

In 2020 we received 2,054 UCAS applications (1,766 in 2019). Of these applicants:

- 1,972 successfully registered for and sat the BMAT (1,713 in 2019).
- 164 did not meet our requirements for entry (most often because they were too young, did not explain why they were applying on the basis of re-sits, were only sitting one or two A-level exams after receiving centre-assessed grades this summer rather than three, or did not possess suitable academic credentials).
- 20 withdrew from the application process before shortlisting

The data below, unless otherwise stated, refer to the subset of 1,851 applicants (90%) who were eligible to apply *and* had registered for the BMAT (with most of these receiving a score, despite the difficulties experienced with the delivery of the test by CAAT this year) *and* had not withdrawn their application by the time of shortlisting. 44 applicants applied for deferred entry (41 in 2019). Of these, 10 were shortlisted and interviewed, and none received an offer of a place for 2022 (compared to 4 last year who were offered deferred places for 2021).

- 62% of applicants were female (64% in 2019).
- 75% of applicants offered A-levels.
- 21% of applicants resided outside the EU and 9% resided in the EU outside the UK.
- 17 graduates submitted applications (11 of these were international applicants).

Overall, approximately 23% of applicants who made complete applications were shortlisted (25% in 2019).

## **SHORTLISTING**

As part of the process to decide which applicants are called to interview, we established a numerical ranking on the basis of GCSE performance and BMAT results (both are quantitative and objective measures), equally weighted. If applicants had not taken GCSEs or iGCSEs ranking was based on BMAT score alone. This ranking formed the basis of an initial shortlist of 385. Note that the AQA Level 2 qualification in Further Maths is included in the GCSE calculation, whereas the OCR Level 3 qualification is not.

BMAT is the only element of an application that is common to all applicants for Medicine and giving as it does a snapshot of ability and aptitude, is an important selection tool when assessing a large number of extremely well qualified applicants.

We do not ascribe equal weighting to all sections of BMAT. In 2020, weightings were: section 1=40%, section 2=40%, and section 3=20%. In calculating the section 3 score, double weight was ascribed to the 'Quality of content' score and single weight given to the 'Quality of English' score (with A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, E=1, and X=0).

A small number of candidates were unable to take the BMAT for COVID-related reasons (not all of whom had informed CAAT as organisers of the test, as instructed in our email of 23 October acknowledging application). A further number failed to take the test despite registering and apparently making every effort to do so. A further small subset of candidates had partial scores as a result of failing to complete the test for technical reasons. A much larger number of candidates experienced some level of technical trouble during the delivery of the test, but were able to complete it and received complete scores. Where we had received such information pertaining to

BMAT, either via CAAT, via the University of Oxford online form, or via email to [admissions@medschool.ox.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@medschool.ox.ac.uk), it was noted at the appropriate stage of shortlisting.

The GCSE measure used was a combination of proportion of A\* grades at GCSE and number of A\* grades at GCSE (with equal weighting). For shortlisting purposes a grade 8 or 9 is considered equivalent to an A\*. We also used GCSE performance data for schools in Great Britain and Northern Ireland to help tutors to assess whether an applicant's grades at GCSE may reflect an under- or over-performance within the context of the school at which they were taken. Therefore, it is possible that the chance of being shortlisted was increased/reduced if an applicant had a higher/lower proportion of A\* grades than would be predicted for the average student applying to Oxford from their GCSE school.

The formula for contextualising GCSEs is the normalised number of A\*/9/8 at GCSE plus normalised proportion of A\*/9/8 at GCSE divided by 2, followed by carrying out a regression on the whole dataset, with each candidate's GCSE score and available 'platinum' school performance data. The ranking score is then calculated using the additional formula  $0.74 \times \text{normalized BMAT score} + 0.74 \times \text{the contextualized GCSE score}$ . If there is no cGCSE score (where we have no school data), GCSE score is used. If there is no GCSE score, the BMAT score is used twice.

The applications of candidates who did not make the initial shortlist were then reviewed by tutors, taking into account any individual circumstances - both academic and non-academic - that might indicate that GCSE and/or BMAT performance is likely to have underestimated their potential. Any applicants deemed worthy of further consideration were then reviewed by a cross-college panel, alongside applicants immediately below the initial shortlist. As a result of this process 41 additional applicants were added to the shortlist. Five applicants were initially excluded from the shortlist because they were believed to have international fee status, but did not rank quite as highly as the top international candidates, who are limited to 7.5% of the shortlist. It subsequently transpired that the five would be eligible for home fees on the basis of pre-settled status, so they were added to the shortlist.

