

Aspiring to Oxbridge Jewish Free School

04.04.24

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our registration
page



Theo Boyce



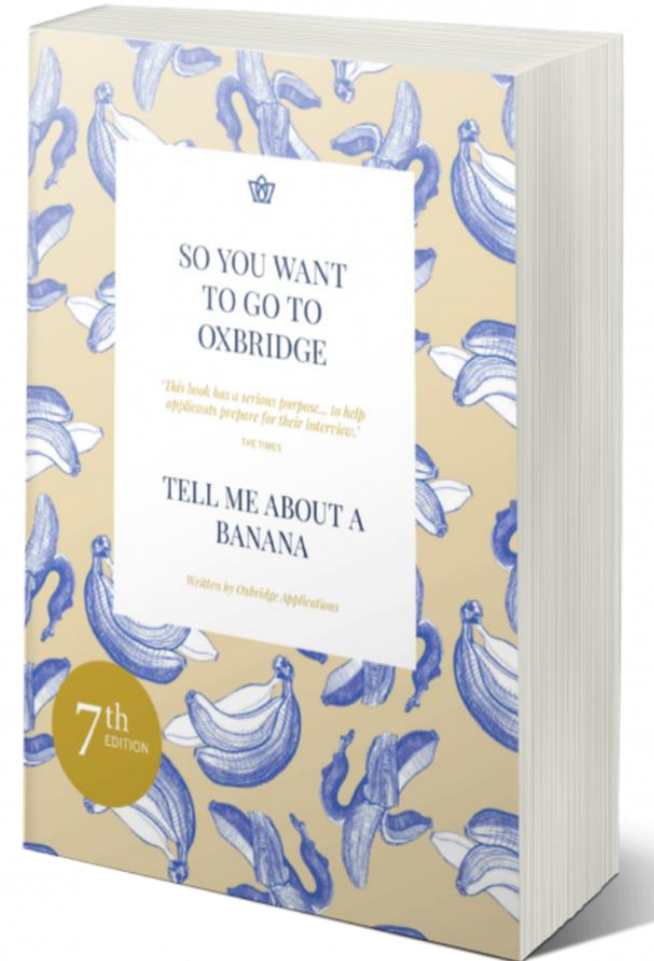
- Human, Social, and Political Sciences at Queens' College, Cambridge
- Further degrees at Guildhall School of Music and Drama and Birkbeck, University of London
- 10 years' experience in helping young people make decisions and prepare for university study



Oxbridge Applications



- 25 years of experience
- A range of support available, from one-day events to on-going academic tuition
- Thousands of Oxbridge offers





Why apply?



Rewarding Application Process



Academic Resources

History and Tradition



College Life & Extracurriculars





Networking and Careers

Some Common 'Awkward' Questions

- Isn't it all work and no play?
- Isn't it just for posh (white) people?
- Isn't it more expensive?
- Isn't Oxford worse than Cambridge?
- Why can't you apply to both?
- Isn't it impossible to get in?

