

Case-study 3: an arts subject in a small traditional university which operates a devolved selection process, including assessment by academic admissions tutors

Programme of Study:	History (UCAS course code: V100)
Total applications received:	285
Places available:	Up to 130 (this target is shared across all single and joint honours history programmes)
Applications per place:	2.2:1 (when counting target for this course only)
Applicants invited for interview:	2
Offers made:	281
Percentage of offers made to applicants:	98%
Standard A-level offer	300 pts from 3 A-levels including a B in History
Range of accepted A-level achievement	80-500 tariff points
Average tariff score of accepted applicants:	290 (from A-levels only)
Proportion of accepted applicants with qualifications other than A-level:	11% (including admissions through clearing in August)

Selection process

Centralised or devolved selection	Devolved to the Faculty
Is an admissions test required?	No
Are interviews or auditions held?	No
Interview/audition period	n/a
Equal consideration date	15 January
Policy on considering applications after this date All applications receive the same consideration irrespective of when they are received. The programme is always open in UCAS EXTRA and clearing.	

Admissions policy setting process

The Faculty Admissions Coordinator agrees selection criteria with the admissions tutor, following consideration of the previous year's performance against target.

Published entry profile information on required academic criteria and skills:

We normally ask for three subjects taken to A level. One of these should be History, however we also consider applicants who have not studied the subject before. We are also happy to receive applications from those holding equivalent qualifications other than A-level and are very flexible about these. Applications from those with life experience but who may lack formal qualifications are welcomed. We recognise the full range of pre-degree level qualifications, and where these are absent consider students on the basis of submitted work (normally an essay question) and interview around that piece of work.

Detailed description of process

Applications are received centrally. A positive criminal conviction declaration starts the University risk assessment prior to tutor consideration. Those applicants who declare a disability are contacted by Disability Services for information about support needs.

Applications are considered by the Faculty's Admissions Coordinator against criteria previously agreed with the subject Admission Tutor based on history having been taken within A-levels or other equivalent qualifications. The coordinator reads the reference, paying attention to any strengths and predicted grades in particular in history (or where history not being taken, related social science/humanities). The coordinator also reads the personal statement looking for evidence of interest in the subject but as this degree has a wide range of options they do not require evidence of interest in any particular period. Any applications that do not meet those criteria, including any seeking transfer with credit are referred to the subject specialist.

The subject tutor will decide whether the applicant has the appropriate evidence of interest in and knowledge of history as shown through the personal statement and may decide to invite for a discussion. In a very few cases, normally where the applicant has not been in academic study within the last 5 years or where the previous study has not been related to history, the tutor will set an essay question and deadline for submission prior to discussion with the applicant. This is designed to determine the applicant's preparedness for HE, commitment and subject interest which can otherwise be demonstrated in the application through self-directed learning.

All applicants who receive an offer are invited to an applicants' open day.

Student case studies

Florence was a pupil at an independent girls' grammar school, taking A-levels in religious studies, politics and history and two further AS-levels. Her application was received on 17th October and she was sent a conditional offer on 31st October. Florence declined the offer and was accepted at her first choice CF institution.

Kevin chose to continue at his comprehensive school for his A-levels in ICT, English, General Studies and History. His application was received on 28th January and he received a conditional offer on 29th February which he accepted as his firm choice. He gained A-level grades B (history), C, D, D and his place was confirmed.

Dawn was a local mature applicant who had left school with one O-level. She had completed an NVQ3 but had not found this challenging. She expressed a deep interest in history which was apparent in discussion with the admission tutor in early May. Encouraged by that discussion she made a full application that was received on 12th May. The tutor did not feel it was necessary to meet with Dawn again and regarded the earlier discussion as her interview. She received unconditional offers on 30th May for both this and a related history degree and she accepted the alternate offer.

Unsuccessful applicants – the very small number of applicants not considered suitable for the course on the basis of their predicted/achieved grades being too low, or no apparent commitment to the subject were considered for other courses and made a change of course offer to a programme that appeared to match with their background/stated interests and were offered the opportunity to attend an open day to explore that option.