

## **BIOLOGY ADMISSIONS REPORT 2020/2021**

Figures in this report are correct as of 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020. Two applicants have been discounted as they were required to make a reapplication but their deferred places had already been confirmed in the previous admissions round.

In the 2020/21 admissions round there were 675 applications for Biology, which was a decrease of 62 on the previous year. This included 12 deferred applications for 2022 entry to the course. 129 candidates made an open application, i.e. they did not choose a college when they applied. There were 95 places available for 2021 entry to the course, meaning there were 7.1 applications per available place.

Of the 675 applications received, 366 (54%) were home applicants, 40 (6%) were EU applicants and 269 (40%) were overseas applicants. 439 (65%) applications were from female candidates and 236 (35%) were from male applicants.

336 applicants (50%) were shortlisted for interview. After interviews took place, 107 college offers were made, including 10 open offers (where a place is guaranteed if the offer conditions are achieved but the college place will be allocated by the end of August). In addition to this, 3 deferred offers were made for entry to the course in 2022. In total 16% 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, French, German, Spanish and Economics.

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 virtual meeting attended by representatives from all colleges that admit Biologists, and shortlisting decisions were discussed and agreed.

Of the 336 candidates who were shortlisted, 247 were home applicants (67% of the home applicants), 15 were EU applicants (38% of the EU applicants) and 74 were overseas applicants (28% of the overseas applicants). Of those shortlisted for interview, 220 were female (50% of females who applied) and 116 were male (49% of males who applied).

After shortlisting had taken place, some 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 then invited to attend a remote interview with each of the two colleges.

Although the content of interviews varies between interviewing panels, all interviewers asked detailed questions about subjects, objects, data or written/graphic material that the interviewees are not expected to recognise or have studied before. Questions arising from the candidate's Personal Statement were also often posed.

After Biology interviews finished, Biology representatives for all colleges met remotely 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 110 offers that were made, 94 were home applicants (26% of home Biology applicants were successful), 2 were EU applicants (5% of EU Biology applicants were successful) and 13 were overseas applicants (5% of overseas Biology applicants were successful). 67 offers were made to female candidates (15% of female applicants were successful) and 43 were made to male candidates (18% of male applicants were successful). Five candidates have been put forward as [Opportunity Oxford](#) candidates.

The average number of GCSEs taken by shortlisted candidates who took GCSEs was 10.0 (average for all applicants who took GCSEs is 9.8). 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 0.30, for shortlisted applicants was 0.57, and for successful applicants was 0.71.

The graph below shows the distribution of A\*s achieved at GCSE for Biology applicants who had at least 5 GCSEs.

