



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

Guide for Teachers  
and Advisers  
2024 entry





# Welcome

*At Cambridge, we remain determined that the growing pressures on schools and colleges (increased workload, budgetary pressures on schools and students alike and the lingering effects of the pandemic) not be allowed to affect our capacity to identify, encourage and admit young people with the academic ability and potential to thrive at this University.*

*We appreciate having your input, and that of your colleagues, and that you continue to work with us to persuade your students that higher education remains a worthwhile investment of their time, energy and resources.*

*Together, we're making progress: more than 70 per cent of UK students at Cambridge are now from maintained-sector schools, and admittance of those from under-represented groups has also grown. However, we do need your assistance in encouraging those who may not already have considered Cambridge as an option, to make sure that our undergraduate body reflects the spread of talent across the UK population, and that they know they will thrive here.*

*Having been Cambridge's Director of Admissions for over seven years now, I've really valued my interactions with teachers, both individually and at various meetings and conferences, and very much hope that this dialogue continues. Please do get in touch with me directly at the email address below.*








*Dr Sam Lucy*

**Director of Admissions for  
the Cambridge Colleges**

✉ [directorofadmissions@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:directorofadmissions@admin.cam.ac.uk)



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### Please note

This guide covers application and admission procedures for Home fee status applicants for 2024 entry, and the information contained is intended to be used in conjunction with that found in the Undergraduate Prospectus and on the Undergraduate Study website ([www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk)).

Information for international applicants can be found on the website. Guidance on fee status can be found here: [www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/international/fee-status](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/international/fee-status).

### Schools and colleges

Throughout this guide, we use the term school to describe all educational establishments offering education up to and including FE. This includes colleges and sixth forms.



# Working with schools and colleges

We're committed to working alongside schools and colleges to make sure every suitably qualified student, no matter what their background, has all the information they need to apply to Cambridge. We run a range of face-to-face and online schemes and events designed to help you access this information and support your students in their journey to our University.

To find out more about how we can work with you, contact your link College or speak to the Cambridge Admissions Office.

[www.cam.ac.uk/arealinks](http://www.cam.ac.uk/arealinks)

[admissions@cam.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@cam.ac.uk)

## College Area Links Scheme

The Area Links Scheme connects every area of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to a specific Cambridge College.

The Scheme was established to build effective relationships with schools and colleges across the UK by:

- providing specific/defined contact points so that schools have a direct way of staying in touch with the collegiate University
- enabling the Cambridge Colleges to develop knowledge of specific regions and understanding of their local education environments

If you'd like some information about the University or to arrange a visit, your link College is keen to hear from you! Each College runs its own programme of activities for the schools in their link regions. For example, Admissions Tutors and Schools Liaison Officers may offer online support and guidance sessions, visit schools, run masterclasses and/or organise visits to Cambridge.

Find out which College is linked to your area online at: [www.cam.ac.uk/arealinks](http://www.cam.ac.uk/arealinks).

## Subject enrichment

The University's HE+ website ([www.myheplus.com](http://www.myheplus.com)) provides resources for students in Years 12 and 13 to explore their subject(s) of interest beyond their current curriculum.

The University also offers a number of public events suitable for students in younger year groups. Details of these can be accessed at:

[www.cam.ac.uk/public-engagement](http://www.cam.ac.uk/public-engagement).

## Events

The Cambridge Admissions Office (CAO) staff organise and attend a range of in-person and virtual events throughout the UK each year to encourage students to consider the University of Cambridge. We've detailed some of these below. Please check our events listing page for a full list of University, College and department events: [www.cam.ac.uk/ugevents](http://www.cam.ac.uk/ugevents).

