



Gillingham School Dorset

United Learning Academies Admissions Policy and Guidance

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UNITED LEARNING

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United Learning Academies Admissions Policy and Guidance

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United Learning Admissions (Academies) Guidance

Note: this is not a template policy and is guidance for our academies when setting their individual admissions policy.

Each individual academy needs their own admissions policy which reflects the guidance set out below. An exemplar policy is included in the [Admissions Consultation Pack](#), for reference. This document also sets out further advice on admissions consultations.

Schools must have separate Admissions Policies specific to each academic year and not one generic policy.

Our Approach to School Admissions

Our approach to school admissions aligns with the [Schools Admissions Code](#) (September 2021) and the [Schools Admissions Appeal Code](#) (October 2022) along with other relevant legislation.

United Learning schools welcome children of all faiths and none, embracing all cultures, races, and family backgrounds. Our schools are committed to serving their local communities. We do not seek to change admissions criteria for schools joining the Trust unless they are unfair, unclear, or non-compliant with the Code or law, or if specific admissions requirements are part of the school's Funding Agreement.

Our ambition is for all United Learning academies to be excellent local schools. Admissions policies reflect this by being fair, transparent, and compliant with equalities legislation. We work collaboratively with local authorities and other trusts on place planning to ensure children have access to good education close to home.

The School Admissions Code

The Code sets mandatory requirements for all admission authorities, including academy trusts. Academies must comply with the Code under their funding agreements, unless varied by the Secretary of State (rarely permitted).

The Code ensures school places are allocated fairly. It uses the language of must and must not, which are legally binding. This guidance summarises key points for quick reference, but schools must consult the full Code when considering changes.

Responsibility for Admissions

As a Multi Academy Trust, the United Learning Trust Board is the overarching Admissions Authority for our academies.

Responsibility for admissions is delegated to Local Governing Bodies. It is essential that admission arrangements are routinely reviewed by governors, and it is recommended that an Admissions Committee be established, where necessary, to provide the appropriate focus and scrutiny on key aspects of this. Further information on the role of the LGB and Admissions Committees is provided on page 11. All LGBs must ensure their school-specific Admissions Policy and practices abides by the Admissions Code and any other locally agreed protocols.

Paragraph 2.7 of the School Admissions Code makes clear the role of the Admission Authority:

2.7 Admission authorities must allocate places on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only. A decision to offer or refuse admission must not be made by one individual in an admission authority. Where the school is its own admission authority the whole governing body, or an admissions committee established by the governing body, must make such decisions. The admission authority must keep a clear record of any decisions on applications, including in-year applications.

The Trust Board also delegates the oversight of admissions to Regional Directors via the Executive Team. Any proposals to change the Admissions Policy of a school should include Regional Director oversight and agreement.

Admissions Criteria

All United Learning academies must ensure the practices and criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are **fair, clear** and **objective**. Parents should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated in any given academic year. Each school must have admissions arrangements which set out clearly how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school.

Each school must have a separate admissions policy for each academic year. Even if unchanged, policies must be reissued annually.

Admissions arrangements must be **determined** annually. If changes are proposed, consultation must occur within the statutory timeframe. If unchanged, arrangements must still be consulted on at least once every 7 years.

Headteachers are expected to discuss any proposed changes with their Regional Director and LGB well in advance of the consultation window, and support from the Central Office team can be provided if required.

If a school is undersubscribed, any parent that applies **must** be offered a place¹. When oversubscribed, admissions must be ranked in order against oversubscription criteria and then that ranked list returned to the local authority who typically coordinate all admissions in the area. Admissions policies must clarify that separate applications are required for:

- Nursery to primary school transfer
- Infant to junior school transfer

Published Admissions Number

Each academy must set a **Published Admissions Number (PAN)** for every relevant age group—typically Reception, Year 7, and Year 12 (for external Sixth Form applicants). For all-through academies, the PAN must apply only to pupils joining the school for the first time, not those transferring internally from Year 6.

Year 12: The PAN for Year 12 refers **only to external applicants**. It does not include internal students continuing from Year 11. Schools must make this distinction clear in their admissions policy. For support with phrasing, contact the Secondary Education Team at: secondaryeducation@unitedlearning.org.uk

Changes to the PAN may require consultation, as set out below:

¹ Subject to the Local Authority being able to allocate a place at a higher ranked preference in the normal round of admissions

- **Increasing or maintaining PAN:** No consultation is required, but schools must notify the local authority and publish the change on their website.
- **Decreasing PAN:** Requires formal consultation and may need DfE approval if it impacts local provision.
- **Temporary increases** (e.g. bulge years): Schools should avoid formally increasing PAN to prevent needing future consultation to reduce it again. A separate process is in place for schools agreeing to a bulge year, and schools should contact their Regional Director about this in the first instance.

If a school admits above PAN in-year, this does **not** constitute a formal increase to PAN. However, the local authority must be informed to support coordination.

Oversubscription Criteria

All United Learning academies **must** publish clear criteria for allocating places when applications exceed the number of available places. These criteria must:

- Be reasonable, clear, objective, and fair
- Comply with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation
- Reflect any specific requirements in the school's Funding Agreement

Children whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names the school must be admitted by law. They are not subject to the oversubscription criteria.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants must be offered a place (with the exception of grammar schools in cases where not all applicants have reached the required academic standard).

Priority Order

1. Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)
This includes children who were in state care outside England and ceased to be so due to adoption (as per paragraph 1.7 of the Code).
2. Other criteria
Applied in the order published in the school's Admission Policy, with a clear tie-breaker where applicants are tied for the final place (usually distance or random allocation).

Prohibited Practices

The following **must not** be used in admissions arrangements:

- Prior schools attended (unless a named feeder school)
- Preference order on the CAF (e.g. "first preference first")
- Selection by ability (unless a designated grammar or partially selective school)
- Financial contributions or parental support
- Reports from previous schools
- Discrimination against disabled children or those with SEN
- Interviews with parents or children

(Note: Sixth Form meetings may be held to discuss course suitability but cannot influence the offer of a place.)

