



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Oxbridge

Student and parent information



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

What is Oxbridge?

University of Oxford and University of Cambridge are the worlds most renowned universities for education and research.

Reasons people don't apply:

Dispelling Myths, Selling the Opportunities

I don't have good enough GCSEs

- What is their context?
- What are they applying for? In 2018:
Student 6 A*, 2A, 2B—offer for French at Oxford
Student 5 A*, 5 A—Education at Cambridge
- Foundation year—Cambridge Foundation Year, Lady Margaret Hall Oxford Foundation Year
- If on upward trajectory and look like real deal, take a risk
- Going through the processes encourages aspiration and a better application elsewhere

I don't have the right A Levels...

At least two “academic subjects” but not always necessarily two facilitating subjects

Eg: *Philosophy at Oxford offer—
History, Philosophy, Drama*



“It will be full of private school people! I won't fit in...”

This is a generalisation and although some students may come from private schools, it doesn't mean they are any different to you and your interests, love of the subject etc.

“I won't be good enough”...

If you have the GCSE and predicted A Level results, you are considered a perfect candidate. If you love learning and are interested in the subject, why wouldn't you be?

“I will have to work really hard and won't have fun..”

You will have to work really hard, but you will still have fun. Oxford and Cambridge are vibrant cities with student unions, societies and long summers

“It's expensive”

It is the same threshold for any other university. You could be paying £9,250 a year at Chichester university, - why not apply to Oxbridge?

Why Oxbridge?

It is no surprise that Oxbridge is regarded as the best in the world for academic undergraduate courses:

- World class teaching
- World class research
- Small classes (3-8 students)
- Expert researchers and professors leading courses
- Excellent progression into employment and postgraduate courses.

Is Oxbridge right for me?

If you are a student who loves learning and is always curious about knowledge, Oxbridge embraces this love of learning and develops your skillset to become a world class academic student:

- You are looking to study classic, academic subjects
- You enjoy debating, discussing and evaluating topics
- You enjoy self directed study and are motivated by this

Are Oxford and Cambridge the same?

They are similar in their reputation and what they expect from students, but they are very different in how they structure courses, admissions , interviews and their colleges.



Oxford University

University of Oxford

The university runs the undergraduate courses (departments) and puts on lectures and seminars, but it is the college which you are assigned to which really gives you the experience.

Each department will have an academic supervisor who will provide guidance throughout your course.

Colleges

All members of university are part of a college or hall, which is a small community.

The University has **35 colleges**, some dedicated to graduates only and others accepting undergraduates and graduates.

Here, you will have a college advisor who will support with academic issues. Each college has their own Senior Tutor who will lead the admissions process in each college.

All colleges provide:

- library and IT facilities, accommodation
- welfare support
- sports and social events

You will need to choose which college you wish to be part of and apply through them directly. There are between 3-8 places on all Oxford courses, so allocation of colleges may not always be guaranteed to your first choice.

What if I can't decide?

Then you are welcome to make an open application by choosing campus code 9 on your UCAS application. This will mean that your application will be assigned to a college or hall that has relatively fewer applications for your course in the year you apply.

Which college is easiest to get into?

Competition for places at all Oxford colleges is very strong. None of them is easy to get into. Some colleges tend to receive more applications for each place than others, but this varies from year to year.

NEARLY
250
COURSES

FROM OVER
30
FACULTIES AND
DEPARTMENTS

IN GROUPS OF
2 OR 3
FOR SPECIALISED
TUTORIAL TEACHING



OXFORD STUDENTS

26 Nobel Prize winners

27 UK prime ministers

International leaders including Aung San Suu Kyi, Indira Gandhi and Malcolm Turnbull

Scientists like Ben Goldacre, Stephen Hawking, Susan Greenfield and Tim Berners-Lee

Writers and poets including Vikram Seth, William Boyd, Jeanette Winterson, Monica Ali and Wendy Cope

Actors and filmmakers including Felicity Jones, Hugh Grant and Ken Loach

Archaeology and Anthropology

B

Biochemistry (Molecular and Cellular)

Biology

Biomedical Sciences

C

Chemistry

Classical Archaeology and Ancient History

Classics

Classics and English

Classics and Modern Languages

Classics and Oriental Studies

Computer Science

Computer Science and Philosophy

E

Earth Sciences (Geology)

Economics and Management

Engineering Science

English Language and Literature

English and Modern Languages

European and Middle Eastern Languages

F

Fine Art

G

Geography

H

History

History (Ancient and Modern)

History and Economics

History and English

History and Modern Languages

History and Politics

History of Art

Human Sciences

L

Law (Jurisprudence)