- Virtual Tour – access a range of information, 360 degree photography, articles and films from our Colleges and departments ([www.virtualtour.study.cam.ac.uk](http://www.virtualtour.study.cam.ac.uk)).
- Cambridge Open Days, for Year 12 students – check the website for 2023 Open Day dates, regular updates and booking instructions ([www.cam.ac.uk/opendays](http://www.cam.ac.uk/opendays)).
- HE fairs ([www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/events](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/events)).
- Subject Masterclasses for Year 12 students ([www.cam.ac.uk/masterclasses](http://www.cam.ac.uk/masterclasses)).
- Think Cambridge for Year 11 and 12 students ([www.cam.ac.uk/think-cambridge](http://www.cam.ac.uk/think-cambridge)).
- Outreach events and initiatives for students from a variety of widening participation backgrounds ([www.cam.ac.uk/outreachevents](http://www.cam.ac.uk/outreachevents)).

Find more information online at:

[www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/events](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/events).

## Cambridge Students' Union (Cambridge SU) Initiatives

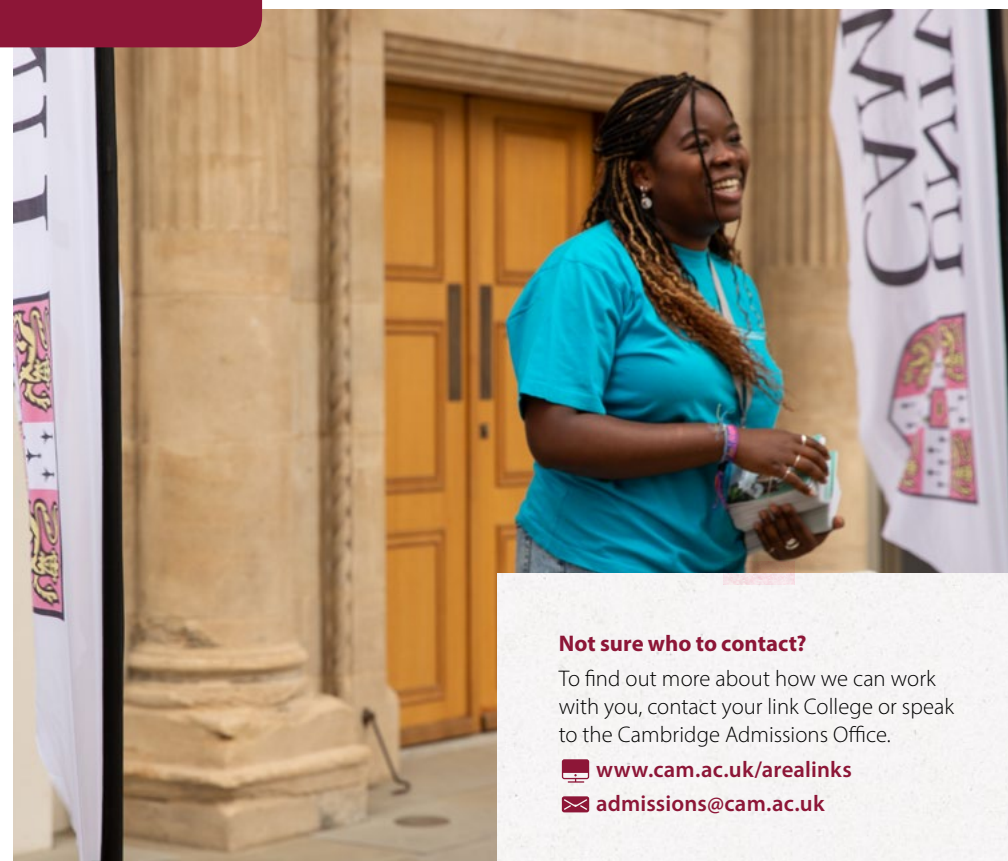
Cambridge SU organises a popular residential Shadowing Scheme as well as running various other initiatives. For more information, contact the Cambridge SU Undergraduate Access, Education and Participation Officer (see p16).

## Events for teachers and HE advisers

The University and some Colleges organise events specifically for teachers and student advisers. These provide up-to-date information and guidance on the University, our admissions process and outreach opportunities.

