



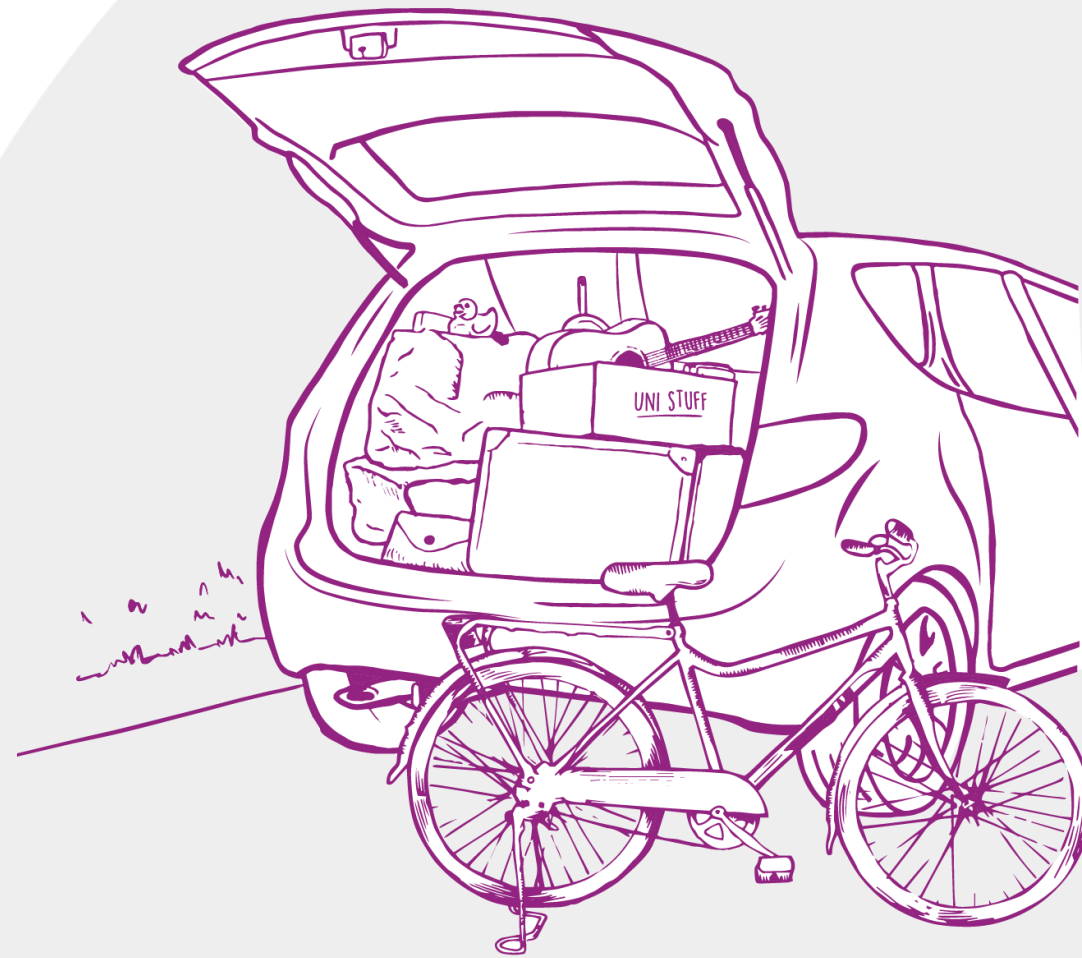
Oxford and Cambridge Student Conferences Teacher sessions

This morning:

10:00 – 10:15	Why Oxford or Cambridge?
10:15 – 11:00	Holistic Admissions: How Cambridge and Oxford assess applications
11:00 – 11:30	Admissions Assessments & Tests
Break	
11:45 – 12:15	Super-curricular engagement: Supporting students to demonstrate their subject interest
12:15 – 12:50	Q&A



Why Oxford or Cambridge?



Challenging, stimulating courses



- Expert teachers/lecturers – many national and world subject leaders
- Extensive small-group teaching – supervisions/tutorials
- Superb facilities and resources



The collegiate University

A College is like a mini campus providing a base for students.

Role of the Colleges

- Admit students
- Academic and pastoral care
- Accommodation, dining and recreation
- Organise small-group teaching
- Facilities for academic study

Role of the University

- Determines course content
- Organises lectures, seminars, practicals and projects
- Sets and marks examinations
- Awards degrees



Supportive environment



- Academic – Director of Studies (DoS)
- Pastoral – Tutor
- Students' unions and peer support
- Counselling service
- Disability Resource Centre (DRC)
- Financial



Fulfilling student experience

Get involved!

- University clubs and societies
- Sport, music and drama at every level
- Pubs, clubs, bars, theatres
- Safe and relaxed cities only 50 minutes/1 hour from London
- Low cost of living
- Find a good work/life balance



Excellent employment prospects



- Cambridge is one of the top five UK universities most often targeted by Britain's leading graduate employers, and Oxford is in the top 10 (*The Graduate Market in 2017*)
- Number 5 (Cambridge) and Number 6 (Oxford) in the world for employer reputation (QS World University Rankings 2018)
- 91% (Cambridge) and 95% (Oxford) of students in employment or further study within six months of graduating
- Students and graduates have life-long access to an active Careers Service





Holistic Admissions: How Cambridge and Oxford Assess Applications

**Oxford and Cambridge
Student Conferences
2018**

The application process

1 Choose your course



2 Choose a College or open application



3 Check admission test/assessment arrangements



4 UCAS application



5 SAQ (22 October) – Cambridge only



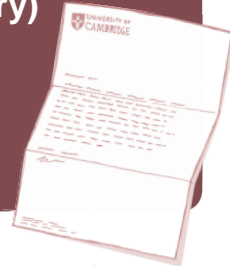
6 Submit written work and/or take admission test/assessment



7 Interview (December)



8 Decision (January)



15 October – What happens next?



Receiving and processing applications

- Applications are received through UCAS
- Contextual data (where available) is collated centrally.
- Open applications are allocated to a College
- Applications and contextual data info are disseminated to departments/Colleges.

