

Law

2021 Admissions Round Feedback

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.

This year the University received 2046 applications for approximately 230 places to read Law or Law with Law Studies in Europe.

As part of the university-wide Common Framework for Admissions, introduced a few years ago, the Law Faculty shortlists candidates (college-blind) in consultation with a Faculty Selection Committee (FSC) consisting of representatives from 15 Colleges. Once college blinding is removed, Colleges also have the opportunity to add candidates who were not selected by the FSC to their shortlists. Some candidates are shortlisted to their college of application, and some are reallocated to other colleges for interview. FSC collectively shortlisted approximately 2.5 applicants per place available on the Law course. As a result of this process, each college can interview between 2.5 and 3 applicants per available place. The point of this system is to minimise the extent to which applicants may be prejudiced by their choice of college and to make sure, as far as possible, that all those applicants who are strong enough to merit an interview are in fact interviewed. All colleges, Keble included, will also have interviewed some candidates who did not choose, or were not initially allocated to them. This had no influence on our final decision. At the interview stage, around 600 candidates were considered, with 24 under consideration at Keble for 8 places.

The decisions about which candidates to shortlist for interview were based on the following: (1) the UCAS form: grades to date, predicted grades (where applicable), personal statement and the helpful references (the law tutors gratefully acknowledge the time that referees spend writing references); (2) the LNAT (a written test taken by candidates before the interview stage which comprises both essay and multiple choice components); and (3) contextual information on applications designed to support the aims of Oxford's Access and Participation Plan. Information on this can be found here:

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/decisions/contextual-data>

Our final assessment of the candidates interviewed was based on all of the following: (1) the UCAS form; (2) the LNAT; and (3) two twenty-minute interviews which this year were conducted online because of the restrictions to deal with the pandemic. The interviews largely consisted of legal scenarios designed to test for the criteria involved in selection (details of which are published on the web at

<https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/undergraduate-selection-criteria>).

They assumed no prior knowledge of law whatsoever; the problems were specifically chosen for the unusual nature of the scenarios and any candidates who had studied some law were specifically told not to speculate on what the law might be.

In terms of the interviews, the best candidates were able to engage in a sophisticated way with the problems discussed and give reasons for their answers, as well as demonstrating the flexibility of thought necessary to acknowledge when a previously adopted position might need to be abandoned, or adapted. Weaker candidates at interview tended to adopt a position without fully articulating their reasons for doing so, or without being able convincingly to reject potential counterarguments.

The college made eight offers for 2021, including one for Law with Law Studies in Europe.

The focus of the admissions process is on academic merit. Extra-curricular activities play little to no part in the decisions made. We are looking for exceptionally bright and motivated students who are intellectually curious and who will thrive in the demands placed upon them by the study of law at Keble.