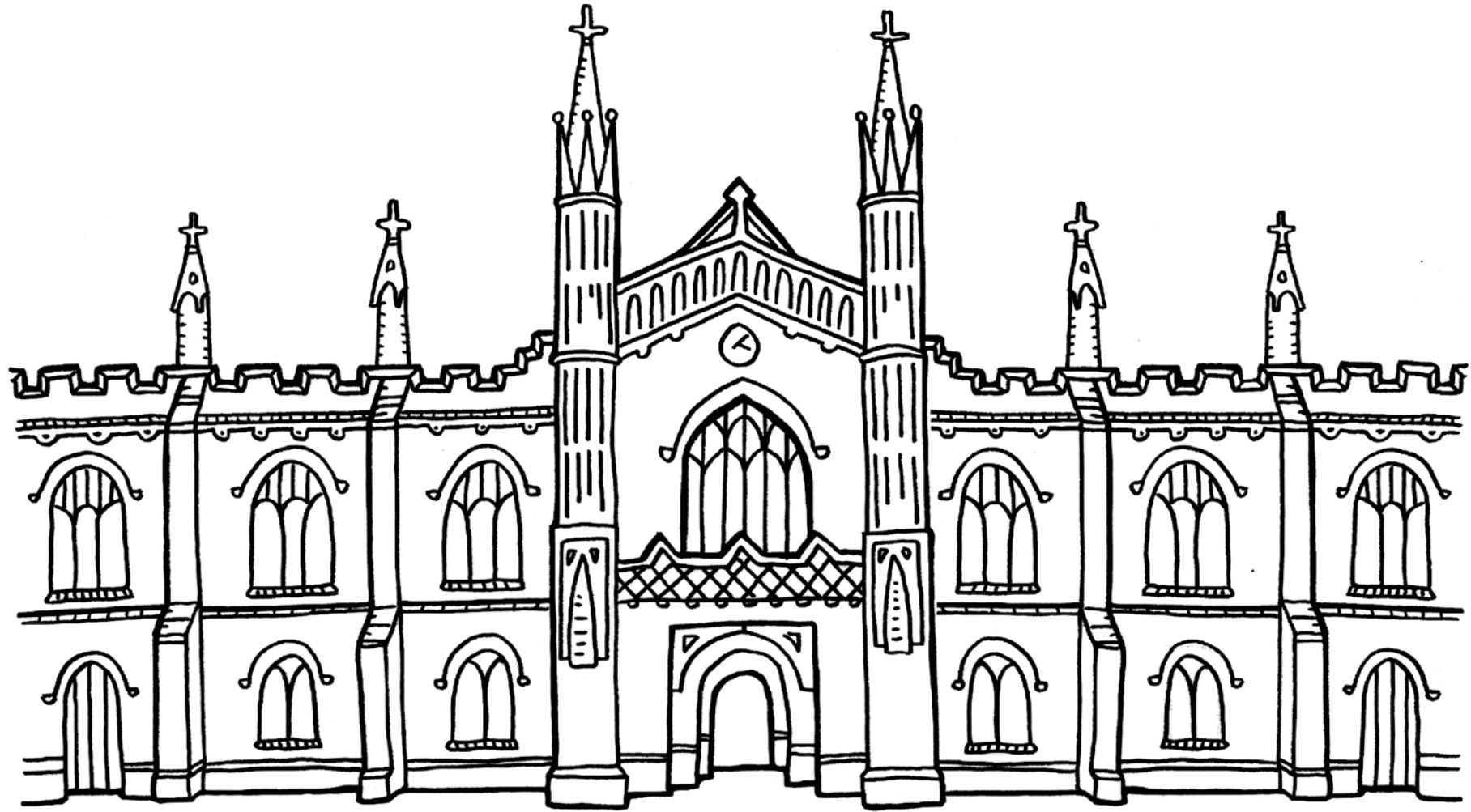


“Do it - you may as well! The whole application should help with your A Levels and it can be fun. If you want to get in - start early, and research the course properly”

Successful Oxford Applicant, Engineering

Supported by Oxbridge Applications 2023-24





What are they looking for?

“There are many more deserving applicants than we have places”

Dr. Buda, Oxbridge Applications tutor
Ex Cambridge Admissions



GCSEs

Average Applicant: 7A* (8 or 9)

Average Shortlisted Applicant: 7.8A* (8 or 9)

Average Offer Holder: 8.5A* (8 or 9)

School average is also taken into account



A Levels

Average Applicant: Predicted 2 A*

Average Offer Holder: Predicted 2.8 A*

Again, school average is taken into account



Grades are Necessary, not Sufficient

- Most Oxbridge applicants in 2023 scored 8 or 9 in all their GCSEs
- The lower the interview rate, the more important these will be
- Oxford weight GCSEs slightly more, Cambridge weight A Levels slightly more



What Economics students have studied

Most Economics students (who had studied A levels and started at Cambridge in 2017-19) achieved at least A*A*A* (87% of entrants).

Most had studied:

- Economics (93%)
- Further Mathematics (93%)
- or both (86%)

The majority of students who studied IB achieved at least 44 points overall.

[Check our advice on choosing your high school subjects.](#) You should also check if there are any required subjects for your course when you apply.



A detailed line drawing of a street scene. The main building is a large, multi-story structure with many windows and a balcony. In the foreground, there is a street with a telephone booth and a street lamp. The drawing is in a simple, sketchy style.

The Case of Alistair

So... What Are they Looking for?

- Exceptional academic **potential**
- A genuine **passion** for the subject area
- Someone who will **suit** the Oxbridge style of learning and teaching





Strategy

Choose wisely



University

Oxford

Individual Science Courses

- Lower interview rate
- Varied (or no) admission tests
- Much more prescriptive structure with mostly set modules in first two years
- 4 years normal and expected

Cambridge

Natural Sciences

- Higher interview rate
- Preferably 4 science/maths A Levels
- NSAA used for all applicants
- Loose, open structure, with room to chop and change
- 4 years possible but only on good performance and application



I like History...

