

The Ruskin School of Art

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APPLYING TO STUDY FOR A BACHELOR OF FINE ART

This document outlines the admissions process as it relates to Fine Art undergraduate applicants.

BACKGROUND

The Ruskin School is the Fine Art Department of the University of Oxford. Application to the undergraduate Bachelor of Fine Art degree is competitive. The Ruskin welcomes applications from students with diverse backgrounds and experiences, including mature students and students from overseas.

Clear guidelines on the academic qualifications undergraduate applicants need to attain can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/2bgqyv>

Information regarding international qualifications can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/b84mru5>

Information about English language requirements is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/2b679xn>

For candidates who are undertaking vocational qualifications, please follow this link for more information about required subjects and levels : <http://tinyurl.com/a6b67bo>

We normally recommend that candidates commence a Foundation Course in Fine Art (or equivalent) before applying, though a small number of candidates are accepted directly from school.

OPEN DAYS

If you can, it is a good idea to attend an Open Day at the Ruskin. Three days are organised each academic year and coincide with the University's main Open Days, when other colleges and departments are also open to visitors.

Open Days offer you an opportunity to hear more about the content of the BFA course and the annual admissions process. Ruskin tutors begin the session with a talk in the Drawing Studio at 74 High Street and this is followed by a tour of both sites. There is no requirement to book to attend an Open Day at the Ruskin, although some other departments and colleges do require booking, so please check their websites.

More information about the Ruskin's Open Days can be found at: http://www.ruskin-sch.ox.ac.uk/about/open_days

COLLEGIATE SYSTEM

In order to study at the University of Oxford, you need to belong to both a college *and* a department.

Each college determines their own student cohort. On the Ruskin's website, you will find a list of colleges that accept undergraduate and/or postgraduate Fine Art students. Each college has its

own distinctive character, so you may well have a preference. To understand more about the colleges, please follow this link:

http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate_courses/colleges/index.html

When applying, it is possible to choose a specific college or to make an open application, where you select the subject that you wish to study but do not select a college. With an open application, you will then be assigned a college. Please bear in mind that successful candidates can be offered a place at a different college to the one to which they originally applied.

UCAS SUBMISSION

To apply for the undergraduate Bachelor of Fine Art degree at the Ruskin, each applicant is required to complete and submit a UCAS form by the deadline in mid-October.

For information and assistance regarding this process, please refer to the UCAS website: www.ucas.com.

Please note that all applications for a BFA need to be submitted online to UCAS by mid-October in the year before the intended year of entry. The Ruskin does not offer deferred entry.

The mid-October deadline applies to *all* BFA applicants.

PORTFOLIO SUBMISSION & SHORTLISTING

Once the UCAS form has been submitted, all applicants then need to arrange for their portfolios to be delivered directly to the Ruskin. An application can be made void if a portfolio is not submitted. It is therefore very important to meet both the UCAS deadline and the portfolio submission deadline.

For details on the preparation of your portfolio, and more specific advice, please refer to the downloadable sheet on the Ruskin's website. *It is essential that all applicants submit a portfolio that complies with the stipulated guidelines.*

The deadline for submitting your portfolio to the Ruskin is mid-November, approximately one month after the UCAS deadline. A downloadable Guide to BFA Admissions is available on the Ruskin's website. This offers a clear visual guide to the relevant deadlines.

When the Ruskin staff view the portfolios we are always looking beyond the fulfilment of School curricula. We look for highly motivated activity, over and above any project-based work. We look for a breadth of engagement, a sense of purpose and a strength of opinion in the way the portfolio is edited. We enjoy discovering a sense of the temperament behind the work and any other interests that inform the portfolio. We are emphatically not looking for a formula or a specific style, but we do seek signs of energetic, ambitious and inquisitive work.

Please note that the University uses the work you submit to the extent necessary for the conduct of the admission process. The University is not in a position to verify the contents of portfolios, or to make any special arrangements for care, custody or return. The University cannot therefore accept responsibility for any loss or damage.

Once candidates have been shortlisted, the colleges (and not the Ruskin) will write to advise you if you have been selected for interview. The Ruskin normally retains the portfolios of those applicants who have been shortlisted until the interview date. Portfolios can then be taken away once the interview process is completed.

If you are not shortlisted, you should arrange to collect your portfolio from the Ruskin.

PORTFOLIO DELIVERY AND COLLECTION

When arranging delivery of your portfolio, it is extremely important to ensure that your work is securely packaged.

Please also remember that it is your responsibility to clarify with courier companies the importance of delivering your work by the deadline and to meet all the associated payments. The delivery and return of a portfolio remains entirely a candidate's responsibility.

Portfolios should be delivered to:

The Ruskin School of Art
74 High Street
Oxford, OX1 4BG

Deliveries can be accepted between Mondays and Fridays from 9.30 am – 8.30 pm, and on Saturday mornings from 9 am – 12 noon.

There are a number of courier firms you can use, such as Fed-Ex, TNT, DHL. Alternatively, a local mailing service is: Mail Boxes Etc at 94 London Road, Headington, Oxford, OX3 9FN. Telephone: 01865 741729. Email: info@mbeheadington.co.uk.

Please also make sure that your portfolio is collected by mid December/the end of term. We have limited space and cannot guarantee that we'll be able to store it after that time.

N.B. Please ensure that whoever is collecting your portfolio has your name, i.e., the name that is on the portfolio, so that they know whose work to collect. In the past, companies have arrived with only a delivery address (which may be different to the address on your application form). We cannot release portfolios without the company providing a name.

INTERVIEWS

Colleges, and not departments, write to candidates with the shortlisting results.

If you have been shortlisted, the college will advise you of the date and time of your interviews, either in a letter or on your arrival at Oxford. If you are based overseas and wish to receive the shortlisting results via email, please contact the college admissions office to let the college know.

You will be invited to stay at the first college of your choice, or the college to which you have been assigned if you made an open application. Whilst in Oxford, you will be interviewed by both the Ruskin and the college during the course of your stay. At the college you are likely to be interviewed by the College Tutor for Fine Art or a College Admissions Tutor.

For international students who find themselves unable to travel to the UK due to exceptional circumstances – for example, if a candidate is unable to process a visa in time, or has school exams – it is possible to request an interview by Skype. This would replace the interviews in Oxford. Please alert either the Ruskin or the college to which you have been assigned of your situation immediately upon hearing the shortlisting results.

The interview at the Ruskin School is undertaken by a small group of tutors. We see the interview as your chance to tell us about yourself and the ideas that inform your work. On the second day, all candidates undertake a Practical Test in the Drawing Studio. This gives you an opportunity to demonstrate your ability and inventiveness. If your interview is arranged for the Tuesday, please note that you will be given extra time for the Practical Test to allow for this. All the work from this test is retained by the Ruskin.

You are also invited to bring some of your recent work to your interview and this can often form a basis for discussion. You will be encouraged to talk about your work and interests and to discuss contemporary art, including exhibitions that you may have recently visited.

Finally, here is a useful website giving information on contemporary exhibitions around the UK:
www.newexhibitions.com

For more information about the University of Oxford's application process, please refer to the Oxford University Admissions website at: www.admissions.ox.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can telephone the Undergraduate Admissions office enquiry line on: 01865 288000.