- Teachers and Advisers' Webinar Series – providing advice and guidance on different topics at key points throughout the year, as well as Q&A sessions with experienced admissions staff.
- Teachers and Advisers' Conference – covering the application process, making a competitive application, supervisions and interviews, and the Cambridge Colleges, as well as the opportunity to network with other teachers and advisers.

You're also welcome to attend most of our open days and events with your students. See the website for further information ([www.cam.ac.uk/teachers](http://www.cam.ac.uk/teachers)).



### Not sure who to contact?

To find out more about how we can work with you, contact your link College or speak to the Cambridge Admissions Office.

[www.cam.ac.uk/arealinks](http://www.cam.ac.uk/arealinks)

[admissions@cam.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@cam.ac.uk)



# Why Cambridge?

**Top 3**



in the *Complete University and Guardian University Guides 2023*.

**92%**

of our students who responded to the Graduate Outcomes Survey were in work or further study within 15 months of graduating.<sup>1</sup>



**121**

affiliates of the University have been awarded the Nobel Prize since 1904.



**Top 10**



Cambridge is one of the top ten universities most often targeted by Britain's leading graduate employers (*The Graduate Market in 2022*).

**3 years**



Cambridge guarantees almost all students College-owned accommodation for at least three years (see below).



## Academic excellence

The University of Cambridge is one of the world's greatest universities, consistently rated among the top higher education institutions in national and international league tables. We provide a challenging, flexible and individual learning experience. Our teaching staff include many national and world subject leaders, so students have the exciting opportunity to be taught by experts in their field.

## Flexible learning

Many of our degree courses (formally referred to at Cambridge as Triposes) encompass several subjects, with some options available across several courses where the subjects overlap. Our courses are generally broad in the first year, before becoming increasingly focused in later years (see p6). This allows students to explore their subject and confirm their strengths and interests before specialising.

## The collegiate structure

Cambridge is a collegiate university that comprises various faculties and departments in different academic subjects, and a number of Colleges (see p7). Therefore, as well as being a member of the University and an academic faculty or department, students also belong to a smaller College community.

The collegiate system offers a huge amount of individual pastoral and academic support for each student (see p14) and provides places for them to live, study and socialise (though students in all Colleges take the same course and examinations, and are awarded degrees by the University).

## More personal tuition

In addition to lectures, practicals and seminars, students receive regular small-group tuition (most often for between one and three students). This more personal tuition, known as 'supervisions', allows students to explore course material in much greater depth, investigate new approaches, receive regular feedback and clarify anything they're unsure of.

## Outstanding support

To help our students succeed we provide expert teachers and lecturers, excellent library and computing facilities, superb labs and lots of support. Our extensive welfare and support systems ensure that students' individual needs can be recognised and met. As a result, we have consistently high student retention rates, with the latest figures indicating that 99 per cent of students continue or complete their undergraduate degree at the University (compared to 92 per cent nationally).<sup>2</sup>

## Accommodation guarantee

The Cambridge Colleges guarantee accommodation to single undergraduates without children for three years (many also provide for fourth-year students)<sup>3</sup>, and students are only charged rent when they're in residence – contracts are typically for 27-39 weeks, rather than a full year.

## Excellent facilities and resources

Study costs are kept low because we're fortunate to have excellent computing and library facilities (in addition to the resources at the University Library, many departments and all Colleges have a library and provide computing facilities). Transport costs in the city are usually minimal as it's easy to get around on foot or by bicycle.

## Substantial financial support

The University and Colleges are committed to the principle that no suitably qualified Home fee status student<sup>4</sup> should be deterred from applying to Cambridge by their financial circumstances, and that no publicly funded Home fee status student should have to leave because of financial difficulties.

Therefore, an extensive programme of financial support – including non-repayable Cambridge Bursaries – is offered to help our students to meet the costs of their Cambridge education, regardless of background ([www.cam.ac.uk/studentfinance](http://www.cam.ac.uk/studentfinance)).

