**Theology Admissions Feedback 2019-20**

**Summary**

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<th>Theology and Religion</th>
<th>Philosophy and Theology</th>
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<td>Applications</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>148</td>
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<td>Shortlisted</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>63</td>
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<td>Offers</td>
<td>2020 entry</td>
<td>48(^1) [including 8 open offers]</td>
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<td>2021 entry</td>
<td>28 [including 2 open offers]</td>
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Mansfield made seven Theology and Religion offers for 2020 entry, including one open offer. No offers were made for Philosophy and Theology.

**Shortlisting**

Candidates were shortlisted using their UCAS applications and written work, and for Philosophy and Theology applicants, their scores on the Philosophy Test. 69 applicants were shortlisted for Theology and Religion, approximately 2.0 applicants per place. 63 applicants were shortlisted for Philosophy and Theology, approximately 2.1 applicants per place.

**Written Work**

All candidates were asked to submit a piece of work as part of the assessment, usually a marked essay written as part of their normal school or college work. Work was marked centrally on a scale of 0-100, using the following criteria: ability to think clearly and to reason coherently; evidence of independence of thought; ability to structure work and arguments in a logical way; ability to write clearly (and grammatically) with clear expression of thought.

The mean written work score for all Theology and Religion applicants was 64.6. The mean for shortlisted applicants was 65.6, and 66.9 for those who went on to receive an offer. The mean written work score for all Philosophy and Theology applicants was 63.1. The mean for shortlisted applicants was 64.9, and 65.4 for those who went on to receive an offer. The distribution of grades was as follows:

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Philosophy Test
Candidates for Philosophy and Theology were required to sit the Philosophy Test on 30 October 2019. The Philosophy Test is a 60 minute test designed to assess a candidate's philosophical reasoning skills. The test ordinarily involves a comprehension exercise and a short essay or answer a structured question.

The mean Philosophy Test score for all applicants (excluding those who did not sit the test) was 60.8. The mean score for shortlisted applicants was 64.8, and 65.0 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 Philosophy Test (n=4).

UCAS Application
Candidates were assessed on the basis of their past and predicted examination results, their personal statement, their teacher’s reference and any relevant contextual information. Each candidate’s individual circumstances were taken into account when assessing their application.

Contextualised GCSE
All candidates who had sat GCSEs were also given a contextualised GCSE score. The contextualised GCSE score provides information on how well an applicant performed at GCSE compared to other applicants to Oxford, given the performance of the school at which they sat their GCSEs.

A ranking was calculated using the contextualised GCSE score, written work score and Philosophy Test score (where applicable). Scores and rankings were calculated separately for Theology and Religion and Philosophy and Theology. The ranking was then used to help shortlist candidates, with those who came higher in the ranking more likely to be shortlisted for interview, and those lower in the ranking less likely to be shortlisted unless mitigating circumstances or contextual information suggested that their scores might not be an accurate reflection of their potential.

Candidates were reviewed by a faculty admissions panel, and a final shortlist agreed. 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 interview in Oxford were interviewed at two colleges, and ordinarily had two to four interviews of 20-30 minutes each.
In the interviews tutors looked for evidence of: ability to understand complex concepts; ability to form sound arguments; ability to listen to and respond to counterarguments; openness to learning; ability at close textual reading and interpretation; dedication and diligence in work; independent thought and reading; ability to develop ideas presented in written work; oral communication skills.

**Offers**

Offers were made to candidates who demonstrated the most potential to perform well on the course on the basis of their UCAS form, submitted written work, performance in the Philosophy Test (where applicable), interview performance and any other relevant contextual information. The list of candidates to be made open offers was agreed at a meeting of Theology tutors from all colleges.

33.3% of Theology and Religion and Philosophy and Theology offer holders 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](#).