2021 Admissions Round Feedback

Engineering Science

Please note this is subject admissions feedback from the 2021 selection round - there will be changes each year, and these pages are only retained to provide a general indication of process.

The Engineering 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 proving their supporting statements and for the encouragement and support they give to applicants.

Engineering Science continues to be a very popular course at Oxford. There were 1103 applications to Engineering Science this year; 390 applicants were shortlisted for interview, and 199 offers were made, including five for deferred entry in 2023. In Keble College there were 75 first-choice applicants, of whom 27 were shortlisted for interview.

Our assessment of candidates is based on the following: (1) the UCAS form: grades to date, predicted grades, personal statement and the school reference; (2) scores in the Physics Aptitude Test – PAT (organized centrally by the Department of Engineering Science); and (3) the two interviews.

Those candidates not invited had less strong UCAS applications (typically less good public examination results and/or predictions) and/or scored less well in the PAT. Almost all interviewed candidates had all or mostly A*/8 and 9 grades at GCSE and predictions at A level of straight A grades and generally two A* grades in maths, further maths (where offered) and/or physics, or equivalent. International qualifications were assessed according to the published guidance: https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/for-international-students/international-qualifications.

For all applicants to Oxford for Engineering Science, the mean mark for the PAT was 41.4% and the standard deviation was 17%. For the short-listed candidates the mean mark for the PAT was 53.1% and the standard deviation was 14.7%. For candidates who were made an offer the mean mark for the PAT was 56.6% and the standard deviation was 13.9%.

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 can 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.

Each shortlisted applicant had two interviews: one at Keble and the second at another pre-assigned College, each of around 30 minutes in duration with two interviewers. These

interviews were conducted remotely and online, using Microsoft Teams and Miro whiteboard software. Both interviews largely consisted of one or more mathematics and physics problems designed to test for the criteria involved in selection (see https://www.eng.ox.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/applications/). Successful applicants were also able to demonstrate enthusiasm for and knowledge about engineering as a discipline.

The final outcome was that 12 applicants were offered places at Keble for 2022, including one applicant to another college. Three Keble applicants were made offers at other colleges. The tutors are keen to support the College's strategy for widening access to the University, and we were pleased to be able to make an offer under the Opportunity Oxford programme (details of which can be found here: https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/increasing-access/opportunity-oxford.)