Title & Forenames:	Personal ID:
Surname:	App Scheme Code:
Preferred First Name:	Date Applied:
Address:	Application Source:
	Fee Code:
	Student Support Arrangements:
	Domicile / APR:
Postcode	Residential Cat.:
Country:	Route B:
Gender:	Criminal Convictions:
Date of Birth:	Disability/Special Needs:
Age at 1st October:	Country of Birth:
Mobile Number:	Nationality:
Home Number:	Entered UK:
Email:	School:
In Care:	Last Education:

COURSE DETAILS							
Course	Orig. College	College	Short Name	Further Details?	Entry Point	Home	Entry Year
	STJ	STJ			1		2017

SCHOOL , COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATION				
Name	From	To	PT/FT/S W	UCAS Code
Secondary School,	9 / 2010	7 / 2015	FT	
School	9 / 2015	7 / 2017	FT	

ACTIVITIES IN PREPARATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
No information supplied

CONTEXTUAL DATA							
Care	Pre 16	Post 16	ACORN	POLAR	OFFA	OFFA 1	Overall
N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y

Receiving and processing applications

Further detail about contextual data is available to tutors, colleges and departments through our admissions support systems (some subjects use their own version of this). Details about extenuating circumstances can also be recorded here, if appropriate, so they can be seen by tutors who are considering the application.



Home / UAO - Comms and Recruitment Team (Read only) / UAO-CommsandRecruitment

Advanced Filter Filter Search Save Generate PDF Generate PDF All Generate Excel All Attachments PDF

College 1:	Surname	Forename	Title	UCAS Personal ID	Overall Status	Applicatio.	College 1	Offer College	Code	Course	Test 1 Type	
All						University	University		OS	G400	Computer Science	MAT
College 2:						University	University	A	V	V100	History	HAT
All						Queen's	Queen's		OS	C100	Biological Sciences	
All Colleges						Balliol	Balliol		OS	H100	Engineering	PAT
<input type="checkbox"/> Include Offer Col						New College	New College			C700	Biochemistry (Molecular and	
<input type="checkbox"/> Include Appl. Col						Corpus	Corpus Christi			F303	Physics (4-year MPhys)	PAT
Course Group:						Brasenose	Brasenose			L0V0	Philosophy, Politics and Economics	TSA
All						Somerville	Somerville		OS	H620	Electrical Engineering	PAT
Flag:						Regent's	Regent's Park			V600	Theology and Religion	
None						St Peter's	St Peter's			LN12	Economics and Management	TSA
Overall Status						University	University	A		GG14	Mathematics and Computer Science	MAT
All										A101	Medicine (Fast-track, Graduate	BMAT
Team Views						Brasenose	Brasenose			A100	Medicine	BMAT
UAO-CommsandRecruitment						Christ	Christ Church			F100	Chemistry	TSA
						Pembroke	Pembroke	A		V100	History	HAT
										A101	Medicine (Fast-track, Graduate	BMAT
						Magdalen	Magdalen			C700	Biochemistry (Molecular and	
						Hertford	Hertford		OS	M100	Law	LNAT
						Mansfield	Mansfield			VV56	Philosophy and Theology	Philosophy Test



Sample subject moderation spreadsheet (Cambridge)

UCAS PERSONAL ID	APPLICATION YEAR	ACAD PLAN	Reporter 'HOME' category	COLLEGE	In Care	PN: POLAR3	Socio-economic: OAC	Lower-performing GCSE schools	Few Cam/Ox offers	CF	LAST NAME
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	N		2	Y				Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	LC					Y		Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	W				Y			Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	JN			Y				Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	ED						Y	Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	LC							Smith
#####	2015	HPTX		HH					Y		Smith
#####	2015	HPTX		CC							Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	K	Y				Y	Y	Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	CC		1	Y				Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	CC							Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	K							Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	K							Smith
#####	2015	HPTX		W							Smith
#####	2015	HPTX		CL							Smith
#####	2015	HPTX		ED							Smith
#####	2015	HPTX		ED							Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	CHR		2				Y	Smith
#####	2015	HPTX		LC							Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	K				Y			Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	CAI						Y	Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	T			Y				Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	EM							Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	SE						Y	Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	DOW				Y			Smith
#####	2015	HPTX	Y	G							Smith

School Type	School Avg Pts Score (A Level)	School Avg Pts Score (GCSE)	No of A* GCSE	No of A GCSE	No of Other GCSE	Raw GCSE Score	Adjusted GCSE Score
Further Education	193.9	59.8	0	3	8	0	0.0
Further Education	189.0	55.0	0	3	7	0	0.0
Other		36.7	0	0	6	0	0.0
Other			7	7	2	7	7.0
Other		58.2	2	7	0	2	2.0
Other		0.0					
Independent School	240.0	49.7	4	3	2	4	4.0
Other							
Further Education	197.9	0.0	0	0	7	0	0.0
Other		45.4	0	2	6	0	0.0
Other		0.0	0	2	1	0	0.0
Sixth Form College	222.6	44.1	5	5	0	5	5.0
Other		49.4	8	3	0	8	8.0
Other							
Independent School	242.4		5	4	1	5	5.0
Other							
Other			1	0	0	1	1.0
Other			2	1	0	2	2.0
Other							
Other		27.2	0	3	6	0	1.9
Other			0	0	9	0	0.0
Sixth Form College	207.6						
Other Maintained	255.9	57.0	6	4	0	6	6.0
Independent School	248.7	57.9	3	6	0	3	3.0
Sixth Form College	244.2	34.6	7	1	0	7	7.3
Independent School	275.1	63.1	8	3	0	8	8.0

Contextual Data

Contextual Data

To ensure all applicants are assessed fairly and holistically, both universities consider additional information. This gives us a fuller picture of their educational and social circumstances underpinning their application and performance in assessments.



