History and Politics 2026

ADMISSIONS STATISTICS

HPOL		Applicants	Shortlisted	Offers
Overall		619	226	49
Gender	Man	262	91	24
	Woman	346	125	23
	Use different term	4	2	1
	Prefer not to say	7	2	1
Domicile	UK	327	148	42
	EU	70	15	0
	Overseas	222	57	7
Average scores	Number 8/9/A* GCSE	-	8	8
	History written work	-	6.3	6.8
	History interview	-	6.4	7.8
	Politics interview	-	6.1	7.6
Interviews	1st interviews	-	220	46
	2nd interviews	-	18	3
Course change	Shortlisted for History	-	32	6
	2nd interview for History	-	7	2
	Offers for History (HPOL interview)	-	-	12

SHORTLISTING PROCESS

History selection criteria:

- Enthusiasm for history
- Evidence of historical imagination and understanding, particularly the ability to speculate and compare
- The possession of appropriate historical knowledge and the capacity to deploy it
- Intellectual curiosity
- The capacity to engage with alternative perspectives and/or new information
- Capacity for hard work
- Accuracy and attention to detail

Weighting of selection scores:

100% contextualised GCSE

Shortlisting procedure:

For candidates with GCSEs, the Faculty produced a spreadsheet of candidates, ordered by selection score, with the threshold cut-off score indicated. The threshold is determined by the desired places to interview ratio of 2.5 : 1, but taking into account the number of candidates without GCSEs. Candidates below the cut-off are recommended for deselection (no interview) unless there are strong grounds for retaining particular candidates on the basis of:

- contextual data pertaining to school and/or socio-economic background
- relevant information from the UCAS forms, for example illness or difficult family circumstances.
- A-level and predicted A-level results (neither used in calculating the de-selection score).

College admissions tutors could 'rescue' candidates from below the cut off line, but all rescued candidates had to be approved by the HPOL Admissions Co-ordinator, and had to be interviewed by the rescuing college.

Candidates without GCSEs were not ranked and selection decisions made on the basis of available evidence.
College admissions tutors could also decide to select candidates for an interview in History at this stage, and had to interview such candidates within their college.
After candidates are selected for interview, there is a redistribution process to even out candidates between colleges.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

Interviews:

All interviews were conducted over Microsoft Teams, with each candidate having interviews for History and Politics. After their interview, each candidate was given a score for each interview.
History scoring is based on:

- Clarity of thought and expression
- Analytical ability
- Flexibility
- Enthusiasm and commitment
- Historical imagination
- Use of appropriate historical knowledge: candidates must demonstrate that they have understood well what they have studied, and demonstrate their ability to deploy historical evidence in support of an interpretation.

The Faculty ranks all candidates after all 1st interviews are complete, using the weighting below:
50% cGCSE
10% Written work
40% History interview
Candidates are then put into bands depending on their ranking.

After the scores are available, college admissions tutors make a decision for each candidate:
Place for History
Recommend for 2nd interview
Reject

Allocation of second interviews:

High-scoring candidates who were not offered a place after the first interview were allocated a second interview at a college that had not filled all their places.

Procedure for decision making:

Further decisions are made by college admissions tutors after 2nd interview. When all decisions have been entered and the list of Open Offers to be made agreed, they are finalised by the Faculty.