Engineering Admissions Feedback 2019-20

This year the University of Oxford had a high number of applicants for Engineering. Many of the candidates who applied made very good applications and, as every year, many difficult decisions had to be made.

Throughout the process, contextual data for UK candidates, including school performance and postcode data, were used when assessing applications. You can find more information about contextual data on the Oxford University website here.

Unfortunately, not every applicant can be interviewed. The purpose of shortlisting for interview is to identify those applicants who are most likely to succeed in the rest of the selection process and give interviewers time to consider each shortlisted candidate carefully. Decisions about which candidates to shortlist were based on exam results and predictions, the UCAS form, and the PAT results. These decisions were made based on the stated admissions criteria (https://www.eng.ox.ac.uk/media/1081/typical_engineering_interview_question.pdf).

UCAS forms were marked by Oxford Engineering tutors based on previous examination results, qualifications predicted, the school or other institutional reference, and the personal statement.

Given the number of shortlisted applicants and their uneven distribution between colleges, a number of shortlisted candidates are reallocated from oversubscribed colleges to colleges with a lower ratio of candidates to places. The aim of reallocation is to even out competition for places across the University. All shortlisted candidates were invited for interviews in Oxford. For those who attended their interviews in Oxford, interviews were conducted at both their first and second colleges. This gives each candidate the best chance of receiving a place.

Interviews are academic and subject-focused in nature. The applicant’s performance in each interview is judged according to the admissions criteria. Tutors are looking for candidates to demonstrate: fluency in expressing core knowledge and ideas in physics and mathematics; ability to apply existing knowledge methodically to new situations; ability to assimilate and apply new concepts; and rapidity in thinking and reasoning and to be able to discuss their: commitment to intense and sustained learning and their interest in and enthusiasm for the engineered world.

The competition for places was very high this year. Only 38% of applicants were invited for interviews and only 18% of applicants were offered a place. Further information about Engineering admissions can be found at: https://www.eng.ox.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/applications/.