Admissions Manual for Theology and Religion 2019-20

This is version 4 of the Manual

Summary of Changes:

Opportunity Oxford information (including new screen shots) updated on pp. 9-11, 14, 31-32

Changes in version 3: Updated Quick Reference Guide on Contextual Data included.

Changes in version 2: College Admissions Tutor List updated

INTRODUCTION

This document describes the procedures to be used for Undergraduate Admissions at the Faculty of Theology and Religion. It outlines the criteria and processes relevant to admissions in the following courses:

> BA Theology and Religion (T&R)
> BA Philosophy and Theology (P&T)
> BA Religion and Oriental Studies (ROS)

This document provides information relevant to the pages of ADSS particular to these courses but it should be read in conjunction with the General ADSS Manual, which contains comprehensive instructions concerning the use of ADSS and information about the data it supplies. You will need your Single Sign-on (SSO) to access these manuals. There is no attempt to duplicate in this manual the technical guidance amply provided in the ADSS manual.

The manual is intended as an *aide memoire* for experienced admissions tutors as well as a guide for new colleagues. This year we shall implement two significant (and University-wide) changes to the process involving (1) the use and availability of Contextual Data and (2) the introduction of the Opportunity Oxford programme in Theology and Religion. We are also piloting the transfer of P&T applicants to T&R at the shortlisting stage. The implications of these changes for our admissions operations are noted in the relevant parts of this manual. You are especially encouraged to consult the Quick Reference Guide in Appendix 4 as well as the UAO Handbook, which includes further detailed guidance and links to specific training on Contextual Data.

The Opportunity Oxford programme is in development and procedures are not yet confirmed. This provides an opportunity to develop any processes that might be required in our Faculty. Tentative suggestions based on current information are included in this manual. If further information is made available which necessitates further Faculty involvement, a special appendix may be added to a future edition of this manual.

The Faculty's procedures were developed to comply with the Common Framework for Admissions. General information on Undergraduate Admissions is available in the Undergraduate Admissions Office (UAO) Handbook, including relevant policies and guidance. Please paste the following URL into your browser: http://www.ox.ac.uk/uao-handbook

If you have any queries about the Admissions Process in Theology and Religion please contact the Faculty Admissions Co-ordinator or for any technical queries relating to ADSS please refer to the General ADSS Manual or contact the ADSS support team directly.

Please note, you may need your Single-Sign-On to view information at some of the links on this page.

Innovations and improvements for 2019-20 are signalled in this manual in red. For ease of reading, where the whole section is new, only the heading is red.

OVERVIEW OF THE ADMISSIONS EXERCISE

Background

In 2013 the Faculty of Theology and Religion developed a partly centralised Admissions Process. Undergraduate Admissions are made by Colleges and all decisions rest ultimately with College Admissions Tutors; however, it is intended that Faculty co-ordination could help to facilitate a fairer and more efficient admissions process. Further information relating to the following partly centralised elements of the admissions process can be found in sections of this handbook: marking of written work; review of all applications and deselection recommendations by the Faculty Admissions Committee; redistribution of candidates between Colleges. The timeline for the whole exercise is given below and further details are provided in later sections of this manual.

Date		Action By
Before MT	UAO contacts Colleges to confirm number of available places on different courses (used to allocate Open Applications).	College Offices
Wk 0-1	Admissions Co-ordinator will ask all Admissions Tutors to confirm the number of places they intend to offer for each course, including the underwriting of Open Offers. These tutors are also asked to confirm which colleagues will be involved in UG Admissions and in what capacity, so that appropriate ADSS access can be arranged.	Co-ordinator College Tutors
Week 1, Tuesday 15th October	Deadline for the submission of UCAS Applications to the University of Oxford. The University Admissions Office then uploads this data to ADSS.	
Week 2, Wednesday 23rd October	Data is released through ADSS to Tutors and Officers.	
Wk 3, Wednesday 30th October	P&T students sit the written test in Schools and Centres	
Wk 4, Friday 8th November	Deadline for the return of the PPH Opt-Out Survey. The survey is sent automatically to all applicants to T&R and P&T, if they will be a mature student when they start the course. It now applies only to Wycliffe Hall and St Stephen's House.	
Wk 5, Sunday 10th November	Written Work Due to Colleges – work uploaded to attachment slot 2 on ADSS	College Offices
11th –18th November	Central Marking of Written Work	Co-ordinator Central Markers
Wk 6, Mon-Thurs 18th-21st November	Centrally-marked philosophy test scores available on ADSS	
Wk 6, Thursday 21st November	Admissions Committee meet on or before this date to make *initial* deselection *recommendations* which are entered on ADSS.	Co-ordinator Committee

22nd -24th November	Admissions team make additional/modified recommendations as the marking of written work is completed.	
Wk 7, Monday 25th November	Final Deadline for College Tutors to enter deselection decisions on ADSS.	College Tutors
Wk 7, Monday 25th November	Final Deadline for College Tutors to reserve candidates on ADSS.	College Tutors
Wk 7, Tuesday 26th November	All reallocation decisions are confirmed with application Colleges	Co-ordinator College Tutors
Wk 7, Wednesday 27th November	Some unreserved candidates are reallocated to a new First College	Co-ordinator
Wk 7, Thursday 28th November	All candidates are assigned to a Second College	Co-ordinator
Wk 7, Friday 29th November	Colleges should communicate decisions to all candidates, inviting shortlisted candidates to interview.	College Tutors College Offices
Wk 9, Monday 9th December	First Colleges interview T&R and P&T candidates.	College Tutors
Wk 9, Tuesday 10th December	Second Colleges interview T&R and P&T candidates. First and, if possible, Second Colleges interview ROS candidates	College Tutors
Wk 9, Wednesday 11th December	When necessary, second colleges interview ROS candidates	College Tutors
Wk 9, Wednesday 11th December 5 p.m.	Deadline for all Interview Scores to be entered into ADSS	College Tutors
Wk 9, Thursday 12th December	Before the meeting the Admissions Co-ordinator will calculate Final Scores and Rankings on ADSS.	Co-ordinator
Wk 9, Thursday, 12th December, 2:15 p.m.	Post Interview Final Admissions Meeting for all College Tutors.	Co-ordinator College Tutors
Wk 9, Friday 13th December	All final decisions entered on ADSS.	Co-ordinators College Tutors
Wk 0, Wednesday 14th January 2020	Publication date for post-interview decisions to applicants.	College Tutors College Offices
Monday 10th August 2020	Beginning of A Level Results week; results are released to the University but under strict embargo. College Tutors will liaise with college officers and the Faculty Admissions Co-ordinator to confirm or reject offers.	Co-ordinator College Tutors College Offices
Wednesday 12th August 2019, **4 p.m.**	Deadline for all decisions which can be made before the embargo is lifted	
Thursday 13th August 2020	Embargo Lifted. A Level Results published to students	

CONTACT DETAILS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Faculty Admissions Co-ordinator:

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The **Admissions Committee** is convened by the Admissions Co-ordinator early in Michaelmas Term according to the Faculty Standing Orders, also included in appendix 1

College	Admissions Tutor	Contact Email
Christ Church		
Harris Manchester		
Jesus		
Keble		
Lady Margaret Hall		
Mansfield		
Oriel		
Pembroke		
Regent's Park		
St Benet's Hall		
St John's		
St Peter's		
Trinity		
Worcester		
Wycliffe		

The Faculty Admissions Co-ordinator will email important information throughout the admissions process. College Tutors are also likely to exchange emails. Please check your email at regular intervals.

In general, important communications from the Faculty Co-ordinator will be directed only to the Admissions Tutors (and College officers) in the above table. College Admissions Tutors are responsible for forwarding relevant information to College colleagues (academic and administrative) as appropriate.

SUMMARY OF PROCESS – CANDIDATE STATUSES AND TRANSITIONS

The seven white boxes indicate the possible statuses of a candidate as he/she progresses through the Admissions processes (which are represented by the blue ovals). These statuses are used by both ADSS and UCAS.

The arrows indicate transitions that can be made between these specific statuses. A change of status is performed using the Change Status button which appears in the top right of certain ADSS Views when individual candidates are highlighted.

