

Example letter to Headteachers asking them for a reference (March 2017)

Dear Headteacher

**Re: Mandarin Excellence Programme**

I am writing to you because [name of student] has expressed interest in joining the Mandarin Excellence Programme at [name of school] from September 2017. [name of school] was one of a small minority of schools in the country to be successful in bidding with the University College London to start delivering the Department for Education's Mandarin Excellence Programme from September 2017. This is an intensive immersion course in Mandarin Chinese and those students selected to participate in the programme will be part of a privileged minority who will have access to the best teaching and enrichment opportunities over the next five years.

Students will learn Chinese as a single language option. They will have 4 hours a week of taught Chinese, as well as homework (including access to on-line resources) and enrichment days. In addition, students will take part in a China immersion course in Beijing in Year 8, and a UK-based Chinese immersion course in Year 9.

The Mandarin Excellence Programme has proved hugely popular with prospective students and is already oversubscribed, but places are limited to 30 students for September 2017. We will consider all applications, irrespective of academic achievement to date, however, due to the intensity of the programme and the level of commitment required, it is important that students are able to work independently (including some online study) and are sufficiently motivated. An interest in other cultures, or experience living abroad would also be desirable. In addition, students on the programme will be expected to take part in summer schools, including an immersion course in China at the end of Year 8.

In order to help ensure we select the most suitable students, I would be grateful therefore if you could reply to this email by **[date]** and comment on whether you think [name of student] would enjoy the Mandarin Excellence Programme and how well you feel they would cope with the intensity and level of commitment required.

Yours sincerely...