



Felsted

MORE ACADEMICALLY ABLE POLICY

SENIOR SCHOOL

Governors' Committee normally reviewing:	Academic Committee
Date last formally approved by the Governors :	Autumn Term 2018
Date policy became effective :	November 2010

Period of Review:	Three Yearly
Next Review Date :	Autumn Term 2021

Person responsible for implementation and monitoring :	Assistant Head (Academic) MAA Co-ordinators (Years 9-11 and Years 12-13)
Other relevant policies :	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curriculum policy• Learning and Teaching Policy• Support for Learning Policy• Assessment Policy• Careers Education and Guidance Policy• Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy• Scholarship Policy

The following Policy encompasses the Aims and Ethos of the Senior School

Mr Chris Townsend
Head, Senior School

[Aims and Ethos](#)

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Felsted is committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all pupils and a 'culture of vigilance' to safeguard and protect all in its care, and to all aspects of its 'Safeguarding (Child Protection and Staff Behaviour) Policy'.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

The aims of the School and the principles of excellent pastoral care will be applied to all children irrespective of their race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy or maternity; equally these characteristics will be recognised and respected, and the School will aim to provide a positive culture of tolerance, equality and mutual respect.

MORE ACADEMICALLY ABLE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION, PRINCIPLES AND ORGANISATION

A key element in a culture of aspiration and attainment for all pupils

Felsted pupils have a wide range of abilities but the school aims to personalise learning for all. As part of this wider ethos of personal development and valuing all individual achievement, the school aims to recognise and meet the needs of more academically able (MAA) pupils. It is important that this MAA Policy is seen in the context of the promotion and development of a culture of aspiration and attainment for all pupils, and that there is a balance between opportunities for all those that seek academic enrichment and development with opportunities and consideration of the needs of pupils who are identified as exceptionally able. The school continually works to achieve ever-greater outcomes for pupils in external examinations and a key goal is to improve our uptake of pupils to prestigious universities both in the UK and internationally.

Organisation of Provision

MAA provision is delivered through differentiation integrated in all lessons and activities, across the curriculum, as well as through separate specific timetabled sessions for the most able. Enrichment and extension activities and visits are organised by the Roberts Society (junior) and Andrew society (senior). The delivery of MAA provision is co-ordinated by two MAA Co-ordinators on the teaching staff, in charge of Years 9-11 and Years 12-13 respectively, who work closely together and with the Deputy Head (Academic), Assistant Heads and all Heads of Department. In Years 9-11 provision for the most able is based around the Roberts Society; in Years 12 to 13 the Andrew Society, Oxbridge preparation and extension and enrichment in the classroom and through independent study, entering external competitions and reading lists are the main forms of provision. In addition to this, all pupils in year 10 now participate in the Higher Project Qualification (HPQ) programme; a carefully structured project-learning programme that enables pupils to develop academic interests and study skills, and to explore topics of their own choosing at a level and complexity that goes way beyond examination syllabuses. This opportunity offers MAA pupils time and space to explore areas of interest in great depth, and to benefit from one to one supervision and guidance from a supervisor. Further to this, most pupils in Lower Sixth undertake either an Extended Project Qualification (A Level programme) or an Extended Essay (IB programme). HPQ, EPQ and IB EE is delivered by teaching staff acting as 'supervisors', overseen by the Head of Projects and by the Director of IB. Staff working in this capacity with MAA pupils are supported by the JMAASCo and the SMAASCo respectively.

Identification of Pupils in the Programme

The MAA programme involves all staff in identifying pupils who would benefit; it also includes a range of students from Felsted Scholars, to potential Oxbridge candidates in the Sixth Form, as well as those who are MAA (very able pupils) in particular subjects. As provision is targeted, in addition to the school Scholars and pupils identified through the MidYIS test (scoring 126 or above) HoDs are asked to identify pupils in their subject area. It is acknowledged that MAA students can often be difficult to identify as they can 'hide', coast or do not wish to seem different to others, and test data alone is not always a good predictor (see the detailed information below on recognition of MAA pupils).

Links to External Organisations

The School subscribes to NACE (National Association for Able Children in Education) and benefits from updates and newsletters sharing up to date information and best practice. The school has achieved a NACE Challenge Award in recognition of our provision for MAA pupils which we seek to maintain and improve, year on year.

The school is developing links with other schools in the region and also with higher education institutions through the work of the Professional Guidance team, enhancing our capacity to provide MAA pupils with effective onwards support in competitive applications for next-steps post-Felsted.

