

WINTER POOL 2011/2012, Clough Hall and Sidgwick Hall, Newnham College

Information for Admissions Officers and Secretaries

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Please note that this year the Pool files for Art subjects will be located in Sidgwick Hall and the Pool files for Science Subjects will be located in Clough Hall.

Pool Opening Times:	
Tuesday 3 January 2012	11am to 6pm
Wednesday 4 January 2012	9am to 6pm (Pooling with strings/tags expires at 5pm)
Thursday 5 January 2012	9am to 6pm (Subject meetings held until 5pm)

The Pool will open and close **promptly** at the advertised times. Please note that the Pool is **not** open when CAO staff are working in Newnham College to set up/dismantle the Pool.

Pool Interview Dates:	
Thursday 12 January 2012	ASNC, Archaeology & Anthropology, Architecture, Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, Classics, Computer Science, English, Mathematics, Music, Philosophy, Theology & Religious Studies.
Friday 13 January 2012	History, History of Art, Law, MML, Geography, Land Economy, Linguistics, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Natural Sciences (first day).
Saturday 14 January 2012	Economics, Engineering, Natural Sciences (second day), PPS.

Other Important Dates and Deadlines:	
Wednesday 21 December 2011	WP/1 (estimate of places to be filled) form to Helen Reed at CAO by 1pm
Wednesday 21 December 2011	Pool files to the Clough Hall, Newnham College by 1pm together with two copies of form WP/2 (alphabetical list of pooled applicants by subject by College). Please complete separate forms for Biological and Physical Natural Science applicants.
Wednesday 4 January 2012	Agreed posting date. No letters with decisions (<i>other than rejection letters for applicants not called to interview, which can be posted earlier</i>) are to be posted to applicants before this date.
Friday 6 January 2012	Interview lists circulated electronically by CAO by 3pm
Friday 27 January 2012	Final date for decisions to be entered in to CamSIS

POOLING CRITERIA

The wording for the overall grading scheme for interviewer reports, agreed by the Admissions Forum in 2002 (and modified in 2004), should ensure greater consistency between Colleges in deciding which applicants to pool. The following overall grading scheme should be adopted, and used as a basis for pooling decisions:

- 10 Exceptional applicant – must take
- 9 Very strong – definitely worth an offer
- 8 Strong – worth an offer
- 7 Probably worth an offer
- 6 Possibly worth an offer
- 5 Doubtful for an offer
- 4 Weak
- 3 and below, probably unacceptable

Since 2004 the Admissions Forum has regularly reviewed the operation of the Winter Pool and has agreed several recommendations designed to improve its effectiveness:

1. Colleges should endeavour to ensure that their internal use of the scoring system on Interviewer Report forms accords with the “official” scale as above. All references to pooling decisions should be removed from the official scoring system on Interviewer Report forms.
2. There are four identified categories for pooling:

A	<i>Recommendation:</i> If places are available, this applicant is strongly recommended [applicants pooled with tags/strings should normally be in this category]
B	Looked weaker on paper but impressed at interview
P	Met compulsory pooling criteria
S	Applicant in special need of reassessment

The pool cover sheet is designed so that the category (A, B, P or S) under which an applicant is being pooled is prominently displayed. Colleges may also pool applicants who do not fall into any of the specified categories.

The criteria under which applicants might be pooled ‘**in special need of reassessment**’ (category S) are:

- a) **When the applicant received wildly divergent *subject* interviewer assessments** (e.g. scores of 8 and 4) – large differences between subject interviewer and general academic (formerly tutorial) interviewer assessments are not considered grounds for an applicant requiring reassessment;
- b) **When the applicant’s interviews malfunctioned;**
- c) **When the applicant was seriously disadvantaged at interview due to special circumstances** (e.g. debilitating illness or recent family bereavement).

In circumstances (b) and (c) it may be more appropriate that the preference/allocated College takes responsibility for ensuring reassessment takes place.

3. All applicants in this round (except those for Mathematics and Medicine) who are not offered places by their preference Colleges but have attained an overall average of 93% or more in their three best AS Level subjects **MUST** be pooled in **category P** if not in another category.