INITIAL CONSIDERATION

Shortlisting and Deselection

DESELECTED

INTERVIEW (UNRESERVED)

RESERVED (AND INTERVIEW)

Reallocation

Second College Assignment

Interviews and Decision Meeting

REJECTED

OFFER

OPEN OFFER
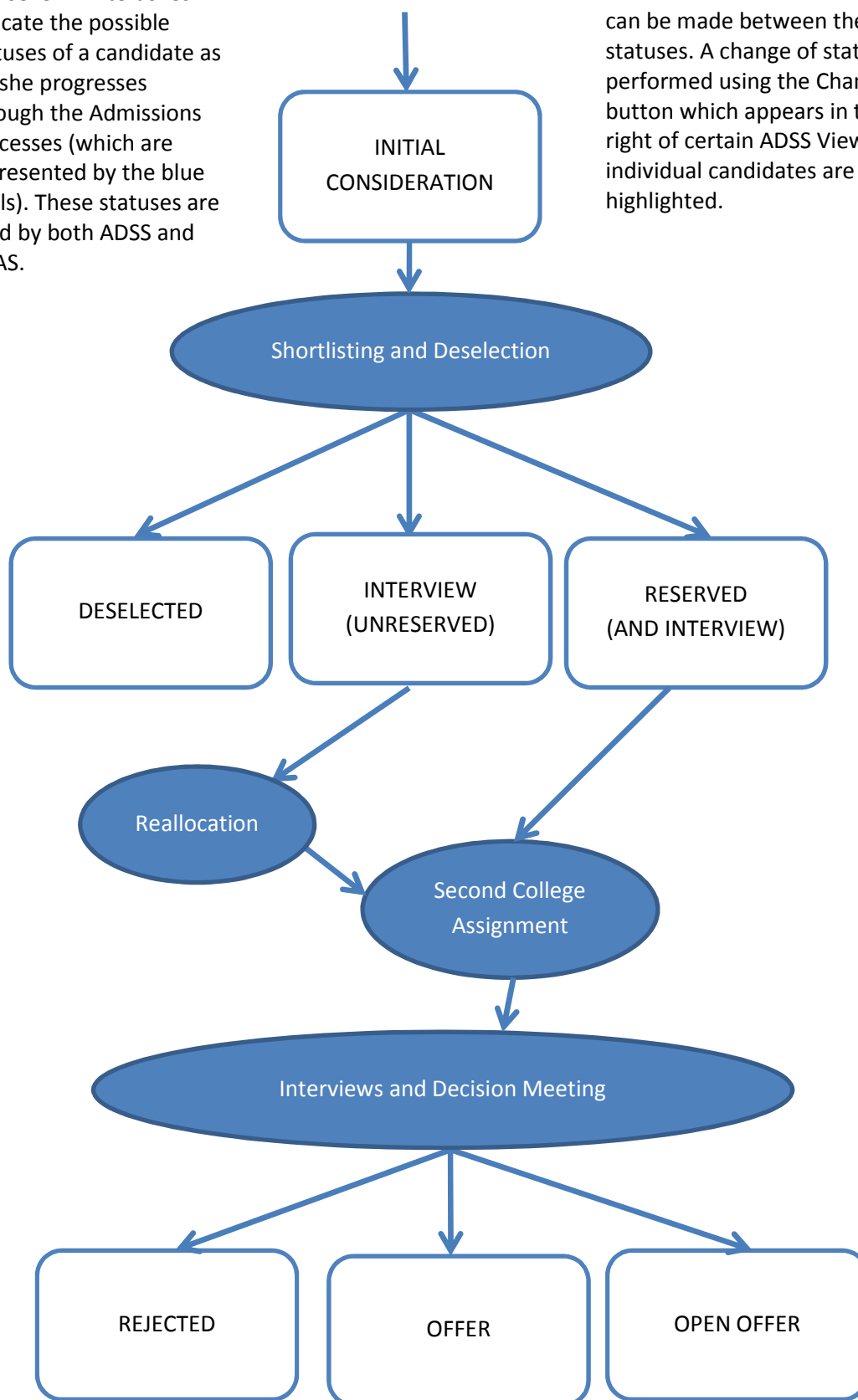
USING ADSS

Please refer to the General ADSS Manual for details. This section provides only an overview of the Faculty Pages.

Logging-in

https://adss.ox.ac.uk/ (copy-paste URL into browser)

Log in with your SSO and select the appropriate role from the drop-down box at the top-right of the screen.

Summary of Views

Data for College Tutors has been configured in the two 'Team Views': 'Lead Tutors (read/write access)' and 'Tutors (read only)'. Both Teams should be able to see the same menu of views but have different permissions in relation to them. Choose the appropriate View from the list on the left-hand side of the screen.

In both cases, the Views are listed in (roughly) chronological order for the admissions exercise.

Views are summarised in the table below and further details are found in the relevant sections of this handbook.

Theology and Religion – Candidate Summary	A comprehensive summary View displaying most data available on each applicant. In previous years, this was called the *College Tutor View*. We have adopted the label *Candidate Summary*, which is routinely used by other departments, with the intention of making navigation of our Views more intuitive to colleagues in College Offices and UAO.
Theology and Religion – Contextual Data	A new View is compiled for us by UAO and displays comprehensive and detailed contextual data on each candidate. Please see below for further guidance relating to Contextual Data. This view is comprehensive. The most useful Contextual Data is also displayed in other Views.
Theology and Religion - Documents	Provides access to uploaded documents including written work but also files uploaded by a candidate's college and, for ROS candidates an O.S. Faculty Interview record sheet and, if relevant, an OLAT script.
Theology and Religion - Written Work	Provides access uploaded written work and marks entered by central markers
Theology and Religion - Shortlisting and Deselection Decisions	A view summarising a selection of key pre-interview data, including rankings; recommendations from the Admissions Committee. Tutors should use this View to enter College shortlisting and deselection decisions.
Theology and Religion - Deselected Candidates	View data on deselected candidates.
Theology and Religion - Interview Scores	Tutors should use these Views to enter marks awarded for first and second interviews. See section below.
Theology and Religion- Interview Decisions	View final rankings and use to enter Final decisions on each candidate.
Theology and Religion - Places Awarded	Summary of places awarded for all courses, including Opportunity Oxford nominations.
Opportunity Oxford – eligible candidates (including Band B)	Displays all applicants who are eligible for Opportunity Oxford. Not all of these candidates will be flagged.

Please note that according to ADSS conventions, most Views are labelled by Faculty rather than Course. 'Theology and Religion' Views will therefore contain data on applicants to all three courses. In any View, candidates can be filtered by course and college.

The Theology and Religion Candidate Summary View

This is the most useful View which summarises most data on a candidate, including written work, test and interview scores.

It also displays a range of data supplied by UCAS and the University Admissions Office, including schools and contextual data and a number of 'flags' that highlight which candidates fall into particular categories.

Six **Flags** highlight details in relation to a candidate or to his/her application:

Deferred
Disability
Mature
International
Post Qualification
Senior Status

The Comments Flag and the Attachment Flag are used by colleges to signal that extra information on a candidate has been supplied.

There is also one flag used in the Deselection Process, see section below.

Please note that the Overall WP flag is no longer in use. But a new flag (yellow O) will indicate which Band A candidates are eligible for the Opportunity Oxford programme. Other (Band B) applicants may be eligible, albeit unflagged. To see the full list of eligible candidates please consult the *Opportunity Oxford –eligible applicants (including Band B)* View

For detailed explanations of the meaning of flags and other ADSS data, please see the **General ADSS Manual**. The manual describes how figures are calculated, what figures and codes mean and how they might legitimately inform decisions.

Understanding Contextual Data and the Theology and Religion – Contextual Data View

Alongside the introduction of the new [Access and Participation Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25](#), the University has completely overhauled its provision and use of the contextual data held on candidates. It is particularly important that you understand the nature and significance of contextual data. **The UAO provides comprehensive explanations in the UAO Handbook. They have also compiled a brand new quick reference guide which is included as a final appendix to this manual.** From this year, contextual data will be more granular than the binary flags used previously and a composite measure will be used to rank applicants within the whole cohort of Oxford applicants.