- For those shortlisted the mean adjusted BMAT score was 68% (61.8% in 2019).
- For those shortlisted who had taken GCSEs, the mean number of A\*s at GCSE was 10.6 (10.2 in 2019) and the mean proportion of A\*s at GCSE was 0.96 (0.94 in 2019).
- 1 graduate was shortlisted.
- 32 international fee-status applicants were shortlisted.

## **Interviews & Offers**

Each applicant was interviewed by two colleges: the college of preference, or allocation if an open application was made, and one other randomly assigned by computer so as to equalise as far as possible the strength of the applicant field at each college (as measured by the numerical ranking produced by the shortlisting algorithm). The number of applicants called for interview is usually fixed at around 425, in other words about 2.5 applicants per place available.

Interviewers assessed each candidate against our explicit list of selection criteria, available online [here](#). The composition of interview panels was arranged such that every candidate was interviewed by at least one practising clinician. You can find a demonstration interview with one of our current students and two college tutors, recorded for the 2020 Virtual Open Days, on YouTube [here](#).

Following interviews, colleges ranked all the candidates they had seen, on the basis of all information available to them at that time. After disclosure of the candidate rank from the second college, BMAT score and BMAT essays, colleges reviewed their ranking and submitted a final version. On the basis of this final ranking, candidates were provisionally assigned offers at a particular college, with the college the applicant had chosen (or had been allocated to) having first refusal. Admissions decisions were confirmed by correspondence between colleges and the Medical Sciences Office.

**Please note that colleges interviewed blind of college of choice (or allocation) and BMAT score.**

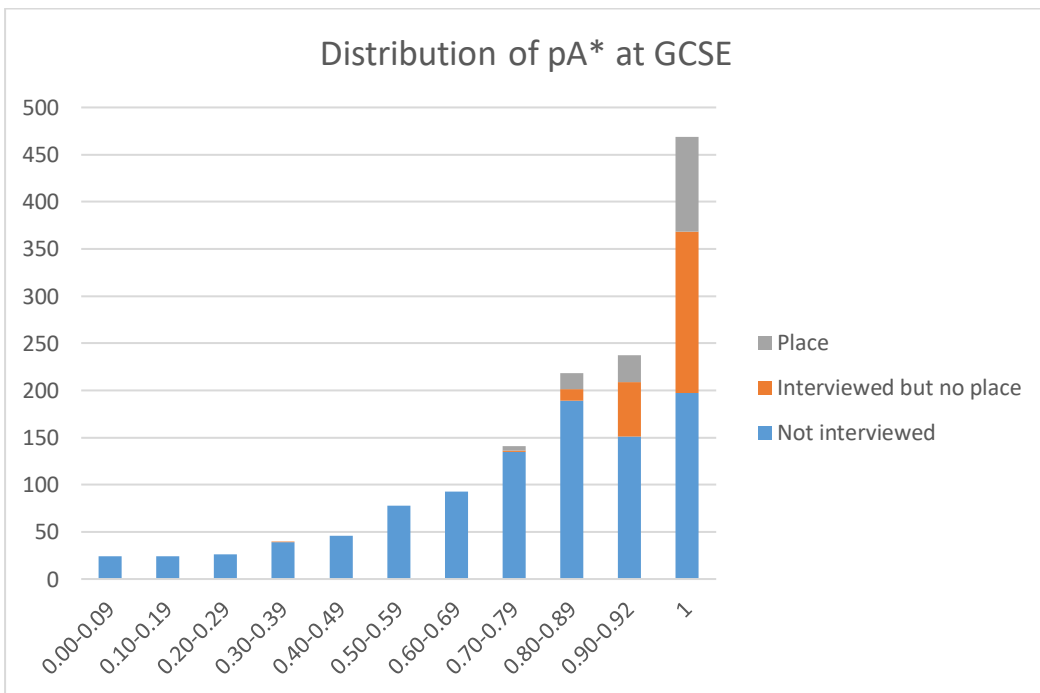
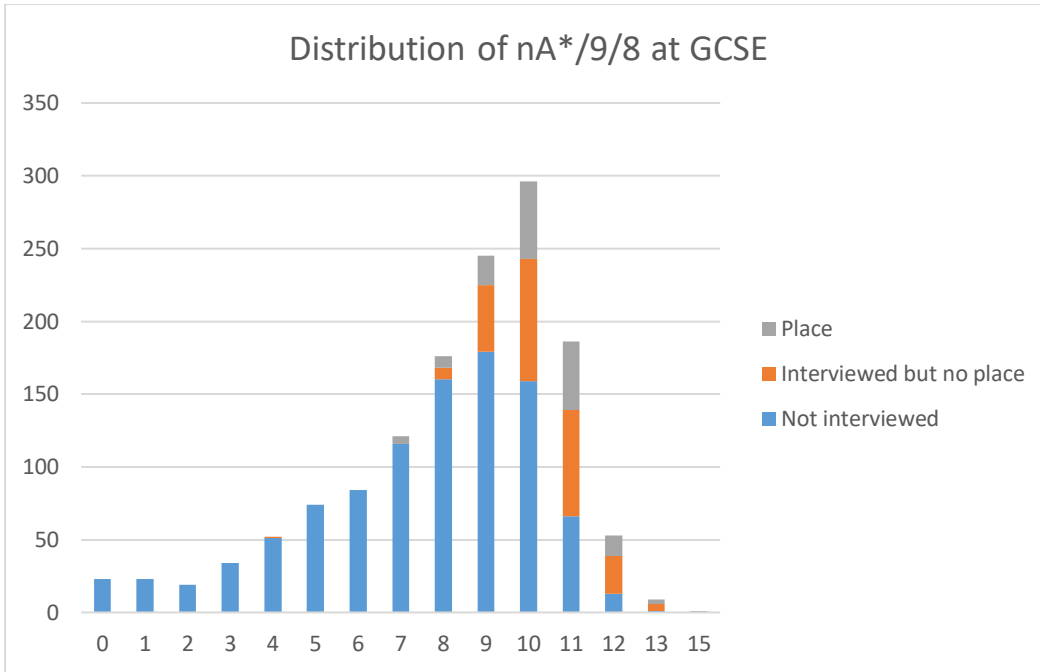
Colleges made 149 quota offers, no deferred offers and 8 open offers (which means the applicant is guaranteed a place at Oxford to study Medicine, but will not be assigned to a college until after A-level results are known).

