

Summary of Admissions Process for Chemistry – Information for Applicants 2023-24

1. Admissions statistics

1067 (*1015 last year*) applications were received in 2023 for Chemistry, approximately 5.8 per place. Of these 661 (*658 last year*) applicants were shortlisted for interviews. In all 214 (*205 last year*) offers were made, including open offers.

The breakdown of applicants by APR Region was:

Home: 639
EU / Overseas: 428

The breakdown of applicants by gender, as declared on the UCAS forms, was:

Woman: 499
Man: 548
I prefer not to say / I use another term: 20

17 applications were for deferred entry, and 120 applicants made open applications (i.e. did not specify a college preference).

The breakdown of those given offers by APR Region is:

Home: 170
EU / Overseas: 44

The breakdown of those given offers by gender, as declared on the UCAS forms, is as follows:

Woman: 90
Man: 118
I prefer not to say / I use another term: 6

2. Admissions process

Throughout the process all UCAS forms, contextual information, application and interview grades were easily accessible via a web-based database to all College tutors involved.

2.1 Shortlisting

In light of the competition for places, the purpose of shortlisting is to provide time, during the December interview window, to guarantee that all shortlisted applicants receive at least two interviews. Application numbers increased again this year, which meant that some applicants who might have been shortlisted in previous years were not shortlisted this year.

Shortlisting was performed by the Chemistry Admissions Coordinators and the College tutors in accordance with the stated admissions criteria (<https://chem.web.ox.ac.uk/admissions>), based on all available and relevant data. These data include all aspects of the applicant's UCAS form and any further relevant contextual data specific to the application. Each application was graded against agreed descriptors. All recommendations from college tutors to modify the shortlist were submitted, with reasoning, to the Chemistry Admissions Coordinators for scrutiny. The proposed list of all applicants not to be shortlisted was available to all colleges for a period of 5 days before the shortlist was finalised. A small number of applicants were brought back into contention at the request of a college.

To even out the chances of admission between colleges, 77 shortlisted applicants were reallocated to different colleges from their application college, before interviews. The colleges then sent letters and/or emails to all applicants, informing them of the outcome of the shortlisting exercise.

590 of the shortlisted applicants offered A-levels. 534 of those offered at least one of A-level Physics, Biology, and Further Mathematics (in addition to the required Chemistry and Mathematics A-levels).

2.2 Interview process

Admissions interviews took place remotely via Microsoft Teams. The University Admissions Office produced guidance for remote interviews and corresponding advice on their website for applicants.

All shortlisted Chemistry applicants were interviewed remotely over a two-week period in December. The timetable of interviews by subject was readily available on the Undergraduate Admissions website well in advance of the dates.

All applicants had at least two interviews at their first-assigned college. 260 applicants had an additional interview at a second college. Second college allocation was calculated in such a way as to even out the chances of admission between colleges. Interviews were academic in nature. Applicant performance was judged according to the stated admissions criteria. The interviews were graded against agreed descriptors.

2.3 Decisions

The Chemistry Department operates various procedures in a coordinated effort to ensure that the strongest applicants are admitted to the University irrespective of college choice. These include transparency of all application grades, interview grades, and UCAS forms amongst all tutors involved with admissions, and a final meeting of tutors from every college at which the strongest, unplaced applicants are collectively discussed and final offers, including open offers, are made.

Decisions are deemed to be official at the end of the final meeting. These decisions are then communicated to the respective college offices for dissemination to shortlisted applicants.

Standard offers are stated on the Chemistry course page of the University website (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/courses/course-listing/chemistry>) for those taking A-levels, the International Baccalaureate or Advanced Highers. College tutors seek advice from Admissions tutors or the Admissions Office in making other offers.