Contextual Data

Geodemographic data from postcodes

- Participation of Local Areas (POLAR3)
- Output Area Classification (OAC) - Cambridge
- ACORN – Oxford

School/College information

- the performance of the school/college at GCSE level
- the regularity with which the school/college sends successful applicants to the University of Cambridge or the University of Oxford

Individual circumstances

- When a student declares on their UCAS application that they have spent time in local authority care
- Extenuating Circumstances Form (Cambridge)

Contextual Data

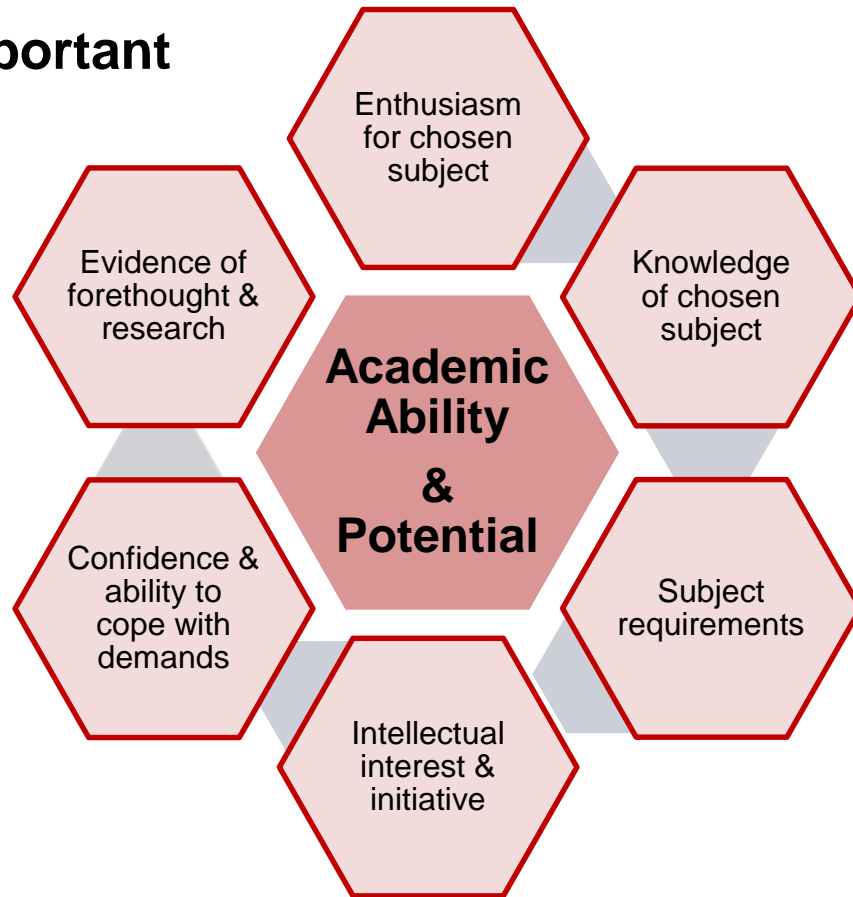


How do we use contextual data?

- As a key part of our overall decision making
- Not used to systematically make lower offers, but helps to put each individual applicant into context
- Make offers based on academic merit to students with the capacity to succeed on our academic and rewarding undergraduate courses.

