Information for Applicants: BA (Hons) in English Language and Literature

Thank you for applying for a place on BA (Hons) in English Language and Literature at the University of Oxford. We appreciate the time and effort you put into making an application. We had a high number of applicants for English Language and Literature, with many very good applications, which means that we had to make many difficult decisions.

Admissions statistics
There were 970 applications for English Language and Literature in 2022, at a ratio of 4 applicants per available place. 802 applicants registered as Female on UCAS and 168 applicants registered as Male. 787 applicants were from the UK, 43 from the EU, and 140 from overseas. 630 applicants were shortlisted and invited to interview. 248 applicants were made offers to read English Language and Literature, starting in October 2023, conditional upon successfully meeting the required AAA grades.

Shortlisting procedure
On the basis of evidence from their UCAS form, contextualised GCSE scores, written work, and performance in the admissions test (the Oxford ELAT), applicants are placed in one of ten decile bands. The top 50% of applicants are automatically shortlisted for interview. College admitting tutors may also shortlist a small number of for interview applicants who are outside the top 50% but who show promise in one of more areas of assessment. It is important to remember that shortlisting takes place in a highly competitive environment; virtually all candidates are predicted 'A' or 'A*' grades in all of their final examinations (or equivalent qualifications), so a strong academic record in itself does not guarantee an interview. Candidates called for interview will have an application which includes: an excellent or promising academic record; a compelling personal statement; a strong reference; good written work; and an Oxford ELAT paper of a high standard. Available contextual information on candidates is also considered at this stage. You can read more about how we shortlist applicants on the English Faculty's website: https://www.english.ox.ac.uk/what-we-look-for-undergraduate.

Reallocation process
Once shortlisting is complete, the Faculty operates a procedure of reallocation between colleges, moving some candidates to colleges other than the one to which they originally applied. This is undertaken in full consultation with the tutors in each college, and is done in order to make the Admissions process as fair as possible, giving all candidates a balanced chance of gaining a place in the University as a whole.

This year, shortlisted applicants who were invited to interview, on average, had eight GCSEs at grades 8/9/A*. The most common A-Level subjects studied by interviewees were English Literature, History, and Mathematics. The average score for Written Work submitted by interview candidates was 7.6/10.

Interview process

Colleges are responsible for scheduling and conducting interviews for English Language and Literature. Interview panels are usually comprised of two admitting tutors. It is Faculty policy for shortlisted applicants receive two interviews, each around twenty minutes in length; often these will be arranged to allow candidates to demonstrate different skills. Many interviews will focus on an unseen passage that a candidate receives shortly before the start of the interview. Interviews might also involve questions that emerge from a candidate's personal statement or an extensive discussion of wider reading beyond what a candidate is studying at school. Candidates may well be invited for a further interview at another college; as with pre-interview reallocation, this is to ensure that the best candidates gain places in the University regardless of the competition in particular colleges. This year, after first college interviews, 51 candidates had additional interviews at a second college, to give them the best chance of receiving an offer.

Interview performance is judged according to the following criteria:
- Evidence of independent reading
- Capacity to exchange and build on ideas
- Clarity of thought and expression
- Analytical ability
- Flexibility of thought
- Evidence of independent thinking about literature
- Readiness and commitment to read widely with discrimination

In making final decisions, admitting tutors carefully examine all available information at every stage: qualifications achieved and predicted, school or college reports, personal statements, written work, Oxford ELAT results, and performance in interviews. They will also consult with their colleagues across the University, in order to ensure that competition is fair across all colleges. The aim of the whole is to establish each candidate's potential for effective learning in a tutorial-based system, and for achieving good examination results in the Faculty of English.

Pre-interview Admissions Tests

The Oxford ELAT is a 90-minute test in which you wrote an essay responding to passages of literary material on a given theme. The results were released on 10 January 2022 and you can find more information about this at: https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/guide/admissions-

. This year, the average performance of all applicants in the OxELAT was 44.2/60. For candidates shortlisted for interview, the average score was 46.9. Successful offer-holders averaged a result of 49.5.

OxELAT score for all applicants

OxELAT score for shortlisted candidates

OxELAT score for offer-holders