

GENERIC FEEDBACK ON UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS

INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the admissions process in the Faculty of Theology and Religion and contains generic statistical information from the 2019 UCAS cycle. This information is relevant to three BA courses: Theology and Religion (T&R); Philosophy and Theology (P&T); and Religion and Oriental Studies (ROS). In some cases, statistics are withheld to protect individuals within a very small cohort.

Individuals may request particular feedback on their own performance from the colleges to which they applied or where they were interviewed. It is hoped that the data supplied in this document will help candidates and referees to understand an individual performance in the context of a very competitive field of applications and a complex process.

Requests for clarification and further information should be directed to colleges in the first instance but the Faculty of Theology and Religion may be contacted via dus@theology.ox.ac.uk. The Faculty is unable to comment on individual applications.

NUMBERS OF CANDIDATES AND RATES OF PROGRESSION

Table 1: Number of candidates at application, shortlisting and offer stages

	APPLICATION	SHORTLISTING	OFFER
T&R	118	77	49
P&T	142	55	29
ROS	9	4	2
All Courses	269	136	80

NOTES:

Offer figures include 8 Open Offers in Theology and Religion and 2 Open Offers in Philosophy and Theology.

6 applicants for P&T were offered a place for T&R; are counted for T&R throughout, although 5 of these 6 were shortlisted for P&T. (Initially, there were 112 applicants for T&R and 148 for P&T.)

THEOLOGY AND RELIGION

65.3% of applicants were invited to interview.

41.5% of applicants were offered a place (= 63.6% of those invited to interview).

PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

38.7% of applicants were invited to interview.

20.4% of applicants were offered a place (= 52.7% of those invited to interview).

RELIGION AND ORIENTAL STUDIES

44.4% of applicants were invited to interview.

22.2% of applicants were offered a place (= 50% of those invited to interview).

ALL COURSES

50.6% of applicants were invited to interview.

29.7% of applicants were offered a place (= 58.8% of those invited to interview).

BREAKDOWN OF APPLICANTS BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Table 2: Number of applicants with selected characteristics and also that number of applicants as a percentage of the cohort

	Whole cohort size	Male		Female		International		For deferred entry (2021)	
T&R	118	48	40.7%	70	59.3%	18	15.3%	4	3.4%
P&T	142	62	43.7%	80	56.3%	16	11.3%	4	2.8%
ROS	9	4	44.4%	5	55.6%	5	55.6%	0	0.0%
All Courses	269	114	42.4%	155	57.6%	39	14.5%	8	3.0%

SHORTLISTING PROCEDURE

All applications are assessed individually and in full by tutors, both in the college that has received the application and on an intercollegiate Faculty Admissions Committee. Final shortlisting decisions rest with college tutors but tutors in all colleges commit to working together to achieve a fair outcome and the work of the Faculty committee helps to ensure parity of standards across colleges. The Faculty does not apply specific weighting measures to the various components of an application but the whole of each application is assessed on its relative merit in relation to the following published criteria.

For any BA degree in the Faculty of Theology and Religion, candidates must:

- submit a strong UCAS form, including a supportive reference, excellent past examination results, and[/or] the predicted 3 'A' grades at A-level or equivalent.
- submit written work which demonstrates:
 - 1) the ability to think clearly and to reason coherently,
 - 2) evidence of independence of thought,
 - 3) the ability to structure work and arguments in a logical way,
 - 4) the ability to write clearly (and grammatically), with clear expression of thought.

In addition for applications to Philosophy and Theology, tutors will take into account each candidate's performance in the Philosophy written test.

In addition for applications to Religion and Oriental Studies specialising in Islam/Arabic or Judaism/Hebrew, tutors will take into account a candidate's performance in the Oriental Studies Language Aptitude Test (OLAT).

The Faculty's use of contextual data throughout the admissions process accords with University's published statement, summarised at <https://ox.ac.uk/context>.

