English Language and Literature: Admissions Round 2025 (for 2026 entry)
Information for Applicants

The below information relates solely to the BA in English Language and Literature.

1. Admissions Statistics

Application Numbers

No. of applications	996
Applicants per place	4.07
No. of open applications	107
No. of applications for deferred entry	14
No. of applicants shortlisted	642
No. of offers	245 (7 of which were deferred offers)

Breakdown of applicants by domicile

UK	716
EU	34
Not EU	247

Breakdown of applicants by gender:

Women	777
Men	184
I use another term / I prefer not to say	35

2.1 Shortlisting Procedure

Published Criteria:

https://www.english.ox.ac.uk/what-we-look-for-undergraduate

Shortlisting Process

College tutors read and assess the UCAS form. The written work is marked centrally by a team of Faculty markers, with each piece of written work being double-marked in all cases, with the average of the two marks used in the shortlisting calculation. Where there is a significant difference between the two marks, the written work is third-marked to determine the final mark used in the shortlisting.

The scores for a candidate's UCAS form and written work are combined with their contextualized GCSE score to generate their pre-interview score (see below for details of weightings). The contextualized GCSE contextualizes an applicant's GCSEs results by considering the school performance data of their GCSE school. Candidates' pre-interview scores are used to rank them and place them in deciles. Deciles 1-5 (i.e. the top 50%) are automatically shortlisted.

Tutors then shortlist candidates below decile 5 at their discretion, in accordance with Faculty guidelines, which ask that tutors consider shortlisting candidates whose profile/scores show promise in some areas, even if their overall pre-interview score was not in the top 50%. The guidelines require tutors to give especially careful consideration to applicants whose contextual data shows them to be in the most disadvantaged group of candidates. This year 64.5% of candidates were shortlisted.

Reallocation Process

The reallocation process uses an algorithm that seeks to ensure that each candidate has the best possible chance of receiving an offer. It also seeks to ensure colleges have the same, or very similar, number of shortlisted candidates per place (not including any decile 6-10 candidates who have been 'rescued').

Colleges that have an above average number of shortlisted candidates per place are classed as 'exporting' colleges; colleges that have a below average number of shortlisted candidates per place are classed as 'importing' colleges. Exporting college are able to 'reserve' up to two candidates per place (e.g. if a college has 7 places for English, they can reserve up to 14 shortlisted candidates). Reserved candidates cannot be reallocated. All unreserved candidates in deciles 1-5 at exporting colleges are eligible for reallocation to an importing college.
The reallocation algorithm reallocates candidates according to a 'best chance' principle. It first ranks all eligible candidates by their pre-interview score. It then looks at each candidate in turn, beginning with the top-ranked candidate, and places that candidate at whichever importing college has the fewest number of shortlisted candidates with pre-interview scores better than or equal to their score (i.e. the college at which the candidate is likely to be most competitive, based on the pre-interview score). The algorithm will not reallocate a candidate if it determines that they stand the best chance by remaining at their original college. This year 90 candidates were reallocated pre-interview.

Weighting of components for pre-interview score

UCAS form	**25%**
cGCSE	**45%**
Written work	**30%**

Statistics on shortlisted applicants:

Average no. of GCSEs	10
Average contextualized GCSE score (between –3 and +3)	0.09
Average written work score	7.23
Average UCAS form score	7.8

2.2 Interview Process

Candidates usually receive two interviews at their first college. Each interview will be around 25 minutes. At least one of these interviews, and sometimes both, will involve a candidate being asked to discuss and analyse a passage, extract or poem. Interview panels usually consist of two tutors.

Interviews are scored between 1 and 10, with 10 high.

Second College Interviews

After all colleges have completed the first round of interviews, colleges meet in three groups to consider and allocate candidates for second college interviews. Candidates whose scores, including interview scores, indicate that they are highly competitive but who have yet to secure an offer from their first college, are considered for second college interviews. In some cases, candidates who are interviewed by another college still receive an offer from their first college.

Number of candidates who received second college interviews: 96.

Procedure for Final Decision Making

College tutors make final decisions by looking carefully at each candidate's complete profile (UCAS form, contextual data, qualifications, written work, interview scores), when compared against the profiles of other shortlisted candidates.