In order to make views user-friendly, only the composite level data has been included on general views. On the *Candidate Summary*; *Shortlisting and Deselection Decisions; Interview Decisions* and *Final Ranking* views you will be able to view the following Contextual Data:

Composite Measure Score - labelled WP Score
Composite Measure Band of Disadvantage – labelled WP Band
Composite Measure Course Percentile Ranking – labelled WP % Ranking

These composite level measures are based on six other data points. Comprehensive and detailed contextual data held on each candidate is displayed in the *Theology and Religion – Contextual Data* view, which has been shared with all tutors. However, it is likely that you will find it more convenient to access this data through individual UCAS forms (it is summarised in a table at the bottom of the first page of each form) or through the individual candidate summary, accessed by double-clicking on a candidate's name in any View. Sorting candidates in the *Candidate Summary* view by Band or Ranking will highlight candidates for particular attention. Please note, if/when you do consult the *Theology and Religion – Contextual Data* view, that the data displayed on the UCAS form is found in the columns labelled 'quintile' (or category) in the case of ACORN.

The following points are worthy of special note but are no substitute for the full guidance and training provided by UAO:

- A higher Composite Measure Score, Band or Course Percentile Ranking indicates a higher disadvantage.
- For quintiles: 1 indicates the most disadvantaged and 5 indicates most advantaged, on these individual measures. The *reverse* is the case for ACORN, where category 5 indicates the greatest disadvantage.
- Course percentile rank is calculated within each course – T&R, P&T and ROS are treated separately. This will require special consideration within colleges which treat T&R and P&T as a single cohort.
- Bands of disadvantage are calculated across the *whole cohort of Oxford applicants*. It is therefore possible, because of our relatively small sample size that, in any given year, we may have very few or no applicants in Band A.

Colleagues are strongly encouraged to undertake the specific (stand-alone) training provided by UAO, on Canvas, **here**. (The Admissions Coordinator will forward links to UAO training.)

RECEIVING AND MANAGING APPLICATIONS	
Week 1, Tuesday 15th October	Deadline for the submission of UCAS Applications to the University of Oxford. The University Admissions Office then uploads this data to ADSS.
Week 2, Wednesday 23rd October	Data is released through ADSS to Tutors and Officers.
Wk 3, Wednesday 30th October	P&T students sit the written test in Schools and Centres
Wk 4, Friday 8th November	Deadline for the return of the PPH Opt-Out Survey. The survey is sent automatically to all applicants to T&R and P&T, if they will be a mature student when they start the course. It now applies only to Wycliffe Hall and St Stephen's House.
Wk 5, Sunday 10th November	Written Work Due to Colleges
11th–18th November	Central Marking of Written Work
Wk 6, Mon-Thurs 18th-21st November	Centrally-marked philosophy test scores available on ADSS

Entry Requirements

These are advertised on the University Website as follows:

- A-levels: AAA
- Advanced Highers: AA/AAB
- For T&R and ROS – IB: 38 (including core points) with 666 at HL.
- For P&T – IB: 39 (including core points) with 666 at HL.
- Or any other equivalent (see other UK qualifications, and international qualifications)

Wherever possible, your grades are considered in the context in which they have been achieved. (See further information on how we use contextual data.)

A subject involving essay writing to A-level, Advanced Higher, Higher Level in the IB or another equivalent can be helpful to students in completing this course, although this is not required for admission. We expect you to have taken and passed any practical component in your chosen science subjects.

The University provides very helpful summaries of UK qualifications and International qualifications.

The UAO Handbook also supplies information relating to recent Qualification Reform at GCSE and A Level.

The University Website also gives the following advice:

Tutors are primarily interested in previous academic achievements as demonstrated, for example, by GCSE or other examination results, and in the quality of submitted written work. They may also take other information on your UCAS application into account (such as your personal statement and reference). Personal statements should focus on your academic reasons for wishing to study Theology and Religion; references should comment primarily on academic performance.

Pre-Interview Selection Criteria

These are advertised on the Faculty Website as follows:

To reach the interview stage of the admission process for any BA degree in the Faculty of Theology and Religion, candidates must fulfil the following criteria:

- They must submit a strong UCAS form, including a supportive reference, excellent past examination results, and[/or] the predicted 3 'A' grades at A-level or equivalent.

- They must submit written work which demonstrates 1) the ability to think clearly and to reason coherently, 2) evidence of independence of thought, 3) the ability to structure work and arguments in a logical way, and 4) the ability to write clearly (and grammatically), with clear expression of thought.

Criteria for BA Philosophy and Theology

In addition to the criteria for Theology and Religion, tutors will take into account each candidate's performance in the Philosophy written test.

Criteria for BA Religion and Oriental Studies

In addition to the criteria for Theology and Religion, tutors will take into account a candidate's performance in the Oriental Studies Language Aptitude Test (OLAT). Only those candidates who intend to study Islam/Arabic or Judaism/Hebrew are required to take the OLAT.

Written Work

Applicants to all three courses are required to submit ONE piece of written work.

Each piece is accompanied by a cover sheet, providing some context for the work. Candidates are encouraged to submit their work electronically.

Advice and Suggested Titles

The University offers general guidance on the submission of Written Work here. The Admissions pages for T&R, P&T and ROS include further advice on what should be submitted including the following:

Theology and Religion candidates are required to submit one piece of written work, by Saturday 10 November 2018, which has been marked in the normal process of school or college work. In place of this essay you may send an examination or test answer to an unseen question, which has been supervised and marked by your school or college. All written work must be in English.

Please send work in Religious Studies if you are studying this subject to A-level (or equivalent). If you cannot submit a sample of work in Religious Studies, please submit work in a related area, for example work on any Humanities subject, such as History or English. If you do not have such written work available, please contact the Tutor for Admissions at your first choice or allocated college, and they will suggest essay topics or alternative work.

Please ensure that work is not overly long but conforms as far as possible to the published guidelines on the submission of written work, as tutors want to evaluate the succinctness and pertinence of your work. If you have any questions, please contact your first choice or allocated college, or email the Director of Undergraduate Studies and Outreach, Dr Mary Marshall, at dus@theology.ox.ac.uk.

For more information, and to download a cover sheet, please see our further guidance on the submission of written work.

If a candidate contacts you to request suggested essay topics, you should recommend a title or selection of titles that might be approached successfully by a student (often of about 17 years of age) who has no or very limited subject knowledge. By way of example, following titles have been suggested by a number of Colleges in previous years and might be used again:

> *'Theology and Religion should not be studied in a secular University.' Discuss.*
>
> *How might you resolve the ethical issues surrounding _____?*
>
> *'If God does not exist, then religion is pointless.' Do you agree?*

However, it is generally advantageous if the candidate is able to submit a school essay in any subject. Candidates should be encouraged to submit essays from A Level Politics, English, History or any other subject they are studying, rather than attempting to write on an unfamiliar topic from scratch and in isolation. The need to suggest titles will therefore be infrequent and mainly limited to applicants with a Science background, mature candidates with no recent written work and international applicants. The written work should hopefully provide an opportunity for tutors to see the 'best' of candidate's work, completed with support and in the framework of a wider programme

of study. It also provides a valuable opportunity to learn something of the applicant's academic background and context (what is covered, how it is marked, what is prioritised). In so far as is possible, we hope it will allow us to access candidates on relatively equal terms and without placing an extra burden of work on many candidates.

Centralised Marking

In providing centralised marking, the Faculty intend to ensure parity and fair comparison of all marks awarded for submitted written work. Each year the Faculty employs two markers who undertake the marking of every submitted essay to the same criteria. They also moderate a sample to ensure that both are marking to the same scale. Centralised marking is overseen by the Admissions Co-ordinator. As the marks awarded will be used to compare candidates only within this cohort, the absolute mark awarded to each is less important than tutors' confidence that all students have been marked to the same criteria, on the same scale and with the same level of 'harshness' or 'leniency'. This does not preclude College Admissions Tutors from reading and marking the work themselves – the essays provide valuable information apart from the mark awarded.

College Offices are requested to upload written work to attachment slot 2 only.

This means that all written work will accessible on ADSS on the *Theology and Religion Written Work* View. There should be no need to request copies from other Colleges or through the Faculty. Simply click on the link from this View to open the written work attached for each candidate.

Course ▲ ▼	College 1 ▲ ▼	Written Work ▲ Score ▼	Written Work ▲ ▼
Philosophy and Theology	Mansfield		Sample Wor...