In the case of post-qualification applicants the equivalent criterion is: A*,A*,A* or better at A Level.

4. Post-qualification International Baccalaureate applicants (except those for Mathematics and Medicine) who have achieved **both** 41 points (or better) overall **and** 7,7,6 (or better) at Higher Level **MUST** be pooled in **category P** if not in another category.
5. Scottish applicants (except those for Mathematics and Medicine) achieving four SQA Higher grades at level

A1 **MUST** be pooled in **category P** if not in another category.

In the case of post-qualification Scottish applicants the equivalent criterion is three Advanced Higher grades at level A1.

6. Applicants interviewed overseas (except those for **Medicine**): all applicants who scored **8.5** or above when interviewed by the Cambridge team overseas **MUST** be pooled, and 8s and 7s at your discretion.
7. **Medicine / Veterinary Medicine**: pooling arrangements in these subjects are detailed in Section 2.6 of the Undergraduate Admissions Handbook and pooling decisions are made after the pre-Christmas Group/Moderation meetings. The Subject Convenor for Veterinary Medicine is Dr Penny Watson (Emmanuel). Currently, the Chairs of the various Medicine Groups are:

Group I	Dr James Keeler (Selwyn)
Group II	Dr Geoff Parks (Jesus)
Group III	Dr Robert Henderson (Emmanuel)
Group IV	Dr Stephanie Ellington (Lucy Cavendish)

Mature applicants

All mature applicants who are realistically possibly worth an offer should be pooled. The criteria for this differ from those for standard-age applicants in many subjects. The four Colleges that take mature students only are able to advise. Poor results in examinations taken more than 10 years ago should not be held against applicants: recent academic achievement is important. A good command of English is essential.

Applicants with good grades in an Access course and applicants with grades over 80% in Open University courses should be pooled, as should those with good grades in other relevant equivalent qualifications.

WINTER POOL – PREPARATION STAGE

File Preparation

Cover sheet: Each file must be accompanied by the standard pool cover sheet (Appendix 3), stapled to the file cover, giving details about the applicant. Please complete the cover sheet as fully as possible. BMAT and TSA scores, where taken, can be included.

The central section of the pool cover sheet should be used to indicate the strength of the applicant, giving scores for written tests, summary information about public examination performance, brief comments from the Admissions Tutor and an overall assessment from the Admissions Tutor using the 1-10 scale detailed above. The pool cover sheet has been designed so that if an applicant is being pooled in a specific category (A, B, P or S) this is prominently displayed.

Content of files: In order to encourage offers out of the Pool without further interview, the pool files should be made as helpful and as complete as possible. **Files should include a copy of the Cambridge Applicant Print Out (CAPO) and, in the case of overseas applicants, the Supplementary Overseas Application Print Out (Appendix 1). Wherever feasible, all interviewer reports (both subject and general) and photocopies of all submitted written work or interview tests should be included.** BMAT scores and Section 3 essay scripts, and TSA scores, where taken, should be included. This material should be filed just behind the CAPO.

Please note that the Admissions Forum agreed that school information from the CAO Schools Database on each pooled applicant should also be placed in the file. Once you have found the applicant's school in the database simply go to File> Print> Print Selected Records and a single sheet containing all of the necessary information will be printed.

Other points to note about the preparation of the files:

- Please type or use a black pen when completing the cover sheet so that any photocopy will be clear.
- When preparing cover sheets for pool applicants who would have a long journey if required to attend for interview, please tick the priority call box.
- Please tick the CSAS (Cambridge Special Access Scheme) box if the applicant is being considered under this scheme.
- Please tick the relevant box if the applicant has applied for a Choral Scholarship.
- The CAPO should be at the top of the sheaf of papers inside the file, with any changes of address attached.
- Comments in cases where there are special circumstances to take into account should be included in the file.
- Please make sure that all papers are secured with a treasury tag. Loose papers are easily lost.
- If the applicant is now applying to read a different subject from the one originally stated on the CAPO, please check that the correct subject is entered on the CAPO and on the pool cover sheet.
- In the case of Modern and Medieval Languages or Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, please indicate the **choice of language(s)** on the cover sheet.
- In the case of Natural Sciences, cover sheets should be clearly marked **(P) - Physical Sciences** or **(B) - Biological Sciences**
- In the case of **Computer Science**, please mark clearly on the cover sheet, **CS with Natural Sciences**, **CS with Mathematics** or **CS with Social Psychology** as appropriate.
- In the case of Mathematics, please mark clearly on the cover sheet **Mathematics** or **Maths with Physics**, as appropriate.
- Any change of year of entry should be clearly noted.

