

Consultation Briefing Paper

27/01/20



Admitting Year 7 to UTCN

We are proposing a change in admissions to allow Year 7 students to join our school.

Current recruitment is into Year 10 and Year 12 only.

Our Vision

To be the best in developing tomorrow's engineering, computing and science professionals.

Background

Since UTCN opened in 2014, there is a great deal that we can be proud of.

OFSTED inspected us in May 2019 and graded us Good in every area they judge.

Inspectors praised the school for the *'strong progress'* that its pupils make and the *'very high quality'* of careers advice given.

Praise was also given for the school's work with employers which enables students to progress onto the next stage of their education or go into employment. Inspectors found staff morale to be high and pupils friendly and welcoming.

Headteacher, Alex Hayes, said: *'Staff work extremely hard day-in, day-out to do the very best for the young people in our care and I am very pleased that this has been recognised by the OFSTED team. We are striving to be the highest performing University Technical College in the country, and with this judgement and our recent results, we are well on the way to achieving this.'*

Inspector, Daniel Gee, wrote: *'Pupils' overall behaviour in lessons is good. They follow the instructions of their teachers and they work hard. Pupils' overall attitudes to learning are also good.'*

'Pupils are provided with a very wide range of independent advice, employer engagement opportunities and work experience placements. In recent years, all pupils have left the school with a position in education, employment or training.'

Dr Ben Milner, Chair of Governors at UTCN, said: *'Our vision is to develop the engineers and technology specialists of the future and I am delighted that inspectors have recognised that this vision permeates the school at all levels. We look forward to going from strength to strength.'*

OFSTED also commented:

- Students *'make strong progress across a wide range of subjects'*
- *'Pupils are friendly and welcoming.'* They *'are well looked after and ... are kept safe'*
- *'Very high quality'* careers education, information and guidance
- The *'curriculum is a key strength'*...reflecting *'local and national needs and opportunities'*
- *'Students are very positive about the curricular and extra-curricular opportunities that are available to them'*

The Proposal

This proposal builds upon our successes and the positive progress of students at UTCN.

We would like to extend our admissions arrangements to include Year 7 students – currently students can only join us in Year 10 and Year 12. Extending our offer to Year 7 students is a significant development, and your views are critical to help us shape the way forward.

Our reasons for seeking this change are:

- The Department for Education (DfE) has written to all UTCs asking them to consider changing their age range from 14-19 to 11-19, as a way of developing the educational provision in the local area and better delivering their vision.
- Parents suggest that the opportunity to attend the UTC for longer would be a positive factor in consideration of school choices.
- Such a move will enable our students to start to master our area of specialism earlier, which will support students in making even greater progress, and in preparing for the world of work, during their time at UTCN.
- The national Progress 8 measure of students' progress is designed to judge schools over a 5-year period, so this adjustment will help the UTC to comply.
- We would be able to design a varied and interesting STEM curriculum beginning in Year 7, enabling students to better develop much sought-after skills in Engineering and Computer Science.

We are therefore proposing to:

- Change the age range of UTCN from 14-19 to 11-19

The earliest that UTCN could admit Year 7 students would be September 2021. However, determining the first admission date and PAN (Planned Admission Number) would be dependent on the results of the consultation, the availability of a suitable site and school finances. A separate consultation on PAN would also be undertaken.

What would UTCN be like for students in Year 7?

Here at UTCN, we exist to develop tomorrow's engineering and technology specialists, so it is right that our approach would be tailored to our specialism. However, we would ensure that every young person followed a curriculum that was broad enough to support them to achieve their goals and ambitions – whatever they might be.

We prepare our students in four ways and Year 7 would benefit from these same main principles:

1. Relevant Curriculum

Our curriculum is relevant. We work with local and national employers and universities to make sure our curriculum gives our students the right skills for the future. As 100% of the students who have left us have gone onto employment or university, we must be on the right lines!

2. Fantastic facilities

We have a fabulous £10m site which contains £1.3m of specialist engineering and scientific equipment which provide many unique learning experiences for our students.

3. Employer Links

We have the support of a significant number of local and national employers and the sponsorship of the University of East Anglia. These organisations support the delivery of the curriculum, provide work experience, offer first-rate careers advice and help our students develop the skills that employers actually want.