You can also use the Attachments pdf button to generate documents combining several attachments.

eligion Written Work

el All Attachments PDF

The Central Markers have access to this view only and will enter their marks as they work. Marks awarded are subject to change until all marking is completed. The Admissions Co-ordinator will send updates and notify tutors when marks have been finalised, prior to deselection.

Central Markers use the criteria included in appendix 2 to this manual, which correspond to the published selection criteria on p. 12.

Philosophy Test

The Philosophy Test is managed and marked centrally by colleagues in the Oxford Philosophy Faculty. The marks will be entered on ADSS but Theology and Religion tutors are referred to Philosophy Admissions Coordinator, Dave Leal for details about test performance. See the University Tests Website for some details and a sample test paper.

OLAT

This test is required of applicants to ROS who intend to study Judaism or Islam. It is not, however, always available at the key stages in our Admissions exercise. Consequently, and because it is not available for all ROS candidates, the OLAT score is not used in any calculations and rankings performed by ADSS. When OLAT marks are available, they are visible in the OLAT column on the College Tutors View on ADSS. See the University Tests Website for some details and a sample test paper.

SHORTLISTING AND DESELECTION	
Wk 6, Thursday 21st November	Admissions Committee meet on or before this date to make *initial* deselection *recommendations* which are entered on ADSS.
22nd 24th November	Admissions team make additional/modified recommendations as the marking of written work is completed.
Wk 7, Monday 25th November	Final Deadline for College Tutors to enter deselection decisions on ADSS.

Principle of Deselection

The Faculty Admissions procedure aims to shortlist (summon to interview) two applicants per place. Each shortlisted applicant is guaranteed an interview at at least two Colleges and so across all Colleges we will hold at least four interviews for each place available. (NB Colleges admitting only mature students are likely to hold fewer interviews, depending on the total number of mature shortlisted applicants.) This is a manageable number of interviews and ensures that appropriate consideration is given to the most able candidates. It also makes it possible for applicants to be evenly distributed across Colleges, see below on Reallocation.

At the beginning of the Admissions exercise the Admissions Co-ordinator will write to all College Tutors to confirm the number of places they intend to offer in each course, from this information a total number of places is calculated.

Pre-Interview Ranking

After the central marking has been completed, ADSS is used to generate a Pre-interview ranking for each course. The ranking is displayed on the *Theology and Religion - Shortlisting and Deselection Decisions* View.

The ranking is calculated using the following data (where available and as appropriate to the course):

- Contextualised GCSE A*Score (replaced by normalised GCSE A* Score, if contextual data is not available)
- Written Work Score (this replaces GCSE data where none is available for T&R and ROS applicants)
- Philosophy Test Score (this replaces GCSE scores where none is available for P&T students)

The selection of these components follows advice from UAO and practice within other similar Faculties. The components are variously weighted to compensate for bias or absence of data. For more technical information on the score calculations, please contact the Admissions Co-ordinator.

As scores are calculated separately for each course, scores can only be compared within the cohort of applicants to each course individually. A separate ranking is generated for T&R, P&R and ROS. You can use the drop down menus in ADSS to filter by course and then view and reorder candidates according to their ranking.

The data used to generate the ranking is relevant to, and available for, the majority of applicants. However, it does not represent all applicants, e.g. those with international qualifications; neither does it reflect all information about a candidate, e.g. context and personal circumstances. The ranking should therefore be used **only with great caution** to inform shortlisting and deselection decisions.

Admissions Committee Recommendations

The principal job of the Admissions Committee is collectively to review all applications and make recommendations for deselection (rejection of an application) that are based on a view of the whole field of candidates. This is particularly important because applications are not evenly distributed across all Colleges and those receiving fewer applications have a reduced field on which to judge their relative merit. It is also important to ensure consistency in decision making; that applicants of equal merit are given the same treatment and that mitigating factors are handled consistently. Applications are divided between members of the Admissions Committee for individual review; members report to the Committee and difficult cases are given further consideration.

What the Committee provide are recommendations only and the final decision rests with College Tutors. All College Tutors are, of course, encouraged to read and assess applications to their College at an early stage. It is College Tutors who are best able to offer a fine grained assessment and notice subtleties which might be missed by the Committee.

Committee procedure and Considerations

The Admissions Co-ordinator makes an initial 'sweep' which is shared with the Admissions Committee. This 'sweep' identifies particular categories of candidates, as follows:

- Incomplete Applications (e.g. failure to register for the Philosophy Test), which are invalid.
- Failure to meet the Entry Requirement in qualifications either obtained or predicted.
- Post qualification candidates who already meet the Entry Requirement.
- Post qualification candidates who are re-sitting in order to meet the Entry Requirement.
- Particularly poor performance in one or more elements, e.g. Philosophy test, written work, GCSE grades.
- Widening Participation applicants – e.g. those in bands A and B.
- Mature applicants
- International Applicants

Candidates falling into any of these categories are highlighted for the particular attention of the Committee. None of these categories is associated with a recommendation either to interview or to deselect but rather, the process enables similar candidates to be compared with the following points in mind:

- Applicants in WP Band A are strongly recommended for interview if they meet the minimum requirement. According to existing University policy, where a candidate in Band A is not to

be shortlisted for interview the college should provide justification to the departmental Admissions Coordinator.

- ▪ Successful applicants will receive a 'standard' offer conditional on obtaining AAA or equivalent. Most candidates who fail to meet their conditional offer are not admitted.

- ▪ Poor performance (generally or in any one element) may be mitigated by factors evident in the whole application or by excellence in another area.

All candidates are considered on their own merit and individually. Working together, the Admissions Committee will identify candidates to recommend for deselection corresponding to the target number of applicants to shortlist (invite to interview).

Deselection Recommendations and Decisions on ADSS

Admissions Committee recommendations for deselection will appear as a 'Y' in the 'Recommend for Deselection' column on the *Theology and Religion Shortlisting and Deselection Decisions* View, as well as an easy to spot bright green Y flag to the right of that column.

College Tutors should review the Committee's recommendation and indicate *their own decision* on the *Theology and Religion Shortlisting and Deselection Decisions* View. College Tutors should choose one of the following three options from the drop-down menu under 'Tutor Decision':

Deselect
Interview
Reserve – see details on reallocation below.

Tutors may therefore "rescue" a candidate who has been recommended for deselection by the Committee, or mark for deselection any whom the Committee initially recommend for interview. Moreover, as the marking of written work is completed, the Admissions Committee may add to or change their deselection recommendations. In cases where a Tutor's decision diverges from the final decision of the Admissions Committee, Tutors are invited to correspond with the Admissions Co-ordinator to explain that decision and divergence. This information would be very much appreciated and will be used to ensure consistency across Colleges and to ensure that the number of students invited to interview is close to the Faculty's two-per-place target.

The final deadline for College Tutors to enter their deselection decisions is **Monday 25th November 2019**.

If College Tutors do not enter their decisions using the drop down menu, it will be assumed that they accept the deselection recommendations of the Admissions Committee.

Transfer from P&T to T&R at the Shortlisting stage

Following discussions with UAO and acting on feedback from tutors on previous admissions rounds, this year, for the first time, it will be possible to transfer P&T students to T&R at the shortlisting stage.

It is a long-established practice for colleges to make a T&R offer to applicants who have applied and been interviewed for the joint school with Philosophy. Hitherto, it has not been possible to shortlist joint school applicants for the single school. As a result, it was possible for Philosophy and Theology candidates, who displayed a strong aptitude for Theology and Religion, but not relatively so in Philosophy (e.g. performing poorly in the Philosophy Test) to 'slip through the net'. Such applicants were unlikely to be shortlisted, especially because Philosophy tutors face significant pressures in week 9 and are understandably reluctant to interview "extra candidates". Nevertheless, such students may have had potential to excel in Theology and Religion and keen to accept a single school offer.

This year, for the first time, UAO will contact all candidates registering for the Philosophy Test to inform them that Philosophy and Theology candidates might also be considered for a place on the single school. We have permission, *in cases where a Philosophy and Theology applicant will not be shortlisted for the course to which they have applied*, to summon that applicant to interview for a Theology and Religion place. The records for these candidates would then be updated and they would be treated as Theology and Religion applicants from shortlisting onwards. Similar arrangements are already deployed by several other subjects for transfer between schools.

