Physics Admissions Feedback 2018-19

Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applications</th>
<th>1401</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shortlisted</td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019 entry</td>
<td>198$^1$ [including 13 open offers]</td>
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<td>2020 entry</td>
<td>3$^1$</td>
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Mansfield made seven offers for 2019 entry.

Shortlisting

Candidates were shortlisted using their UCAS applications and their scores on the Physics Aptitude Test. 466 applicants were shortlisted, which was approximately 2.6 candidates per place (2.3 candidates per offer made).

Physics Aptitude Test

All candidates were required to sit the Physics Aptitude Test on 31 October 2018. The Physics Aptitude Test is a single two-hour paper combining maths and physics questions. The test is set to a defined syllabus and the content is checked by school teachers to ensure that it is set at an appropriate level. More information about the test can be found here.

The mean PAT score for all applicants (excluding those who did not sit the test) was 52.3. For shortlisted applicants the mean was 69.3, and 74.6 for those who went on to receive an offer. The distribution of marks was as follows:

Note: graph excludes candidates who did not sit the PAT (n=32).

$^1$ Includes five Physics & Philosophy applicants who were made an offer for Physics only.
UCAS Application
Tutors assessed the motivation and ability of each candidate on the basis of their qualifications and predicted grades, personal statement and reference. Each candidate’s individual circumstances were taken into account when assessing their application.

The PAT scores, used in conjunction with the UCAS applications, were used to help shortlist candidates. Candidates who achieved higher scores in the PAT were more likely to be shortlisted for interview, and those with lower scores were less likely to be shortlisted unless mitigating circumstances or contextual information suggested that their scores might not be an accurate reflection of their potential.

A number of candidates were reallocated to a different college at this point, to ensure that the ratio of shortlisted applicants per place was approximately the same at each college.

Interview
All shortlisted candidates were asked to come to Oxford to attend an interview. Applicants resident outside the EEA/Switzerland were also offered the option of a remote interview. Candidates who came to Oxford ordinarily had two interviews at their first college, and one at another college that had been assigned to them.

In the interviews tutors looked for evidence of: a real interest and strong desire to learn physics; ability to express physical ideas using mathematics; mathematical ability; ability to analyse and solve problems using logical and critical approaches; ability to see how one part of a physical system connects with another; ability to predict what will happen in a given physical situation; ability to give precise explanations both orally and numerically.

Offers
Offers were made to candidates who demonstrated the most potential to perform well on the course on the basis of their UCAS form, performance in the PAT, interview performance and any other relevant contextual information.

28.4% of candidates who were made offers for Physics received their offer from a college other than their first choice college. Most candidates were made a conditional offer; for details of the standard offer please see here.

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2 For some colleges this may have been arranged as one longer interview or three shorter interviews.