2. AIMS

AIMS OF THE SCHOOL 'GARDE TA FOY'

1. Felsted seeks to educate all Felstedians to develop them as individual characters, through provision of outstanding all round education.
2. Felsted seeks to develop and stretch students academically, to be life-long learners, well-rounded, aspirational, globally minded, with the skills to flourish beyond school, applying the principles of a growth mindset, to be the best that they can be.
3. Felsted seeks to provide outstanding pastoral care, a safe and supportive environment, co-curricular opportunities, lessons in leadership, service, challenge, personal growth, and emotional/intellectual development.
4. Felsted seeks to develop a strong sense of community, based on development of personal faith, tolerance and respect. This community will include all students, as well as parents, staff, Governors, Old Felstedians and the wider Felsted community.
5. Felsted seeks to make a difference, through developing truly effective global citizens, under the IDEALS of the Round Square, fulfilling our charitable purpose, including making a Felsted education available to families, through bursary, scholarship and outreach.
6. Felsted seeks to provide a strong foundation for the future of the school.

As part of the whole-school aims, the school seeks

- to identify and support the most able Felsted pupils as learners with specific, recognisable needs that should be met through our curriculum and broader school experience;
- to ensure academic achievement of the highest level;
- to ensure challenge is an integral part of classroom teaching and learning; to develop effective school-wide strategies to identify, educate and support the MAA so as to nurture their capacity for unrestricted learning and creative thought; and to ensure these methods are taken up, adapted and used in Departments;
- to inspire pupils by giving them opportunities to see beyond the boundaries of Felsted
- to ensure that school policies include a focus on the needs of MAA children;
- to provide for pupils individually through Individual Education Plans, with specific targets, self-reflection, teaching strategies and liaison with parents.
- to address the social, emotional and behavioural needs of MAA students.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF MORE ACADEMICALLY ABLE (MAA) STUDENTS

3a Definition

Felsted makes use of the NACE guidelines, as well as those provided by ISI.

Felsted understands More Academically Able Pupils to include the top 15% of each intake for the purposes of academic monitoring as MAA using MidYIS and ALIS data. The school recognises that some pupils will underperform in testing, and will therefore also include pupils identified by teachers in the MAA cohort of each year group.

For pupils in years 9-11, identification and inclusion in the 'super curriculum' is the top three pupils in each cohort identified by MidYIS data.

A copy of the MAA list is published to all HODs and teachers. As teachers also assist in the identification of MAA, the following criteria may be used to distinguish between the bright/able child and the truly gifted or talented child:

Bright Child	MAA Child
Is interested	Is highly curious
Usually has good ideas	Always has good ideas and sometimes lateral ideas which may appear at first to be silly.
Knows most of the answers	Knows most of the answers and starts to asks questions
Answers questions appropriately	Answers questions but then tends to elaborate
Several repetitions needs for mastery of a skill	Only one or two repetitions needs for mastery
Understands ideas	Constructs abstractions
Enjoys peer company	Prefers company of adults
Grasps meanings	Draws inferences
Copies accurately	Creates original work and designs
Technician/operator	Creator/Inventor
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Good at memorising	Good at memorising and making informed guesses
Makes observations when shown how	Is keenly observant
Pleased with own work	Highly self-critical and sets exceedingly high standards.
Enjoys straightforward sequential problems	Thrives on complexity

3b The Need for Early Identification:

More academically able children have a great thirst for knowledge and it is vital that this need is identified as early as possible so that parents and teachers can give them the required level of support in order that they may develop their talents.

Pathways: During the first three weeks of September all Year 9 pupils are given a range of tests in English along with the MidYIS test. Pupils joining Felsted from Felsted Preparatory School will have MidYIS data for Years 7 as well as NFER and other standardised assessments. Pupils from Felsted Prep School will also have individual action plans. A considerable amount of data is also received for students joining Felsted's Sixth Form or Year 9 from other schools. This group is supplemented throughout the year by teacher recommendations and by analysis of the summer internal exams.

4. PROVISION YEARS 9-11: THE ROBERTS SOCIETY AND JUNIOR ACADEMIC SCHOLARS

There are three key areas of provision:

- **Extension** through enhancing differentiation within lessons to ensure that the most able pupils are being challenged
- **Enrichment** through extra-curricular events, either trips or speakers/workshops in school that are either subject-specific or of broad appeal
- **Individual monitoring and coaching** of able pupils.