Common Acceptable Criteria

- **Siblings:** Must define clearly what counts as a sibling (e.g. step, foster, adopted, etc.) and whether they must be on roll at the time of application or admission.
- **Distance:** Must specify how distance is measured (e.g. straight line or road route, name of MIS if a specific system is used etc), and how shared custody arrangements are handled.
- **Catchment Areas:** Must be clearly defined with maps or street lists. If referring to a map held on the Local Authority website, this must be made clear, with a link given alongside information as to how paper copies can be requested if needed.
- **Feeder Schools:** Must be based on strong, tangible links. United Learning's Feeder Schools Policy (Annex A) should be followed where relevant.
- **Random Allocation:** Must be supervised independently and re-run each time a place is offered from the waiting list.

Less Common Criteria (but permissible)

- Selection by aptitude (max 10% of places; must be consulted on)
- Faith-based criteria (only in designated faith schools)
- Children of staff (must follow paragraphs 1.39–1.40 of the Code – see Annex D)
- Children eligible for pupil premium or service premium

If a school wishes to change their admissions criteria in any way, including increasing or decreasing the PAN, they must in the first instance discuss this with the relevant Regional Director and LGB prior to planning any consultation.

Changes relating to Secondary Academies should also be sent to Head of Operations – Secondary Academies: Holly.Cookson@unitedlearning.org.uk.

Grammar Schools

Only schools that are formally designated as Grammar Schools are permitted to select their entire intake based on high academic ability.

Grammar schools do not have to fill all places if applicants do not meet the required academic standard.

Where selection is wholly based on ability, and places are offered only to those who score highest in a selection test, no priority needs to be given to Looked After Children (LAC).

This is an exception to the general rule that LAC and PLAC must be given highest priority in oversubscription criteria.

Determination

All schools **must formally determine** their admissions arrangements every year—even if no changes are made. This ensures that objections can be raised if necessary.

Key Deadlines:

- **Determination Date:** Admissions arrangements must be formally agreed and set by 28 February in the determination year (i.e. the year before the arrangements apply). This should be clearly documented in LGB minutes.

- **Notification to Local Authority:** Must be completed by 15 March following determination.
- **Publication:** Arrangements must be published on the school's website by 15 March and remain visible throughout the offer year.
- **Objections Deadline:** Any objections to the arrangements must be submitted to the Schools Adjudicator by 15 May in the determination year.

Schools must retain minutes of the meeting(s) where arrangements were determined. These may be requested by the Adjudicator should any concerns about admissions be raised.

Additionally, schools must provide all necessary information to the local authority by 8 August (unless agreed otherwise locally), enabling the local authority to publish the composite prospectus by 12 September.

Consultation

Consultation is a statutory requirement and must be undertaken:

- At least once every 7 years, even if no changes are made to the admissions arrangements.
- Whenever qualifying changes are proposed to the admissions policy or oversubscription criteria.

Please note that the lead in time for consultation is approximately 18 months before the change can legally come into effect, so advanced planning is essential.

Key Requirements:

- **Minimum duration:** Consultation must last at least 6 weeks.
- **Timing:** Must take place between 1 October and 31 January of the school year before the arrangements are to apply. *Example: For admissions in September 2028, consultation must be completed by 31 January 2027.*
- **Publication:** During the consultation period, schools must:
 - Publish the full proposed admissions arrangements (including PAN) on their website.
 - Clearly highlight the areas being changed.
 - Provide contact details for submitting comments.
- **Stakeholders to consult:**
 - Parents
 - Local authority
 - Other admission authorities in the area
 - Other relevant people in the area who may have an interest
 - Body/person representing the religion / religious denomination of the school
- **Objections:** Even after consultation, arrangements can be objected to and referred to the Schools Adjudicator. Objections must be submitted by 15 May in the determination year.
- **Implementation:** Any decision by the Adjudicator must be implemented without further consultation.

Schools must ensure their Regional Director and LGB are fully informed of any planned consultation. A consultation pack is available on the United Learning Hub to support schools through this process.

Variation

Once admissions arrangements have been formally determined, they cannot be changed for that academic year unless:

- A change is required to comply with a mandatory requirement in the Admissions Code or law.
- A change is needed to implement a determination by the Schools Adjudicator.
- A misprint or clerical error needs correcting.
- There is a major change in circumstances that justifies a variation (note: this is a high threshold).

Process for Seeking a Variation:

- Any proposed variation must be referred to the Secretary of State via the Department for Education's regional teams.
- Relevant stakeholders must be notified of the proposed change.
- If approved, the variation must be published in line with the requirements for publishing admissions arrangements for the full offer year.

Schools new to United Learning

When a school joins United Learning, its existing admissions arrangements will be reviewed to ensure they are fair, clear and objective as well as being compliant with the School Admissions Code and relevant legislation.

Admissions arrangements will only be changed if:

- They do not comply with the Code or legal requirements
- Specific admissions requirements have been agreed as part of the school's Funding Agreement

Additionally, the arrangements will need to be updated to reflect United Learning is now the admissions authority.

Applications and Offers

Applications for school places during the normal admissions round are managed via the Local Authority's Common Application Form (CAF). National offer days are:

- Secondary applications: 1st March (or next working day)
- Primary applications: 16th April (or next working day)

Supplementary Information Forms (SIFs)

Some academies may require a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) to process applications. If used:

- The SIF must only request information that directly affects oversubscription criteria.
- Completion of a SIF must not be a condition for priority or admission.

- Applicants who clearly meet criteria based on the CAF must not be disadvantaged for not submitting a SIF.
- SIFs must not request prohibited information (see paragraph 1.9 of the Code).
- Schools may request proof of date of birth, but must not ask for a long-form birth certificate or documents revealing parental details.

Sixth Form

Children on roll and staying on at sixth form do not need to use the CAF to apply for a sixth form place. Academies can set academic entry criteria for sixth forms and this **must** be the same for both external and internal applicants (paragraph 2.6 of the Code). Internal students are not automatically guaranteed a place unless they meet the published academic entry criteria.

School sixth form admissions arrangements for external applicants must be consulted upon, determined and published in accordance with the same timetable as admissions at other entry points.

The highest priority in any oversubscription criteria must be given to looked after children and previously looked after children who meet the academic entry criteria.

Offers of Sixth Form places may be conditional upon meeting specified academic entry requirements, typically based on GCSE results. Final enrolment must be subject to these conditions being met, and this should be communicated clearly to applicants.

