

Keble Access and Admissions 2022

This is our fourth annual report to Fellows, college staff, students and alumni on our access and outreach activity in academic year 2020-21, as well as undergraduate admissions in the last round, December 2021.

Because of the ongoing pandemic, our schools outreach work was mainly online. But this did enable us to develop new digital outreach activities that can be sustained even when in-person visits resume.

Highlights:

- A new partnership was launched between Keble, the Access Project and Waverley School, Birmingham
- The Ambassador Platform enable us to communicate online with prospective applicants, leading to 20 offers across the University
- Over 800 students attended our virtual Open Days
- Over 260 students attended virtual school sessions
- We added a YouTube Access channel
- 76% of the 2021 UK undergraduate intake attended state schools
- 75% of offers to UK undergraduates were to students from state schools

Access and Outreach activities in 2020-21

Oxford-Cambridge Webinars

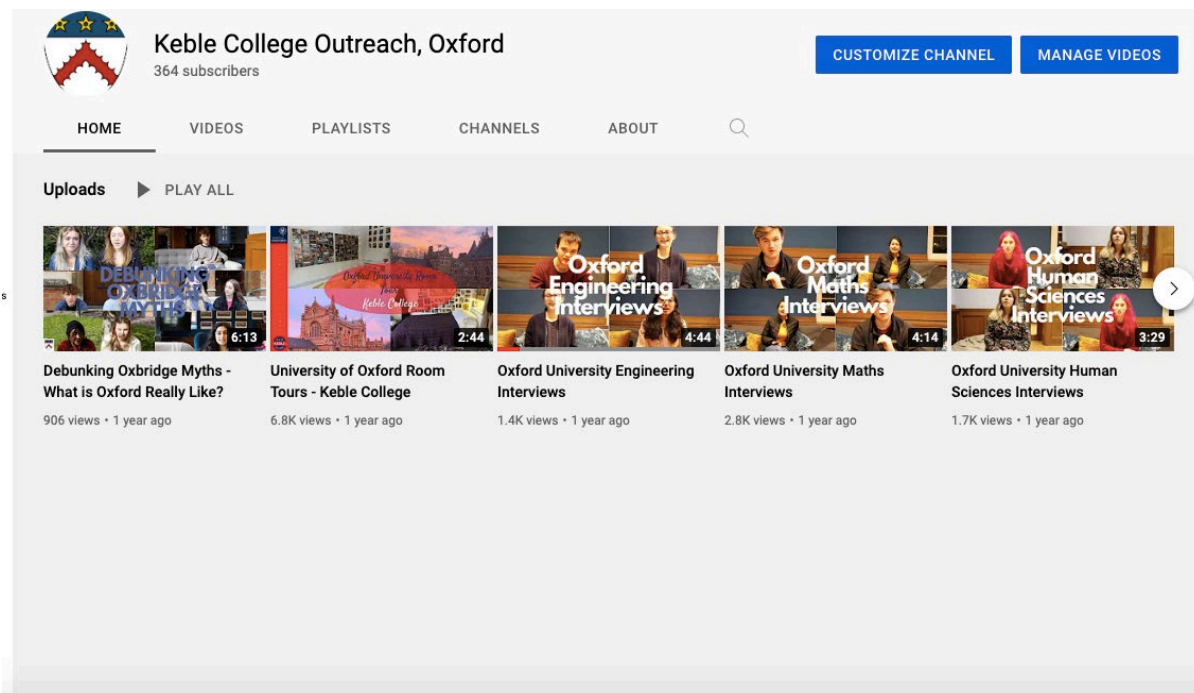
With our colleagues at Newnham College, Cambridge, we ran a new series of webinars for Key Stage 4 students at state schools in Birmingham, and their teachers. Outreach practitioners and students from both universities gave a series of four live sessions aimed at Year 10 students (although Year 11 students are also welcome to attend):

Introduction to University
Post 16 Subject Choices
Student Life (featuring current students)
Teacher and Advisor Event (Supporting Applicants)

The webinars, which were held in February, were extremely well attended, attracted approximately 700 students and teachers total.

Digital Outreach

Our YouTube channel was enhanced with an additional (mostly subject-specific) nine videos produced by Keble at Large, to be added to the eight produced in the beginning of lockdown (new videos: Engineering, Maths, Human Sciences, CAAH , English, MML, Oxbridge Myths, Accommodation).



