

Balliol College



Feedback on Undergraduate Admissions December 2018

Subject: Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE)

PPE is an extremely competitive degree at Oxford, and received 2338 applications across the University this year, a ratio of over 8 applications per available place. Of these 2338, 182 applications were direct to Balliol. Some Balliol applicants were then reallocated to other colleges, a process that helps balance out the number of applications per college and hence the prospect of admission. All applicants were expected to sit the Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA). For more detailed information on the 2018 TSA results please see <http://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/thinking-skills-assessment/tsa-oxford/scoring-and-results/>.

The majority of the 2338 applications received across the University were rejected before interview, with in total 719 applicants eventually shortlisted for interview. This included fifty-one of the Balliol applicants. Shortlisting was based in part on the performance in the TSA, but also included consideration of other aspects of applications as evidenced in the UCAS form, including predicted and obtained examination results. These data were evaluated with consideration of relevant contextual information.

Shortlisted applicants were invited to Oxford for interview, though some applicants, principally those from outside the EU, being interviewed by Skype. The format of the interviews allowed applicants who had not taken school courses in PPE subjects to not to be at a disadvantage. Performance at interview was then considered alongside TSA score and information in the UCAS form, again with consideration of contextual information, in determining to whom to offer places. In total around 275 offers were made across the University, with thirteen of these offers made by Balliol.

Prospective applicants may be interested in this suggested reading:
<https://www.ppe.ox.ac.uk/how-to-prepare-for-ppe>