Cambridge

- History & Politics, 13%
- History of Art, 20%
- History & Languages, 24%
- History, 33%
- 'AMES', 50%
- Archaeology, 50%
- Classics, 50%
- Theology, 50%
- 'ASNAC', 53%

Oxford

- History & Economics, 11%
- History & Politics, 11%
- History & English, 13%
- History of Art, 14%
- History & Languages, 25%
- History (Ancient & Modern), 23%
- History, 23 %
- 'CAAH', 24%
- 'Arch + Anth', 24%
- 'AMES', 30%
- Theology, 41%
- Classics, 41%



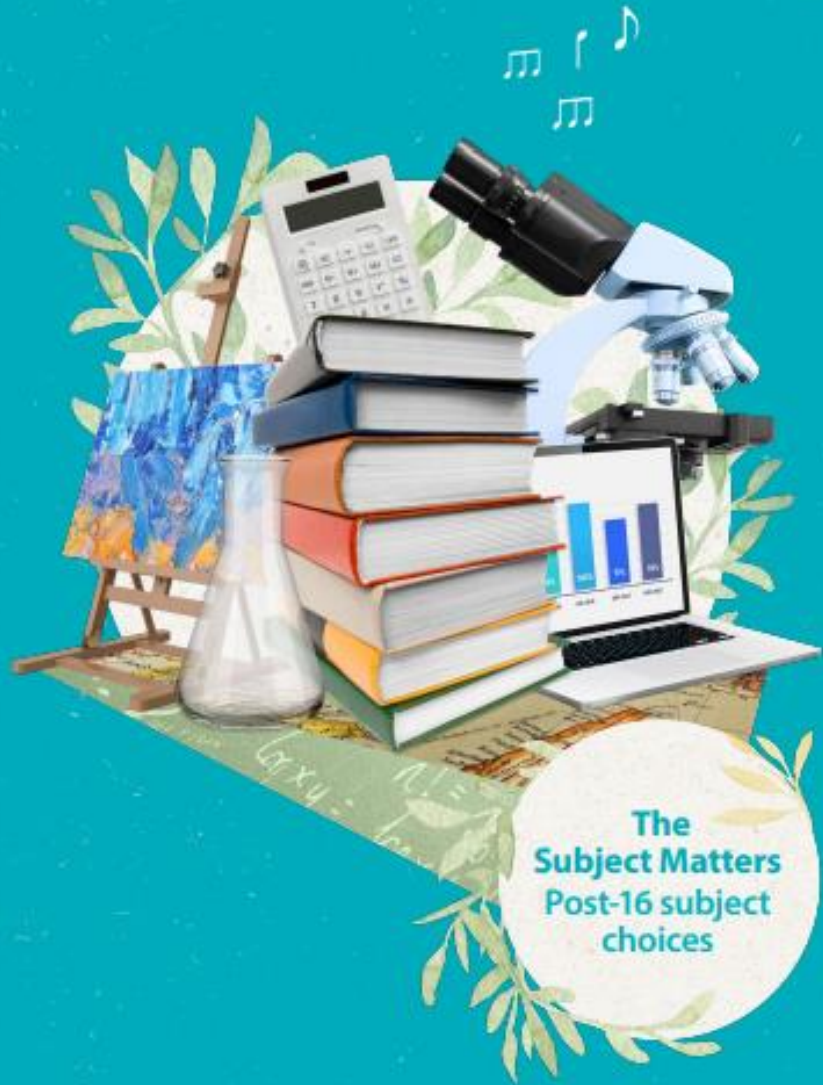
Admission requirements for 2024 entry

Below is a summary of each course's requirements.

- Essential
- Recommended
- ▲ Helpful – may be useful on course

Please check the course page for details.

Course	Entrance requirements (at A-level or equivalent)	Subject choices	Test	Written work
Archaeology and Anthropology	AAA	▲ Combination of arts and science subjects		Two pieces
Asian and Middle Eastern Studies	AAA	▲ A language Mastering the ability to handwrite is a mandatory core element for Japanese, Chinese and	AMELAT for some options	Two pieces



The
Subject Matters
Post-16 subject
choices

Go Further with Super-curriculars

- Academic
- Relevant
- Beyond your syllabus



The 'story' of your developing interests

- You listen to a podcast about ant behaviour ...
- You opt to write about ant behaviour in your EPQ...
- You extend your project further and enter it into a national student science competition...
- You submit your research to the 'Global Ant Project' organisation...
- They offer you a week of work experience in the summer...
- You do an online course from an American university about entomology (insect studies)...