ROBERTS SOCIETY METHOD OF SELECTION

The Roberts Society is advertised to all incoming pupils, all of whom are invited to apply either in September or January. Letters of application, CEM data, prep school liaison, teacher

recommendations and scholarship information are then all used to inform the JMAASCo about potential MAA students. Academic scholars are expected to take an active role in the society and individual interviews are arranged for those who are unsure of expectations.

From September 2018, we aim to develop and embed a 'super-curriculum' for exceptionally able pupils. Selection will use the following data, in order of priority:

1. MidYIS score - top 3 pupils in each year group will be invited to participate.
2. MidYIS score greater than 117
3. Engagement with and involvement in the wider Roberts Society programme
4. Teacher assessment (where it is thought a pupil may have significantly underperformed in MidYIS testing)

4a Enrichment - Extra-curricular events/activities (co-ordinated by the JMAASCo)

School-based activities

- Subject-specific master-classes using university outreach programmes (such as Oxford and Cambridge) or specific G and T organisations (for which HoDs could be asked to recommend further pupils to be invited)
- Coca-Cola business Challenge
- The Apprentice Challenge
- Hot Topic nights
- Debating competition
- Big quiz of the year (final against parents)
- Spelling bee
- Speakers (MPs, BBC executives, business leaders, etc...)
- Essay competitions
- Involvement with MUN

Trips/visits

- Visits to Oxford/Cambridge or taster days (looking at facilities, colleges, sample lecture/tutorial, etc...)
- Bletchley Park

4b Extension - Differentiation within the lessons

- The school aims to further develop a culture of sharing best practice with regards to differentiation within lessons and catering for the most able through the Junior Academic Scholarship Co-ordinator researching and cascading ideas and providing opportunities for staff to share their ideas.
- To ensure that pupils who have been designated as MAA are appropriately challenged, teachers frequently modify the scale and/or the extent of the tasks with which they are presented. Schemes of Work increasingly identify specific tasks for the MAA within lessons. MAA provision is part of most departments' development plans. There is not a detailed, standard curriculum for MAA children, because their needs are very individual. The emphasis is on the individual in order to:
 - meet individual children's needs;
 - build upon their individual strengths;
 - encourage development in areas in which they need support.
- The following list highlights the range of issues that have been considered when seeking to meet the needs of MAA pupils at Felsted.
 - Planning schemes of work with specific consideration being given to the MAA pupils.
 - Related 'teaching and learning' issues, e.g. resources, differentiation, teaching and learning styles.
 - Developing enrichment and extension materials to stretch the most able.
- HoDs are expected to provide subject-specific opportunities for development, for example through suggested reading lists. Subject HoDs are expected to plan and run their subject-specific events with support from the JMMSCo.

- (Other opportunities will be explored over time; for example, encouraging IB pupils to act as a learning support tutor for the most able pupils during lessons, enabling the teacher to set alternative activities for the most able. This "service" could then count towards the IB pupil's CAS hours).

4c Individual monitoring and coaching

Each member of the Roberts Society has an Individual Education Plan, detailing the pupil's assessment of learning needs, targets and long term aims and aspirations. Preferred activities and involvement in the Roberts Society are indicated. Parents are invited to comment in the hope that the pupils receives a good learning environment both inside and outside school. Teachers are encouraged to use IEPs in lesson planning. Progress in reports, teacher and tutor feedback and the pupil's own self-reflection on their progress is discussed regularly and the JMAASCo oversees the progress of each member of the Roberts Society.

5. PROVISION YEARS 12 AND 13

ANDREW SOCIETY METHOD OF SELECTION

Membership of the Andrew Society is based on the successful and appropriate completion of an application task launched at the start of L6. In addition to this, the Andrew Society Coordinator will consider

- ALIS data
- GCSE results, if available
- Teacher endorsements
- Report grades and target grades
- Credible evidence that a student is able and willing to stretch themselves beyond a taught syllabus
- Evidence of a genuine intellectual passion in a particular subject area

If students do not make the progress expected as members of the Andrew Society, the Senior MAA Co-Ordinator works with HMs and tutors to resolve the situation via school policies such as personal improvement plans. An ultimate sanction is to revoke membership of the Andrew Society. It is also the case that students who score highly in Lower Sixth internal exams can also be asked to join the Andrew Society at a later date.