This special consideration may be exercised by college tutors and may also inform the recommendations of the Admissions Committee.

Inevitably, this year will be somewhat experimental; there are several "unknowns":

- How many P&T applicants, performing less well in Philosophy, will display sufficient aptitude in Theology and Religion to justify transfer? We do not anticipate a large number.
- Will all those P&T applicants shortlisted for T&R accept their invitation to interview for the single school? There is always the risk of withdrawal after shortlisting. Only experience gained this year and subsequently will allow us to judge the extent of any problem.
- What will be the implications of this for applicants to the single school? How will we ensure fairness and parity of treatment?

Transfer is only permitted in one direction from P&T to T&R. It is not possible for applicants who have not sat the Philosophy Test to be shortlisted for P&T and in any case, there is no single school in Philosophy.

Procedure

In this pilot year, College tutors who would like to shortlist a P&T candidate for T&R are requested to email the Admissions Coordinator who will monitor the situation. When these decisions are finalised on 25th November, the Coordinator will update the candidate's course in ADSS.

REALLOCATION AND ASSIGNING SECOND COLLEGES	
Wk 7, Monday 25th November	Final Deadline for College Tutors to reserve candidates on ADSS.
Wk 7, Tuesday 26th November	All reallocation decisions are confirmed with application Colleges
Wk 7, Wednesday 27th November	Unreserved candidates are reallocated to a new First College
Wk 7, Thursday 28th November	All candidates are assigned to a Second College
Wk 7, Friday 29th November	Colleges should communicate decisions to all candidates, inviting shortlisted candidates to interview.

The Principle of Reallocation

The aim of the Admissions exercise is to identify the most deserving applicants in terms of academic ability and potential and to make these applicants an offer of a place. Candidates should not be disadvantaged by factors in their application which are irrelevant to their academic potential, such as their choice of College. In other words, a strong applicant to an oversubscribed college ought not to be overlooked in favour of a weaker candidate at an undersubscribed College. All strong applicants deserve proper consideration by an Oxford College and, in the interests of our Faculty and our degree programmes, all Colleges ought to consider as strong a cohort of applicants as possible. In order to achieve this aim, Admissions Tutors in the Faculty of Theology and Religion are committed to reallocating applicants to achieve an even distribution of candidates across Colleges according to the following principles:

- Each College should invite to interview two applicants for every place they intend to offer.
- Shortlisted candidates who stand a serious chance of an offer at the College to which they have applied, should have the opportunity of an interview at that College.

Reserving Candidates

College Tutors may "reserve" candidates from reallocation to another College. This means that those applicants with the best chance of a place at their application College are called to interview by that College. College Tutors may reserve 1.5 candidates for every place they intend to offer and should indicate which candidates they wish to reserve using the drop-down menu under 'Tutor decision' on the *Theology and Religion - Shortlisting and Deselection Decisions* View. (Using the same drop-down menu as that used to indicated deselection decisions.)

The final deadline for College Tutors to reserve candidates is **Monday 25th November 2019** (the same as the deadline for deselection decisions).

If College Tutors do not enter their reservation decisions, it will be assumed that they wish to reserve the top-ranked applicants to their College on the basis of the Pre-Interview Ranking. The reallocation will begin below that threshold.

The Admissions Coordinator will write to College Tutors to confirm reallocations. No enforced reallocation will take place but please remember that the process depends on co-operation.

Principle of Assigning Second Colleges

Each shortlisted candidate is associated with two Colleges. The 'First College,' which may be that to which the candidate originally applied or another to which the candidate was reallocated. The First College is responsible for calling the candidate to interview and accommodating him/her. All candidates will also be interviewed and their whole application considered by a Second College (assigned by ADSS). A guaranteed second interview is beneficial to the candidates, who thereby receive at least two opportunities to display their ability and potential. It is also advantageous for College Tutors, who increase their pool of applicants from two per place to four per place. Not only do College Tutors select from more candidates but they gain a more representative sense of the field of applicants beyond their College. Assigning Second Colleges in advance makes it easier for Tutors and College Offices to co-ordinate and schedule interviews.

On 22nd November ADSS will automatically assign second choice Colleges to all candidates. The Admissions College will inspect the outcome to ensure:

- Mature candidates are assigned to an appropriate College where they might stand the best chance of a place.
- Candidate opt-outs from Wycliffe Hall and St Stephen's House are respected.
- No candidate is assigned to their application College as a Second College when they have been reallocated as a First College candidate.

The First and Second Colleges will then be visible on the *Theology and Religion College Tutor* View. You can view either your First College candidates, or your Second College candidates or both sets by selecting your College from the appropriate drop-down menus on the left-hand side of ADSS.

Colleges take priority in place decisions concerning their First College candidates. Second Colleges may only make an offer to a candidate if that candidate has not received an offer from his/her First College.

Summoning to Interview

On **Friday 29th November** Colleges should summon shortlisted candidates to interview and write to deselected candidates.

Tutors should of course also follow whatever procedures are in place in their Colleges to communicate shortlisting decisions to their admissions offices and to schedule interviews.

Please do not communicate with applicants before Friday 29th November, to ensure that all ADSS processes have been successfully completed. If completion is confirmed before 29th November, the Admissions Co-ordinator will inform College Tutors.

If you are summoning a P&T applicant to interview for T&R please take care to ensure that this is communicated clearly and explicitly (and positively/sensitively) to the candidate.

INTERVIEWS	
Wk 9, Monday 9th December	First Colleges interview T&R and P&T candidates
Wk 9, Tuesday 10th December	Second Colleges interview T&R and P&T candidates
	First and, if possible, Second Colleges interview ROS candidates
Wk 9, Wednesday 11th December	When necessary, second colleges interview ROS candidates
Wk 9, Wednesday 11th December, 5 p.m.	Deadline for all Interview Scores to be entered on ADSS

Please endeavour to schedule all First and Second College candidates for interviews on the appropriate days, if at all possible.

Conducting Interviews

Training

All tutors involved in the interview process are required to have undertaken the training course developed by the Oxford Learning Institute (OLI) in conjunction with the Undergraduate Admissions Office. OLI offers three training courses relevant to undergraduate admissions interviewing. Please see the *Interviews* section of the UAO handbook.

College Tutors for Admissions are responsible for ensuring that all Tutors involved in the interview process (including the lead tutor) have undertaken this training in the last five years.

Interview Selection Criteria

Colleagues should plan and conduct interviews which enable candidates to demonstrate the following criteria as published on the Faculty Website.

At the interview stage, tutors will assess candidates according to the following criteria. They must demonstrate:

- an ability to think clearly, including understanding complex concepts, forming sound arguments, and listening and responding to counterarguments.

- an openness to learning.

- an ability at close textual reading and interpretation.

- evidence of enthusiasm and/or motivation, including dedication and diligence in work, and evidence of independent thought and reading.

- an ability to develop ideas presented in their submitted written work.
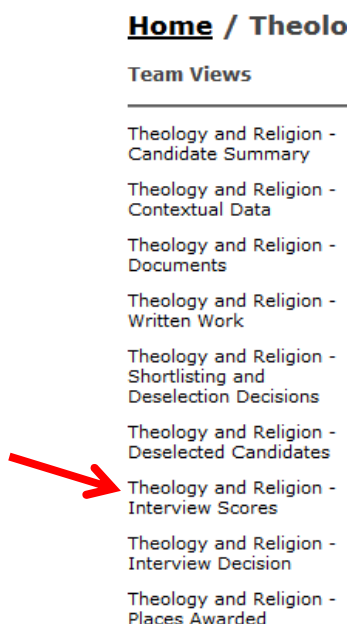
- oral communications skills.

Records and Scores

College Tutors may find it convenient to use the pro-forma in appendix 3 to record each candidate's interview performance. Tutors are welcome to use other forms or keep other notes but it is advisable to keep a record and remember that this material may be subject to the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information requests.

College Tutors are required to express their evaluation of each candidate's performance at interview as a numerical Interview Score on the following scale:

70-80	Outstanding interview
60-69	Competent to very impressive interview;
	further subdivided into:
66–69	somewhat impressive to very impressive interview
60–65	competent but unimpressive interview
51–59	Poor interview
40–50	Very poor interview

College Tutors should enter Interview scores on the *Theology and Religion Interview Scores* View on ADSS.