Make an 'I Think' Personal Statement

- 1 page of A4 (no change for 2024)
- Evidence your:
 - Motivation
 - Independent Thinking
 - Suitability
- Tell the story of how you came to love this subject



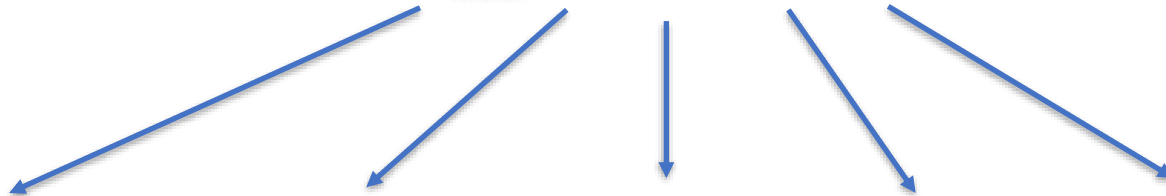
I've always made drawings and visuals, both as a large part of my work and for pleasure, but over the past few years I've become increasingly fascinated by the role and position of illustration. I love working as part of a team and the illustrator is definitely part of a team: delivering a successful project always involves negotiation of aims and objectives and a clear understanding of the mechanics of 'who does what'. Also, I love interpreting and teasing out the meaning of things, which is the essence of illustration: figuring out why a thing works and how to best present that information visually is not just an incredibly important part of communication, it's also hugely enjoyable.

My whole professional life has been spent producing work within the creative industries. Whether that's in art, design, music or teaching, there has always been a strong element of narrative or story-telling involved in my work and this is definitely an area that I feel the BA Illustration course will allow me to usefully explore and expand on over the three years. Of all the projects that I've been involved in, the ones that I am happiest with - and that have been the most commercially successful - are those that have been self-initiated. Certainly looking to the future, I see the whole subject of placing or marketing personal projects as an area that will become increasingly important and again, one which the BA Illustration course and its links to industry will be of great help with.

My career to date can be split into three general sections with huge areas of common ground between each of them. As a founding member and senior partner of the design group 'SubG' [1997 to present] I have considerable experience in instigating and managing projects in a variety of areas, particularly web and interactive design, as well as providing content for print and video projects. I'm also a founding member of the audio production group 'Worldnet Productions' [1993 to present] where I provide compositional and instrumental work for TV and film... plus I do all the book-keeping and accountancy and VAT returns for both partnerships. I've delivered learning activities [1987 to present] through a range of institutions including the Norwich Arts Centre, NSAD, Norwich City Council, Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils, ACE etc. primarily in digital imaging but also photography, web design and musical improvisational techniques.

Outside of work I love developing and being involved with a range of communities and groups. Most recently I helped set up and manage the 'Urban Sketchers Norwich' group (part of the international 'Urban Sketchers' movement) which meets once a month to "show the world, one drawing at a time" and chat over coffee and cake. Previously I was the (unpaid) picture editor for 'Spiked - the magazine of ideas and literature', a monthly mag that came out of the UEA Creative Writing MA, where I was responsible for commissioning and liaising with a range of illustrators and artists.

And I should say the very first thing I did after leaving college (Foundation in Art and Design, Great Yarmouth) was to become a touring and recording musician, where I made many albums and my band played with many cool people including The Manic Street Preachers, The Shamen, The Prodigy, Meat Beat Manifesto etc. I also watched a solid five-and-a-half hours of The Simpsons on video tape with Kurt Cobain.



“Put a lot of work into your personal statement and make sure you include only the things that you feel comfortable to talk about in an interview”