Virtual Open Days

There were three Virtual Open Days on 30th June and 1st July (580 unique visitors) and 18th September (300 unique visitors). We used the online platform Slido, where Keble had its own handle. Twenty-two students were trained as ambassadors to answer questions from prospective applicants. There was also a Q&A page for subject tutors.

Virtual Offer Holder Events

Because our offer-holders were not able to see Keble in person during their admissions interviews, we held a virtual event for them in March. It was a chance for them to ask questions and find out a bit more life in College in preparation for their arrival in September. This year, all our offer-holders met the conditions of their offers.

Our Outreach and Career Development Fellow, Dr Foteini Dimirouli, also took part in a special welcome day for the University's Opportunity Oxford offer-holders in February.

Virtual School Sessions

There were no in-person school visits because of the pandemic, but our access and outreach team were able to run virtual sessions with Years 9-12 at the following schools:

Bishop Vesey's Grammar
 Archbishop Ilsley
 Lordswood Girls' School and Sixth Form Centre
 Holly Lodge High School
 Eton College
 George Salter
 Coundon Court
 Nishkam High School
 Rockwood Academy
 Bournville School
 Alderbrook School
 Jewellery Quarter Academy
 Arena Academy

We were able to contact over 260 students through these sessions.

Keble at Large (KaL)

Keble at Large (KaL) is a student-led Outreach society set up to bust myths about Oxford, encourage people from underrepresented backgrounds to apply, and offer these students practical advice for admissions. In a normal year, this would involve our student volunteers facilitating school tours and workshops for state school students, usually in our link region of Birmingham and the West Midlands, but this academic year has been a very different one. Due to the ongoing pandemic and government restrictions, all of the work KaL has done has been online. Via our Instagram (which has over 1,500 followers), students have done takeovers, giving insight into what life is like on their degree and answering any questions that prospective applicants may have. We have also continued with our "Humans of Keble" posts each week, with current students sharing the story of their journey to Keble, as well as creating and posting weekly infographics with advice for the admissions process and dispelling common misconceptions. This year we have also set up a KaL Blog with comprehensive subject guides written by student volunteers.

There were two big events online hosted with KAL ambassadors:

Year 9-10 University Life event for non-selective school from Sandwell and Coventry (36 attendees) on March 8th

Year 12 Admissions Information event for non-selective schools in Birmingham (58 attendees) on May 19th

Go to the [Keble at Large \(KAL\) Instagram page](#)

The Ambassador Platform







The Ambassador Platform is an online facility for prospective applicants to put questions to trained student ambassadors. The platform is moderated by members of the access and outreach team. Applicants can either 'chat' with individual students or take part in live Q & A events. In calendar year 2021 158 students signed up for the Platform.

Ask us about what life at Keble College is really like

Powered by  The Ambassador Platform

Do you want to speak to someone about their experiences at Keble College? Start a chat with our friendly ambassadors now!

Chat to our students

<p>Student  First year</p>  <p>Zach Stoke on Trent</p> <p>BA Geography</p> <p>Hi! I'm Zach a first year geographer at Keble College, Oxford. Having come from a state school and living in an area with low progression to higher education I had a LOT of worries about Keble and university. I'm</p>	<p>Student  Second year</p>  <p>Nia Cardiff</p> <p>BA Biomedical Sciences</p> <p>Hi I'm Nia and I'm a third year at Keble studying biomed! I attended a Welsh medium comprehensive school in South Wales; although the idea of applying to Oxford was daunting at the time - it was the best</p>	<p>Student  First year</p>  <p>Molly Scarborough, North Yorkshire</p> <p>BA English</p> <p>Hi! I'm Molly and I'm studying English Language and Literature at Keble. I came from a non-selective state school in the North of England and would love to help with any questions you have!</p>
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In the admissions round 2021/2022, for admission 2022/2023 50% of those who signed up to the platform then submitted an application to Oxford, 25 to Keble and 56 to other colleges. Twenty of these applicants were made offers, 10 at Keble and 10 at other colleges. 17 of these were from UK state schools and two were from our linked region, Birmingham. 13 were applicants in bands A and B, i.e. from the most under-represented or economically less advantaged areas.