4. Great People

We are a small school where you will be treated as a real person, not a number. We have a talented team of teachers and other professionals and we will get to understand what motivates you and help you to fulfil your potential and help you to find your future.

What will the Curriculum look like for Year 7?

Our Key Stage 3 curriculum will aim to provide an engaging and holistic curriculum that is relevant to important real-world issues, as well as developing our students learning skills. It would also equip students to effectively transition to our unique pathways as they progress through the UTC.

The KS3 curriculum will rigorously cover:

- English
- Maths
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Humanities (to include Geography, History, RE, Citizenship, PSHE/RSE)

- Computing
- Project (to include Engineering, Technology, Food Tech, Futures and Enterprise)
- Modern Foreign Languages
- PE

The ambition of the UTC is that students, in addition to great examination results, will develop the future skills to be successful in this rapidly changing world. Students will be given the opportunity to solve real problems and learn that 'life is what they make it'. Tackling real-world problems in Project lessons will involve working alongside our wide network of business and industry partners.

What will the school day be like?

The school day will begin at 9am and finish at 3pm, with the option to stay until 4pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, in order to participate in a wide selection of extra-curricular activities. The day will comprise 5 or 6 lessons, with form time and breaks. This is in line with the current Key Stage provision.

Will there be a focus on pastoral care?

While our approach to the curriculum may be unique, our view is that happy students will achieve better personal outcomes.

There will be a strong network of personalised support available to every student, and students will follow the same behaviour codes as older students, which were praised by OFSTED in May 2019:

- *'The behaviour of pupils is good'*
- *'Pupils move around the school in an orderly and respectful manner. They are friendly and welcoming to visitors'*
- *'The school has a strong culture of safeguarding'*
- *'Students are well supported in their transition between their secondary school and UTCN'*
- *'Pupils are well looked after...They told inspectors that they feel safe in school and that they have the confidence that staff will help them if they have a worry or concern.'*

How would the admissions criteria work?

UTCN aspires to be the 11-19 establishment of choice for both students and employers across the region.

UTCN is committed to an open, fair and transparent admissions process for our students and will act fully in accordance with the School Admissions Code and the School Admissions Appeals Code and admissions law. This means that parents will

apply for places through the Local Authority for Year 7 entry. For more information about our Admissions Policy, please visit our website.

Supporting transition to UTCN

UTCN currently operates a successful transition procedure. This includes a number of themed open events, a pre-admission meeting and an induction day.

For Year 6 students, in addition to this, a full programme of introductory activities would be planned from September through to July for all students and parents. This ensures that everyone is fully aware of what we provide and what they should expect regarding our educational provision.

Students and parents will be fully supported, including the opportunity to meet the Headteacher and key staff to ensure successful planning for inclusion and accommodation of learning needs. Our UTC already has good links with the local authority and individual feeder schools and will use these to support effective transition.

Once learners have been offered and have accepted a place at UTCN, they will be invited to participate in a specifically tailored transition programme that will support learners in making the transition to the new ways of working that will be expected of them.

While the transition programme will help learners to understand just how different the UTC approach is, there will also be a period of induction to ensure that new entrants in Year 7 are afforded the best opportunities for success. This will involve an early assessment of their individual needs.

The main aims of our induction process are to:

- Help provide accurate pre-course advice and guidance to prospective parents, carers and students
- Provide a realistic taste of the curriculum to be studied and styles of curriculum delivery such as employer led projects
- Ensure parents, carers and students understand the demands of studying at the UTC
- Allow students the opportunity to meet other prospective students and staff prior to starting their course
- Ensure students are aware of UTCN policies and procedures
- Ensure students feel safe and understand how they should access support as required Ensure all students are fully accommodated to meet their personalised learning needs

Your Feedback

This is your opportunity to contribute your views and ensure that this new development serves the young people, parents and carers, educational community and employers of Norfolk.

How to send us your comments

There are two ways for you to give us your feedback.

1. Go to our website and complete the online survey:

<https://utcn.org.uk/key-stage-3-consultation>

2. Contact UTCN and ask for a paper copy of the form.

What will happen to your comments?

All feedback will be analysed and used to consider whether UTCN should take students into Year 7. If UTCN decides to do this, this data will be presented to the Department for Education.