How we assess applicants

Important



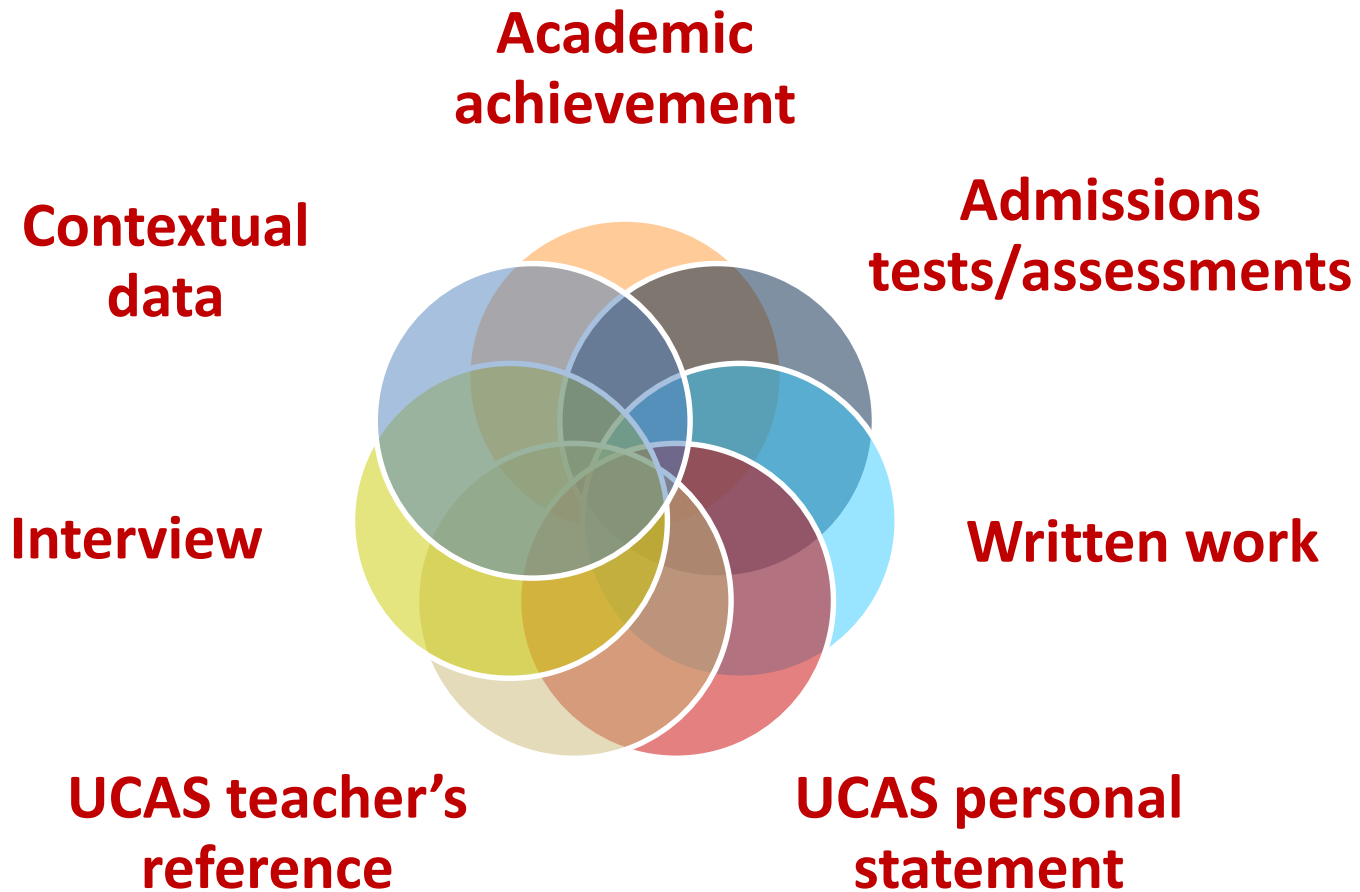
Not relevant for Oxford and Cambridge

Particular background

Particular school type

Irrelevant extra-curricular activities

How do tutors assess applications?



Academic Record

2016 Entry Statistics

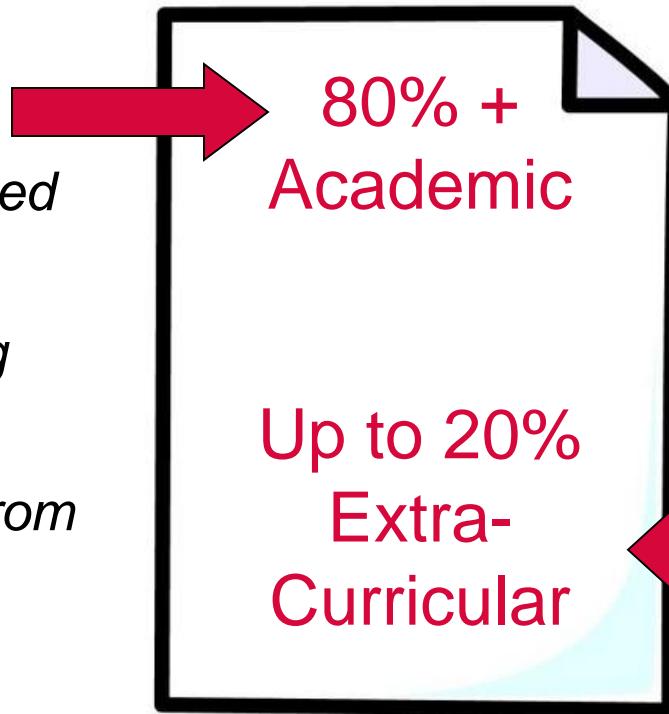
University of Cambridge - 2016 Cycle				
A Level Grades	Applications	Offers	Accepts	Success rate
A*A*A*	3078	1642	1499	53.3%
A*A*A	2229	760	649	34.1%
A*AA	1860	418	320	22.4%

University of Oxford - 2016 Cycle			
A Level Grades	Applications	Offers	Success rate
A*A*A*	2220	967	43.6%
A*A*A	2484	720	29.0%
A*AA	2688	604	22.5%
AAA	1447	225	15.5%

Personal statement

Structuring the personal statement

- *I want to study...*
- *I have read/watched/visited ...*
- *It was interesting because...*
- *What I learned from this was....*
- *What was challenging was...*



- *In my spare time I play...*
- *I had some work experience at...*
- *I enjoy...*

Advising students on personal statements

- A starting point for interview discussion
- Focus on the chosen course(s)
- ‘Why you should choose me for your course’
- Care and attention to detail
- Beware Googled quotations: ‘*I have always...*’; ‘*As Santayana once said....*’
- Make it honest!