The view contains a number of columns, represented below:

Please enter scores in the appropriate columns. They are used in automatic ADSS calculations and the columns are configured in such a way to ensure that Theology and Religion Interview Scores will appear in the same column for both T&R and joint schools in the *Candidate Summary* View.

You may find it helpful to filter candidates by course when you enter Philosophy/O.S. Interview Scores.

A key to what should be entered in the columns on each View is supplied in the table below. (Hovering your mouse over the column heading should also supply a reminder.)

Column Heading	Description
Coll 1 T&R Int A	Enter score for Theology/Religion interview at First College **This column should be filled for all candidates**.
(Coll 1 T&R Int B)	Enter score for Theology/Religion interview at First College. Colleges which offer only one Theology and Religion interview should disregard this column. This column may or may not be filled for any given candidate, depending on College practice.
Coll 1 Phil/OS Int	For P&T candidates – enter score for Philosophy Interview at First College For ROS candidates – enter score for any O.S. Interview offered in college (O.S. runs Faculty interviews and college interviews in O.S. may be offered by only some colleges.) This column should be filled for all P&T candidates, may be blank for some ROS candidates and should be blank for all T&R candidates.
Coll 2 T&R Int A	Enter score for Theology/Religion interview at Second College **This column should be filled for all candidates**.
(Coll 2 T&R Int B)	Enter score for Theology/Religion interview at Second College. This column may or may not be filled for any given candidate, depending on College practice (see above).
Coll 2 Phil/OS Int	If a Philosophy or O.S. interview is offered at the second college, this score should be entered here. This column may be blank for some P&T candidates and for some ROS candidates and should be blank for all T&R candidates

Tutors should not enter any place decisions on ADSS prior to the Final Admissions meeting.

Accommodating other Interviewing models – extra scores and fewer interviews

ADSS allows for only three interviews at each college. If your College conducts additional interviews not covered by the above, e.g. two philosophy interviews at a single college, you may enter only one mark that you consider fair and representative. This might be either a mean average or an agreed single mark based on performance in both interviews. You may record individual scores using the comments function on ADSS.

Colleges offering a single combined Philosophy and Theology Interview to joint school candidates are requested to enter the interview score in the relevant column for both Theology and Philosophy (i.e. to duplicate the entry) but to note in the comments field on the Detailed Candidate Information record that the score derives from a single interview. The Detailed Candidate Information record can be accessed from any page of ADSS by double clicking on a candidate's name. The comments field is at the bottom of the record and is an open text field (and an entry in this field activates the Comment Flag). This action will facilitate later processes as a number of ADSS algorithms require the population of both the Theology Interview Score field and the Philosophy Interview Score field.

Oriental Studies Faculty Interviews

The Oriental Studies Faculty conducts a Faculty interview for each ROS applicant.

These normally take place between Wednesday and Friday of 9th week and so the scores from these interviews may not be available in good time to inform decisions within the Faculty of Theology and Religion. Data from these Faculty Interviews is not incorporated into our Final Ranking calculations. However, as for the OLAT, where this information is available it will be entered by the O.S. Faculty and viewed on the *Theology and Religion – Candidate Summary* View, in the column just to the right of College Interview Scores.

The O.S. Faculty may also upload the Interview record sheet to attachment slot 6. If uploaded, you will be able to access the document in the *Theology and Religion – Documents* view:

Please remember that the Oriental Studies Faculty use different conventions and a different scale to score there interviews. It is advisable to seek the advice of an O.S. colleague on an interpretation of these scores.

The deadline for entering all interview scores on ADSS is **5 p.m. on Wednesday 11th December 2019**.

FINAL DECISIONS	
Wk 9, Thursday 12th December	Before the meeting the Admissions Co-ordinator will calculate Final Scores and Rankings on ADSS.
Wk 9, Thursday, 2:15 p.m. 12th December	Post Interview Final Admissions Meeting for all College Tutors.
Wk 9, Friday 13th December	All final decisions entered on ADSS.

Final Rankings

After interview scores have been entered, ADSS is used to generate a Final Ranking for each course. This ranking is displayed on the *Theology and Religion Interview Decisions* View.

The ranking is calculated using the following data (where available and as appropriate to the course):

- Data used to generate the Pre-interview ranking
- Interview scores

The selection of these components follows advice from UAO and practice within other similar Faculties. The components are variously weighted to compensate for bias or absence of data. For more technical information on the score calculations, please contact the Admissions Co-ordinator.

As scores are calculated separately for each course, scores can only be compared within the cohort of applicants to each course individually. A separate ranking is generated for T&R, P&R and ROS. You can use the drop down menus in ADSS to filter by course and then view and reorder candidates according to their ranking.

The data used to generate the ranking is relevant to, and available for, the majority of applicants. However, it does not represent all applicants, e.g. those with international qualifications; neither does it reflect all information about a candidate, e.g. context and personal circumstances. The ranking should therefore be used **very cautiously** to inform place decisions.

Final Admissions Meeting

This will be held on **Thursday 12th December 2019 at 2.15 p.m.** in Seminar 1 of the Gibson Building.

One representative from each College is expected to attend (normally the Theology College Admissions Tutor).

The Admissions Coordinator will export data from ADSS and display the following information on spreadsheets – one for all candidates and one for each course:

- Name of Candidate
- Course
- First College
- Second College
- Pre-Interview Rank
- Final Rank
- Final Decision – to be entered at the meeting

The meeting then follows the procedure outlined below, hearing each tutor in turn in alphabetical order by College. At each stage the decisions are recorded in the Final Decision Column of the Spreadsheet according to the following code:

1	Offer from First College
2	Offer from Second College
0	No Offer
1A or 2A	Offer for an alternative course
OO – [College]	Open Offer at the College Specified
?	Pending decision

1. Each College reports places to be awarded to First College Candidates.
2. A second round in which Colleges may report further places to be awarded to First College Candidates.
3. Each College then reports places to be awarded to Second College Candidates.
4. The Spreadsheet is sorted by Final Decision.
5. Review of Candidates without an offer. Colleges recommend any unplaced candidates for Open Offer places – priority is given to suggestions from underwriting Colleges.
6. Nomination of candidates for Opportunity Oxford. See details below.
7. The Spreadsheet is sorted by Final Rank – places are reviewed and care taken to ensure that no deserving candidates have been neglected.
8. Review of outcome for WP band A and B candidates.
9. These two stages can be repeated for all candidates and for each course.
10. Review of ROS offers – which languages have been indicated by offer holders
11. (Potential) Opportunity Oxford nominations
12. Tutors are invited to raise concerns and/or offer feedback on their experience of the Admissions Exercise so far.

Open Offer Scheme

This scheme operates for open offers in T&R and P&T. The number of offers made and the courses in which they are made will depend on the availability and preferences of underwriting Colleges.

Each pool candidate is underwritten by one College. In the event that the candidate cannot be placed elsewhere, that College guarantees to take the candidate even if they have no vacancies.

The offer for an open offer candidate is the departmentally recommended (standard) offer (AAA or equivalent).

No College can accept a candidate who has failed their conditional offer until all the pool candidates who have met their offers have been placed. This restriction does not apply to Harris Manchester and Wycliffe Hall as it may not be possible (because they admit only mature students) for them to admit an open offer candidate.

The order of priority for Colleges wishing to take a pool candidate is:

a. The underwriting College, if it has an unfilled place;

b. Any other underwriting College, if it has an unfilled place;

c. Any other College, if it has an unfilled place;

d. The underwriting College, as an additional place;

e. Any other College, as an additional place.

If no College wants to take a pool candidate who has met their conditional offer, then the order of priority is:

f. They must be offered a place by any underwriting College, if it has an unfilled place;

g. They must be offered a place by the College that underwrote their offer

Opportunity Oxford

At the Final Meeting, colleagues will be invited to identify any candidates to be nominated for Opportunity Oxford. Since nominations should go to students who would not otherwise be offered a place, this will be dealt with after all offer decisions have been declared and reviewed. The Faculty Admissions Coordinator will need to consult colleges and the central team in charge of Opportunity Oxford. The process for securing Opportunity Oxford places is likely to continue well into 10th week and College Tutors are kindly requested to keep the Admissions Coordinator fully updated.