## Everyone is welcomed

We welcome students from every background and the diversity of our student body is valued and celebrated by all. We encourage our students to get involved socially and they certainly do, as our hundreds of student-run clubs and societies demonstrate. Whatever your students' interests, there'll be plenty of others here that share them (see also p15).

## Excellent career prospects

Cambridge graduates from all disciplines go into a very wide range of occupations. They're highly employable and greatly sought after thanks to the key transferable skills they develop here ([www.careers.cam.ac.uk](http://www.careers.cam.ac.uk)).



<sup>1</sup> Based on responses to the Graduate Outcomes survey. This records the outcomes of students who completed their studies between August 2019 and July 2020. 55 per cent of graduates responded to the survey.

<sup>2</sup> Higher Education Statistics Agency; all UK domiciled full-time first degree entrants (March 2022).

<sup>3</sup> Accommodation guarantee applies to single undergraduates without children at all Colleges.

<sup>4</sup> Please check the website for details about fee status ([www.cam.ac.uk/tuition-fee-status](http://www.cam.ac.uk/tuition-fee-status)).



# Applying to Cambridge

Students apply to Cambridge online through UCAS. However, at Cambridge the process starts earlier than it does at most other universities to allow time for all the application information to be gathered and considered. While at other universities most undergraduate courses can be applied to up until January, at Cambridge, our deadline for all courses is mid-October. Students who are interested in applying should start their research as early as possible so they have plenty of time to prepare their application.

In addition, students are required to provide some further information not covered by the UCAS application. The six steps below outline the application process (with further detail given on the following pages).

## 1 Choose a course

Students should start researching our courses so they can decide what might be right for them. See p6 for more information.

[www.cam.ac.uk/courses](http://www.cam.ac.uk/courses)

## 2 Decide on a College

Encourage students to consider where they'd like to live while they're here – applicants indicate in their UCAS application if they have a preference College or are making an 'open' application. Find out more on p7.

[www.cam.ac.uk/choosingacollege](http://www.cam.ac.uk/choosingacollege)

## 3 Check assessment requirements

Most applicants are required to take a written assessment. For some assessments, they will need to be registered in advance via an authorised assessment centre. For others, this will be organised by their chosen Cambridge College if the applicant is shortlisted for interview. It is advised that students check the type of assessment required for their course as early as possible, as some assessments may require them to be registered several weeks before the UCAS application deadline.

[www.cam.ac.uk/assessment](http://www.cam.ac.uk/assessment)

## 4 Submit application

UCAS applications need to be submitted online by **16 October** for students applying for 2024 entry (or deferred entry in 2025).<sup>1</sup> Different deadlines may apply for some mature applicants and those applying for the Foundation Year course or Organ Scholarships. Students will need to submit an additional Cambridge-specific application form known as 'My Cambridge Application' (sent to them by email) shortly afterwards.<sup>2</sup> If we need any further information, we'll contact the applicant by email. You'll find more information on the next few pages.

[www.cam.ac.uk/apply](http://www.cam.ac.uk/apply)

## 5 Interviews

Interviews are usually conducted in December and may be in-person or online, depending on the College and particular circumstances. You can find videos and full information about interviews on our website.

[www.cam.ac.uk/interviews](http://www.cam.ac.uk/interviews)

## 6 Our decision

Applicants will be advised of our decision before the end of January 2024. See p8.

### Will my students' applications be disadvantaged because they attend a state/private school?

No. Admission is based solely on academic ability and potential – we don't discriminate for or against applicants because of the type of school they attend (see information about our Admissions Policy, above).

## Undergraduate admissions

The University of Cambridge and its Colleges are committed to offering admission to students of the highest academic ability and potential, irrespective of social, racial, religious and financial considerations. Two further aims of our Admissions Policy are:

- aspiration – to encourage applications from groups that are, at present, under-represented at Cambridge
- fairness – to ensure that each applicant is individually assessed, without partiality or bias, in accordance with the policy on equal opportunities; and to ensure that, as far as possible, an applicant's chance of admission to Cambridge doesn't depend on College choice

Once students are admitted, we ensure that they're given the academic, personal and (where appropriate) financial support necessary for successful completion of their course at Cambridge.