Course availability may be subject to demand, staffing, and timetabling constraints. Not all courses may run each academic year, and applicants should be advised to check availability during the application process.

For the avoidance of doubt, once a child has taken up a place at the sixth form, they are entitled to progress through to Year 13, regardless of their academic performance in Year 12. Where issues around attendance and academic performance arise which in the school's professional judgment put the suitability of the course(s) for a particular student in question, schools should seek further advice from their Regional Director and take legal advice as necessary before taking any further action about the placement.

Right to Appeal for Sixth Form Admissions

Applicants who are not offered a place in the Sixth Form have the right to appeal the decision. This right is the same as for children in any other year group, and intermittent steps such as a meeting with the Principal is not something permitted by the Code. Meetings can take place to discuss course suitability (e.g. if grades are not met and other courses are suggested) but not specifically to discuss admission to the Sixth Form itself.

Appeals may only be lodged in relation to the refusal of a Sixth Form place. Applicants cannot appeal solely on the basis of not meeting the academic entry criteria, but may appeal if they believe the criteria were not applied correctly or fairly.

Appeals must be made in writing and submitted within the timeframe specified in the admissions decision notification. The appeal must be heard by an independent panel in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. Full details of the appeals process, including deadlines and how to submit an appeal, should be given to applicants alongside the outcome of the application.

Appeals for Sixth Form places must be heard within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged, where the offer was conditional on exam results, or 40 days where the offer was not conditional on results (Appeals Code, paragraph 2.3).

Allocating Places

Coordination with Local Authorities:

- In most cases, local authorities coordinate admissions for entry into Reception and Year 7.
- Some United Learning academies choose to allocate places themselves for in-year admissions, especially where the local authority does not offer this service.

Decision-Making:

- Decisions to offer or refuse a place must not be made by an individual.
- Decisions must be made by the Local Governing Body (LGB) or an Admissions Committee established by the LGB (as per paragraph 2.7 of the Code).
- If the Local Authority manages admissions on the school's behalf, the LGB should be satisfied that the Local Authority delivers this in line with the school's policy.
- This applies to both main round and in-year admissions.

Record-Keeping:

- Schools must keep a clear record of all decisions on applications, including in-year admissions.
- If a face-to-face meeting of the LGB or Admissions Committee is not possible, decisions may be made virtually, provided members are present (e.g., via video or phone conference).

Offer Communication:

- In the normal admissions round, offers must be sent by the home local authority.
- Schools must not contact parents about the outcome of applications until after the local authority has issued offers.
- Communication regarding in-year admissions can reflect local arrangements, and this should be set out clearly in the school's Policy.

The Role of the LGB and the Admissions Committee

1. Role of the Local Governing Body (LGB)

The LGB plays a strategic and statutory role in overseeing admissions. It must:

- Review and approve the Admissions Policy no later than 28 February in the determination year, ensuring alignment with the School Admissions Code and United Learning's Admissions Guidance.
- Ensure the criteria for admission are clear, fair, objective and easy to understand.
- Scrutinise any proposed consultation on changes to the Admissions Policy, including the rationale and timeline, before it is launched. (Admissions consultations can only take place between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year.)
- Ensure statutory consultation is undertaken:
 - When qualifying changes are proposed.
 - At least once every seven years, even if no changes are made.

- Monitor the effectiveness of admissions arrangements, including fairness, transparency, and compliance with equalities legislation.
- Agree the overarching principles and approach for admission (both at normal point of entry and in-year) and confirm the role of the Local Authority in carrying out this responsibility on the school's behalf.
- Ensure appeal arrangements are in place and compliant with the School Admission Appeals Code.
- Monitor admissions and appeals, reporting any issues to the Trust as necessary.

It is recommended that the above all feature on the agenda for a full Governing Body meeting in the Autumn Term so that time allows for any required consultation.

2. Role of the Admissions Committee

An Admissions Committee can support the LGB in fulfilling its admissions responsibilities by undertaking detailed work that may not be feasible at full LGB meetings. Admissions Committees should comprise 3 governors (with a minimum quorum of 2). The Principal and the Admissions Officer should also attend (the latter can record the decision if no separate clerk is available).

The role of the Committee primarily involves oversight of applications and decision-making, and only needs to meet as needed. The duties of the Committee are broadly as follows:

- Ensure relevant admissions decisions are made collectively and not by an individual.
- Make decisions on individual applications for admission, where required, in accordance with the determined Admissions Policy and oversubscription criteria.
- Be satisfied that processes to verify local authority rankings during the normal admissions round ensure accurate application of oversubscription criteria.
- Assess discretionary criteria, such as applications based on social/emotional needs, where applicable.
- Ensure timely responses to in-year applications in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

The purpose of the Admissions Committee is to ensure that admissions decisions receive appropriate oversight and scrutiny. It only needs to meet as necessary, and this will depend, in part, on the decisions delegated to Principal – see below.

LGBs / Admissions Committee can further sub-delegate to the Principal certain decisions around in-year admissions, but these must be made in line with the school's existing oversubscription criteria. Examples of decisions that can be delegated include accepting in-year admissions where there is space in-year, as well as rejecting in-year admissions where the year group is full. A sample scheme of delegation is provided in the annexes.

However, in accordance with the School Admissions Code, certain decisions must involve governors and cannot be delegated solely to the Principal. These include:

- Requests for admission outside chronological age group (paras 2.18–2.20 of the Code).
- Applications citing social/emotional needs (where these feature in a school's policy).
- Applications involving potential refusal under paragraph 3.10 (challenging behaviour).

Where statutory timescales make it impractical to convene a full meeting of the Admissions Committee to agree such admissions, the following process should apply:

1. **Preparation by the Principal:** The Principal prepares a full recommendation and supporting evidence in line with the published Admissions Policy and the School Admissions Code.
2. **Governor and Regional Director Review and Ratification:** One member of the Admissions Committee, acting under delegated authority, reviews the Principal's recommendation and consults with the Principal and Regional Director before confirming the decision. This ensures no decision is made by one individual in isolation – a key principle of the Code.
3. **Documentation:** All decisions made under this process must be fully documented, including applicant details and reason for decision (with reference to the Code).
4. **Reporting:** All decisions made under this process must be reported and formally ratified at the next full Admissions Committee or LGB meeting.
5. **Safeguards:** This process should only be used in exceptional circumstances when convening the full Committee is impractical and should not become routine practice.