Entering Decisions

All decisions will be entered on ADSS following the Final Admissions meeting.

The Admissions Co-ordinator will enter this information and College Tutors should check and amend it. (College Tutors should also alert the Admissions Coordinator to any mistakes.) By the end of Friday, all place decisions and changes of status recorded on ADSS will be considered final.

Decisions may be entered or amended on the *Theology and Religion Interview Decisions* View and a summary of places awarded is provided as read-only data on the *Theology and Religion Places Awarded* View.

The progress of Opportunity Oxford nominations will noted and communicated.

If you experience any difficulties in entering or amending decisions following the meeting or after the Friday deadline, please contact the Admissions Coordinator urgently.

Tutors should not communicate with any candidate before the embargo is lifted on 14th January.

COMMUNICATION WITH CANDIDATES

Embargo

There is a strict embargo on contacting candidates before **Tuesday 14th January 2020 (Wk 0).**

Feedback

Candidates are invited to request feedback on their performance and it is good practice to include feedback in or alongside any offer letter, or rejection letter, that you send.

It is often helpful to include some provisional statistics from that year's Admissions round. The Admissions Co-ordinator will compile these before the end of December and send them to College Tutors.

Please remember that those involved in the Admissions process have access to sensitive personal data. The University advises that references to the performance of individuals should be addressed to those individuals only. In other words, personalised feedback letters should be sent directly to candidates. Letters may be sent to referees but should contain only generic information. If writing to referees, please consider encouraging them to continue to supporting applications to our Theology and Religion courses at Oxford.

CONFIRMATION

This takes place in the week that A Level results are published.

Monday 10th August 2019,	Results are made available to Colleges and departments through eVision
Wednesday 12th August 2019, **4:00 p.m.**	Deadline for all decisions which can be made before the embargo is lifted
Thursday 13th August 2020 9 a.m.	**RESULTS DAY** Colleges may contact schools for missing grade information

Embargo

All results data is strictly confidential and under no circumstances should any information be conveyed to anyone outside the University (including Schools) before the end of the embargo period on 13th August.

UCAS operates a "zero breach" policy. You must inform UAO immediately if you have breached or think you have breached the results embargo. UCAS provide an online training module, which contains useful information about what constitutes an embargo breach, the timings and scope of the embargo periods, and practical advice on how to avoid a breach. Further information is available in the UAO Handbook.

Confirmation Decisions and Processing

There is a limited role for College Tutors, as follows:

If you are underwriting an Open Offer and/or have an unfilled place, please contact the Admissions Coordinator to confirm your intentions with regard to Open Offer candidates, in accordance with the Open Offer scheme outlined above.

In Hilary Term 2018 a binding vote on the movement of candidates at confirmation was taken. The vote was carried by a clear majority of 24 colleges voting in favour of the proposal that near-miss candidates with **extenuating circumstances** and the ability to flourish at Oxford can be offered a place by another college. These arrangements will also enable departments and faculties to have sight of the whole cohort at confirmation, and be able to offer advice to colleges about the performance and circumstances of other near-miss candidates. Also available for use for confirmation this summer is the guidance on extenuating circumstances, which can be used by colleges to support their decision making if they wish.

If you are considering admitting any candidate who has failed to meet the conditions of his/her offer, please contact the Admissions Coordinator to discuss this and signal your intentions. In such a case, you are encouraged to consult the Guidance on Clemency, agreed by the Admissions Committee of the Conference of Colleges and published by UAO.

The Admissions Coordinator is responsible for attempting to ensure parity of treatment for all candidates and to update all admissions tutors with regard to the confirmation decisions being made across colleges. An update will be issued by email on a daily basis.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why does none of my candidate data appear on ADSS?

- Please check that you have selected your College and the correct course(s) from the menu on the upper left hand side of ADSS.

Why is the data I have entered not displaying properly?

- Please remember to press 'Save' – ADSS normally prompts you to do this.
- Refresh your browser.
- Log out of Webauth and back in again.
- Try a different browser – ADSS prefers Firefox or Chrome.

Why won't ADSS let me enter data?

- Some users have read-only access. All lead tutors have read/write access. Please contact the Admissions Coordinator if you think you have the wrong kind of access.
- Some views are intended to be read-only. In order to enter data, e.g. interview scores or place decisions, you will need to select the appropriate view from the menu on the left hand side.
- Some data is entered centrally or can only be entered by users with special privileges. Please contact the Admissions Coordinator if you think there are any errors in the centrally uploaded data.

How will I know when to do what?

- Please consult the timelines and deadlines marked in this manual.
- The Admissions Coordinator will endeavour to send emails to remind the group of College Tutors.

APPENDIX 1: STANDING ORDERS OF THE ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

Undergraduate Admissions Committee

Purpose and Activity

The Committee will review all applications for the three undergraduate degrees and make recommendations for deselection or shortlisting for interview based on this overview of the whole field of applications.

The Committee will be consulted by email circulation during the admissions exercise to revise and confirm these recommendations.

The Committee will Assist and advise the Admissions Co-ordinator both in advance of and during the admissions exercise in relation to design and management of the exercise, assessment of individual applications, ensuring consistency and fairness at all points in the exercise.

Membership

The Committee shall consist of the following individuals:
- Admissions Co-ordinator (chair): *ex officio*
- Admissions Co-ordinator for the Philosophy Faculty: *ex officio*

Three or four other College Admissions Tutors. Where possible it is desirable for the Committee to include members with experience in one or more of the following:
- Assessment of applications from mature students
- Assessment of applications from international students
- Admissions to a College admitting a relatively large number of students for our courses
- Admissions to a PPH

Membership is renewable year on year at the invitation of the Admissions Co-ordinator.

Meetings

The Committee shall meet when convened by the Admissions Co-ordinator. There will normally be one long meeting during the sixth week of Michaelmas Term.

Director of Undergraduate Studies and Outreach (excerpt)

(ii) to provide a link to ADEX and co-ordinate responses from the Faculty perspective (with appropriate reference to the Faculty Board and Undergraduate Studies Committee). To have specific responsibility for co-ordinating undergraduate admissions.

Together with a small (approximately four-person) Admissions Committee, and in cooperation with College Tutors, the DUS:
- oversees the marking of candidates' written-work
- oversees the initial, Faculty-wide process of deselecting and inviting candidates for interview
- oversees the process of first-College reallocation
- allocates all invited candidates to second Colleges for second-round interviews
- works as needed with the Faculties that also oversee Theology and Religion joint schools (e.g., Philosophy and Oriental Studies)
- chairs any post-admissions meeting with College Tutors

APPENDIX 2: WRITTEN WORK MARKING CONVENTIONS

80+ Work that in addition to meeting the criteria of the 70-79 band displays outstanding competence, flair, ability and/or maturity, above and beyond what one would expect of students who have yet to start their tertiary education, and which may appear more typical of a second BA student with a good first degree.

70-79 Written work of an exceptional quality, very well presented, very cogently argued, showing an excellent grasp of the material and, where appropriate, making excellent use of sources.

65-69 Highly competent work that is well presented and well argued, and shows a good grasp of the material discussed and/or makes good use of the source material employed.

60-64 Competent work that shows the ability to make a good argument in good English prose, and/or that shows a good grasp of the material discussed, with few errors of reasoning, fact or spelling and grammar.

55-59 Semi-competent work that nevertheless shows some potential; there may be some errors of fact, some faulty reasoning, some poor writing, or else not much grasp of the material discussed, without the work failing in all or most of these areas.

50-54 Lacklustre work that shows some combination of poor prose, poor reasoning, or poor grasp of material without being totally hopeless. Typically, this would be range of marks assigned to written work that just escapes a deselection decision.

45-49 Poor work, badly written, badly argued, and with minimal grasp of the material discussed. Work of this quality would normally result in deselection unless there are very strong mitigating circumstances or very positive indicators for virtually every other selection criterion (e.g. written statement, references and existing qualifications).

below 44 Very poor work that is so dire that the candidate should be deselected no matter what the other selection criteria appear to indicate.

