



# TEACHERS' NEWSLETTER

We hope your academic year has got off to a good start and that your students applying to Oxford have now submitted their UCAS forms and registered for any admissions tests. In this newsletter you can find guidance on the next stages of the admissions process, including submitting written work and preparing students for interviews.

## ADMISSIONS TESTS



Good luck to all your students who are sitting our admissions tests on **30 October 2019**. We know that practising really helps students to do well, so please encourage them to have a go at some past or sample papers, ideally under timed conditions. They can find these on our **individual test pages**, which also contain further information about how to prepare.

## OXFORD INTERVIEWS

The interview is a crucial part of our admissions process. A lot of the teaching at Oxford takes place in small interactive classes or tutorials, and the interviewers – who may be your students' future tutors – use these to assess a candidate's ability to study, think and learn in this way. Tutors are looking for self-motivation, enthusiasm and academic potential. They are interested in an applicant's capacity for thinking independently and engaging with new ideas beyond the scope of their school or college syllabus. Coming for an interview is also a great opportunity for candidates to experience student life at Oxford and to decide whether they would enjoy studying here.



### INTERVIEW TRAVEL EXPENSES

We work really hard to remove any barriers that might make it difficult for candidates to come for interview, including the cost of travel. If your students are UK residents and attend a UK state school or college, then they may be eligible for free travel on public transport to and from Oxford. Candidates must be:

- currently eligible for Free School Meals;
- and/or in local authority care;
- and/or have another reason why it would be difficult for them to pay for travel to attend interview in Oxford.

In order to apply, candidates should follow the link included in their invitation to interview letter. They will be asked to fill out a form to give us the details we need to check their eligibility. Please encourage your students to complete this form as soon as they can as there isn't much time between invitation and the interviews so it is really important that they don't delay. Once we have received and checked the details, we will contact them with details about how to make a booking.



### SHORTLISTING FOR INTERVIEW

MID TO LATE NOVEMBER

Now the application deadline has passed, your students may be anxious to know whether they have been shortlisted for interview.

Due to the large number of applications we receive, it does take time to consider every element of an application, including performance in any admissions tests and written work. This means that students are usually given just a week or two of notice before their interview. Invitations are sent out via email or in the post.

Candidates who made an open application will normally be able to find out which college is assessing their application the week ending **26 October** by email and via UCAS.



### INTERVIEW PREPARATION

LATE NOVEMBER

There's lots of information on our website to help you prepare your students for their interviews. You may also like to look at these **sample questions**, which could be used in a mock interview.

Our best advice is to encourage your students to immerse themselves in their chosen subject in their own time; whether that's by reading something like National Geographic or the London Review of Books, attending an exhibition, or by watching a relevant documentary. You can also help your students to prepare by spending time discussing their subject with them so they can learn to articulate their ideas and opinions and feel confident doing so. For more tips, see our **Interview Guide**.



### ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

AFTER SHORTLISTING

If any of your students that are offered an interview need access arrangements because of a disability or long-term health condition they should let their college know as soon as possible, so they can begin to make necessary arrangements.

Colleges will make reasonable adjustments to support applicants at interview, for instance: by providing materials in alternative and accessible formats, arranging extra time for reading interview materials before, amending interview timings, or providing accessible accommodation.