Please note footnote 51 of the Admissions Code, which allows for decisions to be made virtually, as follows:

“Where it is not possible to convene a face to face meeting of a governing body or the admissions committee (where applicable) in order to make a decision on an application, decisions may be made ‘virtually’, provided members are ‘present’ – for example via telephone or video conference. Admission authorities must ensure their processes comply with relevant governance requirements.”

This approach ensures compliance with the School Admissions Code while enabling timely decisions in the best interests of applicants.

This requirement does not apply to places requested under Fair Access Protocols. FAP placement decisions can be made by the nominated individual representing the school, typically the Principal, with no requirement for liaison with others.

Withdrawing an offer or a place

A school must not withdraw an offer or a place unless one of the following applies:

Permitted Reasons for Withdrawal:

1. **Offer made in error**
If the school mistakenly offers a place it cannot honour, it may withdraw the offer.
2. **No response from parent**
If a parent fails to respond to an offer within a reasonable timeframe, the school may withdraw the offer. However, the parent must be given a further opportunity to respond before the offer is withdrawn.
3. **Fraudulent or deliberately misleading application**
If it is established that a place was obtained through false information, the offer or place may be

withdrawn. The school must consider the length of time the child has been on roll before deciding to withdraw the place.

Important Safeguard:

Once a child has **started at the school**, a place must not be withdrawn except in cases of proven fraud.

Waiting Lists (Normal Admission Round)

If an academy receives more applications than available places in any year, it must operate a waiting list that is clear, fair and objective.

The waiting list must be maintained at least until 31 December of the admission year, unless the local authority coordinates waiting lists for all schools in the area up to that date.

Key Requirements:

- Each time a child is added to the waiting list, the list must be re-ranked in line with the published oversubscription criteria.
- Priority must not be based on the date of application.
- Looked After Children (LAC), Previously Looked After Children (PLAC), and children allocated a place under a Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over others on the waiting list.

In-Year Admissions

Schools must include clear information in their Admissions Policy about how in-year admissions will be managed.

By 31 August each year, schools must publish on their website:

- How parents can apply for a school place
- Whether the school manages its own in-year admissions or participates in the local authority's coordination scheme
- Access to a suitable application form (and a supplementary information form, if applicable)
- When parents will be notified of the outcome
- Details about the right to appeal

If participating in the local authority's in-year coordination scheme:

- Notify the local authority by 1 August
- Provide all required information for the local authority's website, including application forms
- Include links to the relevant section of the local authority's website in school communications

If managing in-year admissions independently:

- Publish arrangements clearly on the school's website
- Notify the local authority of both the application and its outcome

- Inform parents of their right to appeal if a place is refused

Important: Schools must not refuse to accept an application or tell parents they can only be placed on a waiting list. Parents must be allowed to make a formal application.

Schools must also ensure hard copies of in-year admissions information are available for families without internet access.

Reasons for refusal of an in-year admission

United Learning schools aim to meet parental preference wherever possible. However, there are two clear and lawful reasons for refusing an in-year admission:

1. Infant Class Size Limits

- By law, infant classes (Reception, Year 1, Year 2) must not exceed **30 pupils per qualified teacher**.
- A place cannot be offered if it would breach this limit, unless one of the **legally permitted exceptions** applies (e.g. EHCP, LAC/PLAC without a school place, Ukrainian refugees, or procedural errors).

2. Prejudice to Efficient Education or Use of Resources

- If the relevant year group is full, and admitting additional pupils would:
 - Place undue pressure on staff or resources
 - Negatively impact teaching and learning
 - Prejudice the efficient education of others

Then the school may refuse the application under Section 86(3) of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998.

Note: In years of entry (e.g. Reception or Year 7), schools must admit up to their PAN throughout the year. Refusal on prejudice grounds is only lawful after PAN has been reached.

Additional Considerations:

- **Appeals:** Parents must be informed of their right to appeal when a place is refused. Decisions of the independent appeal panel are binding.
- **Fair Access Protocol:** A place may later be allocated under the local authority's Fair Access Protocol.
- **Direction Powers:** The Secretary of State may direct an academy to admit a child. Local authorities may request admission but cannot compel it; they must escalate to the Secretary of State if necessary.

Infant Class Sizes

By law, infant classes (Reception, Year 1, and Year 2) must not exceed 30 pupils per qualified teacher. Schools may only admit additional children under specific, legally defined exceptions. These excepted pupils remain classified as such while they are in an infant class or until the class size naturally reduces to within the legal limit.

Permitted Exceptions Include:

- Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the school.
- Looked After Children (LAC) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) who do not have a school place as part of the normal admissions round.

- Ukrainian refugees, admitted under national resettlement schemes.
- Children admitted following a procedural error in the original application process.

Further detail on these exceptions is provided in paragraph 2.16 of the School Admissions Code.

Admission of Summer Born Children – all schools, all age groups

The Department for Education has published detailed guidance on the admission of summer born children: [DFE Guidance on Summer Born Admissions](#)

Children born between 1 April and 31 August are considered summer born. Parents may request that their child is admitted to Reception a year later than usual, i.e. outside their normal age group. This principle applies across all phases, including secondary transfer, to ensure continuity and to avoid a child missing a year of education at a later stage.

Annex D includes a proforma Admissions Committees may wish to work through in making the decision.

Statutory and Best Practice Principles

- Requests should be granted in most cases. Refusals should be rare, exceptional, and capable of being clearly justified.
- Each request must be considered on its individual merits, in the context of the child's best interests. Decisions must relate specifically to the child, drawing on information about their development, needs, circumstances, and wellbeing.
- Generalised assumptions or cohort-level data (for example, that "summer born children catch up" or "do just as well as their peers") must not be used as a reason to refuse a request.
- Decisions must be made by the Admissions Committee or LGB, not by the Principal acting alone.
- The Principal's professional view, alongside any supporting evidence (for example, educational, medical or developmental information), must be considered but must not be treated as determinative.
- Requests for admission out of normal age group are separate from the application for a place. The age-group decision must be made first, before the offer of a place is considered.

Expectations of Schools

Schools must ensure that:

- Parents are clearly informed:
 - that they have the right to request admission out of the normal age group;
 - when and how to make such a request; and
 - what information or evidence they may wish to submit.
- Parents receive a clear, written decision, including the reasons for the decision, in sufficient time to make an informed choice before their child reaches compulsory school age.

