Ref. FOI/20200804/3

27 August 2020

Reply to request for information under the Freedom of Information Act	
Your ref	Email of 4 August 2020
Request	1. Please could I have the different metrics that the Law Department used in order to rank the applicants when giving places. 2. May this also have the weighting given to each piece of information e.g. how heavily weighted interviews are to the candidates' TSA scores or predicted/achieved A-level and GCSE grades. So the different metrics used for shortlisting

Dear India Cook,

I write in reply to your email requesting the above information.

Item 1

We use a combination of metrics to assess candidates for an offer including:

- GCSEs
- cGCSE score - the cGCSE score provides information about how well an applicant has performed at GCSE, as measured by the number of A*/9/8 grades they have achieved, compared to other applicants to Oxford, given the performance of the school at which they took their GCSEs.
- Predicted grades
- LNAT score (multiple choice and essay score) – the multiple choice is marked externally, and essays are double marked centrally.
- All other information the applicant provided on the UCAS form (such as personal statement, reference, work experience, etc.)

Contextualised data from publicly available information from the government is used to contextualise the academic information.

There are 6 contextual measures in 3 broad categories: time spent in care, residential postcode and prior education:

- Care = Applicant has spent more than 3 months in care.
- POLAR4 = measures proportion of young people who enter higher education aged 18 or 19 between the years 2009-10 and 2014-15.[1]

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[1] Further information is here: https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/young-participation-by-area/

- ACORN = Associates specific geodemographic profiles with individual UK postcodes; it is widely recognised and used by both the public and private sectors to assist in the effective targeting of policies, services and communications.[1]
- Pre-16 School score = Measures the proportion of a school's GCSE candidates attaining at least five GCSEs at grades A*-C/9-4 including English and Maths.
- Post-16 School score = Average point score per academic entry (A-level or equivalent)
- Percentage of Free School Meals score (in Pre-16 school) = Percentage of students that have ever been eligible for free school meals in the past six years or have been in care for more than a day in applicant's school where they took GCSEs.

Shortlisted applicants are then interviewed.

Item 2

The University does not use a formal weighting system for each piece of information when making decisions about shortlisting. College admitting tutors look at all information - test scores, interview performance, references, personal statement, school information, contextual data, and any other information provided via UCAS - and use this to make a holistic assessment, where the pieces of information interact with one another.

Yours sincerely

Information Compliance Team

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[1] Further information is here: https://acorn.caci.co.uk/downloads/Acorn-User-guide.pdf