M

Materials Science

Mathematics

Mathematics and Computer Science

Mathematics and Philosophy

Mathematics and Statistics

Medicine

Medicine (graduate entry)

Modern Languages

Modern Languages and Linguistics

Music

O

Oriental Studies

P

Philosophy and Modern Languages

Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE)

Philosophy and Theology

Physics

Physics and Philosophy

Psychology (Experimental)

Psychology, Philosophy and Linguistics

R

Religion and Oriental Studies

T

Theology and Religion

A-Z of Courses at Oxford

Bailliol College
Brasenose College
Christ Church
Coprus Christi College
Exeter College
Harris Manchester College
Hertford College
Jesus College
Keble College
Lady Margaret Hall
Lincoln College
Magdalen College
Mansfield College
Merton College
New College
Oriental College
Pembroke College
The Queens College
Regents Park College
St Annes College
St Benets Hall
St Catherines College
St Edmund Hall
St Hilda's College
St Hughes College
St Johns College
St Peter College
Somerville College
Trinity College
University College
Wadham College
Worcester College
Wycliffe Hall

Oxford Colleges



More information on each college can be found in the prospectus and online:
<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/colleges/college-listing/>

How do I know which college to pick?

It can be hard, but the prospectus will give you all the information you need about the colleges. You may prefer a smaller college with fewer people or perhaps you want to get involved with a particular sport or club which is run at a college.

Looking on their websites also helps; if you can't make a decision you can be put in for admissions to select you instead.

Subject choice: considering minority subjects

Considering minority subjects may make applications to Oxbridge more *accessible*.

Classics, Archaeology, Modern Languages, Theology, Earth Science competitive but more “accessible”

Consider links between current subjects and new more “accessible” ones

Would a new subject actually be more interesting if only you knew it?

A degree does not have to be vocational.

You want to study Economics at Cambridge, but you are competing against 20 other applicants who have same predicted grades of A*AA...

Why don't you try **Land Economy**:

Fewer applicants, less competition and possibly lower entry requirements.

The undergraduate degree in Land Economy offers students the opportunity to build valuable skill sets, study some of the key issues of our time, and cultivate excellent career opportunities. If you are looking for a degree that will give you an intellectual challenge and a wide breadth of career opportunities, this is it.

Law, economics and their relationship to the built and natural environment are at the heart of this course. In addition to these core areas, the issues studied on the degree have real-world applications and international scope. As you discover your areas of interest, you will also have the chance to explore real-world issues like:

- Environmental protection
- City Planning
- The principles of business regulation
- The financial aspects of real estate
- International development
- Financial regulation
- Principles of public and private institutions
- Mechanisms of the European Union

Admission Tests

These are a part of both Oxford and Cambridge admissions. These usually happen before the interview so that results can be discussed.

BMAT (Biomedical Science Test)

CAT (Classics Admission Test)

ELAT (English Literature admission test)

GAT (Geography Admissions Test)

HAT (History Aptitude Test)

LNAT (National Admission Test for Law)

MAT (Maths Admission Test)

MLAT (Modern Foreign Language Test)

OLAT (oriental Language Admission Test)

PAT (Physical Aptitude Test)

Philosophy Test

TSA (Thinking Skills Test)

Fine Art Practical

Music Performance Test

TSA Testing

The Thinking Skills Assessment is a paper-based test divided into two parts: a 90-minute, multiple-choice Thinking Skills Assessment and a 30-minute writing task.

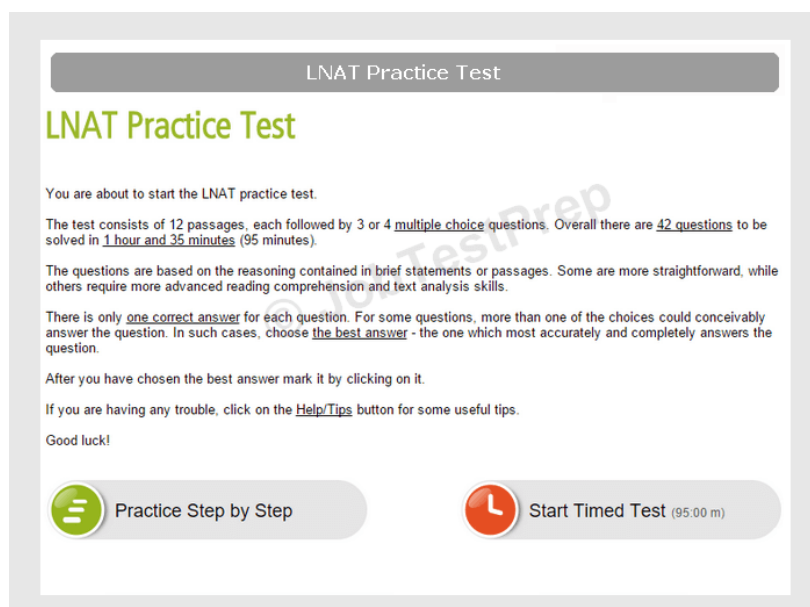
If you are applying for one of the following courses you will be required to take both sections of the TSA: [Economics and Management](#), [Experimental Psychology](#), [Human Sciences](#), [Philosophy](#), [Politics and Economics](#), and [Psychology](#), [Philosophy and Linguistics](#).