- Where a request is refused, the decision letter must demonstrate that:
 - the child's individual circumstances were properly considered;
 - the decision was based on the child's best interests; and
 - no blanket policy or predetermined position was applied.

Decision-Making Requirements

In line with the School Admissions Code:

- Blanket policies refusing admission outside the normal age group are unlawful.
- Schools must not rely on general research, averages, or comparisons as the primary basis for refusing a request.
- The focus must be on:
 - the child's current and future educational, social and emotional needs;
 - the likely impact of admission to Reception rather than Year 1, or, at secondary transfer, admission to Year 7 rather than requiring the child to miss Year 6 or Year 7;
 - the need to ensure continuity across later phases of education.
- In the context of secondary transfer, decision-makers must explicitly consider that refusing a request for admission outside the child's chronological year group will, in practice, require the child to miss either Year 6 or Year 7. Any decision to refuse must therefore be supported by a clear, child-specific rationale explaining why the loss of a year of education would not adversely affect the child's academic progress, social development or emotional wellbeing, and why refusal is nevertheless in the child's best interests.

Deferred Entry and Part-Time Attendance (Primary)

Primary academies must:

- allow children to take up a place in the September following their fourth birthday;
- permit deferred entry later in the academic year, or part-time attendance, up to compulsory school age (Admissions Code, paragraph 2.17); and
- ensure parents understand how these options differ from admission outside the normal age group.

Parental Concerns and Complaints

While there is no right of appeal against a refusal to admit a child outside their normal age group, parents do have the right to complain about the way the decision was reached.

- Parents may raise concerns where they believe:
 - the Admissions Code or DfE guidance has not been properly followed;
 - the decision was not made in the child's best interests; or
 - generalised reasoning was applied instead of a child-specific assessment.
- Complaints should be directed to the Governance Team at the Trust in the first instance.

Children of UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces) and crown servants.

Admission authorities must take specific steps to support families of UK service personnel and Crown servants, ensuring that children are not disadvantaged due to mobility or relocation.

Key Requirements:

1. Advance Allocation of Places

Schools must allocate a place in advance of the family's arrival, provided one is available and the application includes an official letter confirming the relocation date.

2. Use of Future Address

Oversubscription criteria must be applied using the intended address, as long as parents provide evidence.

- If requested, a Unit or quartering address must be accepted as the child's home address.

3. No Reserved Places

Schools must not reserve blocks of places specifically for service children.

4. Removing Disadvantage

Admission arrangements must support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children.

- These arrangements should be appropriate to the local area and clearly described in the local authority's composite prospectus.

These requirements are set out in paragraph 2.21 of the School Admissions Code.

Children from overseas.

United Learning academies must ensure that children from overseas are treated fairly and in accordance with the law. Admission authorities **must not** check immigration or nationality status as a condition of admission.

Key Principles:

▪ No Immigration Checks

Schools must not ask for passports, visas, or other immigration documents as part of the admissions process.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure their child has the right to study in the UK.

▪ No Refusal Based on Nationality or Status

Admission authorities must not refuse a place based on a child's nationality or immigration status.

Children must not be removed from roll on this basis either.

▪ No Active Recruitment from Overseas

Except for Irish nationals, schools must not actively recruit children who are still resident overseas.

Further Guidance: The Department for Education provides detailed advice on this topic: [Schools Admissions – Applications from Overseas Children](#).

Other categories of foreign national children who can enter the UK and attend a school

Ukraine, Hong Kong and Afghanistan

The Department for Education has issued specific guidance regarding children arriving in the UK under resettlement schemes from **Ukraine, Hong Kong, and Afghanistan**. United Learning academies are encouraged to use available flexibilities to support these children.

Key Points:

■ Admission Above PAN and Infant Class Size Limits

Schools may admit children above their Published Admissions Number (PAN) and exceed infant class size limits under the 'exceptional circumstances' clause of the Admissions Code.

■ This applies particularly to:

- Ukrainian children arriving under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme or Ukraine Family Scheme
- Children from Hong Kong under the British National (Overseas) visa scheme
- Afghan children under the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) or Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP)

■ Encouragement to Admit

United Learning academies are strongly encouraged to admit children from these groups wherever possible, recognising the humanitarian context and the need for educational stability.

■ Legal Right to Attend School

Children arriving under these schemes have the legal right to attend school in the UK. Schools must not place additional barriers to admission.

Further guidance is available from the DfE: Schools Admissions – Applications from Overseas Children: [here](#).

Children with Challenging Behaviour and Exclusion History

This section sets out what schools can and cannot do when considering applications from children with challenging behaviour or a history of exclusions.

1. Where a Child Has Been Permanently Excluded Twice

Any school can refuse an in-year admission application only if all of the following apply:

- The child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools.
- The most recent exclusion occurred within the last two years.
- The school can demonstrate that admitting the child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

This is the only circumstance where refusal based on exclusion history is explicitly permitted under the Code.

2. Where a Child Is Considered to Have Challenging Behaviour (But Has Not Been Twice Excluded)

Schools cannot refuse admission solely on the basis of challenging behaviour, except in very limited circumstances set out in paragraph 3.10 of the School Admissions Code:

- The school must already have a particularly high proportion of pupils with challenging behaviour or exclusions, and
- The school must be able to evidence that admitting another such pupil would prejudice efficient education or resource use.

If these conditions are met, the school may refer the application to the Fair Access Protocol (FAP) for placement, rather than refusing outright.

3. Fair Access Protocol (FAP)

Schools should refer a child to the FAP where:

- The child meets the eligibility criteria under paragraph 3.17 of the Code, and
- Admission through the normal process would prejudice efficient education or resource use.

Key Principle: Most schools cannot lawfully refuse admission solely because a child is perceived to have challenging behaviour. Refusal is only permitted under the “twice excluded” rule or where the school meets the high threshold in paragraph 3.10 and follows the FAP process.

What Schools Must Not Do

- Must not refuse admission in the normal admissions round (e.g., Reception or Year 7) on the basis of behaviour or exclusion history.
- Must not refuse admission solely because:
 - The child has poor behaviour at a previous school.
 - The child is perceived as potentially disruptive.
 - The child is awaiting assessment for special educational needs.
- Must not automatically refuse or redirect children with challenging behaviour to alternative provision or other schools.
- Must not apply a blanket policy of refusing children with exclusions or behavioural concerns.