Successful Cambridge Applicant, Natural Sciences

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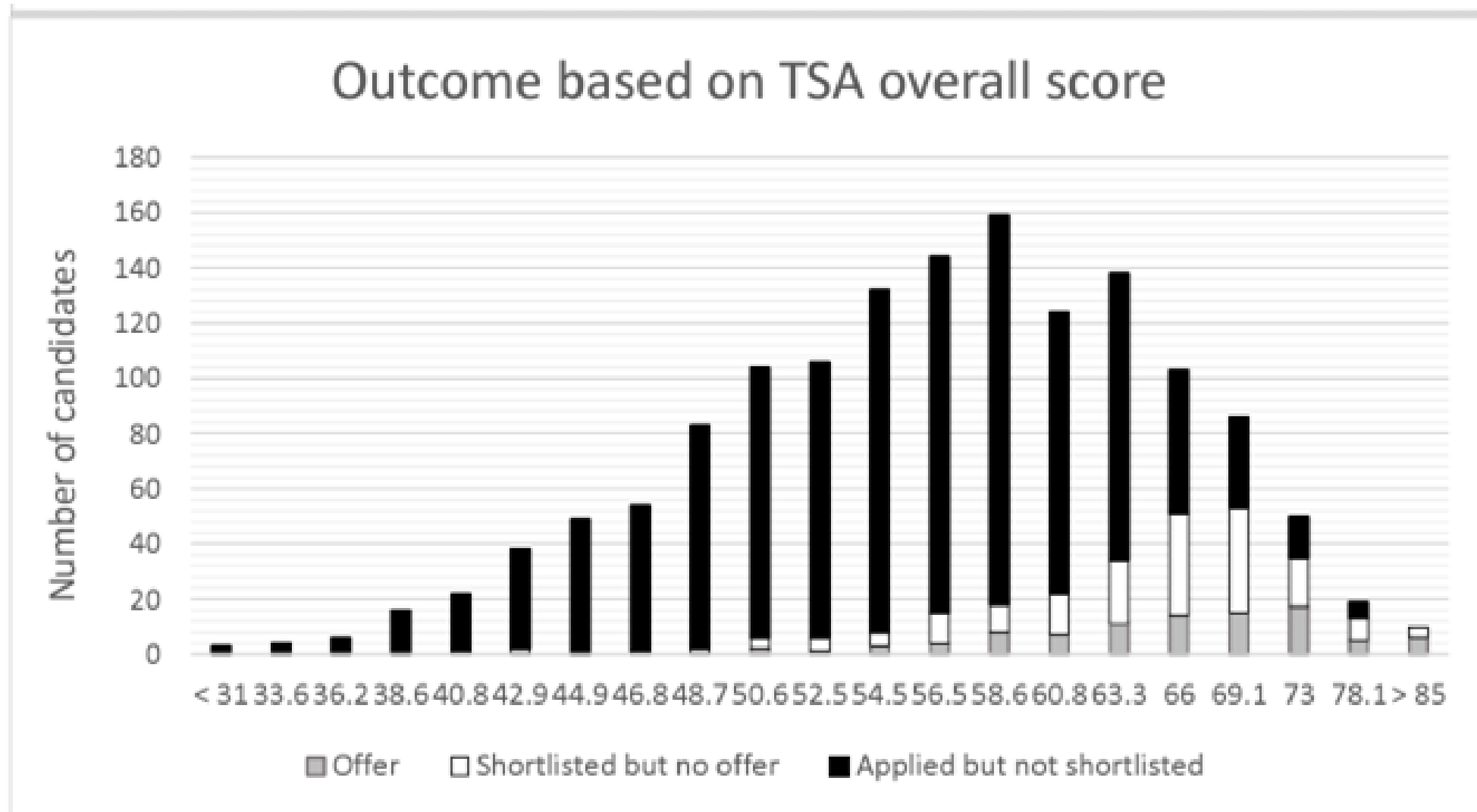


Start Early with Admissions Tests

- There are 32 admissions tests run at Oxbridge
- For competitive courses these are **very** heavily weighted
- Don't be intimidated – enjoy the challenge.



Small Margins can make a big difference



Written Work Performance

- Needed for many essay subjects
- Marked with undergraduate criteria in mind
 - Argument-driven
 - Evidence-based
 - Strong focus on question
- Show some contrast if you submit two



Interviews - what actually happens?

- 30-minute meetings with academics (1-6 but usually 2)
- Focused on academic discussion relevant to the subject
- Likely to involve being shown new ideas / material
- Likely online in 2024 (Teams or Zoom)



Is it ever morally justifiable to destroy art?

If someone arrives at your clinic with an alien and says the alien has been hurt, how do you determine if the alien is in pain?

