

2022 Admissions Round Feedback

Classical Archaeology & Ancient History

Please note this is subject admissions feedback from the 2022 selection round - there will be changes each year, and these pages are only retained to provide a general indication of process.

The CAAH admissions tutors would like to thank all applicants for the time and care they put into their applications. We are also grateful to referees for providing their supporting statements and for the encouragement and support which they give to applicants.

In Classical Archaeology and Ancient History, 152 (134 in 2021) candidates applied to Oxford and 142 (122 in 2021) were shortlisted for interview; 32 (27 in 2021) offers were made for 2023 entry. As in previous years, tutors across the University worked together to ensure that the best candidates from the entire cohort applying to Oxford were offered places, regardless of to which college they had applied (it follows that the direct application to place ratios for each college are not necessarily indicative of a candidate's chance of success). At Keble, ten out of the eleven first-choice applicants were interviewed, and some of these had at one further interview with tutors from another college. Five applicants from other colleges were also interviewed. Two offers were made for 2023, which is the College quota for this subject.

For Classical Archaeology & Ancient History, candidates will normally be summoned for interview. Grounds for not summoning include: less good results in official examinations (especially GCSE); less good results predicted for A level and/or other impending examinations; less good written work showing lack of intellectual coherence or power of analysis, or serious inaccuracy; lack of interest in ancient history or Classical archaeology in the personal statement.

In their assessment of individual applications, the tutors took account of contextual data concerning relative individual and school performance as well as some background characteristics related to place of residence. This information is available only for applicants from within the UK. An explanation of how the University uses contextual data may be found here:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/decisions/contextual-data>. This year tutors were also aware of the potential and uneven impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on both learning and assessment.

Final selection was made on the basis of several factors, including achieved and predicted grades, personal statement, school report, written work, contextual information, and performance at interview. All interviews took place remotely, online. All shortlisted first-choice Keble candidates were interviewed twice, in each case by a panel which combined ancient history and archaeology. In each interview candidates were asked to read and discuss a short ancient historical text (translated into English) which was sent electronically twenty minutes in advance. In a second segment, candidates were presented with one or more images for description and discussion. The interview sometimes concluded with general questions generated from the UCAS Personal Statement and / or from the pre-submitted written work.

In admitting students we hope to select those individuals who, from the evidence that we have available to us, are the most able and most likely to benefit from the course that we offer. Tutors were looking for evidence of enthusiasm / motivation for studying the course, analytical / reasoning ability, communication skills, aptitude for the subject, intellectual curiosity, and visual acuity / engagement with images / objects.

At Keble, Archaeology & Anthropology, Classical Archaeology & Ancient History, and Human Sciences form part of an integrated 'subject group' directed by two Tutorial Fellows, one in Anthropology and one in Archaeology. The subject group as a whole now admits up to 9 candidates per year.

The university website offers more information about the courses including the selection criteria: <http://www.classics.ox.ac.uk/classical-archaeology-and-ancient-history.html>