Teacher Reference

References

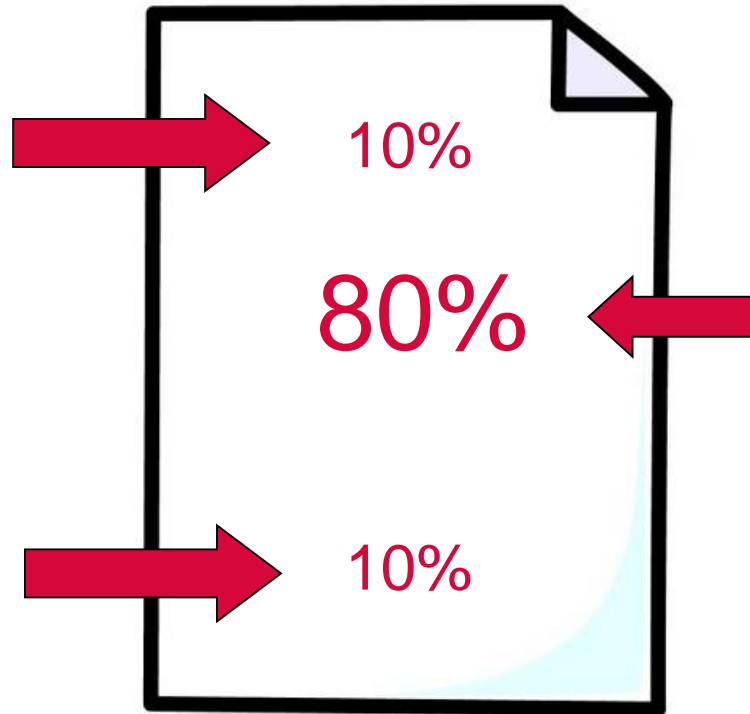


- Highlight areas of particular strength
- Relating it back to the relevant subject selection criteria is helpful
- How strong a candidate is relative to peers
(e.g. *‘one of the top three students in a very strong cohort’* or
‘the best historian I have taught during my career’)
- Contextualise achievement
- Additional information is only required if there is a change of circumstances post-application
- Remember Cambridge’s Extenuating Circumstances Form



Structuring the Teacher's Reference: an example

**School or college
information**
(particularly regarding
qualification reform)



**Any mitigating
circumstances**
(including nature and
length of impact)

Concluding statement

- **Subject-specific information and aptitude for degree**
- Focus on subject choice
- Contextual achievement
- Areas of particular strength



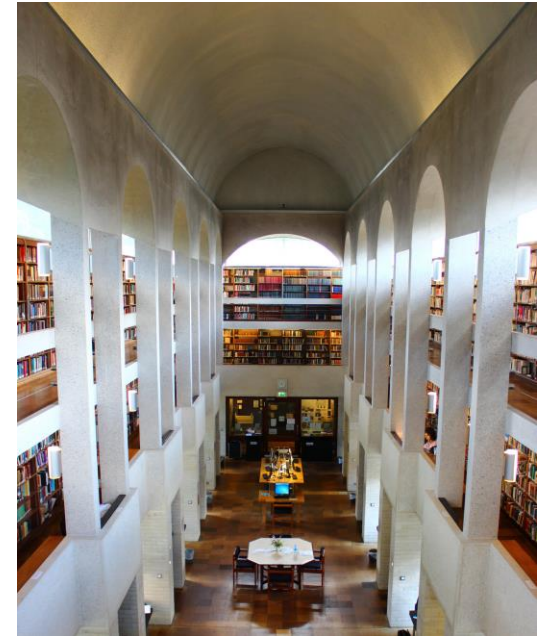
Interviews



Interviews: Format

- Candidates should expect at least one subject specific interview
- Typically 20-45 minutes
- Problem-solving scenarios and discussion relevant to the course applied to
- Interactive assessment of:
 - Interest
 - Aptitude
 - Core knowledge and technical skill
 - Capacity to learn from mistakes and to listen in discussion

Disability information flagged on the UCAS form is looked at separately and allows us to make appropriate adjustments at interview if needed



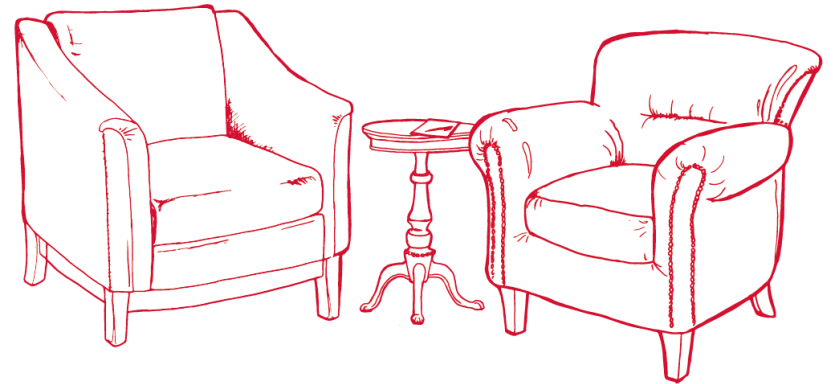
**No hidden agenda,
no trick questions,
not the final
hurdle!**

Interviews: What are tutors looking for?

- Students should be able to demonstrate:
 - Fluency in expressing core knowledge and ideas
 - Ability to apply existing knowledge methodically to new situations
 - Ability to assimilate and apply new concepts
 - Clarity of thinking/reasoning
- They should be able to discuss their:
 - Commitment to intense and sustained learning
 - Interest in and enthusiasm for their chosen subject

Interviews: How to prepare

- Encourage students to refresh their memory about super-curricular work they've done
- Give students opportunities to discuss academic work and ideas as this is a core part of the interview format
- Review personal statement
- Watch the interviews films
- Don't worry about what to wear!



Interviews: Sample questions

Geography

If I were to visit the area where you live, what would I be interested in?

Computer Science

How do pirates divide their treasure? *A group of 7 pirates has 100 gold coins. They have to decide amongst themselves how to divide the treasure, but must abide by pirate rules:*

- The most senior pirate proposes the division.
- All of the pirates (including the most senior) vote on the division. If half or more vote for the division, it stands. If less than half vote for it, they throw the most senior pirate overboard and start again.
- The pirates are perfectly logical, and entirely ruthless (only caring about maximizing their own share of the gold).