The Access Project – Update

In 2021 we launched a new partnership with the education charity The Access Project and Waverley School in Birmingham, following on from our highly successful programme with Colmers school in Rednal, which began three years ago. The initiative is grounded in the local community, and is part of Keble’s wide-reaching efforts to help students from the West Midlands make successful applications and transitions to leading Universities. The partnership is based on an intensive programme of support for students starting in Year 10. The Access Project offers bright young students from disadvantaged backgrounds free weekly tuition in the subjects they need most help with, along with expert guidance through the university application process. An ever-growing number of Keble students and alumni are participating as volunteer tutors, while The Access Project’s specialised Oxbridge programme organises visits and tailored support for students in collaboration with Keble.



The virtual launch (see above) was attended by West Midlands Mayor Andy Street (PPE 1982, Honorary Fellow), along with representatives from the school, TAP and College. Current Keble student and JCR President Japji Gaba, who also attended the launch, told Waverley School pupils: “Someone like myself from an ethnic-minority, first-generation university student, and working-class background is testament to the fact that if you believe in yourself and have confidence...if you put in the work, there’s no reason you can’t do it...once you get into Oxford, you make leaps and bounds.”

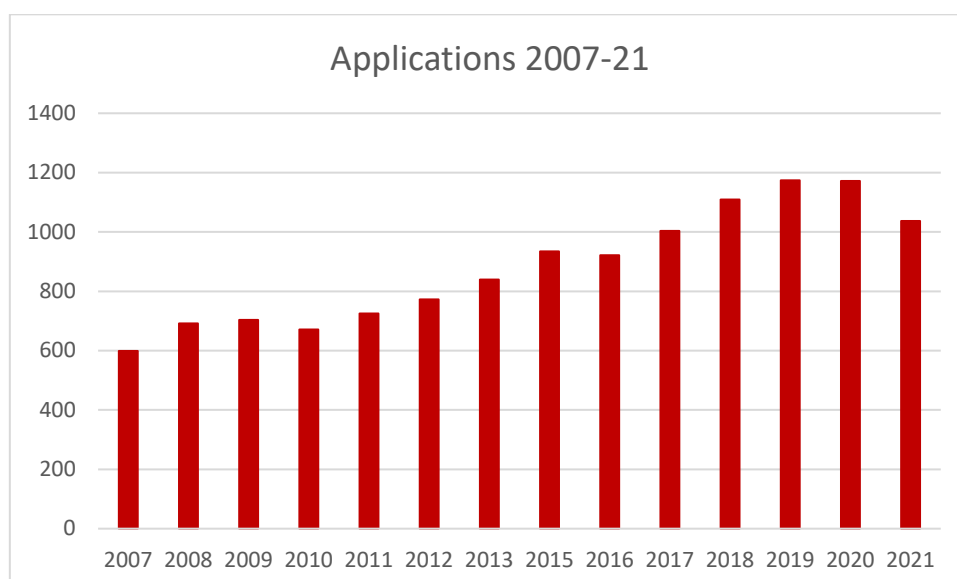
In addition, twenty people from our Alumni and student pool signed up to be volunteer tutors for The Access Project.

We co-hosted three Oxbridge virtual trips for TAP students with Cambridge St Catharine’s and Newnham, and Oxford Magdalen, on 7th January, 23rd February, March 13th (approx. 100 students in total participated, all year 12)

Applications

Our outreach and access activities are designed to enable students to make good, informed decisions about their future and to encourage them to aim high. By providing support and guidance on the admissions process, we also try to enable students to make the best applications they can. If that leads to an offer at Keble we are understandably pleased, but we also encourage students to apply to whatever course, college, or University they think suits them best. Keble is only one college at Oxford, and we work in concert with our colleagues across the University to achieve our common goals.

In the December 2021 admissions round there were 1037 individual applications, which was an unusual drop from previous years. The whole University also had a drop in admissions numbers, fuelled by lower numbers from the EU and overseas.



We are not able to interview all applicants and this year only around 43 per cent were shortlisted (called for interview), based on criteria that are shared in common across the University. This means

that over 600 applicants were disappointed at this early stage, the vast majority of whom will have achieved good grades at school and are predicted to do well in their end-of-school examinations. Shortlisting now takes more account of the individual circumstances of each student. In line with the University's [Access and Participation Plan](#), more detailed information is available on applicants and their schools, enabling tutors to make better judgements about their relative ability and potential. This year, for example, we had access to data on free school meal eligibility, an individual-level measure. More information on how we use contextual data can be found [here](#) on the University's website.

