

BIOLOGY ADMISSIONS REPORT 2019/2020

In the 2019/20 admissions round there were 739 applications for Biology, which was an increase of 39 on the previous year. This included 17 deferred applications for 2021 entry to the course. 128 candidates made an open application, i.e. they did not choose a college when they applied. There were 100 places available for 2020 entry to the course, meaning there were 7.39 applications per available place.

Of the 739 applications received, 457 (61.8%) were home applicants, 64 (8.7%) were EU applicants and 218 (29.5%) were overseas applicants. 472 (64%) applications were from female candidates and 267 (36%) were from male applicants.

369 applicants (50%) were shortlisted for interview. After interviews took place, 139 college offers were made, including 33 open offers (where a place is guaranteed if the offer conditions are achieved but the college place will be allocated in August). In addition to this 2 deferred offers were made for entry to the course in 2021. In total 19% of applicants received an offer.

[The standard offer for Biology](#) is A*AA, at A level, including Biology plus Chemistry, Physics or Mathematics and with the A* in a Science or a Mathematics (or equivalent). There was variation in the remaining A level subject(s) taken by A level applicants – some shortlisted applicants held Biology plus two or more of Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics. For other candidates, the third subject included Geography, English Literature, Psychology, History, Physical Education, Computer Science, French, Geology, Economics and Politics.

Prior to shortlisting, a team of Biology tutors reviewed the applications as a gathered field and made interview recommendations to all other Biology tutors involved in admissions. As part of this assessment, performance at GCSE and equivalent or other qualifications that had already been attained were evaluated, plus school type and the various measures and indicators on the UCAS forms were taken into account. The first choice application college also assessed all applications to their college and made recommendations. All recommendations were then taken to a meeting attended by representatives from all colleges that admit Biologists, and shortlisting decisions were discussed and agreed.

Of the 369 candidates who were shortlisted, 285 (62% of those who applied) were home applicants, 28 (44%) were EU applicants and 56 (26%) were overseas applicants. Of those shortlisted for interview, 243 (52% of those who applied) were female and 126 (47%) were male.

This year, after shortlisting had taken place, more applicants were redistributed to a new college 1 so that all colleges had a similar number of interviewees per available place. All shortlisted candidates were then allocated a second college and again each college had approximately the same number of applicants to consider per available place. All shortlisted applicants were invited to attend interview at each of the two colleges.

Although the content of interviews may vary between interviewing panels, all interviewers asked detailed questions about subjects, objects or written/graphic material that the interviewees are not expected to recognise or have studied before. The candidate's Personal Statement was also often discussed.

After Biology interviews finished, Biology representatives for all colleges met as a group – at this meeting all decisions relating to interview candidates were agreed and confirmed, including which candidates would receive a Biology Open Offer.

Of the 141 offers that were made, 119 were home applicants (26% of home Biology applicants were successful), 11 were EU applicants (17% of EU Biology applicants were successful) and 11 were overseas applicants (5% of overseas Biology applicants were successful). 89 offers were made to female candidates (19% of female applicants were successful) and 52 were made to male candidates (19.5% of male applicants were successful). Two candidates have been put forward as [Opportunity Oxford](#) candidates.

The average number of GCSEs taken by shortlisted candidates who took GCSEs was 10.1 (average for all applicants who took GCSEs is 9.9). As well as considering GCSE results, a candidate's GCSE performance relative to their school was also considered (sometimes known as 'contextual GCSE' or 'cGCSE' score). In general, successful candidates had performed better than unsuccessful candidates relative to their schools – the average cGCSE score for all applicants was 0.28, for shortlisted applicants was 0.62, and for successful applicants was 0.69.