So, what division should the most senior pirate suggest to the other six?

Interviews: Sample questions

Biological Sciences

Why do lions have manes?

Philosophy

What exactly do you think is involved in blaming someone?

Economics

Do bankers deserve the pay they receive? And should government do something to limit how much they get?

Admissions Assessments and Tests

**Oxford & Cambridge
Student Conferences
Teachers' Programme**



Why use assessments and tests?

- Differentiate between well-qualified candidates
- A common set of data
- To stretch and challenge applicants
- Assess the aptitude and potential of candidates
- If appropriate, assess subject knowledge and understanding
- Help us concentrate interviewing resources on those most likely to achieve an offer (Oxford)



Logistics and Registration

- Most admissions tests require prior registration
 - Typically 15 October
- It is the student's responsibility to ensure they are registered for tests through their school/college
- All Oxford tests are taken in advance of interviews
- Some Cambridge tests will be in advance, some at interview
- All except LNAT can be taken in schools, and are pen and paper format
 - 2018 date: Wednesday 31 October
 - Hope to schedule further ahead for future years



How to prepare

Specimen and past papers are available for many of the tests, offering applicants the opportunity to:

- familiarise themselves with the test content, level and format
- get to know the different types of questions they may be asked
- test themselves under **timed conditions**
- review answers



Examples



Thinking Skills Assessment

Every motorist pays the same amount for road tax, regardless of how much they use the roads: someone who covers as little as 1,000 miles pays the same as someone who covers 20,000. This is unfair. Road tax should be scrapped and the money raised by an increase in the tax on car fuel. Making this change would ensure that those who use the roads more would pay more. This would not only be a fairer system, but could also bring in more revenue. Which of the following statements best illustrates the principle underlying the argument above?

- A - People should receive free medical treatment only if they cannot afford to pay for it.
- B – People who travel to work every day by train should pay a lower fare than those who travel only occasionally.
- C – People who earn more than double the average wage should be made to pay much higher charges for dental treatment.
- D – Television channels should be paid for by subscription so that only those people who watch them should be made to pay.
- E – Telephone charges should be higher for business customers than for domestic customers because they are using the system only to make money.



ELAT example

The following poems and extracts from longer prose and drama texts are all linked by the theme of storms. They are arranged chronologically by date of publication. Read all the material carefully, and then complete the task below.

- (a) From 'The Storme' (1633), a poem by John Donne *page 4*
- (b) From *Modern Painters* (1843), a book on art by John Ruskin *page 5*
- (c) From *The Story of an African Farm* (1883), a novel by Olive Schreiner *page 6*
- (d) From *Riders to the Sea* (1905), a play by John M Synge *page 7*
- (e) 'The Storm' (1911), a poem by Katherine Mansfield *page 8*
- (f) From *Giovanni's Room* (1956), a novel by James Baldwin *page 9*

Task:

Select two or three of the passages (a) to (f) and compare and contrast them in any ways that seem interesting to you, paying particular attention to distinctive features of structure, language and style. In your introduction, indicate *briefly* what you intend to explore or illustrate through close reading of your chosen passages.

This task is designed to assess your responsiveness to unfamiliar literary material and your skills in close reading. Marks are not awarded for references to other texts or authors you have studied.

Natural Sciences Example (Cambridge)

- 4 If you look at a clock and the time is 9.45, what is the angle between the hour and the minute hands?
- A 0°
 - B 7.5°
 - C 15°
 - D 22.5°
 - E 30°

Geography example (Cambridge)

- 17** The most popular theory about the origin of the Moon is that it was formed from debris breaking off the Earth in a planetary collision 4.5 billion years ago. If this were true, the Moon would be made of the same material as is found on Earth. Examination of Moon rocks shows this to be the case, although there is little iron in Moon rocks. However, this can be explained because, according to the theory, the material that formed the Moon would have come from the Earth's crust, not its iron-rich core. Thus we should accept the theory as true.

Which one of the following identifies the flaw in the above argument?

- A** The popularity of a theory is not what determines its truth.
- B** Evidence that is inconsistent with a theory proves that the theory is false.
- C** The explanation offered in the passage is not consistent with the theory.
- D** Evidence that confirms a theory's predictions does not prove that the theory is true.
- E** A theory that is not consistent with the facts should be rejected, not modified.

Revision helpful

- Science based courses
- Languages
- Will always provide a syllabus of material to revise

Similar exercises useful

- Humanities courses
- Languages courses
- Likely to be similar to the kinds of exercises undertaken in school