However, if you are applying for either Chemistry or History and Economics, you will be required to take only Section 1.

Why do I have to take a test?

Most applicants to Oxford University have great personal statements, excellent references and are also predicted top grades. It can therefore be difficult for us to choose between so many well-qualified candidates, especially as applicants come from all over the world and take different qualifications.

Tests give us an extra piece of information for every student who has applied for a given course, wherever they are from. Considered together with the other elements of the application, this helps us to identify the very best candidates. However, there is no specific mark that will guarantee your application will be shortlisted. The tests vary each year, and your test score will be considered alongside the scores of other students who apply for your course.



Access Programmes Oxbridge

Bursaries

Financial support for undergraduate students at Oxford is a feature of the world of the university and its colleges. In addition to bursaries and tuition fee reduction the collegiate University has always offered additional support to students through a number of additional financial assistance schemes, including supplementary financial provision offered by colleges.

The collegiate university continues to devote substantial resources to providing generous maintenance bursaries up to an estimated £7.2 million to maintain reductions in fees.

Access programmes

Access to Leeds

- To be from a household with an annual income of £25,000 or less or to have been free school meals during GCSEs
- Be first generation of immediate family to go to university
- Attend a school achieving below national average at GCSE
- Your only option is to attend a local university
- Your studies have been disrupted by circumstances in your personal life

EXAMPLE:

KIM: Divorced parents (income below £25,000) and sister is disabled

Standard offer AAA but received Access to Leeds offer to BBB

Foundation Years

These are becoming increasingly popular across all universities. Oxbridge are looking to develop foundation programmes for a range of courses to give access to students who may have just missed out on the entry requirements. These are already at Nottingham and Birmingham for some courses, but Oxbridge have never really offered these till now.

These are also access programmes for those who are from disadvantaged backgrounds.



Foundation Oxford

Oxford are developing a foundation year for talented students who have experienced disadvantage and educational disruption.

Cambridge

Admissions decisions at the University are based solely on academic criteria – your ability and your potential. They assess everyone individually, which means they look at – and for – different things in different people for different courses.

Consequently, there's no magic formula that will guarantee you're offered a place. However, all Admissions Tutors are looking for the students who they believe:

- have the most academic ability and potential
- will benefit from and flourish in the Cambridge learning environment
- are best suited to the course they applied for

A range of teaching methods make Cambridge No1 for teaching, student satisfaction and research. All undergraduates will be taught through:

- Lectures and seminars
- Practical
- Supervisions
- Field trip
- Work experience
- Independent research
- Study abroad



Extra curricular activities make up student life and the experience at Cambridge. There are a range of societies which are a great way of taking up a hobby, meeting new people and developing an interest in something new:

<h2>Top 5</h2> <p>in 2016 in the Academic Ranking of World Universities, QS and Times Higher Education World University Rankings.</p>	<h2>No. 1</h2> <p>for well-structured courses, tuition in small groups, and helpful/interested staff (Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey 2016).</p>	<h2>Top 5</h2> <p>Cambridge is one of the top five universities most often targeted by Britain's leading graduate employers (The Graduate Market in 2016).</p>
<h2>90%</h2> <p>student satisfaction (National Student Survey 2016).</p>	<h2>3 years</h2> <p>Cambridge guarantees most students College-owned accommodation for at least three years (see p22-3).</p>	<h2>150</h2> <p>open days and events in Cambridge each year for you to visit us (see p150-1).</p>

A

Archaeology

Architecture

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Anglo Saxon and Celtic Studies

C

Chemical Engineering

Classics

Computer Science

E

Economics

Education

Engineering

English

G

Geography

H

History

History and Modern Languages

History and Politics

History of Art

Human, social and political sciences

L

Land Economy

Law

Linguistics

M

Management Studies

Manufacturing Engineering

Maths

Medicine

Modern and Medieval Languages

Music

N

Natural Sciences

P

Philosophy

Psychological and Behavioural Sciences

T

Theology, Religion, Philosophy of Religion

V

Veterinary Medicine

A-Z Courses at Cambridge

Colleges

Christ College

All courses except Veterinary Medicine. Centrally located and is vibrant and medium sized.