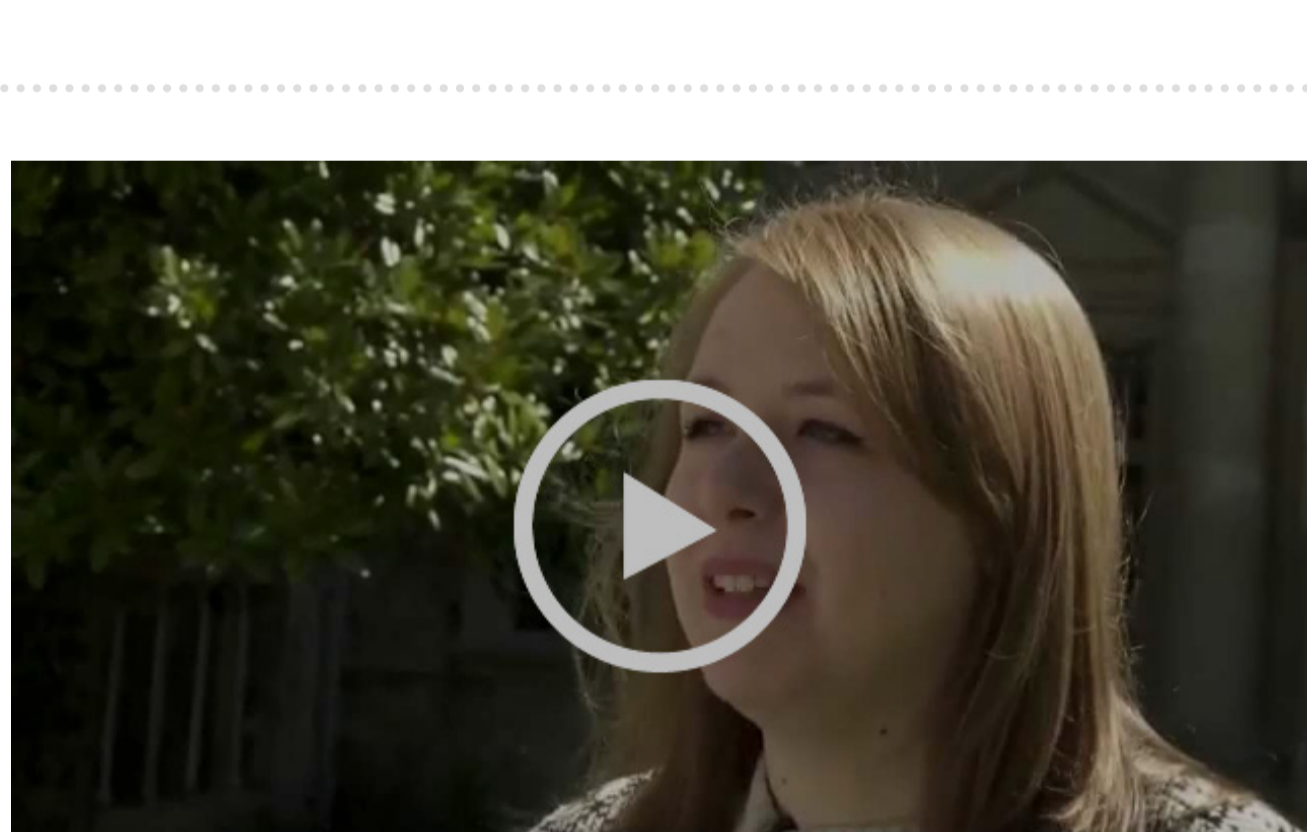
### INTERVIEW TIMETABLE

8-18 DECEMBER

This year's interviews will take place in Oxford between **Sunday 8 and Wednesday 18 December**. The full timetable can be found **here**.

Students should bring a copy of their personal statement and any written work they were asked to submit. Food and accommodation is completely free and there will be current students on hand to show them where to go.

There's no dress code for candidates, but they should remember to bring some warm clothes!



### OXFORD INTERVIEWS: WHAT TO EXPECT

## UNIQU APPLICATIONS



In 2020, there will be 1,350 places available on our free residential programme, UNIQU, for UK state school students in their first year of further education. Taking place over four nights and five days in spring and summer, the UNIQU residential programme offers pupils the opportunity to stay in an Oxford college, study a particular subject, experience undergraduate life and receive first-hand support on making a competitive application. UNIQU aims to encourage students who would do well at Oxford but might not have the confidence to apply.

We also run UNIQU Digital, an online platform which provides students with further mentoring, activities and advice in preparation for making their applications. UNIQU Digital is a resource that is available to all participants but also up to a further 1000 students who miss out on a residential place.

UNIQU is extremely effective at increasing a student's chances of success. Last year 40% of UNIQU participants who applied to study at Oxford were offered a place – the average success rate of UK applicants is 20% – so do please encourage your students to apply. Applications will open on **2 December** and close **27 January**. **For more information on how to help your pupils apply please click here.**

