

## DEPARTMENTAL ADMISSIONS STATEMENT

*Department Name): Historical Studies*

*Admissions Tutor: Christine MacLeod*

### 1. Admissions Process

#### UK/EU Applicants

We welcome applicants from any geographical, social, ethnic, or educational background, and from any age group.

The Department's Admissions Tutor and designated readers work with the administrative support of the Faculty of Arts Admissions Office. The Admissions Tutor is responsible for admissions to the degrees of History (V100) and History with Study in German (V1R2). UCAS forms reach the Department via the University Admissions Office and the Faculty of Arts Admissions Office, who distribute them (in random bundles of fifty) to members of the academic staff designated as readers. All UCAS forms are considered independently by two members of academic staff (a reader and the Admissions Tutor). The reader records his/her opinion of each application on a departmental admissions pro-forma and passes it together with the UCAS form to the Admissions Tutor, who makes an independent assessment before reaching a preliminary decision on whether to make an offer and recording it on the pro-forma. Owing, however, to the intense competition for places, offers are not made immediately, in order that we can ensure fairness to all applicants who apply before the UCAS deadline and monitor the number of offers made. After final assessment, all forms are returned to the Faculty of Arts Admissions Office, who record the decision and forward the forms to the University Admissions Office for further processing and transmission to UCAS.

All applicants receive a written acknowledgement of their application within four weeks of its receipt by the Faculty of Arts Admissions Office, to establish contact and inform the candidate of the process being followed and when they can expect to receive a decision on their application.

There are no processes specific to Overseas applicants, except that their forms are fast-tracked through one designated reader (and the Admissions Tutor), since they are not subject to the UCAS quota.

## 2. Criteria for assessing candidates

### UK/EU Applicants

All applicants are assessed on the basis of their actual or predicted examination performance, the strength of their personal statement and their school/college reference. Given the number of applications we receive each year from applicants who have achieved or are predicted to achieve top grades, we necessarily place substantial emphasis upon the quality of the personal statement.

Candidates are not discriminated against on grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, religion, disability or age.

### Exam performance

We welcome applications from candidates offering any range of A2 subjects (or equivalents), including candidates not taking History at A2. We do not include General Studies A2 when making offers. Mature applicants are also welcome to apply on the basis of either recent A-levels or a relevant Access course. In the case of mature applicants vocational qualifications and/or employment history may in some instances also be taken into account.

For History with Study in German (V1R2) we require applicants to pass German A2 (or equivalent) at a minimum of grade B. Candidates for V100 who wish to transfer into the History with Study in French programme at the end of their first year are required to pass French A2 (or equivalent) at a minimum of Grade B.

When assessing examination performance, a range of contextual information is taken into account, including: school or college performance (assessed on the basis of the institution's average A level scores over the previous two years), and exceptional challenges which the candidate may have faced (such as serious illness or bereavement).

### Personal statement

We seek evidence of high levels of interest in, and commitment to, the study of history. We are particularly eager to identify applicants whose interest in the subject extends beyond the A2 syllabus (if they are taking A2 History). Evidence of wider reading and of a critical engagement with this reading is important. Applicants who have gained a relevant broader experience of the practice of history (e.g. museum work, independent research projects, etc.) are also given credit. Within the Personal Statement itself, we seek evidence of coherent, analytical and critical thinking. Credit is given for well-constructed and accurately expressed argument. We may also take into consideration competence in a foreign language or an understanding of how other relevant disciplines can inform the study of history.

### School/College reference

When assessing the school/college reference, we are looking for evidence of high levels of motivation, an ability to work independently, and intellectual inquisitiveness.

References should provide detailed assessment of the applicant's powers of analysis and expression, and of the applicant's potential for further development in these areas. We welcome teachers drawing our attention to applicants whose actual or predicted examination performance does not, in the teacher's opinion, accurately reflect their ability and commitment.

If English is not the applicant's first language, we require evidence of the necessary linguistic skills to cope with the demands of an undergraduate degree in the Arts: usually an overall IELTS score of 7.0, including 7.0 in writing.

Given the sheer number of applicants, only mature applicants are normally invited to interview. These interviews are conducted by two people, at least one of whom has been trained in fair and effective recruitment techniques, and are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities.

### **3. Offers**

#### *UK/EU Applicants*

Offers are usually within the range of AAA-AAB (or equivalent). The actual individual offer which is made varies according to a range of factors including AS level results, the combination of A levels being studied, any exceptional personal circumstances, and broader contextual information such as school performance.

Mature students with satisfactory recent academic or other subject-specific experience, will normally be made an unconditional offer. Other applicants will usually be advised prior to application to take an A-level or Access course at college, and any offer will be based on an A-C pass at A-level or a pass in Access.

History (V100) and History with Study in German (V1R2): we typically make 350-400 offers for the 107 places available. There is no separate quota for History with Study in German (V1R2).

The Department expects to receive over 1500 applications in each admissions cycle (including approximately 30 for History with Study in German). We must attempt to meet but not exceed our intake target. We do this by considering the statistics from the previous few years' cycle, taking into account the total number of applications, acceptance rate and rate of attainment of required grades. To ensure that we do not make too many offers, we usually hold applications until after the UCAS deadline in January, as explained in section 1. In addition, the Faculty of Arts Admissions Office maintains running statistics on admissions throughout the year, which allows us also to react to changes in trends occurring during the current cycle.

Regretfully, the pressure of numbers prevents us from offering feedback on individual applications. Any post-decision query should be addressed to the University Admissions Office.