



Felsted

MORE ACADEMICALLY ABLE POLICY

SENIOR SCHOOL

Committee normally reviewing:	Senior Leadership Team
Date last formally approved by the Committee:	Autumn Term 2021
Date policy became effective :	November 2010

Period of Review:	Three Yearly
Next Review Date :	Autumn Term 2024

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 (Special Educational Needs) Policy● Assessment, Tracking and Reporting Policy● Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy● Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development and Education for Social Responsibility Policy● Scholarship Policy

The following Policy encompasses the Aims and Ethos of the 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), co-ordinated by three MAA Co-ordinators on the teaching staff, in charge of Years 9-11 and Years 12-13 respectively. They 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, competitive applications 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 Felsted Diploma project; 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). FDP, EPQ and IB EE are 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) pupils are encouraged to apply to join the Roberts and Andrew societies, allowing for those who are academically ambitious and curious to participate. 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 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

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.

Pupils may also be identified and included in the MAA programme through admissions and assessment for academic scholarships. Academic Scholars are those whose assessment and reports demonstrate a high level of ability and achievement in a number of areas.

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.

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 two 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

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.

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)
- 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
- MedSoc
- CREST awards

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.
- 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.

- o Planning schemes of work with specific consideration being given to the MAA pupils.
- o Related 'teaching and learning' issues, e.g. resources, differentiation, teaching and learning styles.
- o 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.

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. 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 support the Professional Guidance team assisting the members of the Andrew Society who apply to Oxbridge or make similarly competitive applications.

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 internationally.

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

- 'Off timetable' Oxbridge, MDV and competitive applications supervisions by subject staff
- 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 Autumn 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. Timetabled UCAT preparation also takes place. The School therefore aims to

ensure that there is close support of Oxbridge and MDV candidates at all stages of the application process.

- Making sure that students holding Oxbridge and MDV offers continue to be supported and challenged in the final 2 terms of their school careers.
- Rigorous Interview Practice
- Google classrooms 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' 'Futures Conference' 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 feedback from previous candidates and questions that they have been asked.
- Oxbridge and MDV Individual Education Plans to provide guidance for both students and teachers (*see Appendix 5*).
- Weekly meetings for members of the Andrew Society
- The Andrew Society Presentation required of every pupil member as a 'way into' working beyond the syllabus.

Speakers are invited to subject specific society meetings as well as Andrew Soc meetings and trips are organised, both subject based and general enrichment eg ballet, opera

6. OXBRIDGE APPLICANTS

The Director of Professional Guidance has oversight of the Oxbridge preparation programme. Candidates are identified through data (GCSE results), teacher recommendation and candidate self ID. A rigorous programme of support is put in place from the beginning of the Lower Sixth.. Students are encouraged to research options and visit colleges by the end of the summer term of the Lower Sixth year. The DPG monitors the progress of each potential candidate, including a checklist at the end of the summer term of the L6 (appendix) The DPG will also ensure that regular, timely communications with parents keep them informed of the progress of their child, and flag any concerns.

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 multidisciplinary subject such as PPE, there will be cross department support..

Students are advised to carefully view the university website to find out what might be required in terms of work to be sent prior to interview or of tests at interview. This information is also provided by the DPG to subject mentors

A Departmental mentor is asked to :

1: Hold Meetings/ Preparatory sessions

- Weekly session during Spring and Summer Term
- Continue weekly session in Autumn term but may be more ad hoc meetings and 1:1s
- Confirm to the DPG when the regular session will be scheduled

2: Assessment preparation

- Familiarise themselves with the curriculum and paper style for any pre-interview or at interview assessment required by the university of choice. Syllabuses and past papers are all available on subject specific pages on Cambridge and Oxford's website
- Teach any extension materials to allow student best chance of success

- Allow plenty of opportunities for past paper practice, assess papers and give feedback and advice to improve performance

3: Application preparation

- Encourage enrichment and extension activities (normally through weekly sessions). These could take the form of: book groups; reading and discussion of reading; unseen material discussions; preparation for essay competitions; familiarise yourself with taster lectures and Ted talks for areas of interest that students could use in applications.
- Support the PG department with personal statement preparation, particularly looking for rigour in academic extension and critical thinking, as well as subject specific accuracy. The mentor needs to be happy with the PS before it is passed to the DPG to make final amendments.
- Consider previous subject specific Oxbridge success data and support the student with conversations about whether they should apply to Oxford or Cambridge, and understand the difference in courses in your subject at each. (the DPG will also be having these discussions with each student)
- Provide input, where relevant, for the reference regarding any engagement with additional material etc

4: Interview preparation

- THE PG department will arrange 2 interviews with a subject specialist who the student will not previously have encountered.
- Support with possible interview questions and unseen material practice
- Department based mock interviews

5: Student accountability

- Keep records, shared with the DPG and the Assistant Head Academic, clearly showing the following:
 - Student attendance at support sessions
 - Student engagement with extra reading etc
 - Student progress (scores) in assessment preparation where relevant
- This is really important information in order to address any issues prior to application.

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
- Andrew Society for pupils in the Sixth Form
- Oxbridge provision including mock interviews and coaching
- Medsoc Year 9 - U6
- 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.
- Young Engineers
- CREST Awards

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 ensure that teaching strategies meet the needs of the pupils.

9. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Individual HoDs to discuss:
 - o Trajectories
 - o Enrichment
 - o Interaction with the Roberts Society programme (such as provision of questions for the Big Quiz of the Year)
 - o Provision for most able within their Schemes of Work
 - o Suggested reading lists for each age group
 - o Able pupils in their subject area
- All staff development
 - o 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
 - o JGTCo and SGTCO to lead INSET
 - Demonstration of activities (using best VA teachers)
 - Teachmeet developed; sharing of best practice
 - o Lesson observations by SLT/JGTCo
 - Following able pupils
 - Observing teachers identified as needing support with most able

10. MONITORING & EVALUATION

- Reporting data is used to establish the extent to which the MAA cohort is making suitable progress, and to identify individual underachievement
- CEM data used to assess Valued Added results for students
- Feedback questionnaires to be completed and analysed by Roberts and Andrew 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)

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.