File Organisation

When preparing files for the Pool, please arrange them alphabetically by surname within each subject/course.

Applicants for **Natural Sciences** should be divided into Physical Scientists and Biological Scientists, and listed separately in these categories on separate WP/2 forms. If there is any doubt about an applicant's category, please include them on both lists.

Those applying for Mathematics with Physics should be filed with all other Mathematics applicants.

All Admissions Tutors' comments about applicants should be entered on the pool cover sheets and NOT on Pool Form WP/2.

Mature and Affiliated Applicants

Please make absolutely sure that the files of any applicants who will be over 21 by the time they hope to enter Cambridge are clearly marked **MATURE** and/or **AFFILIATED** as appropriate. The names of mature and affiliated applicants should appear on the subject sheets with all the other applicants, and the comment column should note that they are "mature". The files of mature and affiliated applicants are stored in a separate "mature and affiliated" section of the Pool and not in the main sequence.

The files should be accompanied by two copies of a list of the names and subjects of mature/affiliated applicants pooled by your College (on form WP/2).

Choral Award Applicants

Choral Award applicants should be listed separately, using a different sheet for each subject and writing the subject on each sheet. They should **also** be listed in the main sequence of subject sheets. Their files will be in the subject boxes in the Pool, but a separate list of all Choral applicants will be available from the Pool staff. Please ensure that the application form and accompanying materials for the Choral Award is included within the applicant's pool file. At the request of the Admissions Forum, a tick box has been added to the pool cover sheet in order to assist in identifying Choral applicants.

Delivery of Files to Newnham

Pool files should arrive at the Clough Hall, Newnham College, by no later than 1pm on Wednesday 21 December. However, it would be very much appreciated if Colleges would get files to Newnham earlier than this. Newnham College Porters' Lodge can give College staff access to a secure room in which to leave the files at any time from 9am on Monday 19 December. Please ensure that application materials are filed alphabetically by surname by category within subject/course. Each subject should be accompanied by two copies of the CAO Pool Form WP/2. The files should be addressed to the Winter Pool, Newnham College. Please clearly label each box of files with your College name, and Box 1 of 2, Box 2 of 2 etc.

Checking Stage

At the end of the Pool all files will be checked by CAO. A full interview list (including details of those made offers and those still under consideration) will be prepared and circulated by e-mail to Colleges by 3.00pm on **Friday 6 January 2012**. It will **not** be possible to inspect any file during the checking stage.

WINTER POOL INTERVIEW ARRANGEMENTS AND FINAL DECISIONS

Interviews

Wherever possible interviews will take place from 12 to 14 January 2012 inclusive, as agreed by the Admissions Forum.

If pool interview dates conflict with the dates of modular examinations, Colleges are asked to negotiate a mutually convenient date for the interview, if possible between 11 and 16 January.

Where there are two Colleges interviewing, they are asked to liaise closely so, wherever possible, the applicant only has to come to Cambridge once. If an applicant is being interviewed by two Colleges, he or she may not be given more than two interviews per College. Wherever possible, applicants who are invited back for interview by more than one College should be given one or two joint interview(s) by both Colleges at the same time, rather than having to attend separate interviews at each College. This should particularly be striven for where either College or both would usually use more than one interview. General academic interviews (where used) would be additional to these.

Colleges should be prepared to conduct interviews at any time from 9.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 6.00pm (possibly later) on the designated days. Applicants may, in some cases, need to spend two nights in Cambridge if they are to be interviewed by two Colleges.