5a Organisation and Rationale

The Senior Academic MAA Co-Ordinator, is in charge of both the Andrew Society for MAA pupils, the overall MAA programme for Year 12 and 13 pupils, and the Oxbridge preparation programme. Oversight of the progress of more able and talented students in Years 12 and 13 is achieved via weekly evening meetings of the Andrew Society which enables the Senior Academic MAA Co-Ordinator to provide guidance and feedback on students' research projects (*the Andrew Society presentation*), to run book clubs and seminars and to provide detailed guidance to the c10-15 members of the Andrew Society who, in a typical year, might be expected to apply to Oxbridge.

The aim of the programme in its entirety is to provide the intellectual stimulus and encouragement which all more able and talented students require; and to enable all members of the Andrew Society to apply to competitive, highly ranked universities. A realistic aim is to grow the number of viable Oxbridge as well as more widely 'competitive applications', including to prestigious institutions particularly in the USA.

5b Opportunities provided to Year 12 and 13 students as part of the Andrew Society/ Oxbridge programme:

- 'Off timetable' Oxbridge Supervisions by subject staff, including extra lessons for Law applicants

- Detailed guidance on the Oxbridge application process, beginning with guidance meetings with prospective candidates as early as November of the Lower Sixth year and a parents' meeting in the Easter Term of the Lower Sixth. The school aims to educate parents and appropriate students to be realistic but also to aim high and apply – the process of applying to Oxbridge is sometimes perceived as increasingly bureaucratic, and the prospect of completing an extra application form for Cambridge (the SAQ), and sitting TSA, LNAT, BMAT tests or those set by Oxford and then submitting written pieces may be a deterrent to some students. The School therefore aims to ensure that there is close support of Oxbridge candidates at all stages of the application process.
- Making sure that students holding Oxbridge offers continue to be supported and challenged in the final 2 terms of their school careers, so that A/ A* grades are achieved. They are also encouraged to act as mentors to younger students, for instance by addressing a parents' and students' meeting on Oxbridge entrance.
- Interview Practice Schemes such as an interview exchange with Bishops Stortford College.
- An Intranet page on the MIS featuring guidance on the application process and reading lists for all major subjects. The Library has many of the relevant texts and organises displays of these materials.
- Attending an Oxbridge conference run by both universities during which students can meet tutors and attend subject specific seminars
- Attending an 'in house' Oxbridge entrance day in the summer term of the Lower Sixth designed to provide students with detailed guidance and advice on the application process.
- Mock interview practice, including making use of a 'Felsted guide to Oxbridge interviews', featuring feedback from previous candidates and questions that they have been asked.
- Oxbridge Individual Education Plans to provide guidance for both students and teachers (*see Appendix 5*).
- Weekly current affairs classes for members of the Andrew Society
- The Andrew Society Presentation required of every pupil member as a 'way into' working beyond the syllabus.

6. OXBRIDGE APPLICANTS

The Senior MAA Co-ordinator is also the Competitive Applications Co-ordinator and has oversight of the Oxbridge preparation programme, identifying potential L6 applicants. Students are encouraged to research options and visit colleges by the end of the summer term of the Lower Sixth year. As previously described, students are supported in their choices by attending an Oxbridge conference in the Easter Term of the Lower Sixth year and an Oxbridge preparation day run by Felsted staff just before the end of the summer term of the Lower Sixth year.

For each candidate, a Departmental mentor is nominated by the Head of the subject being applied for; the Departmental mentor might be the Head of the subject or another member of the Department. Where a pupil is applying for a subject such as PPE, the Oxbridge Co-ordinator will either act as mentor or approach an appropriate member of Common Room.

Students are advised to contact colleges/departments to find out what might be required in terms of work to be sent prior to interview or of tests at interview. The Oxbridge Coordinator also consults prospectuses and advises Departmental mentors accordingly.

A Departmental mentor might:

- discuss with the candidate possible reading and written assignments for the summer holidays
- meet regularly with the candidate to discuss aspects of the subject 'beyond the syllabus', such as wider reading, university-level articles or STEP-type Maths problems.
- in consultation with the Oxbridge Co-ordinator arrange a subject specific mock interview
- generally advise and encourage

7. CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The School has a coherent programme of valuable co-curricular out of class activities. The range of programme opportunities include:

- Roberts Society for pupils in Years 9-11
- Super - Curriculum for the exceptionally able
- Andrew Society for pupils in the Sixth Form
- Oxbridge provision including mock interviews and coaching
- Academic Clubs and Societies which the MAA are encouraged to attend and lead where necessary
- Provision of sessions and support for G&T in the various creative areas – Drama, DT, Music, Sport
- Enhancement activities such as MUN, Youth Parliament, Public Speaking, Debating etc.