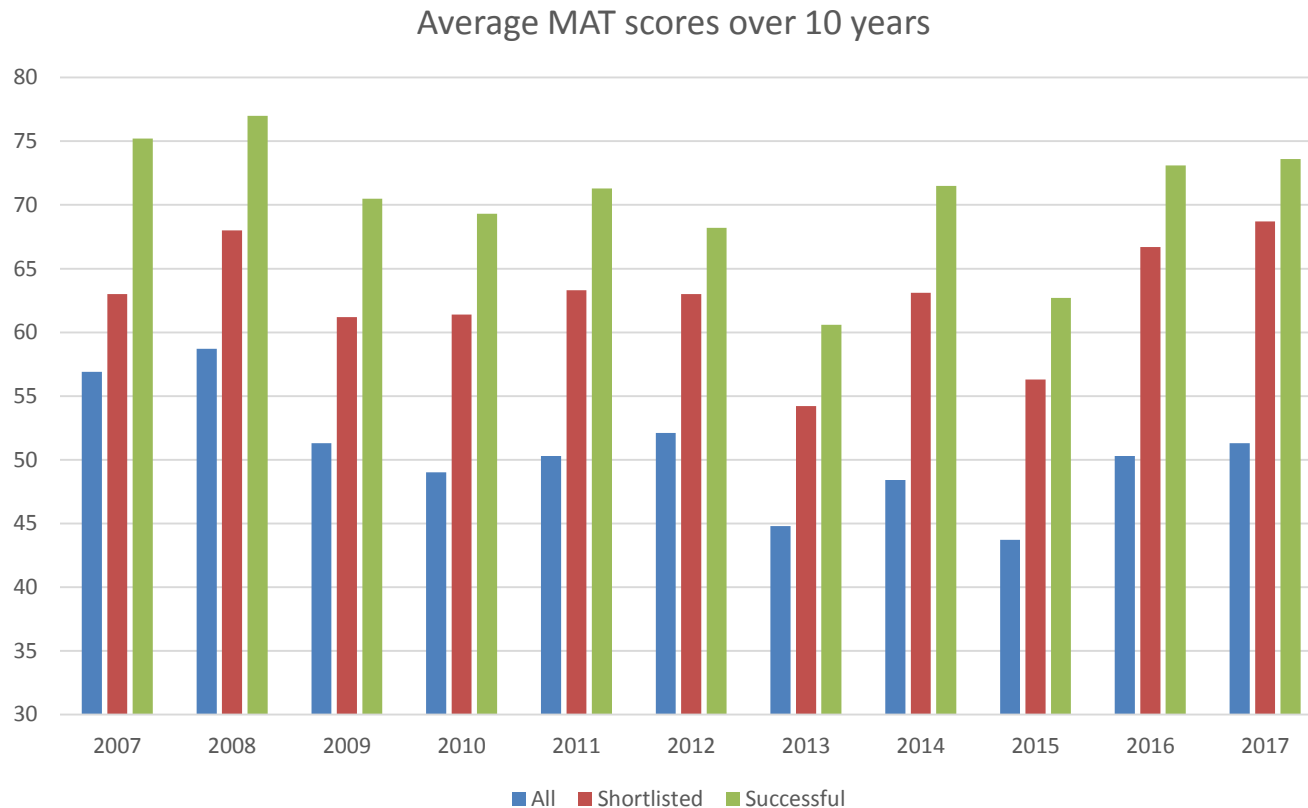
Practice only

- TSA
- LNAT

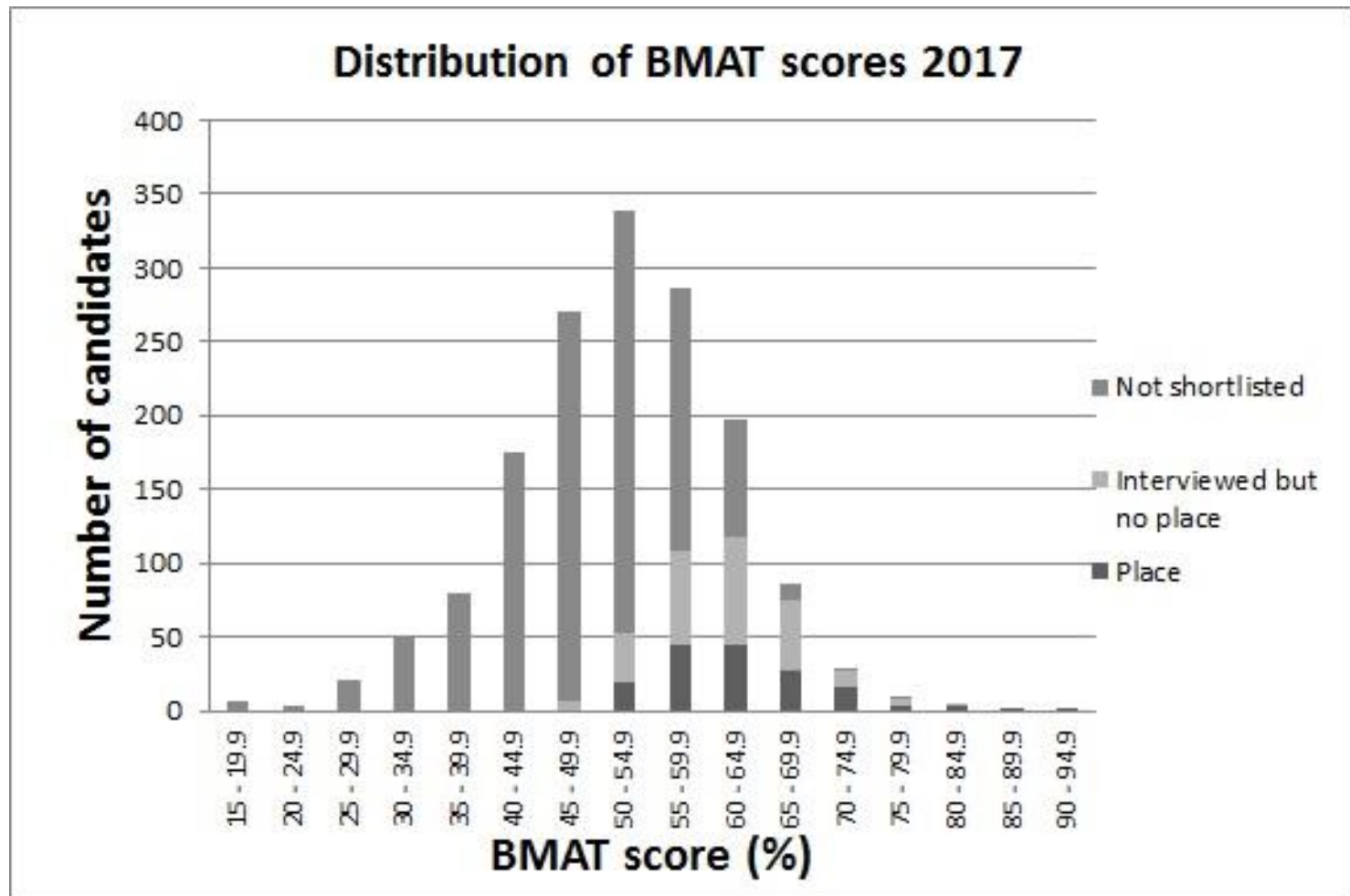
Practice under timed conditions the best preparation for all tests