A summary of feedback will feature on our website.

UTCN will be responsible for the personal data provided to it during the consultation process.

If you have any questions about this, please contact:

Zoë Hill-Smith
KS3 Project Consultant
UTCN
Old Hall Road
Norwich
NR4 6FF

Tel: 01603 580280

Email: zoe.hill-smith@utcn.org.uk

27/01/20

Consultation Survey



Admitting Year 7 to UTCN

We are proposing a change in admissions to allow Year 7 students to join our school.

UTCN's vision is to develop the next generation of STEM professionals. In May 2019 OFSTED judged us to be 'Good' in every area. Following on from this success, we are proposing a change to our admissions arrangements to allow Year 7 students to join us. Current recruitment is into Year 10 and Year 12.

Extending our offer to Year 7 students is a significant development, and your views are critical to help us shape the way forward. We hope that you will be able to take a few minutes to answer the questions below. Every response received will be reviewed and included in our final report.

This consultation will run for six weeks from 9am on Monday, January 27th to 9am on Monday, March 9th 2020.

This survey is available online at <https://utcن.org.uk/key-stage-3-consultation>

Alternatively, the survey below – which contains the same questions - can be completed and returned to Reception at UTCN.

1. Which best describes your relationship with UTCN?

- I am a current student
- I am the parent/carer of a current student/s
- I am interested in being a student at UTCN in the future
- I am considering sending my child/children to UTCN in the future
- I am local education professional
- I am a member of the community
- I am a local employer
- Other (Please Specify)

2. If you are a parent of a current or potential student, what school year is your child currently in?

- Year 4 or below
- Year 5
- Year 6
- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Year 10
- Year 11
- Year 12
- Year 13
- Not applicable
- Other (Please Specify)

3. Do you think it is right that local children have access to technical and employer-based learning, as well as more traditional options?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

4. Do you think there should be a greater choice of STEM education providers in the local area?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know

5. UTCN currently recruits students into Year 10 and Year 12. We are proposing to admit students into Year 7 for reasons indicated in our consultation booklet.

Our reasons for seeking this change are:

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6. Would you support the above proposal?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

7. If you are a current parent/carer or student of UTCN, do you think your child/you would have benefitted from being able to start in Year 7 rather than Year 10?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Non applicable

8. Why did you select this answer?

9. Is there anything you would like to add?

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are we definitely going to have Year 7 students at UTCN?

No. At this stage we are consulting with stakeholders to canvas their opinions. If we want to pursue taking Year 7s, we will need to apply to the Department for Education for approval. Only then will we be in a position to make a final decision.

2. Why are we considering taking Year 7 students?

Increasingly, students joining us in Year 10 and 12 do not study Design Technology and Computing at KS3. This means that, every year, students are joining us with ever lower levels of skill. Taking students earlier would mean we would be able to design a varied and interesting STEM curriculum from Year 7 which would allow students to master these key skills effectively.

3. Where would Year 7 be based?

Our ideal scenario is to set up a separate KS3 unit in a separate building, which is close to the UTC, and would house the same level of facilities. We are also looking at other options, including sites slightly further away from the UTC and remodelling our current building to accommodate KS3 students.

4. When would Year 7 join?

The earliest that UTCN could admit Year 7 students would be September 2021. However, the first admission date and the actual number of students joining will be dependent on the results of the consultation, as well as the availability of a suitable site and finance. A separate consultation on Planned Admission Numbers (PAN) would also be undertaken.

5. How will this affect current students?

As September 2021 is the very earliest that UTCN could take Year 7 students, most current students will be unaffected. At that date:

- All current Year 12 and 13 students will have left by July 2021.
- Current Year 11 students who progress with us to the Sixth Form could see the arrival of Year 7 students in September 2021 (at the earliest) when they would be in Year 13.

- Current Year 10 students who progress with us to the Sixth Form could see the arrival of Year 7 students in September 2021 (at the earliest) when they would be in Year 12.

However, our preference is for KS3 students to be accommodated in a separate building.

6. How will this benefit current students?

Taking Year 7 students will have very little, if any, impact on current students. However, ultimately, it should secure the reputation of UTCN as being a first-class provider of the scientists, technology and engineering specialists of the future.