Admissions Criteria for History & Economics

Economics tutors are looking for evidence of the following qualities in applicants for the History and Economics course:

**Application and interest:** capacity for sustained study, motivation and interest, an independent and reflective approach to learning;

**Reasoning ability:** ability to analyse and solve problems using logical and critical approaches, ability to assess relevance, capacity to construct and critically assess arguments, flexibility and willingness to consider alternative views;

**Communication:** willingness and ability to express ideas clearly and effectively on paper and orally; ability to listen; ability to give considered responses.

Throughout the admissions process, tutors will be seeking to detect the candidate's future potential as an H&E student. Existing achievement (as revealed in official examinations, predicted examination results, and school reports), as well as performance in the pre-interview test, written work, test done at the time of the interviews and the interviews, is relied upon mainly as evidence of future potential.

Mathematics and History at A-Level (or an equivalent), are highly recommended, but are not essential. Candidates are not expected to have studied economics at school, but should be interested in the subject and be prepared to put their minds to problems of economics presented to them. In the case of candidates whose first language is not English, competence in the English language is also a criterion of admission.

Final decisions about offers of places will use the full range of evidence available, including past and predicted exam results, written work, the school report, the personal statement, the pre-interview test, the test done at the time of the interviews and the interviews themselves. Entry is competitive, which means that not all candidates who satisfy the admissions criteria will receive offers.

**Are all applicants interviewed?**

No. We only interview those who have a realistic chance of getting in, when judged by past and predicted exam results, written work, school reports, personal statements and the pre-interview test. Applicants who do not take the pre-interview test will not normally be shortlisted for interview.

**What happens at interview?**

The interview is aimed primarily at assessing the candidate’s potential for future development. Interviewers will be looking for evidence of genuine interests and enthusiasms, and the motivation to work hard at them. The candidates should listen effectively, absorbing facts and ideas presented to them and assessing their relevance. They should be ready to respond to problems and criticisms put to them. They should present arguments and reasoning in a clear and carefully articulated manner.
The interview is not primarily a test of existing knowledge, and in particular, is not a test of economics or history, unless these subjects have been followed at school. The candidates are expected to show reasons for their expressed interests in the H&E course. Candidates’ general accomplishments are not relevant except insofar as they bear on one or more of the general admissions criteria.

For the selection criteria for History see:

http://www.history.ox.ac.uk/prospective/undergraduate/applying/the-application-process.html