

Report on Music BA Admissions, 2019-2020

To encourage applications this year, three Open Days were held in 2019, two in July and one in September. In addition, the UNIQ outreach programme was held with 10 state school participants, 5 of whom applied in 2019 and 2 of whom were offered a place.

The Music BA course received 185 total applications this year (96 female, 84 male) in the December gathered field, compared with 193 in 2018. This number included 14 Band A candidates and 33 Band B candidates. The Admissions Panel comprised representatives from all participating colleges. Every UCAS application was reviewed by the Admissions Coordinator against the subject's published selection criteria to advise on deselection. Contextual data and any special circumstances were taken into consideration as appropriate. Candidates were only deselected where they had not achieved or were not predicted to achieve the entry requirements, where there were no special considerations. Written work was marked centrally by a team of postgraduate students who were trained by the Chair of Faculty and Admissions Coordinator to ensure consistency. This did not form part of the selection for interview process but was considered by tutors as part of the decision-making process alongside personal statement, academic record, school reference, and performance at interview and audition. In Music, a few colleges receive the bulk of applications, therefore candidates are reallocated via an algorithm to undersubscribed colleges on the basis of the number of places they have available. This enables all candidates to have the best possible opportunity to be assessed fairly, and not to be disadvantaged by applying to an oversubscribed college.

85 female and 67 male candidates were invited for interview. Interviews were held either in the Faculty of Music or in the relevant colleges. Each candidate attended at least two interviews, one interview at each of their first- and second-choice colleges (the second-choice college also being allocated by algorithm). Interviews focused on interests mentioned in personal statements, written work, compositions (where applicable) and usually included a prose and/or musical excerpt given to the student to examine for a period of time before the interview. Band A candidates were given three interviews. The intention here was to enable them another opportunity to show their knowledge and potential. Following completion of first and second interviews, college interviewers were required to rank all their interviewed candidates and grade them. The Faculty then held an Initial Selection meeting. This involved discussing every candidate with great care against the published selection criteria and initially determining those candidates on whom the interviewing colleges had reached a consensus (offer/not offer) and those still under consideration. Those candidates still under consideration who might be either taken by a college still considering or given an Open Offer place were given a third interview on Thursday of Week 9. These interviews were coordinated centrally, with each interview panel made up of two interviewers (usually University postholders) from different colleges. The Second Selection Meeting considered the results of these interviews and involved further discussion and decision-making on candidates still under consideration. The Final Selection Meeting involved making final agreement on the offers to be made and the Open Offers. It works by offering places which are underwritten by a specific college, but with the understanding that the offer holder's college will only be determined after A level result. Open offer holders

may be allocated to a college in which a student offered a place there has not achieved their grades. 10 colleges participate in the scheme, but not always every year. This year there were 8 Open Offer places available. When considering the allocation of Open Offer places, the Faculty took into account not only candidates' interview performances but also their strength on paper, with the intention of trying to ensure that these underwritten candidates who would be reallocated to colleges where first-choice candidates had failed to meet the offer requirements would not themselves fail to make their grades.

The Faculty made 85 offers (42 female, 43 male), including 8 open offers, equal to last year, making a 40% success rate. By school type, 89 applicants (48%) came from state schools and 62 (34%) from independent schools, with 34 providing no data (for example, overseas students). In terms of offers, 50 (59%) went to state school applicants, 27 (32%) to independent school applicants and 8 (9%) to those who provided no data. In terms of the new contextual data, 6 Band A candidates were made offers, and 19 candidates from Band B.

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