After shortlisting but before candidates are summoned to interview, a number of candidates are reallocated to a different college. This helps to ensure that no candidate is unfairly disadvantaged, for example by application to a particularly oversubscribed college. The Faculty considers reallocation (where implemented) to be in an applicant's best interests and effective in ensuring parity of standards and in the treatment of candidates across colleges.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Each shortlisted candidate was interviewed by the college which called them to interview. The precise scheduling and format of interviews may vary between colleges but the following is expected:

- Theology and Religion candidates received at least one interview at this college.
- Philosophy candidates will receive at least one Theology/Religion interview and at least one Philosophy interview at this college.
- Religion and Oriental Studies candidates receive at least one Theology /Religion interview at this college, alongside an interview at the Faculty of Oriental Studies.

Every candidate was also given at least one interview at a second college. Second colleges are allocated by computer on a nearly random basis and then adjusted to ensure, e.g. that non-mature applicants are not allocated to mature-only colleges and that no candidate has the same first and second college.

At interview, Theology and Religion tutors assess candidates according to the following published criteria:

- an ability to think clearly, including understanding complex concepts, forming sound arguments, and listening and responding to counterarguments.
- an openness to learning.
- an ability at close textual reading and interpretation.
- evidence of enthusiasm and/or motivation, including dedication and diligence in work, and evidence of independent thought and reading.
- an ability to develop ideas presented in their submitted written work.
- oral communications skills.

DECISION MAKING

Based on all the information available, with reference to the selection criteria detailed above and in accordance with their academic judgement, tutors at each college identify those candidates they believe to be most deserving of an offer/place.

All college tutors meet in a final faculty meeting to declare their decisions. Where a candidate does not receive an offer from the college that called him/her to interview, that candidate becomes available to his/her second college and may receive an offer from that college.

College tutors collectively scrutinise the decisions being made and review data on all shortlisted applicants to ensure fair treatment and to avoid mistakes or oversights. Tutors also consult and collaborate to identify deserving candidates to receive “open” offers, which could be realised as places at a number of different colleges.

TEST AND WRITTEN WORK STATISTICS
Table 3: Philosophy Test Statistics in 2019-20 at each principal stage of the admissions process – application, shortlisting and offer. (Marks are out of 100.)

	Application	Shortlisting	Offer
Range of marks	30 – 75	55-75	55-75
Mean Average	60.75	64.6	64.7
Mode	64	64	64
Median	62	65	64
Standard deviation	6.3	3.4	3.9

CAAT does not automatically release Philosophy Test results but individuals may request their own results from the college to which they applied or where they were interviewed.

Table 4: Written Work Statistics for T&R and P&T in 2019-20 at each principal stage of the admissions process – application, shortlisting and offer. (Marks are out of 100.)

	T&R				P&T		
	App	Short	Offer		App	Short	Offer
Range of marks	54-74	58-74	59-73		48 – 74	54-74	54-74
Mean Average	64.6	65.6	66.6		63.0	64.9	65.5
Mode	64	64	68		63	65	67
Median	64	65	67		63	65	66
Standard deviation	4.3	4.1	3.8		4.8	4.2	4.3

Table 5: GCSE Statistics for T&R and P&T for 2019-20 at each principal stage of the admissions process – application, shortlisting and offer.

	T&R				P&T		
	App	Short	Offer		App	Short	Offer
Number of GCSEs							
Range	6-14	8-14	8-14		6-12	6-12	6-11
Mean Average	10.0	10.2	10.4		10.0	10.1	9.8
Mode	10	10	10		10	11	10
Median	10	10	10		10	10	10
Standard deviation	1.2	1.1	1.1		1.0	1.1	1.2
Number of 8/9/A* grades							
Range	0-12	1-12	2-12		0-12	0-11	0-11
Mean Average	6.6	7.9	8.4		6.6	8.1	7.9
Mode	10	10	10		10	10	10
Median	7	9	9		10	9	10
Standard deviation	3.0	2.6	2.4		3.2	2.6	2.6

These figures are provided only for that portion of the cohort applying with more than 5 GCSEs, i.e. this is the principal pre-16 qualification.