KEBLE AT LARGE

**ENGINEERING SCIENCE**

APPLICATION GUIDE

https://lh4.googleusercontent.com/cgzbTaKLX_mVSRL6gGJBvo9U4X4q9P4XBYsW-NO5eVS3aLlOxbmBf0TzrcFk98oARnTGozjkO7i7gTXLWCA6c3Sfq5qbCU0xIhkh8zhw6Y-6qyLOFzUwJlN7hXxYzm7KErsN2W-2

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| **Deadline for applying through UCAS** | **15th October 2016** |
| **A-Level requirements** | **A\*A\*A to include Mathematics and Physics**A\*s must be in Mathematics, Physics or Further Mathematics |
| **Aptitude test?** | **Yes – ­­Physics Aptitude Test (PAT)** |
| **Course length** | **4 years** |
| **Qualification** | **MEng in Engineering Science** |

**UCAS Application**

* Every application to University starts with UCAS: applying to Oxford for any subject has an earlier deadline than other Universities so be sure to keep this in mind.
* Your teacher will submit references about you but you shouldn’t worry too much as your teachers should hopefully be saying positive things about you!
* All of your academic, and certain extracurricular, achievements then get entered into UCAS and shared with the University.
* It is also important to note that academic scores are considered in light of your school’s performance; for example, GCSE performance that outperforms the average from your school will be flagged up even if you have a lower number of A\*s than other applicants. Therefore, there is no specific GCSE grade requirement for an Oxford place.
* Generally, an applicant will need to be predicted A\*A\*A grades to be interviewed. Exceptions can be made for special circumstances (e.g. Change of schools, illness etc.), then a candidate predicted A\*AA may still be offered an interview.
* However, all applicants must attain A\*A\*A grades at A level to meet their offer.

**Work Experience**

* Whilst no means an essential requirement for an application, work experience is a very good way of showing your interest in the subject and a good thing to talk about at the beginning of your interview.
* In particular, if any of your past work experience has inspired you to pursue the subject, or maybe even an individual discipline within Engineering, it would definitely be a good thing to write about!
* Try to use your initiative when it comes to applying; a position may not necessarily be widely advertised but a phone call or letter of enq­­uiry/interest may do the trick if you can demonstrate you’re really keen.
* Once again, work experience is not essential and so if you try your best and can’t find any opportunities, the University will not hold this against you!

**Personal Statement**

* Writing a personal statement will probably be the thing you spend most of your time on in your application, and it is very important to realise there is no perfect formula for it! You can (and definitely should!) ask around for advice with regards to its content, wording and structure, but just remember you will see a huge variety in people’s suggestions and so it’s a good idea to try and keep in mind what you’d like Universities to see.
* The purpose of the personal statement is primarily to convey why you want to spend the next four years of your life studying Engineering (and why you would be good at it!). Oxford tutors therefore will want it to be predominantly focussed on academics, and the extracurricular interests will be of less interest to them.
* Do however make sure to include them as they will be important to other Universities!
* Your personal statement could include: motivation behind your choice to study Engineering, reference to particular aspects of your A-level course that you enjoy/that may be relevant to Engineering, work experience, extracurricular activities and any extended reading you may have done.
* A quick note on extended reading – you will almost certainly be asked about anything you’ve written about reading in your statement, so make sure to refresh your knowledge before the interview!
* Whilst the personal statement is about you, in order to help your application, it is good to read up on what each University wants to see from applicants - this can then be used as a potential structure for your statement. Often Universities publish the key attributes they want an Engineering student to demonstrate on their admissions pages online.
* In terms of an Oxford application, the Engineering Science course is a general course for the first two years, specialising only in the last two. It is also fair to say that is more theoretical (less practical) than other courses at other Universities and so the tutors are looking for students who will thrive in that environment.

**Recommendations for Reading**

* Try and identify an area of your physics/maths course that you enjoy specifically and extend this by finding a book that explores this further.
* Try and check the New Scientist or a newspaper’s ‘science’ section at least once a week. If anything interests you make sure you read up on it a bit further, this will demonstrate scientific interest if it gets brought up at interview.
* There is no need to memorise set articles you may come across, but a general awareness of what’s going in the scientific community will stand you in a great position.
* There is certainly no set reading list for what you should read as the tutors are looking for a genuine interest in extending your understanding.

**Aptitude Test**

* To make an application to Oxford for Engineering you have to sit the Physics Aptitude Test (that is taken on the 2nd November this year).
* Normally your school will be involved in arranging this exam for you if you approach them about it. If not the college or the department would be more than happy to help you out.
* The PAT is probably unlike any test you will have taken before as a good mark is 50-60% so may be a bit intimidating to start with.
* There is a syllabus published on the Department of Physics website but you should be familiar with the topics from school (although giving it a look over isn’t a bad idea in case there are certain areas which you’re less familiar with).
* The test is designed to assess your problem solving ability and so tutors are as interested in how you approach the question as they are with the answer (so don’t worry if you don’t get the answer to everything!)
* A good place to start your preparation is by revising the physics and maths you’ve learnt in school so far (it’s also worth referring to the online syllabus).
* There are also past papers online with a number of unofficial written solutions (as Oxford don’t publish their own) and so working through those is also a very good idea.
* It’s important to note that the format of the exam has changed over the years so look at the website to know what to expect on the day.
* Your result on this test will be used with your grades at school to determine whether you get an interview.

**Interview**

* If your application passes the first round, you will be invited to interview at the University or over Skype if you can’t make it to Oxford (e.g. if you’re an overseas student).
* For Engineering, you will be interviewed at two colleges, the one you applied to, and one randomly assigned college- the colleges won’t know which you have applied to. If you’re submitting an Open application, both colleges will be assigned to you.
* You will be interviewed at both colleges once and they will take place on the same day. The college you’ve applied to normally allows you to stay the nights before or after.
* For the interview, make sure you go over your personal statement and ensure you’re up to date with everything you said you have read/enjoy. You can expect tutors to pick out things in your personal statement and make you elaborate on them.
* In your interviews you will normally have a bit of a discussion about your personal statement and why you want to do the course for the first 5-10 minutes before getting on to technical questions. The interviews are around 30 minutes long in total.
* The tutors want to see how you go about the technical questions and if you can adapt to new concepts. The questions may be on something completely new to you, or similar to problems you’ve seen at school.
* In terms of what to wear, the University say ‘wear whatever clothes you feel comfortable in’. Some candidates will dress in suits and ties, but this isn’t a requirement and so a smart shirt and trousers to show you’ve made an effort will definitely suffice. (The tutors will also not be terribly smart so there really is no pressure)

**Further Questions?**

If you have any further questions, please don’t hesitate to e-mail Keble at Large at kebleatlarge@outlook.com