Important Exceptions and Safeguards

- The “twice excluded” rule does not apply to:
 - Children who were below compulsory school age at the time of exclusion.
 - Children who have been reinstated following a permanent exclusion.
 - Children with an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan).
- Any refusal based on behaviour must:
 - Be evidence-based, and
 - Be approved collectively by the Admissions Committee, not by an individual.

Fair Access Protocols

All United Learning academies **must comply** with their local authority’s Fair Access Protocol (FAP). These protocols ensure that children who are unplaced and vulnerable are offered a school place quickly and fairly, outside the normal admissions round.

What Schools Must Do:

- Participate fully in the local authority's FAP process.
- Accept placements made under the FAP, even if the school is full or the child has challenging circumstances.
- Ensure no disproportionate burden is placed on any one school — the local authority must manage this. Schools are advised to keep careful records of FAP and in year admissions should the need arise to challenge local authorities.
- Recognise that FAP placements override normal admissions arrangements, including oversubscription criteria.

What Schools Must Not Do:

- Must not refuse a FAP placement on the basis of:
 - Behaviour concerns.
 - SEN status (unless the child has an EHCP — in which case placement is via the LA's SEND team).
 - Lack of parental preference.
- Must not require a child to be assessed for SEN before admitting them under FAP.
- Must not automatically replace an excluded pupil with another child with challenging behaviour.

Eligibility for FAP Placement:

A child must meet **both** of the following criteria:

1. **Be eligible** under one of the categories in paragraph 3.17 of the Admissions Code, including:
 - Children in care or recently subject to a Child Protection Plan.
 - Children in refuges or temporary accommodation.
 - Children from the criminal justice system.
 - Children with disabilities or medical conditions (without an EHCP).
 - Children who are carers, homeless, or from refugee/asylum-seeking families.
 - Children refused admission due to challenging behaviour (under paragraph 3.10).
 - Children out of education for 4+ weeks with no reasonable school place available.
2. **Have difficulty securing a school place**, demonstrated by:
 - At least one refused application.
 - Confirmation from the LA that no places are available within reasonable distance.

Additional Notes:

- Parental preference does not apply under FAP — the local authority may allocate a place at any suitable school.
- Appeals and FAP can run in parallel — a child may be placed via FAP while an appeal is still pending.

- Schools must not delay admission pending appeal outcomes.

Appeals and Objections

Objections to Admissions Arrangements

Any person or body who believes an academy's admissions arrangements are unlawful or non-compliant with the School Admissions Code may submit an objection to the Schools Adjudicator.

- **Deadline:** Objections must be submitted by 15 May in the determination year (i.e. the year before the arrangements apply).
- **Binding Decisions:** If the Adjudicator upholds the objection, the school must revise its arrangements within:
 - 2 months, or
 - By 28 February following the decision (whichever is sooner).

Right to Appeal – When a Place is Refused

When a school refuses a place, it **must**:

- Clearly state the reason for refusal.
- Provide full details of the right to appeal, including:
 - How to appeal.
 - Deadlines.
 - Contact details for submitting the appeal.

Parents must be informed that appeals must be made in writing, setting out their case.

Appeals Process – Key Requirements

- Appeals must be heard by an Independent Appeal Panel, in line with the School Admission Appeals Code (2022).
- United Learning delegates responsibility for arranging appeals to each academy's **Local Governing Body (LGB)**.
- Schools must clearly state in their Admissions Policy:
 - Whether appeals are handled by the local authority or a commissioned provider.
 - The process for both normal round and in-year appeals.

Appeal Timetable – Statutory Deadlines

- Must be published on the school's website by **28 February** each year.
- Must include:
 - A deadline for lodging appeals (minimum 20 school days from refusal notification).

- At least 10 school days' notice of the hearing date.
- Decision letters sent within 5 school days of the hearing (where possible).

Appeals must be heard:

- Within 40 school days of the appeal deadline (normal round).
- Within 30 school days for in-year, late, or sixth form appeals.

Prohibited Practices:

- Panels must not uphold appeals subject to conditions.
- Schools must not delay or discourage appeals.
- Schools must not require parents to meet with the Principal before lodging an appeal.

Special Cases:

- Appeals for children with an EHCP are heard by the First-tier Tribunal, not the school's appeal panel.
- Complaints about maladministration by an appeal panel can be made to the Secretary of State.

Procedure

Each United Learning academy is responsible for determining and publishing its own admissions arrangements. These must comply with:

- The School Admissions Code
- Relevant legislation
- The United Learning Admissions Guidance (this document)

Statutory Requirements:

- Admissions arrangements must be:
 - Fair
 - Clear
 - Objective
 - Non-discriminatory, in line with the Equality Act 2010
- Schools must:
 - Determine their admissions arrangements annually.
 - Consult when making qualifying changes or at least once every 7 years.
 - Publish arrangements on their website by the statutory deadlines.
 - Retain records of determination meetings and decisions.

Trust-Level Oversight:

United Learning is committed to ensuring that admissions practices across its academies are: legally compliant, transparent, consistent with the Trust's values and strategic priorities.

Central Office and Regional Directors are available to support schools with: drafting and reviewing policies, planning consultations and responding to objections or appeals.

Annex A – United Learning Feeder Schools Policy

United Learning encourages our schools to actively engage with local partners for the mutual benefit of students, staff, and the wider communities they serve. This includes the relationships secondary schools develop with their feeder primary schools – for example, by sharing strong practice to support transition and subject knowledge across phases and extending access to secondary resources and facilities to provide opportunities for primary pupils.

In line with our strategy to develop strong clusters of schools, in many areas we have both primary and secondary schools serving the same communities. This allows us to strengthen our offer to children and their families, providing continuity of excellent education from early years through to post-16, including through:

- following the United Learning curriculum;
- extending academic and enrichment opportunities to pupils;
- taking opportunities for joint staff development;
- making joint staff appointments where there are mutually beneficial opportunities to combine roles and create efficiencies (for example, through the creation of shared support service structures); and
- developing shared contracts (where possible) to create cost efficiencies.