The school has specific, measurable targets for improving the *performance and achievement* of more able and talented pupils in and beyond core subjects for:

- whole-school
- cohorts (eg.gender, EAL)
- individuals.

8. PROCEDURES FOR TACKLING UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG MAA PUPILS

- MAA students are tracked through core subjects, exam results, effort and achievement grades on reports, and using the CEM data (especially those in the top 5%).
- For those underachieving, Personal Improvement Plans are implemented by tutors and Housemasters which consist of SMART targets. Consultation with parents and tutors is regular and the JMAASCo is used to implement targets onto IEPs and ensure that teaching strategies meet the needs of the pupils.

9. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- JMAASCo and SMAASCo to meet with individual HoDs to discuss
 - Enrichment
 - Interaction with the Roberts Society program (such as provision of questions for the Big Quiz of the Year)
 - Provision for most able within their Schemes of Work
 - Suggested reading lists for each age group
 - Able pupils in their subject area
 - Use of Roberts Society IEPs in lessons
- All staff development
 - Academic deputy head to identify subjects/teachers with best VA (esp. at top end) and lower VA
 - Suggest observations and courses to aid lower VA
 - Ask best to demonstrate/share ideas at INSET
 - JGTCO and SGTCO to lead INSET
 - Demonstration of activities (using best VA teachers)
 - Teachmeet developed; sharing of best practice
 - Lesson observations by SLT/JGTCO
 - Following able pupils
 - Observing teachers identified as needing support with most able

10. MONITORING

- Group meetings (by year group) to consider
 - Learning styles and thinking skills eg Gardner
- Individual meetings
 - Create IEPs, and liaise with parents over personal targets.
 - Monitor progress with targets
 - Suggest further activities in strength subjects

- o Offer guidance regarding suitable option choices / extra-curricular options considering their long-term aims

EVALUATION

- CEM data used to assess Valued Added results for students
- Feedback questionnaires to be completed and analysed by Roberts and Andrews Society students biannually
- Appointment of Roberts Society President and Secretary to assess and develop good enrichment opportunities for MAA students

11. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed and updated regularly by the two MAA Co-ordinators, with the Deputy Head (Academic), the Assistant Head and SLT.

Mrs Lorne Stefanini
Assistant Head (Academic)

Ms Meredith Atkinson-Wood
Senior MAA School Co-ordinator (SMAASCo)

Miss Elizabeth McLaren
Junior MAA School Co-ordinator (JMAASCo)

APPENDIX 1

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF MORE ACADEMICALLY ABLE CHILDREN.

The MAA child:

- asks lots of questions and learns more quickly and easily than others.
- has a very fast and retentive memory and good powers of recall.
- shows keen powers of observation and reasoning, of seeing relationships and of generalising from a few given facts.
- is an imaginative or creative thinker.
- is a very good independent worker.
- is extremely curious and can concentrate for long periods on subjects of interest.
- is good at seeing, doing, drawing, building or designing though poor at talking, listening and writing, i.e. they are gifted with 'visual-spatial' skills and may show outstanding mechanical and artistic ingenuity. N.B. Good hand eye co-ordination is indicative of this range of skills.
- enjoys problem solving, often missing out the intermediate stages in an argument and making original connections.
- is well ahead in mathematics, particularly in problem solving.
- has an unusual imagination which can come out in the way they respond to questions.
- has an astonishing strength of will and purpose!
- has a wide range of interests and very good general knowledge and vocabulary - often beyond that expected for their age.
- shows strong feelings and opinions.
- may have a good yet penetrating or odd sense of humour.
- sets high standards and is a perfectionist and obsessive about accuracy.
- pursues hobbies (which are often associated with older children or adults) with great enthusiasm which sometimes verges on being an obsession.
- often prefers games which are often associated with older children or adults.
- often wants to spend time with older children as well as with adults.
- is morally, socially and ethically gifted, with a well-developed sense of the implications of actions or situations. This can manifest itself as a high level of sensitivity and empathy towards others.
- can appear very arrogant and yet be sensitive to perceived 'put downs'.
- can appear to be an extrovert or an introvert within a peer group.
- can show leadership qualities.