Some subjects are consistently more popular than others and they attract high numbers of applicants relative to the number of places available. For Keble, 45% of all applications were in just 5 subjects (Computer Science, Economics & Management, Law, Mathematics, and Physics). There is some reallocation of applicant between colleges before interviews to ensure as far as possible, that the ratio of candidates to places is about the same across all the colleges. It's worth remembering that about one third of undergraduates in Oxford attend a college to which they did not actually apply.

Admissions

The University (and therefore by extension the colleges) have agreed an [Access and Participation Plan](#) with the Office for Students.

Part of this plan ('participation') is about improving the performance of key groups while on course, notably by reducing or eliminating gaps in attainment. Part concerns access, how Oxford is going to address its well-known inequalities in admissions. A key element of this plan is the setting of new and more demanding targets for admitting students from areas of lower participation in higher education (POLAR4) and/or socio-economic disadvantage (ACORN), as well as from under-represented groups. The three main targets are:

- Target 1: to reduce the gap in participation rates for disadvantaged students (ACORN) to 3:1 by 2024-25.
- Target 2: to reduce the gap in participation rates for under-represented students (POLAR4) to 8:1 by 2024-25.
- Target 3: to eliminate the gap in offer rates for Asian applicants by 2021-22.

The University publishes an annual [Admissions Statistical Report](#) which is accessible from its website. This report contains statistics about socio-economic disadvantage, gender and ethnicity, and school type for each subject and college. These figures are retrospective and they concern 'accepts', i.e. students who take up their places at the start of the year, rather than 'offers', i.e. students to whom offers have been made. The figures are presented as three-year rolling averages, which evens out some of the normal annual variation.

The following sections report on Keble's performance on some of the key access measures, with a focus on the most recent admissions round (which is not included in the University's report).

Socio-economic disadvantage

The access targets agreed across the University are expressed as ratios between the most and least advantaged or represented quintiles of POLAR and ACORN classifications. The lower the ratio, the closer the College or University is to the target. On both counts our initial progress is good and in line with the targets set, although more so for the POLAR measure than for ACORN. With fairly small numbers, we would expect some annual variation rather than a consistent trend.

Year	ACORN Target	Keble offers	Oxford offers
2020	4.7:1	2.5:1	2.9:1
2021	4.3:1	2.9:1	2.7:1
2022	3.7:1	3.7:1	2.6:1
2023	3.3:1		
2024	3.0:1		

Year	POLAR target	Keble offers	Oxford offers
2020	14.5:1	7.9:1	7.6:1
2021	13.1:1	7.5:1	6.3:1
2022	10.8:1	5.8:1	6.0:1
2023	9.4:1		
2024	8.1:1		

Five offers were made under the University's Opportunity Oxford scheme, which was in fact below the target we set ourselves. Ten offers were made to applicants with an Opportunity Oxford flag and 18 to applicants flagged as Opportunity Oxford eligible. Six offers were made to applicants with Free School meals and one with a care flag.

School type

None of the University's access targets refer to the type of school applicants attend, i.e. state or independent. But there is, understandably, intense public scrutiny in this measure as a proxy for inequality. Last year, 76% of our final UK admissions were to applicants from state schools. This was notably higher than in the preceding five years, during which Keble was generally below the University average on this particular count.

Of offers made to applicants from the UK in the most recent round, 75 per cent were to students from state schools. This was above the figure for the whole University (70%). The admissions data we get do not enable us to fully distinguish between selective and non-selective state schools.

Other data

In the 2020 admission round: 50% of offers were to female applicants; 12% were to applicants with a disability flag; 77% were to Home (UK) students. Ten offers were made to applicants from the EU, up from just one in the previous round; applications from this part of the world were lower than in the recent past.

Detailed figures by ethnicity are published in the University's annual report on admissions data. In the most recent completed round for which data are available (December 2020 interviews), 32% of applications and 27% of accepts were classified as BME. The number of applications from BME students has risen considerably, from 112 in 2010 to 273 in 2021. The number of accepts has roughly doubled, from an average of 15 a year in 2010-14 to 29 a year in 2019-21.

Keble has a relatively high proportion of undergraduates who self-identify as BME: 26.8% in 2021, compared with 22.4% for the University overall. The designation 'BME' masks considerable diversity. Information on the diversity of our student population can be found in a report on our website [here](#).