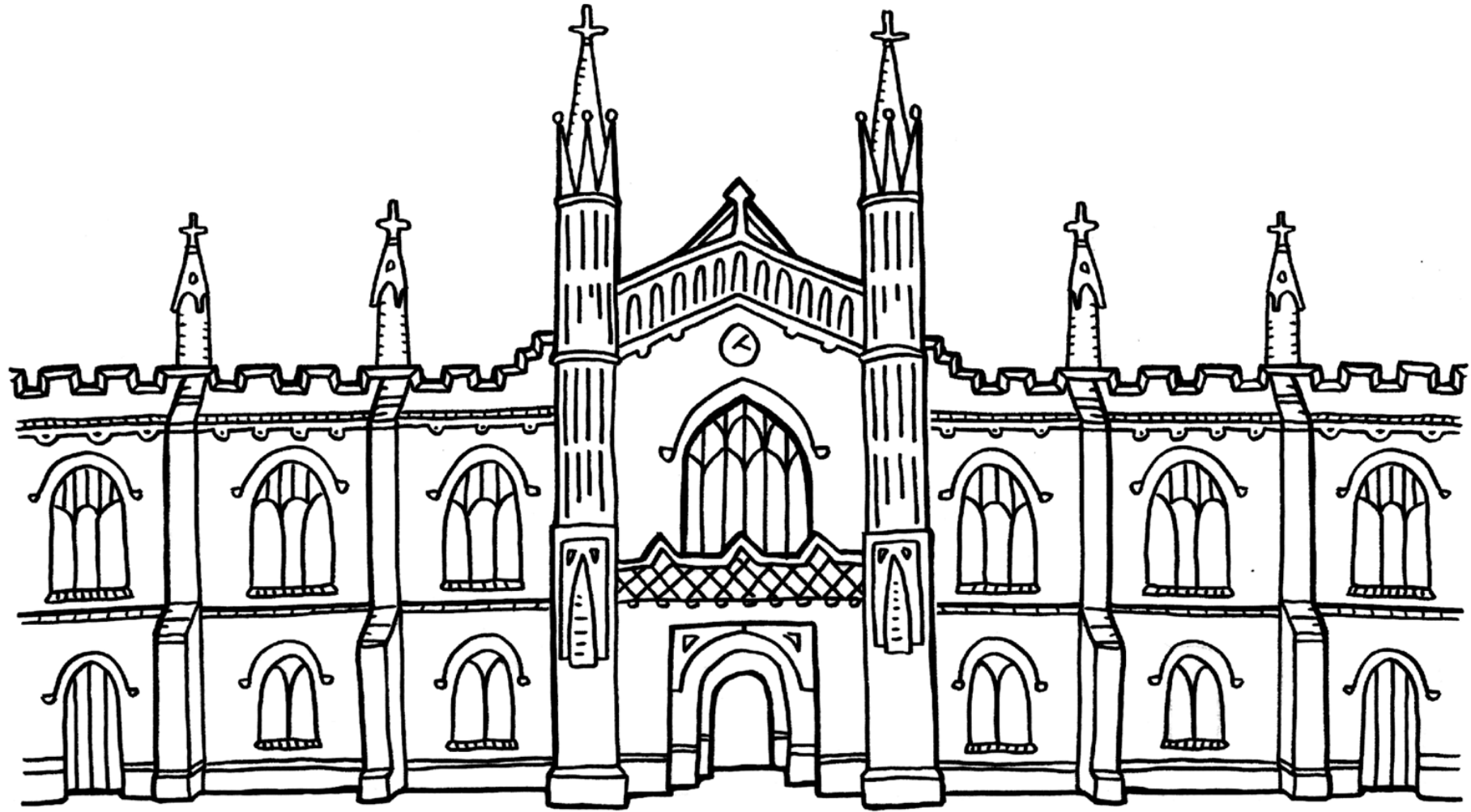
Estimate how much energy could be stored in a 1 cubic meter block of steel?



Showing Suitability

- Contribute to the discussion
- Relax and enjoy the conversation
- Use the 'specificity rule'





Some Final Notes

Managing your Time

- Make your goals achievable and diarised
- Put more time and effort into the more important aspects of the application
- Cut down on any extraneous commitments if needed, temporarily



Managing your Emotions

- Applying to university can be stressful
- Remember you are not in competition with your school peers - help each other!
- Try to limit family discussion of university applications to a set time each week / month



Maximising your Potential

- Take roads off the beaten track – this will help you to stand out
- Build your academic taste
- Get help – most people get it in some form



“It's not out of reach - don't deny yourself the opportunity because you think you won't get in. If you love what you're doing it will be reflected in your application.”

Successful applicant for English, Oxford

Supported by Oxbridge Applications 2023-24





Any Questions?

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Register on our website:

