Accepted'.
- Unconditional/Accepted offer letter, Draft CAS and Accommodation Booking form to be sent in PDF format.

11.6. CAS

- Issued no more than three months before the start of the course.
- SIMS to be updated with CAS details
- CAS statement to be saved in Linked Docs in SIMS
- Full tuition fees must be shown on CAS and any fee payments made before the issue of the visa must be updated on the CAS using the SMS.

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11.7. Arrival

- The college contacts the students to check on visa progress.
- The Accommodation Team ensures that appropriate arrangements are made for the students' reception in the UK.
- The college obtain any missing parental consent letters, run a report on student not present on Registration day, and report any/all delays to all staff.

11.8. Changes of course

- The college Admissions Team and the IAC to be informed of any students wishing to change course in order to check the validity of the change for UKVI purposes.
- The college Admissions Team to inform the UKVI of any permitted course changes using the SMS, and stating the reasons for the change.
- Course changes also to be updated on SIMS.

11.9. Attendance

- Full details of the college attendance policy, along with other college policies can be available upon request to Abbey DLD Colleges.
- Admissions Team to immediately inform the UKVI of any student who has withdrawn using the SMS.

11.10. Visa extensions

- The Admissions Team are responsible for ensuring that regular reports are run to show the expiry dates of all visas.
- Students whose visas are due to expire within three months are contacted by the Admissions Team and asked to attend Visa Extension Appointments. They are also provided with a checklist of required supporting documents.
- The visa application form is completed online, and all supporting documents are checked before the application is submitted.
- Students who fail to attend visa extension appointments are followed up by their Personal Tutors/Housemaster.
- Students provide proof of posting and all subsequent with the UKVI including request letters for Biometrics, Biometrics receipts and any other correspondence from the UKVI. Copies of this correspondence to be kept in the student file.

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11.11. Students leaving before the end of the course

- Admissions Team to be informed about any students who are leaving.
- Admissions Team to send out 'Leavers Form' and follow up on student destinations.
- Admissions records all correspondence relating to this in the electronic file
- SIMS to be updated with leaving dates and information.
- UKVI are informed using the SMS. This is recorded on the CAS and Visa Record spreadsheet, along with all details provided.

12. Academic Progress Policy

In accordance with UK Visa and Immigration legislation, the college follows a strict policy in relation to all students who wish to attend college, having completed previous study in the UK. These students are identified at the admissions stage or during the interview and the following must be obtained from the student before the application progresses:

1. Copy of all previous UK visas and grants of leave
2. Details of all UK-based previous schools/colleges attended
3. Details of all previous courses completed including the NQF level.

If a student is proposing a course at the same or lower NQF level as their previous course in the UK, then an initial assessment is completed (included on international interview sheet) and the student will be met by a member of SLT to explain:

1. Their reasons for wanting to study further at the same or a lower level
2. Their academic history and academic aims
3. How their new course would complement their new course in relation to their career aspirations (and/or)
4. Why starting again in a different pathway is necessary to their career aspirations

The UK Visas and Immigration retains the right to request further information or evidence on which the college based such an acceptance as well as enquire about the process undergone during this assessment. Details of this assessment and the reasons for accepting the student will also be included on the student's Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS). The college Admissions Team will inform the IAC as to the change of course and justification behind the decision.

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13. Guardians for international students in Cambridge

Abbey College does not insist that educational guardians are appointed for students as we act *in loco parentis* for all our students. However, parents of international students may wish to appoint a guardian or ask Abbey College Cambridge to assist in the process of appointing a guardian. Under such circumstances the separate Abbey College Cambridge '*Educational Guardianship Policy*' is followed.

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14. Glossary of Terms

Contact - Any person or organisation who contacts the college on behalf of the student (for example an agent, parent or student).

Agent Manager - Any person within the Abbey DLD Group who travels overseas for the purpose of marketing.

Enquirer - Any person or organisation who expresses interest.

Interview - This can happen before or after an application has been submitted, and can be conducted by Skype, in person or by telephone.

Application - Any official application form, received either with or without the required supporting documents.

Enrolment - Applicants must have completed the application form in full, produced all of the required supporting documents and attended an interview. They will have then paid the deposit and registration fee, and received an unconditional offer from the college.

