

Applying to Oxbridge

- Why apply?
- What are they looking for?
- Key facts
- Entry requirements
- Choosing a college
- Preparation
- Support

Why apply?

- long history of superb education and intellectual regard
- renowned for their research and high-quality teaching
- you'll be pushed to your limits to explore your chosen subject in depth and breadth.
- centred on the tutorial (Oxford) and supervision (Cambridge) systems
- short and intense terms
- you are willing to do a tremendous amount of work
- often live in college – has a range of facilities (canteen, bar, sports fields, chapel, music/ drama facilities etc)
- sporting success and other opportunities
- Cambridge (1) and Oxford (2) in last year's league tables
- excellent employment rates (2% unemployment one year after graduation cf. 8%)

Key Facts

- You can only apply to Oxford **OR** Cambridge.
- The ratio of places to applicants is **1:6** although it may vary according to subjects.
- Remember to check carefully what the entry **requirements**. You may need to take an additional **test** or be expected to submit marked **essays**.
- Make sure you attend an **open day** advertised on the university websites.
- Applications must reach UCAS by **15 October 2016**
- Expect to be interviewed
- Every year there are 10,000 unsuccessful applications to Oxbridge – don't be put off – just make sure you have a plan B.

Who do they want?

- Strong academic potential
- Passionate about the subject
- “Intellectual curiosity”
- Think beyond the direct subject matter
- Enthusiasm for complex and challenging ideas
- Clarity of thought and analytical ability
- Highly self motivated
- Highly organised
- Work well under pressure
- Physical and mental stamina

How do you maximise your chances of getting in?

- Preparation is everything
- **Choose your subject first**
- Choose which university second
- Choose your college third

Cambridge requirements

- *The typical conditional A Level offer for arts subjects (except Economics) and for Psychological and Behavioural Sciences for 2017 entry will be A*AA.*
- *The typical conditional A Level offer for science subjects (excluding Psychological and Behavioural Sciences) and economics for 2017 entry will be A*A*A.*
- *Applicants have generally achieved high grades in subjects relevant to their chosen course, and most students who apply have at least four or five As or A*s at GCSE. However, there are always exceptions and one of the strengths of the Cambridge admissions system is its ability to assess all applicants individually.*
- Submit UMS scores for every AS and A2 module taken.
- The use of individual module scores means that departments **may** be looking for a minimum of 85-90% in ALL modules at AS

Cambridge continued

- No pre-interview test regime as for Oxford BUT Medics will be expected to have high BMAT scores and testing whilst there for interview (e.g. the TSA) will be rigorous
- Emphasis on further qualifications, e.g. Maths students will be asked for STEP papers.
- Additional College form completed online
- Examples of completed work
- Interviews spread through December
- Possible pool to mid/late January

Oxford

- Offers A*A*A – AAA
- Module scores looked at if provided
- EPQ (personal statement)
- The UCAS form combined with written work and pre-tests will be used to pre-screen students
- Seem to expect (almost) all A grades at AS
- High proportion of A*/A at GCSE (school's average?)

A*A*A

The following courses require two A* grades and one A grade:

- Chemistry
- Engineering Science
- Mathematics
- Mathematics and Philosophy
- Mathematics and Statistics

A*AA

The following courses, mostly in science subjects, require one A* grade and two A grades:

- Biochemistry
- Biological Sciences
- Biomedical Sciences
- Computer Science
- Computer Science and Philosophy
- Earth Sciences (Geology)
- Economics and Management
- Geography
- Materials Science
- Mathematics and Computer Science
- Medicine
- Physics
- Physics and Philosophy
- Psychology (Experimental)
- Psychology, Philosophy and Linguistics (PPL)

Oxford entry requirements

- Tests in various subjects to be taken in College
 - History
 - English
 - Maths
 - Physics
 - Computer Science
 - PPE
- Interview week usually including an interview at a second college
- Decision in January

Choosing a college...

- Must do your subject!
- How many students do they ordinarily take per year, and how many applications do they expect? – ratio applications to entrants?
- What are the specific fields of interest of the teaching fellows at your chosen college – if you know a particular area of your subject that you will hope to pursue you would be better placed to be at a college with a relevant fellow.
- Remember that you will have a subject interview at the college and so will probably face the Director of Studies for the subject – it is useful to know his/her interests.
- Sport or other interests
- Any ex-KLB students?
- Norrington (Oxford) and Tompkins (Cambridge) tables

Preparation.....

- Can you demonstrate:
 - Strong academic potential
 - Passionate about the subject
 - “Intellectual curiosity”
 - Think beyond the direct subject matter
 - Highly self motivated
 - Highly organised
 - Work well under pressure
 - Physical and mental stamina

What can I do?

- Read around subject
- Future Learn courses
- Recommended reading: most colleges and faculties suggest reading for undergraduates to explore before starting the first year of study. These pages can be found by searching for "Oxford suggested reading" and adding the subject. Some examples of these links are:
- <http://www.spc.ox.ac.uk/study-here/information-new-students/undergraduate-reading-lists>
- <http://www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/undergraduate-admissions/english-reading-list>
- https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CC0QFjACahUKEwiRi-hiYvGAhWD7BQKHUgDAD0&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ox.ac.uk%2Fsites%2Ffiles%2Ffoxford%2Fmedia_wysiwyg%2FEconomics_%2526_Management_reading_list_pdf.pdf&ei=Et7VdGdN4PZU8iGgOgD&usg=AFQjCNH_bULmgBUFOCJFEia0g0srZmilmA&bvm=bv.95515949,d.bGg
- <http://www.medsci.ox.ac.uk/study/medicine/pre-clinical/applying/reading>
- http://www.cs.ox.ac.uk/ugadmissions/why_oxford/background_reading.html
- <https://www.isca.ox.ac.uk/prospective-students/degrees/social-anthropology/reading-list/>
- <http://www.geog.ox.ac.uk/undergraduate/course/reading-list.html>
- <http://www.ppe.ox.ac.uk/index.php/how-to-prepare-for-ppe>
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What can I do contd.

- Your subject in the news
- Talk to subject teachers
- Do not believe all that you are told: be sceptical
- Be interested in discussing ideas
- Be aware of debates and issues in your subject
- Read widely and keep up to date
- Follow things up on your own initiative
- Understand the history of your subject

How do subject and admissions tutors (at Cambridge) use personal statements?

- To confirm appropriateness of chosen subject and course
- As an embarkation-point for discussion at interview
- Subject focus
- Reading and other wider exploration
- Work experience (where relevant to course)
- Personal statements must be both honest and *personal*
- Extra-curricular activities/positions of responsibility

Useful links.....

- http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate_courses/courses/courses_and_entrance_requirements/index.html
- <http://www.study.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/apply/requirements/>

Support

- Meet as a group
- Discuss and recommend preparation
- Open day visit
- Personal statement help
- Meet ex KLB students
- Interview preparation from subject teachers
- Mock interviews
- HSK/RFP/JEC/Mr Carter