### Further information

[www.cam.ac.uk/admissionspolicy](http://www.cam.ac.uk/admissionspolicy)

<sup>1</sup> Other application deadlines apply for applicants to our Foundation Year ([www.cam.ac.uk/foundationyear](http://www.cam.ac.uk/foundationyear)), Organ Scholarship applicants ([www.cam.ac.uk/musicawards](http://www.cam.ac.uk/musicawards)) and for some applicants aged 21 or over ([www.cam.ac.uk/mature](http://www.cam.ac.uk/mature)).

<sup>2</sup> Students who are applying for the Graduate Course in Medicine will need to complete a course-specific application form alongside their UCAS application, and Organ Scholarship applicants need to complete the UCAS application, My Cambridge Application form and a third Organ Scholarship application. Please note that it's not possible to apply to both the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford in the same year.





## Choosing a course

### Post-16 subject choices

The A Level/IB subject choices made in Year 11 (or equivalent) can have a significant effect on a student's higher education options.

Many Cambridge courses require prior knowledge of certain subjects and the Colleges expect such subjects to be passed, normally with an A or A\* grade at A Level/grade 6 or 7 at Higher Level of the IB (or equivalent).

Students who have decided on a university course should look at the course requirements before finalising their A Level/IB Higher Level subject choices to check their suitability for entry and whether their combination offers the most suitable preparation for their chosen course. Details can also be found about the subjects taken by typical entrants on each of the course pages ([www.cam.ac.uk/courses](http://www.cam.ac.uk/courses)).

Those students who are unsure about the course they'd like to study should note that there are certain subjects that are essential for a number of courses at Cambridge. Therefore, choosing one or more of these can help keep their options open.

Further advice about subjects and subject combinations that provide a more effective preparation for study at Cambridge can be found on our website ([www.cam.ac.uk/post-16](http://www.cam.ac.uk/post-16)).

### Degree course choices

Our Admissions Tutors are looking for the students who they believe have the greatest academic ability and potential, are best suited to the course applied for and who'll benefit most from the teaching and learning environment offered at Cambridge. Therefore, when considering their degree course choice(s) there are some questions you can encourage your students to think about to make sure they are choosing the right course for them.

- **What are their interests and motivations?**

Students should consider what they most enjoy learning about – this may be particular topics within subjects currently being studied and/or something from their wider interests. It's crucial that they have a genuine personal interest in their subject to be motivated and successful at university.

- **Have they considered less obvious choices?**

Encourage your students to be open-minded and avoid limiting themselves to the more 'obvious' or familiar sounding courses. For example, students interested in history, literature and language may like to consider courses that incorporate all these areas, such as Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic; Asian and Middle Eastern Studies; Classics; History and Modern Languages; Linguistics; and Modern and Medieval Languages, as well as English and History (see also Our courses, opposite).

- **What would they like to do when they graduate?**

While a small number of professions require specific qualifications, most employers don't specify particular degree subjects, so students shouldn't make assumptions about their career prospects. For example, you don't need an undergraduate degree in Accountancy and Finance to become an accountant. Students with a particular career in mind should research any requirements they'd need to fulfil (eg accreditation and/or professional qualifications), and what people currently in that profession studied at university and their subsequent career path – they may be surprised at the range they discover.

- **Have they done their research?**

To understand fully what a course entails, it is vital that students research course outlines at all of their chosen universities. Courses with the same title at different universities can vary greatly, with different entrance requirements, content, structures, options, and teaching and assessment methods.



**Further information**  
[www.cam.ac.uk/courses](http://www.cam.ac.uk/courses)

## Our courses

Many of the courses at Cambridge encompass several subjects, with some options available in a number of courses where the subjects overlap. This offers students a high level of flexibility – those with a clear sense of the subject they wish to pursue can start to specialise early on. However, students who are less certain are able to explore the wider subject area before deciding what to focus on.