NB Since a considerable amount of telephoning/e-mailing between Colleges will be required at the stage when interviews are being arranged, it is important that Admissions Tutors, Directors of Studies or their deputies are readily available on 5 and 6 January and also on the designated interview days.

Interview Lists

Colleges will receive a copy of the interview list electronically and the relevant file of each applicant listed. If the applicant is being interviewed by more than one College then a copy of the Winter Pool cover sheet and CAPO relating to that applicant will be supplied. CAO will retain the file until a final decision is reached. If Tutors wish, at this stage, to look at written work they are welcome to consult the applicant's file, CAPO and other papers at CAO in Fitzwilliam House. (Please ensure that CAO are given a little advance warning of visits for this purpose.) CAO staff will **not** have time to copy papers at this stage.

The interview lists indicate the Host College, which is responsible for contacting the applicant about the interviews and arranging overnight accommodation. The Host College is usually the first College to mark the file 'I'. The Host College arranges its own timetable of interviews, and it will be the responsibility of the other College wishing to interview that applicant to make contact with the Host College to arrange the other interview times.

Details of those applicants made offers directly from the Pool without further interview and of those being kept under active consideration (files marked 'B') will also be included on the interview lists.

Liaison between Colleges when arranging interviews

Host Colleges should:

- Enquire of the other College exactly how long their interview(s) are expected to last and note that in the past it has sometimes proved very difficult to fit in all the necessary interviews if no arrangement has been made for the applicant to stay in College on the night before the interviews.
- Where an applicant is accommodated overnight, please ensure you interview them as soon as possible in the morning so that the start of interviews at the other College is not delayed unduly.
- Ensure that interview timetables are available at their own Porters' Lodge for each applicant, including information about interviews at other Colleges and the likely time that applicants will be free to leave Cambridge.
- Arrange for applicants with multiple interviews to have their interviews reasonably spaced and, if necessary, pay for taxis to the other College where the second interview follows immediately.

The other interviewing College should inform the Host College of the time and place of the interview(s) and the name of the interviewer(s).

Final Stages

Files of applicants who have not been made an offer direct from the Pool ('O'), asked to come for interview ('I') or kept under active consideration ('B') will be returned to preference Colleges on 9 January. Files of applicants who have not been offered places after interview will be returned by **Friday 20 January 2012** or as soon as possible thereafter.

Following the interviews, it is essential that Colleges inform Helen Reed or Rachel Baker in CAO by no later than **5.30pm on Wednesday 18 January 2012** which applicants they would like to make an offer to. If no other College is interested an offer can then be made. If there is a competing College then your attention is drawn to the following notes:

Competing Colleges

It is hoped that conflicting claims for the same applicants can, in most cases, be resolved by amicable agreement. In disputed cases, the following arrangements were agreed by the Admissions Forum in January 2006:

Each subject will have the following options when the two interviewing Colleges wish to offer a place to an applicant:

- a) a simple coin toss OR
- b) a prompt meeting to finalise Colleges by negotiation on the Monday immediately after the Winter Pool interviews have taken place.

Colleges will be informed of which approach each subject will take by 1 December 2010.

- If there are two Colleges that wish to offer to the same applicant, every effort should be made to resolve the situation by negotiation with the other Admissions Tutors involved.
- If it is impossible to reach agreement, Helen Reed in CAO should be informed, by the end of the working day following the interviews **at the latest**, of the name, subject and original preference College of the applicant in dispute, and also the name of the other contending College. Helen Reed will then liaise with the relevant Subject Convenor to ensure that the appropriate action (as detailed above) is taken.

Final Pool Decisions

Preference Colleges are responsible for notifying unsuccessful applicants of **their final rejection** once files have been returned from the Pool. Colleges who interview in the Pool are free to write **informally** to applicants thanking them for coming to interview and saying they have not been successful, but the letter should make it clear that their official rejection comes from their preference College only.

The final date for decision entry into CamSIS is **Friday 27 January 2012**, but Colleges are asked to enter decisions without delay once these have been finalised.