Churchill College

Founded by Winston Churchill, it is a college which has excellent results. All courses except Land Economy, Theology and religion.

Clare College

Bigger college of around 490 students, which offers central location.

Corpus Christi College

Two sites with a rich and inclusive social life. All courses except Education, Land Economy and Vet Med

Downing College

All courses available, and is relatively new.

Emmanuel College

All courses except Land Economy, Education, Education, Drama and the Arts

Fitzwilliam College

Setting is around lavish gardens, centrally located and offers all courses.

Girton College

Set in 50 acres of parkland, it has an informal atmosphere. All courses except education and history of art

Gonville and Caius College

Founded in 1348 it has high academic status and is a friendly, large college. It offers all courses

Homerton College

Newest college, at over 100 years old. Offers all courses except Vet Med and Architecture. Most diverse college

Hughes Hall

Mature hall, which is diverse. All courses offered except Architecture, Medicine and Vet Med.

Jesus College

Relaxed atmosphere, larger college with 510 students, offers all courses

Kings College

First college to admit women at Cambridge, artistic and dynamic. All courses except Education and Vet Med

Lucy Cavendish College

Founded in 1965, new and modern. Offers all courses

Murray Edwards College

All courses except Education and Philosophy

Newnham College

Run by women for women, a college 150 years old. All courses except education

Pembroke College

All courses except Geography and Education

Peterhouse

Close to the arts and sports buildings, it is friendly. All courses except Education, Geography, Land Economy, Physical and Behavioural Sciences and Vet Med

Queens College

Centrally located, all courses available.

Robinson College

Funded in 1979 it is modern and ambitious. All courses except History of Art.

St Catherine's College

For both men and women, all courses except Architecture, Education, History of Art and Linguistics.

St Edmund's College

Most diverse college with all courses.

St Johns College

All courses, located by the river and centrally located.

Selwyn College

All courses available, has an excellent chapel choir.

Sidney Sussex College

Founded in 1596 it is diverse and inclusive. All courses except Education.

Trinity College

All courses except Education, and Vet Med

Trinity Hall

All courses except Education

Wolfson College

470 mature graduate students, all courses except Economics and Maths



How can I prepare myself?

Super Curricular

To prepare yourself for September and making a head start with your application to Oxbridge, have a think about what 'super curricular' you do in your own time.

- Reading around your subject
- Listening to podcasts on science, literature, history etc.
- Watching TED talks on your subject area
- Reading 'An Introduction to..' book on a topic which interests you
- Reading magazine and newspaper articles; opinion pieces
- Attending open days and lectures at universities

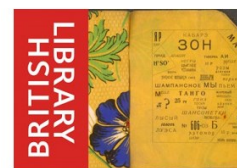
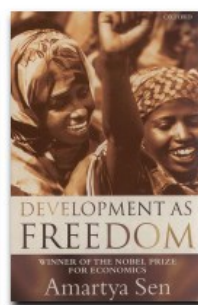
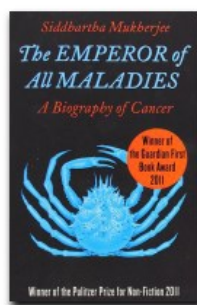
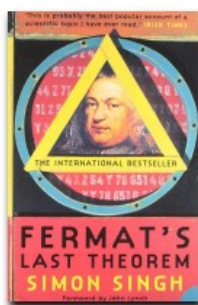
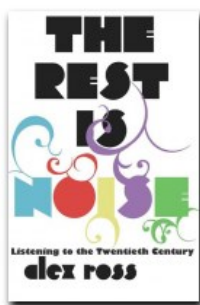


How is this different from the extra curricular?

Extra curricular is great, too, but being part of a drama group, a rugby team or a dance group is something which shows you are a 'well rounded person' but doesn't show you engage with your subject outside of the classroom. Oxbridge are looking for you to sleep, eat and breath your subject.

Some useful websites and links to get you started:

<https://www.univ.ox.ac.uk/applying-to-univ/staircase12/>



British Library Slavonic Resources

The British Library website has lots of resources for studying Russia and Slavonic countries, including letters, posters, archives and films.

[Find out more](#)



TED Series on Anthropology

Be inspired, moved and entertained by the extraordinary selection of TED talks available on anthropology.

[Find out more](#)

NOA Oxbridge Success

Katy Piper—Law, Jesus College, University of Oxford 2016

Katy managed to beat applicants from all over the world to secure one of 8 places at the prestigious, Jesus College.

French, English Literature, Maths, Biology.



Jamie Berry—Land Economy, University of Cambridge (interview) 2019

Jamie managed to secure an interview to study Land Economy at Cambridge beating a number of applicants to be invited to attend.