Registration - The student's first day arriving at the college, where they are required to produce original passports and visas, and comply with the college's regulations in regards to checking, updating contact details and current addresses.

Induction - The student's introduction to college life and participation in welcome talks, instruction on college attendance and other required activities.

CAS - Certificate of Acceptance for Studies: online electronic document using the UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) Sponsor Management System (SMS).

IAC – International Admissions Centre. The centralised admissions team for APG.

SMS - UKVI Sponsorship Management System, where CAS documents are issued, and student activities in connection to their visa are reported.

SIMS – The Abbey Cambridge student database for use by admissions, accommodation, teachers and other staff members.

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15. Courses offered at Abbey College Cambridge and entry requirements

A-level

Subject availability

All subjects are available for a 2-year or 18-month course

Accounting
Art & Design
Biology
Business Studies
Computer Science
Geography
Chemistry
Economics
English Literature
Government & Politics
History
Mathematics
Further Mathematics
Physics
Psychology

We recommend that students study four A-level subjects in their first term and then continue with three or four in the second term onwards.

We do not recommend five A-level subjects. Students who feel that they are ready for a higher workload than four A-levels will be well taken care of: we have extensive expertise in stretching the most gifted students in preparation for the university admissions process.

Entry criteria: English language

Minimum of IELTS 5.5

A student's English language proficiency can be judged through sitting the IELTS test or an alternative 'external' test such as Pearson's PTE, or through an approved Abbey DLD English language test.

Students with IELTS below 7.5 will be required to take a one year English course alongside their A-level study, *for which there is no additional charge.*

Students who are at IELTS 5.0 can join the Pre-session programme in September for three terms, January for two terms, April for one term, prior to a guaranteed entry into the two year A-level programme in the following September.

Entry criteria: Academic

The minimum entry requirement is 5 passes at grade C or above at GCSE or international equivalent. The Admissions Team at Abbey Cambridge will be more than happy to provide advice on the equivalence of an international qualification to GCSE.

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Entry criteria: Student age

15-20 on entry

Students who are not 16 on the first day of the academic year (taken as September 1st) are classed as of 'Compulsory School Age'. Such students will receive a higher level of supervision in school and in their living accommodation for the duration of the academic year.

International Foundation Programme

Core Skills Modules

Pathway September start

Business Management & Economics

Engineering

Medicine

Science

The Abbey Cambridge International Foundation Programme is a one year pre-university course designed to prepare students for entry into UK universities. It is fully accredited by the external body NCFE. Three Pathways are offered: Business; Science; Engineering.

The Business Management & Economics Pathway also has modules in Accounting, Business Studies, Mathematics and Economics.

The Engineering Pathway has Physics, Chemistry, Mechanics and additional Mathematics modules.

The Science and Pharmacy Pathway has Biology, Chemistry, Biomedicine and additional Mathematics modules.

The Medicine Pathway **Biology**, Chemistry, Biomedicine and additional Mathematics for Medicine modules

Each Pathway comprises three academic strands plus Academic English Mathematics, research and presentation skills, and ICT.

Entry criteria: English language

Minimum of UKVI Approved IELTS 5.0

A student's English proficiency can be judged for college entry purposes by taking the IELTS or through an approved 'internal' Abbey DLD English language test. However, the student will be required to submit an IELTS from a UKVI Approved SELT centre as part of their visa application, so we recommend the IELTS.

Students who are at IELTS 4.5 can join the Pre-session course in September for three terms, January for two terms, April for one term, prior to a guaranteed entry into the one-year Foundation programme the following September.

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Entry criteria: Academic

The minimum entry requirement is 5 passes at grade C or above at GCSE or international equivalent. The Admissions Team at Abbey Cambridge will be more than happy to provide advice on the equivalence of an international qualification to GCSE.

Entry criteria: Student age

17-20 on entry

One-year GCSE

Subject availability

September start

Biology or

Business Studies

Chemistry

Economics

English Language

Mathematics

Physics

Students study six GCSEs including a choice between Business Studies and Biology.

Entry criteria: English language

Minimum of IELTS 5.0

A student's English proficiency can be judged through sitting the IELTS test or an alternative 'external' test such as Pearson's PTE, or through an approved 'internal' Abbey DLD test (such as the Oxford Placement Test).

Students who are at IELTS 4.5 can join the Pre-session programme in September for three terms, January for two terms, April for one term, prior to a guaranteed entry into the one year GCSE programme in the following September.