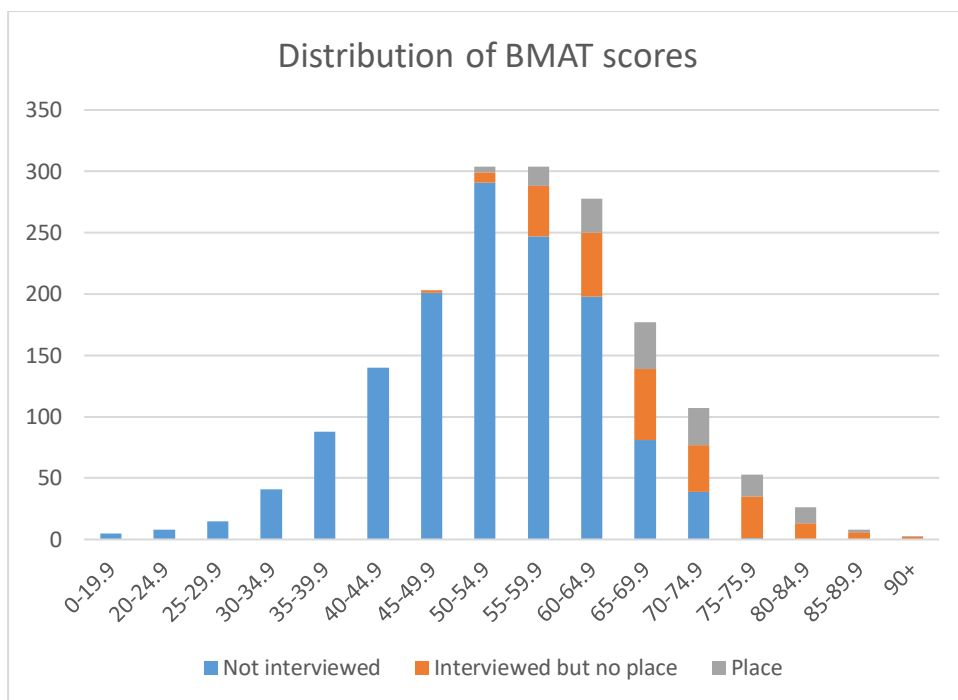
- The overall success rate for male applicants was 9.2% (11% in 2019); the overall success rate for female applicants was 8% (9.3% in 2019).
- For those with an offer of a place, the mean adjusted BMAT score was 68.9%.
- For those with an offer of a place who had taken GCSEs, the mean number of A\*s at GCSE was 10.7 (10.8 in 2019) and the mean proportion of A\* at GCSE was 0.96 (0.93 in 2019).
- No graduate applicants received an offer of a place (graduates compete with school-leavers for places; there is no separate quota).
- 6 international fee-status applicants received an offer for 2021.
- 36.3% of offers were made by colleges other than the college of preference (or allocation – 20.3% of applicants submitted an open application, meaning they did not specify a college of preference on their application and were allocated one). This compares with 43.5% in 2019.