The foregoing mark scale is intended to be a rough equivalent of that which might be used at Prelims, allowing for the fact that no University-level work has yet been undertaken. It is likely that the great majority of marks awarded will be in the range 40-80, but the full range of marks from 0-100 is in principle available and markers should accordingly feel free to award marks about 80 or below 40 for the exceptionally good or exceptionally poor pieces of work that merit it.

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW PROFORMA

Candidate Name	Course
	T&R/ P&T/ ROS

INTERVIEW SCALE	First Interviewer mark:
70-80 Outstanding interview	
60-69 Competent to very impressive interview;	Second interviewer mark:
further subdivided into:	AGREED MARK FOR ADSS
66–69 somewhat impressive to very impressive interview	
60–65 competent but unimpressive interview	
51–59 Poor interview	
40–50 Very poor interview	

Ability to think clearly including
Understanding complex concepts
Forming sound arguments
Listening to and responding to counterarguments
Openness to learning

Ability at close textual reading and interpretation

Evidence of Enthusiasm including
Dedication and diligence in work
Evidence of independent thought and reading
Ability to develop ideas presented in written work
Oral Communication Skills

Other comments

Contextual data: Quick Reference Guide

What is contextual data?

Contextual data is additional information about the background of an applicant, which can help decision-making. UAO collates contextual data for all UK-domiciled applicants educated in the UK secondary system, using publicly available information from the government, and disseminates this information to colleges and departments. All contextual data is provided through ADSS. For 2020 entry the University has changed the policy on the use of contextual data and flagging. The new approach is much more granular than that which it replaces. Rather than being binary, it uses a range of socio-economic and school measures to place individual applicants on a spectrum of disadvantage. This change has been introduced to support the more effective identification of under-represented and disadvantaged students.

Contextual data measures

There are **six** individual contextual measures in three broad categories: time spent in Care, Residential postcode, and Prior education.

Care Flag Applicant has spent more than three months in care	**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
POLAR4 Measures the proportion of young people who enter higher education aged 18 or 19 between the years 2009-10 and 2014-15.	**Post-16 School score** Average point score per academic entry (A-level or equivalent)
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.	**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

Each measure is divided into **five** quintiles (or categories for ACORN) from most advantaged **Quintile 5/(Category 1** for ACORN) to most disadvantaged **Quintile 1/(Category 5** for ACORN) with an associated measure score. Measure scores are combined to reflect the applicant's **composite score.** Further information is **here.**

Individual measure quintiles/categories appear on UCAS forms in ADSS. The colour coding reflects the spectrum of disadvantage (from **most disadvantaged** to **most advantaged)**

CONTEXTUAL DATA						Composite Measure		cGCSE score
Care	POLAR4	ACORN	Pre-16	Post-16	%FSM	Score	Course Percentile	
N	1	4	3	1	2	79	99.29	0.77

Applicant's **Course percentile** rank positions them within their course based on their composite score. A higher composite score indicates higher disadvantage; equally a higher rank indicates higher disadvantage.

Where data is not available for UK-domiciled applicants, the individual measures show N/A (Not applicable) and the composite score and course percentile ranks are blank. For international applicants it's O/S (Overseas).

Bands of Disadvantage

Based on their composite score, all university applicants are allocated into one of four Bands A-B-C-D on ADSS.

Band A	These candidates are the most disadvantaged 15% of the Oxford cohort. **Action required:** Candidates in Band A **must be strongly recommended for interview**, provided that they are predicted to achieve the standard conditional offer for the course, and that they perform to an appropriate standard in any required pre-interview admissions test.
Band B	Band B candidates are also disadvantaged relative to the Oxford cohort. They comprise the next 25% of the cohort after Band A. **Action required:** Candidates in Band B **should be given serious consideration for interview,** provided that they are predicted to achieve the standard conditional offer for the course, and that they perform to an appropriate standard in any required pre-interview admissions test.
Band C	Band C candidates fall in approximately the next 40% of the cohort. They are not as disadvantaged as candidates in Band A and B, but they do not have all of the advantages of those in Band D.
Band D	These candidates are in the most advantaged quintiles/categories for every indicator. The composite score for these candidates is 5.

For all bands, admitting tutors are asked to consider relative advantage and disadvantage when assessing individual candidates.

Course graphs
The UCAS forms for UK-domiciled applicants also display the distribution of composite scores within the course or course group.
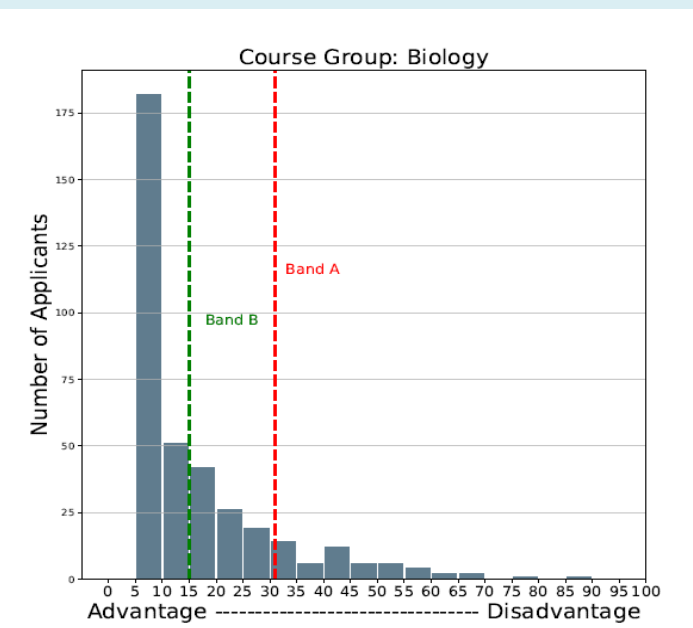
The graph shows:
-the number of candidates for the course (Axis Y)
-(candidates) from most advantaged to most disadvantaged based on the composite scores (Axis X).
-the cut-off score for Band A (red dotted line)
-the cut-off score for Band B (green dotted line).

Action required: Admitting tutors can use this graph to identify where the composite score of an individual applicant lies in the distribution for their course.

Applicants with missing data (UK-domiciled only)
When a candidate has missing data for one or more measures of disadvantage, their individual indicators on the UCAS form, as well as the composite scores, will be displayed as N/A. These candidates will have **Band N/A** unless the available data already places them in **Band A.** Tutors will have to make their own individual assessment of the candidate's degree of disadvantage based on the contextual data that is available and any additional information on disadvantage from other parts of the UCAS form.

Contextualised GCSE 9/8/A* score (cGCSE)

It is recommended that **cGCSE scores should be used as part of the assessment of all UK applicants** with GCSEs, alongside other information, including contextual data and flags.

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. This is only available for applicants from schools in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.
The score is calculated as follows:
- the GCSE performance score (fraction of students getting 5 or more A*/A/9/8/7) of every school is calculated from pupil performance results published by the government;
- the entire applicant cohort to Oxford (across all subjects) is analysed to calculate the 'expected' number of A*/9/8 grades that an 'average' applicant from a school with a particular GCSE performance score should achieve;
- the number of A*/9/8 grades achieved by each applicant is compared to their 'expected' number to produce their cGCSE score.

The cGCSE score is expressed as the number of standard deviations the applicant is away from their 'expected' number of A*/9/8 grades. It will typically be in the range -3 to +3, expressed to 2 decimal places. Very roughly:
- 0 – the applicant has achieved exactly the 'expected' number of A*/9/8 grades for a school with that particular GCSE performance score;
- +1 – the applicant's number of A*/9/8 grades achieved is in the top 15% of the range expected from applicants at schools with that particular GCSE performance score;
- +2 – the applicant's number of A*/9/8 grades achieved is in the top 2.5% of the range expected from applicants at schools with that particular GCSE performance score.

For further information about cGCSE, including its limitations, please see the Contextual Data section in the Admissions

Further information
The Admissions Handbook contains much more detailed information on how contextual data is compiled. Both the Handbook and ADSS also contain all the school performance data which is used to calculate contextual data.
- Published University policy on Contextual Data
- ADSS webview
- Admissions Handbook: ADSS (including course manuals)
- Contacts lists (including Admissions Coordinators)
- Admissions Handbook: Qualifications reform (including GCSE 9-1 grade changes)

For questions about contextual data not related to its use in particular courses, please contact ADSS or Admissions Operations.