Entry criteria: Academic

The minimum entry requirement is 5 passes at a school level equivalent to year 9 in the UK. The admissions staff at Abbey Cambridge will be more than happy to provide advice on the equivalence of international qualifications

Entry criteria: Student age

15-16 on entry

Students who are not 16 on the first day of the academic year (taken as September 1st) are classed as being of 'Compulsory School Age'. Such students will receive a higher level of supervision in school and in their living accommodation for the duration of the academic year.

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Two-year GCSE

Subject availability

September start

Art & Design or History

Biology

Business Studies

Chemistry

Economics

English Language (1st or 2nd language)

Geography or Sports Science

Mathematics

Physics

Students study nine GCSEs.

18m GCSE

Subject availability

January start

Biology

Business Studies

Chemistry

Economics

English Language (1st or 2nd language)

Further Mathematics

Mathematics

Physics

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Entry Criteria – 2yr GCSE and 18m GCSE:

Minimum of IELTS 4.5

A student's English proficiency can be judged through sitting the IELTS test or an alternative 'external' test such as Pearson's PTE, or through an approved 'internal' Abbey DLD test (such as the Oxford Placement Test).

Students who are at IELTS 4.0 can join the Pre-sessional course in September for three terms, January for two terms, April for one term, prior to a guaranteed entry into the two-year GCSE programme the following September.

Entry criteria: Academic

The minimum entry requirement is 5 passes at a school level equivalent to year 9 in the UK. The admissions staff at Abbey Cambridge will be more than happy to provide advice on the equivalence of international qualifications

Entry criteria: Student age

13-15 on entry

Students who are not 16 on the first day of the academic year (taken as September 1st) are classed as being of 'Compulsory School Age'. Such students will receive a higher level of supervision in school and in their living accommodation for the duration of the academic year.

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Pre Sessional English

September, January or April start

The Pre-sessional programme can be taught over a period of one, two or three terms. As well as strengthening English language skills, it also prepares students to learn in a typical British classroom environment. This includes skill development in areas such as pair work, project work, independent reading, discussion work and team building. Physical Education (PE) and Personal Health and Social Education (PHSE) also form part of our Pre-sessional curriculum.

Our Pre-sessional programme consists of 2.5 hours per week of each of the following core academic subjects:

- Maths
- Science 1 (Chemistry)
- Science 2 (Biology) or Economics

Lessons in these core subjects will expand your language specific to these subjects and maintain your subject knowledge and skills. The remainder of the timetable is made up of English. Lessons in English will raise your proficiency in general English, improving your communication skills and giving you the ability to write a range of texts in a variety of registers with improved grammatical and lexical accuracy

Entry criteria: English language

Minimum of IELTS 4.0

A student's English proficiency can be judged through sitting the IELTS test or an alternative 'external' test such as Pearson's PTE, or through an approved 'internal' Abbey DLD test (such as the Oxford Placement Test).

Entry criteria: Academic

The minimum entry requirement is 5 passes at a school level equivalent to year 9 in the UK. The admissions staff at Abbey Cambridge will be more than happy to provide advice on the equivalence of international qualifications

Entry criteria: Student age

13-17 on entry

Students who are not 16 on the first day of the academic year (taken as September 1st) are classed as being of 'Compulsory School Age'. Such students will receive a higher level of supervision in school and in their living accommodation for the duration of the academic year.

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16. Child Protection Files

16.1. Transfer Procedures

Any child under the age of 18 for whom ACC holds a child protection file should have their file transferred to their next school if they leave ACC.

The school should only transfer information that originates at the school. They should not transfer third party information such as health assessments or social work reports.

The transfer takes place with support of the school Admissions department. They send a Leaver's Form and then notify the Heads of Year about the new school address of the student, who locates the relevant file, and this is then sent recorded delivery by ACC. Once the transfer school receives the file and acknowledges the file, the ACC shreds the record. If there is no notification the school's admissions team contacts the school, with understanding that some schools may not respond due to cultural differences and expectations. The Admissions team will do all they can to find out where the student has transferred to, although that may not be possible in some cases.

16.2. Incoming Students

The International Admission Centre (IAC) run by the Abbey DLD Colleges contact the school for incoming students, and check references, and request any child protection files if they exist.