Reflecting links in admissions policies

Where these links are in place – as we expect to be the case between United Learning primary and secondary academies serving substantially the same community – we will [usually] reflect this in our secondary admissions policies.

For example, where both the primary and secondary school follow the United Learning curriculum, we would [generally] expect the primary school to be named as a feeder school in the secondary school's admissions policy, giving it priority within the oversubscription criteria. Where a primary school is not yet able to follow the United Learning curriculum but there are other strong links in place, the secondary school may also consider taking this approach.

We will satisfy ourselves that any changes to admissions arrangements are made on reasonable and transparent grounds, with approval provided by the United Learning Executive.

United Learning schools will always guarantee at least 10% of places for children who do not attend a named feeder school but live very close to the secondary. This will ensure the aggregate admissions from named feeder schools do not prejudice the ability of local children to access a United Learning secondary.

Process to be followed

Where a school proposes to name a primary school as a feeder school in its admissions policy, the Principal should first discuss with the Secondary Regional Director. If the school is a United Learning school, they should also involve the Primary Regional Director and primary Headteacher. If the school is not a United Learning school, we would expect discussions to have taken place with the primary Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

If the RD(s) and school(s) are content that the links between the schools are sufficiently strong to merit naming the primary as a feeder school the RD(s) should make a recommendation to the United Learning Executive to proceed. The Executive will consider the specific facts of each individual case in reaching a decision, taking legal advice where appropriate.

Before making a final determination, the secondary school must run a public consultation in line with any other change, as set out in the main Admissions Policy (above).

Annex B –Terms of Reference for an Admissions Committee of the LGB

LGB Admissions Committee

1. Purpose

This is a standing committee of the Local Governing Body. It operates under delegation from United Learning and derives its purpose from the published Admissions Policy of the Academy. The Committee supports the LGB in fulfilling its statutory and strategic responsibilities for admissions. It ensures that Admissions are given appropriate oversight, scrutiny and are fully in line with the [School Admissions Code](#).

2. Membership and Attendance

- Membership: 3 governors, with quorum being a minimum of 2 governors.
- Attendance: The Principal, the Admissions Officer and / or Clerk. The Principal attends to advise, present cases, and provide operational insight.

3. Frequency of Meetings

- The Committee will meet as required to fulfil its responsibilities.

4. Responsibilities

- Consider applications for admission to the school and make decisions in accordance with the published Admissions Policy and oversubscription criteria.
- Ensure relevant admissions decisions are made collectively by the Committee. This includes ensuring the following decisions are made appropriately by the Committee and in line with the [School Admissions Code](#) and relevant DFE guidance:
 - Requests for admission of Summer-born children (guidance is [here](#))
 - Requests for admission outside of chronological age group ([paras 2.18-2.20 of the code](#))
 - In-year applications where refusal may be considered due to behaviour ([paras 3.8-3.13 of the code](#)).
- Ensure that any delegation of in-year admissions decisions (where vacancies exist) is clearly documented and understood by all parties.

5. Delegated Authority – to the Principal

- The Principal is delegated authority by the LGB to admit pupils in-year where vacancies exist, in accordance with the published Admissions Policy and criteria.
- The Principal is delegated authority by the LGB to reject applications where a year group is full and where admission of additional students would prejudice the efficient education of others.
- The Principal is delegated responsibility to present the school's case at admission appeals.
- Where the Principal exercises delegated authority, the decision must be reported to the LGB/Admissions Committee and formally ratified at its next meeting.

6. Delegation for Urgent Decisions

- Where it is not possible to convene a full meeting of the Admissions Committee within statutory timescales, the following process applies:
 - The Principal will prepare a full recommendation and supporting evidence in line with the published Admissions Policy and the School Admissions Code.

- One member of the Admissions Committee, acting under delegated authority, will review the Principal's recommendation and consult with the Principal (and, where appropriate, the Regional Director) before confirming the decision.
- This process applies to defined scenarios where governor involvement is required under the Code, including:
 - o Requests for admission outside chronological age group (paras 2.18–2.20).
 - o Applications citing social/emotional needs.
 - o Applications involving potential refusal under paragraph 3.10 (challenging behaviour).
- This delegation must be approved annually by the LGB and recorded in the Committee's Terms of Reference.
- All delegated decisions must be fully documented.
- This urgent process should only be used when convening the full Committee is impractical and not become routine practice.

Scheme of Delegation for In-Year Admissions Decisions

Purpose

This document sets out the formal delegation of authority for in-year admissions decisions from the Local Governing Body (LGB) to the Principal and, in urgent circumstances, to a member of the Admissions Committee acting on the Committee's behalf, in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

1. Scope of Delegation

a) Principal

- To consider and process routine in-year admission applications in accordance with the school's published admissions arrangements.
- To refuse applications where admitting children over the year group capacity (as defined by the PAN at the point of routine entry) would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources, as defined by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

b) Admissions Committee Representative (exceptional circumstances only)

- Where a full Admissions Committee meeting cannot reasonably be convened within statutory timescales, one member of the Committee may review and ratify the Principal's recommendation, alongside the Regional Director, before confirming the decision.
- This authority applies only when delay would risk breaching statutory decision deadlines and not become routine practice.
- This process applies to defined scenarios requiring governor involvement under the School Admissions Code, including:
 - Requests for admission outside chronological age group (paras 2.18–2.20).
 - Applications citing social/emotional needs.
 - Applications involving potential refusal under paragraph 3.10 (challenging behaviour).

2. Conditions

All decisions under this Scheme must:

- Comply with the School Admissions Code and the school's published admissions policy.
- Apply the published oversubscription criteria consistently.
- Be fully documented.
- Include a formal decision letter to parents, setting out appeal rights.
- The LGB retains responsibility for oversight of admissions decisions.

3. Reporting

- The Principal will report all in-year admissions decisions (accepted and refused) to the LGB or Admissions Committee at the next meeting.
- Any decision taken under urgent delegation (exceptional circumstances) must be reported and formally ratified at the next Admissions Committee meeting.

4. Review

This delegation will be reviewed and reaffirmed annually by the Governing Body.