Test/Assessment outcomes

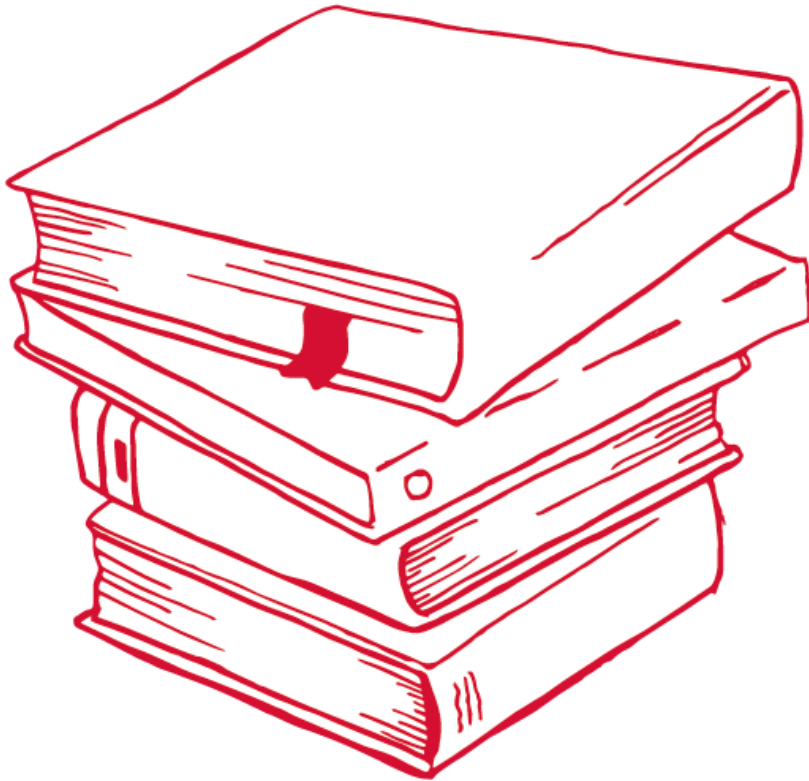


Test/Assessment outcomes



Super-curricular engagement

How students can explore
their subject interest



What is super-curricular and why is it important?

Super-curricular activities include anything a student has done that enhances their subject interest beyond their compulsory studies at school.

Super-curricular activities help to:

- Demonstrate subject interest
- Develop research skills
- Show the student can work independently and be self-motivated
- Broaden the student's subject knowledge

Super-curricular ideas: Directed reading



Additional directed reading is crucial to informed choices and application success. Applicants should keep a reading journal.

Reading must be critical and analytical:

- What is the argument in the book/article?
- What is the supporting evidence? Flaws?
- What does the applicant think?

Super-curricular ideas: Online resources

- HE Plus website (www.myheplus.com)
- Oxplore (www.oxplore.org)
- News stories
- Relevant scholarly articles
- Online journals



Super-curricular ideas: Project work



Working towards a piece of work such as the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) helps students to focus their super-curricular learning in an area they are particularly interested in.

- The EPQ wouldn't form part of an offer for an applicant, but completing one is encouraged.

Super-curricular ideas: University taster sessions

- Subject Masterclasses
- Taster Days
- Summer Schools



Super-curricular ideas: In-school activity

- Timetabled extension classes
- Possible collaboration with local schools
- Discussion groups
- Access to a motivated, high achieving peer group who share their interests

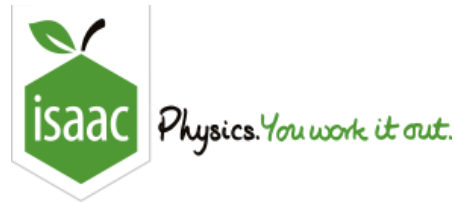
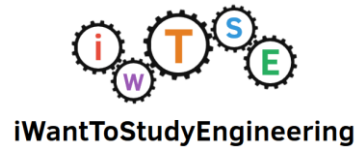
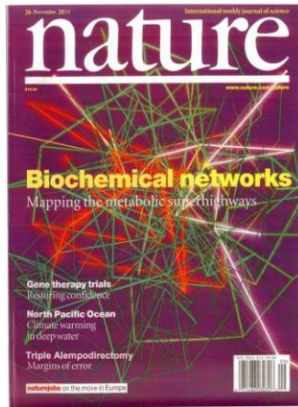


Super-curricular ideas: Work experience



- Work experience isn't expected or required.
- However, for vocational courses, having some relevant work experience is useful and recommended.
- It demonstrates commitment to the intended career and the opportunity to acquire greater understanding of the realities and pressures associated with that career.

Super-curricular ideas: Some specific examples



What about extra-curricular?

Extra curricular activities include non-academic activities, such as taking part in sport, music and volunteering.

- When we assess applicants we are first and foremost interested in their academic potential.
- As students here there are plenty of opportunities to get involved with extra-curricular activities though.



Many opportunities to show subject knowledge throughout the application process

- Personal statement
- Interview
- Admissions assessments/tests
- Submitted work
- Academic record

Thank you
for listening

