HUMAN SCIENCES ADMISSIONS SUMMARY REPORTS 2022-23

1.   ADMISSIONS STATISTICS

1.1   Number of applicants

There were 193 applicants. Of these 191 sat the Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) which is a compulsory part of the process.

1.2   Number of applicants per place

A total of 32 offers were made (including open offers), making a ratio of 6 applicants per place.

1.3   Breakdown of applicants by open applicants, deferred entry, gender and domicile

There were 43 open applications.

There were 190 applications for entry in 2023 and 3 applicants for entry in 2024.

There were 148 female applicants and 45 male applicants.

There were 117 home applicants, 15 EU applicants and 61 overseas applicants.

1.4   Number of applicants shortlisted

92 applicants were shortlisted for interview.

1.5   Number of applicants offered places

32 candidates were offered places (including 2 candidates who were made open offer places).

2.   ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

2.1   Shortlisting Procedures

2.1.1   Selection Criteria

The interview process and selection criteria for Human Sciences are set out on the Human Sciences website at https://www.ihs.ox.ac.uk/admissions

2.1.2   Procedure for Shortlisting

Shortlisting was performed in accordance with the stated admissions criteria available and relevant data in particular these data included an applicant's score from the TSA, all aspects of the candidate's UCAS form, including achieved qualifications and predicted qualifications , and any information specific to the applicant.

As contextualised GCSEs were not available this year, candidates were ranked on their TSA score. A threshold based on the number of places available was calculated and those above the threshold in the ranking and whose predicted or obtained A levels or equivalent grades met the requirements for the course (and who had satisfactory previous qualifications) were shortlisted. A number of candidates below the threshold who had exceptional circumstances were also short-listed, resulting in around 3 short-listed applicants per place.

A meeting of tutors from all colleges offering places for Human Sciences was held to discuss short-listing decisions in the light of all information available to ensure that short-listing decisions were applied consistently across all colleges. At this meeting short-listing decisions for candidates were agreed and these decisions were entered onto the web-based admissions database.

Each applicant had a first-assigned college, which was either the college to which they applied or, in the case of open applicants, a college randomly assigned by the Admissions Office in such a way as to even out the competition for places. In cases where a college was particularly over-subscribed, the college was invited to reallocate some of its candidates after short-listing. These candidates were then assigned to colleges which were under-subscribed. In 2022-23, nine candidates were reallocated to a different first-choice college.

2.1.3   TSA and GCSE

As contextualised GCSE scores were not available this year due to GCSEs having been awarded in 2021 on Teacher Assessed Grades, the pre-interview score for all candidates was based on their TSA score.

2.1.4   Statistics on short-listed candidates

The average number of GCSEs amongst short-listed candidates was 9.7 (compared with 9.6 in 2021-22 and 9.9 in 2020-21) and the average number of GCSEs at 9/8/A* amongst shortlisted candidates was 8.6 (which was the same as in 2021-2 and compared with 8.4 in 2020-21). Amongst all candidates, the average number of GCSEs was 9.5 (compared with 9.6 in both 2021-2 and 2020-21) and the average number of GCSEs at 9/8/A* was 8.0. (compared with 7.8 in 2021-2 and 7.4 in 2020-21).

Of the 92 short-listed candidates, 57 were taking (or had taken) A-levels (compared with 76 out of 108 in 2021-2) and of these 48 or 84.2% were taking Biology (compared to 70 or 92.1% in 2021-2 and 60 or 84.5% in 2020-21).

2.2   Interview Process

2.2.1   Description of Interview Process

All short-listed candidates were interviewed in early December. The interview dates by subject are readily available on the Admissions Office webpage in advance.

All interviews took place remotely on Microsoft Teams.

2.2.2   Number of Interviews at 1st Colleges

There were 91 first college interviews.

2.2.3   Number of 2nd College interview including second college allocation process

There were 91 interviews at 2nd colleges. Each short-listed candidate was randomly assigned a second college by an algorithm so as to equalise across colleges the interview load per place ratio.

2.2.4   Descriptors of Interview Scoring used

Interviews are academic in nature. An applicant's performance was judged according to the admissions criteria. The interviews were graded on a scale of 1-20 against agreed descriptors as follows:

20	Truly exceptional	(A++)	78+
	A candidate such as only rarely encountered		
19	Outstanding	(A+)	72-77
	Unambiguously first class		
17-18	Excellent	(A)	68-72
	Clear suggestions of first class potential: highly competent in response to tests; highly articulate; relevant knowledge going beyond what one might expect; thoughtful and insightful in discussion, taking the conversation further than the norm		
14-16	Very good	(AB)	63-67
	Clearly capable of gaining a 2.1 degree: competent in response to tests; articulate; sound relevant knowledge; enthusiastic about Human Sciences		
12-13	Competent	(B)	58-62
	Competent overall, but some suggestion of weakness: some inaccuracies or difficulty in response to tests or in discussion of relevant issues; gaps in relevant knowledge; some lack of enthusiasm for the subject		
10-11	Borderline acceptance	(BC)	54-57
	Signs of potential, but also clear signs of weakness: inaccuracies or difficulty in response to tests or in discussion of relevant issues; not as articulate as tutorial discussion generally requires; gaps in relevant knowledge; lack of enthusiasm for the subject		
8-9	Weak	(C)	48-53
	Too weak to consider for a place: failures in the tests; failure to sustain a discussion; worrying gaps in relevant knowledge; lack of enthusiasm for the subject		
4-7	Very weak		21-47
	As above, but to a greater degree		
0-3	Exceptionally weak		0-20
	Failure to navigate the tests and sustain a discussion; unacceptable gaps in basic knowledge; unenthusiastic		

2.2.5   Procedure for Final Decision Making including Final Admissions Meeting

The Institute operates various procedures in a co-ordinated effort to ensure that the strongest applicants are offered places irrespective of college choice. These include transparency of all test results, interview grades and UCAS forms amongst all tutors involved in admissions, and a meeting

of tutors at which places awarded are collectively agreed. At this meeting the strongest unplaced candidates were discussed and 7 were selected for a panel interview.

A panel comprising the admissions co-ordinator and two other college lead interviewers for Human Sciences, interviewed these candidates and two candidates were made open offers.

3.   Pre-Interview Admissions Test: The Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) Test

3.1   When the test results are available

The TSA results were made available to candidates on 11 January 2023 by Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing.

3.2   How the test results can be accessed

Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing issue a PDF Statement of Results to each candidate via its Results Online System which can be accessed via the link on its website at
https://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/thinking-skills-assessment/tsa-oxford/scoring-and-results/

3.3   The average performance of Candidates

The average TSA sore in 2022 was:
61.0 amongst all applicants (compared to 64.0 in 2021 and 68.2 in 2020)
65.9 amongst shortlisted applicants (compared to 68.6 in 2021 and 73.1 in 2020)
68.9 amongst successful applicants (compared to 70.2 in 2021 and 73.9 in 2020)

For the problem solving questions, the average score was:
57.0 amongst all applicants (compared to 63.6 in 2021 and 67.7 in 2020)
62.3 amongst shortlisted applicants (compared to 67.9 in 2021 and 72.5 in 2020)
65.0 amongst successful applicants (compared to 67.9 in 2021 and 73.7 in 2020)

For the critical thinking questions, the average score was:
65.1 amongst all applicants (compared to 64.7 in 2021 and 69.5 in 2020)
70.3 amongst short-listed applicants (compared to 70.0 in 2021 and 75.1 in 2020)
73.7 amongst short-listed applicants (compared to 73.5 in 2021 and 75.4 in 2020)

Distribution of TSA Scores