

UTC South Durham

Admissions Policy 2026-2027



Date of adoption	February 2025
Approved by	Governing Body
Signed: (Principal) 	Date:
Signed: (Chair of Governors) 	Date:

Date to be reviewed by	February 2026
Reason for Review	Annual Review
Responsibility	Principal

1. Overall approach

UTC South Durham provides school places to young people of all abilities aged between 14 and 19. It offers a combined academic, technical and workplace curriculum with a strong STEM focus. The UTC is located on the Aycliffe Business Park, County Durham and opened in September 2016. This admissions policy is for students wishing to join the UTC in the 2026-2027 academic year.

UTC South Durham is non-selective but expects students will want to learn about engineering, technology, science and maths and be interested in careers in those fields. It has entry requirements for individual courses to ensure that the education is appropriate for each student.

UTC South Durham is committed to straightforward, open, fair and transparent admissions arrangements. The UTC will act fully in accordance with the School Admissions Code (as revised December 2014), the School Admissions Appeals Code and admissions law as they apply to academies.

2. Entry points

Students may enter UTC South Durham at Year 10 or Year 12.

Applications from students wishing to join in any year group in September 2026 will be made directly to UTC South Durham.

The timetable for applications is outlined in the section 11 Management of applications.

3. Published admission number (PAN)

The maximum number for each year group will be as follows:

	2026/27
Year 10	150
Year 12	150

There will be an automatic right of transfer to the post-16 section of the UTC from Year 11 for UTC students who meet the minimum entry requirements for the Level 3 courses or show the skills and attitudes to be successful on Level 2 courses. The number of Year 12 places available for new entrants will reflect the number of available places up to the overall 150 place limit.

4. Admissions process

A prospectus will be available each year containing information for applications for those wishing to join UTC South Durham the following September. More detailed and up to date information will be available on our website www.utcsouthdurham.org including admissions arrangements and details of open evenings and opportunities to

visit UTC South Durham. These details will also be made available for inclusion in the combined information published by all the local authorities covered by the UTC.

4.1 Admission to Year 10

For students wishing to join at the beginning of Year 10, applications must be made directly to the UTC. All applications can be made via our website www.utcsouthdurham.org where you can complete an online form. If a Word or paper version of the form is required then this can be obtained on request by emailing office@utcsouthdurham.org or by post to:

Tom Dower
Principal
UTC South Durham
Long Tens Way
Aycliffe Business Park
DL5 6AP

Inaccurate or false information on the form, or inaccurate information being shared through the admissions process, could result in the offer of a place being withdrawn.

When there are more applicants than the PAN the oversubscription criteria in section 6 will apply. When Year 10 is undersubscribed all applicants will be admitted, subject to a 1:1 meeting to agree suitability of the UTC as an educational route for the applicant and successful completion of the induction process.

Students who apply to transfer to the UTC who have been at risk of permanent exclusion from their previous school will join the UTC on a supported off-site placement basis in consultation with their Local Authority. This arrangement is to give the student the opportunity to be successful at the UTC while ensuring that they can return to their previous school if the UTC education is not right for them.

4.2 Admissions to post-16 (Year 12)

Students wishing to join UTC South Durham in Year 12 must apply directly to the UTC. The Year 12 application form is available via our website www.utcsouthdurham.org where you can complete an online form. If a Word or paper version of the form is required then this can be obtained on request by emailing office@utcsouthdurham.org or by post to:

Tom Dower
Principal
UTC South Durham
Long Tens Way
Aycliffe Business Park
DL5 6AP

Inaccurate or false information on the form, or inaccurate information being shared through the admissions process could result in the offer of a place being withdrawn.

Both internal and external students wishing to enter post-16 will be expected to have met the minimum entry requirements for the post-16 provision stated below:

- **Level 3 Pathway.** Students will normally require a minimum of five GCSE passes at grades 9-4 including English and Maths. Applicants will require at least a grade 6 or 7 in relevant subjects in order to access some of the subjects offered at A-level, while others will require a grade 5 and some will not need any prior experience of that subject. These will be made clear in the options booklet and discussion with individual families. A probationary period of 6 weeks is built into the programme to allow students to demonstrate their positive attitude and work ethic.
- **PEO Programme (Level 2).** This pathway is aimed at delivering skills and knowledge to those seeking future apprenticeships in the manufacturing and engineering sectors. Students will normally need to meet a minimum entry requirement of five GCSE passes at grades 9-3 or equivalent, including English and Maths for the Level 2 programme. There is also a requirement to demonstrate a suitable interest and attitude towards the subject area. A probationary period of 6 weeks is built into the programme to allow students to demonstrate their positive attitude and work ethic.

