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### Modern Languages Admissions Feedback Information for Applicants – 2023

NB. In previous years this document was compiled from statistics automatically generated by MLAD, the Modern Languages Admissions Database. This year, following the decommissioning of MLAD and the faculty's move to ADSS, some of the statistical information given below may be different or presented in a different format from previous years. Please contact [admissionscoordinator@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:admissionscoordinator@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk) for further details.

#### 1. ADMISSIONS STATISTICS

This year, 752 candidates applied for courses with Modern Languages, an increase of 10% on last year's number of 685.

Total number of applications: 752

Candidates who withdrew or were not invited for interview: 66

Candidates interviewed: 686

Places offered for 2024: 310

Places offered for 2025: 9

Opportunity Oxford Offers: 24

Ratio of applications to offers: 2.36 applications per offer

Applications in 2023			
Language	Number of applicants (2022, 2021); gender	Joint Schools	Number of applicants (2022, 2021); gender
Czech	8 (3, 4) 6M/2W	CML	27 (24, 32) 6 M/ 20 W/ 1 UAT
French	395 (322, 380) 106 M/ 275 W/ 4 PNTS/ 5 UAT	EMEL	34 (43, 38) 14 M/ 19 W/ 1 PNTS
GAI	32 (16, 18) 11 M/ 18 W/ 1 PNTS/ 1 UAT	EML	112 (106, 123) 14 M/ 97 W/ 1 PNTS
German	115 (103, 139) 35 M/ 78 W/ 1 PNTS/ 1 UAT	HML	89 (79, 84) 26 M/ 62 W/ 1 PNTS
Italian	91 (104, 86) 28 M/ 65 W	MLL	87 (91, 92) 25 M/ 55 W/ 4 PNTS/ 5 UAT
Modern Greek	8 (9, 9) 3 M/ 5 W	PML	54 (57, 68) 25 M/ 29 W

Polish	0 (1, 1)		
Portuguese	35 (19, 28) 13 M/ 22W		
RAI	25 (27, 31) 8 M/ 17 W		
Russian	31 (31, 31) 14 M/ 15 W/ 2 PNTS		
Spanish	236 (241, 290) 66 M/ 166 W/ 2 PNTS/ 1 UAT		

## 2. ADMISSIONS PROCESS

### 2.0. General Admissions Criteria

Successful candidates for admission displayed the qualities listed below. The admissions process as a whole is designed to identify which candidates possess them in the greatest measure:

- Motivation and commitment along with capacity for sustained study of language and literature.
- Communication: willingness and ability to express ideas clearly and effectively both in writing and orally; ability to listen and to give considered responses.
- Proven competence in the language(s) as established by schoolwork written in the language(s), by the language test and (in some cases) by oral competence at interview. In the case of beginners, clear evidence of aptitude and potential for language study.
- While there is no requirement that candidates will have read any literature in the language(s), successful candidates will demonstrate an aptitude and commitment to the study of literature by evidence of their readiness to discuss their reading in English or in the relevant language(s) or by their response to a reading-passage at interview. Assessors will look for evidence of intellectual curiosity and critical engagement.

Selection is competitive and it may well be that a candidate is able to demonstrate these qualities and nonetheless is edged out of contention by a candidate with stronger all-round claims. In applying these criteria, the main concern is to identify proven competence in the language(s) along with future promise and aptitude in literary and cultural studies.

Candidates who display one or more of the above shortcomings may nonetheless be invited for interview if the paper application reveals a clear justification for, or explanation of, the shortcomings and clear alternative evidence of the candidate's potential.

### 2.1. Shortlisting

A decision not to shortlist a candidate conforms to current ML guidelines, according to which candidates will normally be invited to interview unless they display at least one of the following shortcomings:

- results in official examinations, especially GCSE, are not at a sufficiently high level;

- results predicted for A-level or other impending official examination suggest that the candidate:
  1. is unlikely to succeed in meeting a conditional offer;
  2. the school report contains clear negative aspects relevant to the general admissions criteria;
- the written work submitted is clearly deficient in respect of the general admissions criteria;
- test results are a) in the bottom quintile for each of two languages, or b) a test result in the bottom quintile means an application in a single language or joint school or a language with a beginners' language (except for any language where a LAT score is available) is not viable.

**NB. In the 2023 admissions round a significant number of our candidates experienced technical disruption to their online language test.** 184 requests for Special Consideration were received. Of these, 5 were not upheld and 15 had requests unrelated to technical issues. All the others were for technical problems, either for disruption to the MLAT test or in some cases for joint-school candidates, anxiety due to disruption in a different test sat the previous day. **Test results were not used as a criterion in shortlisting decisions for any candidate who had experienced disruption to the test. All candidates who were judged to have experienced the most severe level of disruption were shortlisted for interview.**

Reallocation:

The purpose of reallocation is to give worthwhile candidates the chance of interview. Colleges with a higher ratio of candidates to places than the average across all Colleges will automatically be invited to reallocate candidates. Colleges with a lower ratio than the average will be asked to receive candidates.

Number of Reallocated students: 85

## 2.2 Interview Process

Interviews took place on Teams in the second and third weeks of December. During the interviews, candidates were given the opportunity to demonstrate their motivation and commitment, and their capacity for the sustained study of language and literature. They were assessed against the published criteria on their overall communication skills and, where appropriate, on their oral competence in the relevant language(s). We know that it is disappointing to candidates and their schools that we are not able to offer places to all of the very able young people we see.

All candidates receive at least two interviews from their First Choice College. All data is shared on ADSS and Admissions Tutors from other colleges can arrange further interviews, with priority given to colleges on the computer-generated string of 'lower' choices.

Over 100 additional interviews were held.

### Guide Score:

ADSS calculates each candidate's Guide Score by double-weighting the Interview Score and single-weighting all other factors. Schoolwork is not included in the guide score calculation. GCSE score (or its contextualised equivalent) and Composite Score (based on Contextual Data concerning Prior Education, Residential Postcode and Care Status) are then taken into account before Admissions Tutors make a final decision.

The Mark Scheme (for schoolwork and interviews) is as follows:

10 outstanding	80+
9 excellent	79–75
8 very good	74–70
7 good	69–67
6 promising	66–64
5 competent	63–61
4 adequate	60–58
3 poor	57–51
2 weak	50–45
1 very weak	44–

All decisions to offer places to ML candidates (Joint School included) were confirmed at the ML Admissions Final Decisions meeting on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023. All colleges involved were represented by their ML Primary Users together with the Co-ordinators from each Joint Schools and from the Opportunity Oxford scheme.

We are grateful to colleges for their help in making the selection process run so smoothly.

### **3. PRE-INTERVIEW ADMISSIONS TESTS**

The written language tests last half-an-hour and are taken in schools in November. Some candidates were unable to sit the test in schools, and sat it at home with remote invigilation. The test may vary in format from one language to another. The test is designed to test knowledge of basic structures of the foreign language. It is not primarily a test of vocabulary. Each year, tests are vetted by a committee which involves secondary school teachers so that they reflect current teaching aims and practices.

Candidates may be informed of the quintile in which the test score fell, but it is Modern Languages practice not to release the actual test scores since the quintile provides more context for the performance, due to the incomparability across the languages (i.e. French vs. Russian). Modern Languages does not currently produce graphs of test performance as this might enable the identification of individual students in smaller languages such as Czech and Modern Greek.