

2024-25 Admissions Round Feedback

Modern Languages and Joint Schools

Please note this is subject admissions feedback from the 2024-25 selection round—there will be changes each year, and these pages are only retained to provide a general indication of process.

The College made 10 offers for entry in October 2025, in Modern Languages and joint schools with Modern Languages (this year English and Linguistics only). One applicant for the joint school was made an offer for History. There were no offers for deferred entry, though such applications for deferred entry are welcome and are considered sympathetically. They can be especially beneficial for modern linguists if candidates aim to spend the intervening time using their language (or languages) in appropriate countries.

The College considered a total of 19 first-choice applications in Modern Languages and joint schools with Modern Languages, including 5 re-allocated to Keble from oversubscribed colleges. All of the first-choice applicants were invited to interview.

Candidates offered various combinations of French, Italian, Spanish, Linguistics, English, and History, as well as sole French and sole Spanish. The College has no quotas for specific languages or combinations, aiming to take those candidates who are best qualified and show most potential. All first-choice candidates who were invited to interview received a letter explaining that they should give thought to any other combinations they might be willing to be considered for and were asked on arrival to indicate these (if any) on a form. It is not unusual to make a candidate for an offer other than that for which they had applied (e.g. French sole as opposed to French and English).

Candidates received at least two interviews at Keble. Except for candidates applying for Italian ab-initio, candidates, in language interviews, were asked questions in the target language on subjects related to the personal statement in the UCAS form. Candidates were presented with a very short literary passage (variously verse or prose) with a few minutes to read through it in silence (in French and Spanish in the case of French and Spanish candidates; in English in the case of Italian candidates). They were then asked questions designed to test their comprehension and their observation of detail and form. Candidates for Linguistics were given exercises testing their potential for understanding linguistic concepts. A key aim of all interviews was to assess the degree of engagement, observation, rigour and precision with which candidates approached matters of language usage. This assessment was important in deciding which candidates should be offered places, but was considered alongside the results of the written tests and the information available on the UCAS forms.

10 offers were made: 3 to candidates from overseas, 5 to candidates from state schools, 2 to candidates from independent schools. Offers were made in the joint schools with English (1), and Linguistics (3), as well as sole- and two-language options within the main school of Modern Languages.

Candidates are reminded that there is no absolute standard for entry. Admission is competitive and often entails good and promising candidates not securing offers owing to the strength of the competition. Care was taken to make fine distinctions between candidates on the basis of all the information that the admissions process offers the College. The field of applicants this year was very good and it was not possible to offer places to all the candidates who impressed. Every effort was made to secure interviews at other colleges for very good candidates to whom it was not possible to offer a place at Keble.