If either internal or external applicants fail to meet the minimum course requirements described above, they will be given the option of pursuing any alternative courses for which they do meet the requirements provided places on those courses are available.

Internal students who meet the minimum entry requirements for their chosen pathway will automatically transfer from Year 11 into Year 12 if they wish to.

When there are more external applicants who satisfy entry requirements than the PAN the oversubscription criteria below will apply. When Year 12 is undersubscribed all applicants meeting the minimum entry requirements will be admitted.

5. **Special educational needs and disabilities**

All students with an Education Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Need will be admitted to Year 10 or Year 12 if they meet the requirements for pathways identified above. This will follow a formal placement meeting with the Principal, SENDCO (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator) and Local Authority to ensure that the family understands the UTC provision and there is agreement that the UTC can meet the needs of the student. Reasonable adjustments must be made by the UTC to accommodate students with SEND. It is important that students, parents LA's understand the UTC offer in deciding if it is the right route for them.

6. **Oversubscription criteria for entry to both phases**

Where the number of applications for admission to UTC South Durham is greater than the PAN, and after the admission of students with an Education Health and Care Plan that names the UTC, the places will be allocated on the basis of the criteria below in the following order:

- **Criterion 1:** Children in Public Care (Looked After Children) and previously looked after children. This will always be with approval from the relevant Local Authority.

- **Criterion 2:** Siblings of students enrolled at UTC South Durham at the time of the application. (Siblings means children living in the same household and includes brothers and sisters, adopted and fostered children and the unrelated children of adults living together as part of the same family unit at the time when the child is due to start in the UTC).
- **Criterion 3:** Remaining places will be allocated by distance from UTC South Durham with those living closest being given priority for admission. Distance will be measured by a straight line from the front door of the student's home address to the front door of UTC South Durham.

7. Tiebreak

In the event of two or more applications that cannot otherwise be separated, random allocation will be used as a tiebreak. All processes of random allocation under these arrangements will be supervised by someone independent of UTC South Durham.

8. Appeals

Any student not offered a place at UTC South Durham will have a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel. The appeals process will conform to the School Admission Appeals Code and will be binding on all parties. The Appeals Panel members will be independent of UTC South Durham.

Guidance will be prepared for parents and young people about how the appeal process will work, provide them with a named contact who can answer any enquiries they may have and ensure that they are invited to attend the hearing.

The appeals process will be independently administered and clerked. Appeals should be made in writing to: c/o Clerk to Trustees, UTC South Durham, Long Tens Way, Aycliffe Business Park, DL5 6AP, to arrive not later than 20 days from the date of notification that the application was unsuccessful.

9. Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted to a year group outside their normal age range, e.g. where the student is gifted or talented or where a student has suffered from particular social or medical issues impacting their schooling. All such requests will be considered on their merits and either agreed or refused, on that basis. If a request is refused, the child will still be considered for admission to their normal age group.

With the application, parents should request that the student is admitted to another year group (state which one), and the reasons for that request.

Parents will submit any evidence in support of their case with the application. Some of the evidence a parent might submit could include:

- Information about the student's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional

- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group

The UTC will consider each case on its merits, taking into account the individual circumstances of the request and the student's best interests. We will also ensure the parent is aware of whether the request for admission out of age group has been agreed before final offers are made, and the reason for any refusal.

Requests for admission out of the normal year group will be considered alongside other applications made at the same time for the requested year group of entry.

10. Waiting lists

Where UTC South Durham receives more eligible applications than there are places available, a waiting list will be maintained by UTC South Durham until the end of the first term after the start of the school year.

It will be open to any parent to ask for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list. If and when places become available they will be allocated to those on the waiting list in line with the oversubscription criteria.

11. Management of applications

For both age groups the following deadlines apply for applications to be considered:

- **1 December 2025**, 12.00 midnight, the application deadline, for those who wish to apply to secure a place.

Following the 1 December deadline, applications will be considered and offers of places made. If application numbers are greater than the PAN then the oversubscription criteria will be used. Offers must be formally accepted by families in order to reserve a place. Decisions on applications received by 1 December will be notified to applicants within two weeks of the main deadline (14 December).

- Following the deadline, applications will continue to be accepted up until the start of the academic year (1st September). Offers will be made to applications on a first-come first-served basis. Once the PAN is reached further applications will be placed on the waiting list and if spaces become available then the oversubscription criteria will be used on the waiting list to prioritise offers of further places.
- Any applications received once the school year has begun (from 1st September) will be considered as mid-year transfers and will use the appropriate Local Authority process to ensure good quality information flow.