Governors' Resolution Wording

Resolved: The Local Governing Body delegates authority to the Principal to make decisions on routine in-year admission applications, and, where a full Admissions Committee cannot reasonably meet within statutory timescales, authorises a member of the Admissions Committee to review and ratify the Principal's recommendation before confirming the decision, subject to consultation with the Regional Director, compliance with the School Admissions Code and the school's published admissions arrangements. All delegated decisions must be documented and reported for ratification at the next Committee meeting.

Annex C – Admission Committee Checklist for Governors

Admissions Committee Checklist

Purpose: Ensure decisions are fair, lawful, and in line with the School Admissions Code and the academy's determined Admissions Policy.

Please note that meetings can be held virtually and do not need to be held in person.

Before the Meeting

- ☐ Confirm quorum (minimum 2 governors; ideally 3).
- ☐ Ensure Principal and Admissions Officer attend (Principal advises, does not vote).
- ☐ Have current Admissions Policy, oversubscription criteria, and relevant evidence ready.
- ☐ Prepare decision record template (all decisions must be documented).
- ☐ Be clear what type of decision is being requested of the Committee (see numbered list below)

Key Principles

- ☐ Decisions must not be made by one individual.
- ☐ Apply published criteria only – no personal judgment or prohibited factors.
- ☐ Consider each case individually and in the child's best interests.
- ☐ Record reasons for every decision and inform parents of appeal rights.
- ☐ Evidence from the Principal is permitted (e.g., operational insight, class size data, safeguarding context) but must remain objective and within published criteria.

Decisions That Require Committee Approval & Evidence Guidance

1. Admission Outside Normal Age Group (e.g., Summer-born)

Permissible Evidence:

- ☐ Educational reports (nursery or previous school assessments)
- ☐ Medical or psychological advice
- ☐ Parent's written rationale
- ☐ Principal's professional view on best interests

Not Permissible:

- ☐ Blanket policy refusing all requests
- ☐ Decisions based on generalised data or factors not specific to the individual child
- ☐ Decisions based on convenience or staffing

2. Applications Where Year Group is Full

Permissible Evidence:

- ☐ Current class sizes and staffing ratios
- ☐ Impact assessment on resources and teaching quality
- ☐ Principal's operational insight

Not Permissible:

- ☐ Refusal based on perceived difficulty or SEN status
- ☐ Informal comments about 'fit' or behaviour

3. Applications Citing Social/Emotional Needs

Permissible Evidence:

- ☐ Professional reports (CAMHS, social worker, GP)
- ☐ Evidence of safeguarding concerns
- ☐ Principal's safeguarding context

Not Permissible:

- ☐ Parent preference alone without supporting evidence
- ☐ Previous school anecdotal comments

4. Applications Involving Challenging Behaviour

Permissible Evidence:

- ☐ Documented exclusions history (two or more permanent exclusions within two years) *If this threshold is met, reject the application and refer to FAP.*
- ☐ Evidence school already has high proportion of similar pupils
- ☐ Evidence that admission would prejudice the efficient education of others
- ☐ Principal's evidence of current behaviour profile

Not Permissible:

- ☐ Refusal based on reputation or hearsay

- ☐ Behaviour concerns in normal admissions round

5. Sixth Form (Year 12) Admissions

- ☐ Apply published academic entry criteria consistently (e.g., GCSE grade requirements).
- ☐ Ensure oversubscription criteria and subject capacity limits are clear and followed.
- ☐ Treat internal and external applicants equitably in line with policy.
- ☐ Provide appeal rights and record reasons for all decisions.
- ☐ Make reasonable adjustments for SEND and exceptional circumstances.
- ☐ Confirm deadlines and decisions are communicated transparently.

Other Key Checks

- ☐ EHCP cases: Must admit if school is named in the plan.
- ☐ Fraudulent applications: Can withdraw offer only after investigation.
- ☐ Foreign national/service children: Apply criteria fairly; do not request immigration documents.

After the Meeting

- ☐ Complete and sign decision record.
- ☐ Notify parents promptly with reasons and ensure parents receive clear appeal information.
- ☐ Update Local Authority where required.

Compliance Checks

- ☐ Decision recorded with reasons and evidence.
- ☐ Appeal information provided to parent.
- ☐ Consider referral under Fair Access Protocol if refusal is based on challenging behaviour.
- ☐ Check decision does not discriminate under Equality Act 2010.
- ☐ Check infant class size compliance.
- ☐ Ensure decision communicated promptly.

Quick Evidence Guide

✓ Permissible Evidence:

- Educational reports, medical advice, safeguarding documents
- Principal's objective input (class sizes, resource impact)

- Professional assessments (CAMHS, social worker)
- Parent's written rationale

X Not Permissible Evidence:

- Blanket policies or convenience-based decisions
- Informal comments or hearsay
- Previous school anecdotal reports
- Immigration status or nationality checks

Annex D: Template to support decision making for application for admission outside the normal age group

Consideration based on Admissions Code	Comment
Parents' views	
Academic, social, and emotional development factors.	
Medical history and views of a medical professional, where relevant?	
Was the child previously educated outside of their normal age group?	
Would the child have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely?	
Will the child miss a year of school if the request is refused? What are the implications of this for their educational development and wider well-being?	
Evidence considered e.g. records from previous schools, educational psychologists, Health Visitor reports etc.	
Views of the Principal	
Rationale as to why the decision to admit or refuse is in the specific child's best interests	
Confirmation decision is case-by-case and that all evidence has been considered.	

Annex E : Evidence for Children of Staff oversubscription criterion

This annex sets out the evidence that may be required to for the proper administration of an oversubscription criteria in an admissions policy relating to the Children of Staff.

The School Admission Code allows for priority to be given to the Children of Staff in the following scenarios:

- where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made; and/or
- the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

The points below give a framework for demonstrating admission under the second bullet point above and provides a transparent basis for decision-making.

1. Definition of Skill Shortage

A vacancy that was difficult to fill due to:

- Low volume or insufficient quality of applications
- A recognised national shortage (e.g., STEM subjects, as identified by DfE, NFER, ASCL)

2. Evidence Sources

- Recruitment campaign data (advertising duration, applications received, shortlisting outcomes)
- Notes on unsuccessful or extended campaigns
- Sector-level evidence (School Workforce Census, national reports on shortages)

3. HR Confirmation

Statement confirming:

- Staff member's employment on a United Learning contract
- Either two years' continuous service at application date or recruitment to a skill shortage post
- Employment start date and role