



2020 Admissions Round Feedback

Geography

Please note this is subject admissions feedback from the 2020 selection round - there will be changes each year, and these pages are only retained to provide a general indication of process.

Thank You!

A wholehearted thank you to all those candidates who either applied for or were interviewed for Geography at Keble College in the 2020 round. We also greatly appreciate the efforts of school staff in preparing the reports on the UCAS forms and in supporting students to apply to Oxford, especially under such challenging circumstances this academic year. For the 2020 admissions round, we were able to make 6 offers for 2021 (one more than initially planned because of the strength of applications this year).

Keble Website

Keble Geography maintains a website which we hope is useful to those who are thinking of applying to the college to read Geography: <http://www.keble-oxford-geography.info>. This website was designed by past students of Keble and provides some background information on applying to the college. The website has an FAQ section and also a video of an admissions interview run by Richard Washington and Ali Rogers which follows a similar format to the admissions interviews we run each year. While the interviewee was an undergraduate geographer at the time (and not a real applicant), the interview is in all other respects as close to the real thing as we could make it. It was filmed as a once-off, single take, with no editing. We always welcome feedback on our website, especially if the feedback would improve the content and make it more useful for future applicants.

2020 Admissions Process

Shortlisting process

A total of 455 candidates applied to all colleges to read Geography at Oxford in the 2020 round. There were 447 in 2019. 79 places were available to fill this year with a ratio of applicants to offers of 5.8 to 1. We can only interview 3 candidates for every place. Accordingly, 237 interview places were available across all colleges. Shortlisting is done centrally by a committee of in the School of Geography and the Environment so as to achieve a list of three applicants for every place offered. The following criteria were applied for shortlisting in 2020:

- All Band A classified applicants (access criterion) are included in the shortlist.

- Contextualised GCSE performance
- All post-qualification candidates who have achieved A*AA or 39 points in IB .

Candidates without GCSE or contextualized GCSE scores (including some overseas applicants), or who have special circumstances (e.g. contextual flags) were considered separately by the Admissions Panel .

There was no pre-interview examination this year.

Reallocation

A centralised system of reallocation across colleges was applied, after each college had been given the chance to select twice as many candidates than places on offer. Keble was initially able to offer 5 places this year, and could therefore retain 10 shortlisted candidates for interview at Keble.

Candidates beyond the 10 who had applied to Keble and who had been shortlisted were then reallocated to other colleges for interview.

Keble Interviews

Candidates invited for interview at Keble were assessed on the basis of two independent 30 minute interviews with Geography fellows and tutors. Due to the exceptional circumstances created by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic all interviews took place online via the Microsoft Teams platform.

During the interviews, interviewers asked a range of questions designed to test the candidate's ability in problem solving, ability to follow and evaluate an argument and independent thinking. Interviewers also presented the candidates with graphs, pictures and diagrams, to evaluate the applicants' ability to interpret data. We do not test directly for geographical knowledge, but we expect candidates to be able to engage with geographical topics. The academic staff conducting the interviews in 2020 were Richard Washington, Beth Greenhough, Fiona Ferbrache, Ellen Dyer, Jasper Montana and Thomas Caton Harrison. The first three are Keble tutors and Thomas, Ellen and Jasper are researchers in the School of Geography and Environment.

The strongest candidates were able to respond in a thoughtful way to questions and ideas, creatively applying pre-existing knowledge to new problems. They responded precisely and clearly to graphs, maps, pictures and diagrams, seeking clarification from interviewers when necessary, and showing good attention to detail. Strong applicants also came across as engaged and enthused by the topics they were discussing, and demonstrated a broad awareness of, and engagement with topical issues. Above all, the better interviewees responded to what was asked of them rather than tried to inject prepared statements or facts or rely too heavily on previous knowledge. In general there are no strictly right and wrong answers to the questions we pose. We are much more interested in the ability of candidates to justify their reasons for the responses they give. Keble College Geography tutors do their best to be as fair, rigorous and consistent as possible in the identification of candidates with the potential and ability to flourish at the University. Post interviews the panel of 6 met for several hours following the interviews. Each candidate was discussed in detail. Discussion included the candidates' application form, exam grades and the interview itself.

We very much regret that we are unable to offer places to more candidates as so very many of them are deserving of a place. Thank you once again to all candidates for applying and to teaching staff for their very helpful contributions to the process.

Summary data below.

Total number of applicants for 2021 entry (excluding withdrawals)	455
Total number of applicants for 2022 entry	10
Gender of applicants Female: 292 Male: 163	
Not invited to interview	210
Number interviewed	245
Places offered for 2021	78
Open offers for 2021	6
Places offered for 2022	1
Ratio of applicants to offers (all applicants)	5.8