### **GCSEs & BMAT**

In 2020, as in 2019, male applicants did slightly better on BMAT than female applicants (58 vs 54%), while female applicants performed slightly better in GCSEs than male applicants, with a higher average nA\* (8.4 vs 8) and pA\* (0.81 vs 0.77).

The following graphs, showing the distribution of the number of A\*s achieved at GCSE, the proportion of A\*s achieved at GCSE (pA\*) and adjusted BMAT scores for the 2020 cohort, offer a rough guide to prospective applicants.





The mean number of A\* at GCSE for all applicants was 8.2; this rose to 10.2 for those shortlisted and 10.2 also for applicants receiving offers.

The mean proportion of A\* at GCSE was 0.80; this rose to 0.96 for those shortlisted and was 0.96 also for applicants receiving offers.

The mean number of total GCSE qualifications offered (not including short courses or other GCSE-equivalent qualifications) was 10.1.

The mean BMAT score was 55.9%, which rose to 68% for those shortlisted and 68.9% for applicants receiving offers.

*[The BMAT scores shown above are the sum of Section 1, 2 and 3 scores calculated in the following way to give the weightings: Section 1=40%, Section 2=40%, and Section 3=20%:*

*Section 1 & 2: These are originally reported on a scale of 1-9. One mark is removed from this score (to give a scale of 0 to 8), and the resulting figure multiplied by 5 (to give a score out of 40).*

*Section 3: The 'Quality of content' score is multiplied by 2 and added to the 'Quality of English' score (with A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, E=1, and X=0). This gives a score out of 15, which is converted to a score out of 20 by multiplying by 4/3.]*

### A-levels and equivalent qualifications

All A-level applicants must take Chemistry. The table below summarises the distribution of other subject choices amongst applicants this year taking A-levels.

Subject	% of applicants	% of applicants shortlisted	% of applicants placed
Biology	96	96	97
Physics	18	17	19

Mathematics	78	86	87
Further Mathematics	8	11	11

With regard to 'Other subjects', the most popular subjects were Psychology (6%), English Literature (4%), French (4%), History (3%), followed by Spanish (2%), Economics (2%) and Geography (2%).

18% of applicants taking A-levels were studying Chemistry plus just one more science or maths subject. This compares with 12% of shortlisted applicants and 10% of those offered places.

11% of applicants taking A-levels were studying Chemistry, Biology, Physics AND Mathematics (compared to 21% of shortlisted applicants and 21% of applicants offered places).

*N.B. Despite the fact that most applicants offering A-levels tend to take Biology (or Human Biology), this subject is NOT required at A2 level (or indeed at AS-level). However, do be aware that not having A-level Biology is associated with a greater risk of having difficulty at the early stages of the course (and other medical courses).*

61.6% of applicants taking A-levels were doing/had done 3 A-levels, 33% were doing 4 A-levels and approx. 3.6% were doing 5 or more A-levels (though not necessarily all being completed in one academic year).

25% of applicants offered alternative qualifications, the most popular of which was the IB (12.3%), with US qualifications, the Singaporean SIPCAL, and Scottish Advanced Highers representing a few percentage points each as the next most popular options. 10.7% of applicants who were shortlisted and 5% of applicants with an offer studied for qualifications other than A-levels (including the IB).

## **SCHOOL TYPES**

76% of applicants attending school in the UK were from state schools (including sixth form and further education colleges), while 24% were from independent schools.

The overall success rate in 2020 was 10.9% for state school applicants and 8% for independent school applicants.

## **International applicants**

551 applicants identified as international for fee-paying purposes submitted complete applications. Following shortlisting, which is conducted in line with the quota imposed on the Medical School by the UK Government for the available international places, 32 of these applicants were shortlisted and 6 applicants received an offer for 2021.

*[Prospective candidates are reminded that the Medical School is required by the Higher Education Funding Council to limit the number of international (meaning non-UK/ROI in the most recent admissions round) medical students admitted to a maximum of 7.5% across both the standard (A100) and Graduate Entry (A101) courses - see [our advice for international applicants](#)]*