Across the University as a whole this year there were 938 applicants for English. The estimated competition for places was 3.7 candidates per place. We are very careful in assessing candidates, with two tutors reading the written work and the UCAS form, and we take account of all available contextual information. Candidates sit the ELAT which is marked by independent markers, and performance in this is included in our overall assessment. On the basis of all this information candidates are graded and divided into ten bands. Candidates who come in the bottom four bands are unlikely to be called for interview, as we consider that an interview is unlikely to compensate for weaknesses elsewhere in their application. Competition is fierce, nearly all candidates being predicted As or A*s in their A2 examinations (or equivalent qualifications), so an excellent academic record does not guarantee an interview.

The ELAT is a ninety-minute test requiring an essay which responds to passages of literary material. Candidates may access their test results from the Admissions Testing Service website: http://www.admissionstestingservice.org/for-test-takers/elat/scoring-and-results/. An explanation of the scoring and results can also be found on the ATS website.

546 applicants were shortlisted for interview. Candidates are invited for interview if their application shows evidence of: a good or promising academic record, a strong reference, written work and an ELAT paper of a good standard. In selecting candidates for a place to study English we are looking for evidence of such qualities as: independent and critical interest in literature; facility in written and verbal analysis and argument; attentiveness to creative use of language. A full list of the selection criteria for English are published on the web at http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/courses/selection-criteria.

The number of applicants to particular colleges varies from year to year, so a number of shortlisted candidates were reallocated from the oversubscribed colleges of that year to the undersubscribed colleges. About 11% of applicants made open applications, and were similarly allocated to undersubscribed colleges. After first college interviews, around 200 additional interviews were arranged in a second and sometimes a third college, to give candidates the best chance of being placed. We also allocated 12 Open Offers (at a college to be determined after examination results are released).

At Mansfield we saw all our first choice interviewees for an introductory meeting, and gave each candidate two interviews of about thirty minutes each. In the interviews we discussed candidates’ written work, general reading and a piece of unseen poetry. As well as our first choice candidates, we interviewed several candidates who were first choice applicants to other colleges, and several of our candidates were interviewed at other colleges. Mansfield offered 11 places for English.

Across the University, 252 offers were made for English (including open offers).