More than 65 subjects are offered within our undergraduate courses. The course list and a subject search facility can be found on our Undergraduate Study website ([www.cam.ac.uk/courses](http://www.cam.ac.uk/courses)).

## Foundation Year in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

This free and fully funded one year course has been designed to offer a stepping stone to Cambridge for those who have experienced educational disadvantage. The Foundation Year provides an exciting and challenging academic curriculum in the arts, humanities and social sciences and students will gain a Certificate of Higher Education from the University of Cambridge on successfully finishing the course.

Students will also have the option to continue to a number of suitable undergraduate degree courses at Cambridge if the Foundation Year is completed to the required standard. Details about progression and further study can be found on the Foundation Year course page.

[www.cam.ac.uk/foundationyear](http://www.cam.ac.uk/foundationyear)

## Design

Integrating the arts and sciences, the new Design course will challenge students to think about global problems such as climate change and give them the skills to help create solutions.

Design is a new course for 2024 entry and combines architecture, engineering and materials science in one degree, giving students the opportunity to design solutions to environmental and societal challenges.

For more details about the course, visit ([www.cam.ac.uk/courses](http://www.cam.ac.uk/courses)).



### Changing course

Owing to the scope and flexibility available, most students stay on the same degree course. However, it may be possible for students to change course if their College agrees that any change is in their educational interests. There is, however, no guarantee that such requests will be permitted. The process of changing varies between courses and in some cases students may need to undertake an admissions process.

### What's the University's attitude towards deferred entry?

Around six per cent of students accepted to Cambridge take a gap year. This year out can be a useful time to improve skills, earn money, travel and generally gain maturity. Please note:

- a number of Colleges encourage Engineering applicants to take a year out to gain industrial experience
- most Colleges generally prefer Mathematics applicants not to take a year out, but to apply for immediate entry
- it's not possible to defer entry to the Graduate Course in Medicine

Students intending to defer entry should indicate this in their UCAS application and be prepared to talk about their proposed plans at interview.

### Is there an age requirement for entry to Cambridge?

The vast majority of undergraduates are 18 or older when they begin their course here. A student who'll be 21 or over when they start is classified as a mature student.

All students need to demonstrate that they have the maturity and personal skills to cope with university level study, and that they will be able to gain full benefit from their chosen course.

Applicants who'll be under 18 on admission should seek advice from a College Admissions Tutor as early as possible to discuss their application. If they're considering Medicine, they should also read the information online regarding age requirements for this course.





## Choosing a College

At Cambridge, as well as being a member of the University, students are also a member of a College. If a student decides to apply to the University, they'll need to consider their College choice. In the 'Choices' section of their UCAS application they can either indicate if they have a preference College or are making an 'open' application (see opposite).

A student's College is their home for the time they're at Cambridge – where they live, eat, can socialise, receive academic support, and where they often have their supervisions.

### Does College choice matter?

The Colleges are more alike than they are different and students quickly settle in whichever they attend, so applicants shouldn't agonise over which College to choose (see also information about the 'pool' system, p8).

The differences that do exist primarily lie in the ambiance. It's the University (not the Colleges) which determines course content (see right) and students from all Colleges studying the same course attend the same lectures/practicals and sit the same examinations together.

For equally well-qualified students, making an open application or selecting a preference College makes no difference to their chances of being made an offer.

### How do students choose a College?

Some Colleges don't take students in all subjects so applicants should check availability for their course first (listed in the course and College information). Otherwise, we suggest students think of choosing a College in terms of choosing where they'd like to live.

Students might find it helpful to consider:

- **their age** – three Colleges are exclusively for students aged 21 or over (mature students)
- **College size** – number of students
- **appearance and type of accommodation** (eg on-site or College-owned houses around the city)
- **particular facilities** (eg for certain sports, performing arts etc)
- **personal preference** – it just 'feels right'.

Please note that two of the Colleges (Murray Edwards and Newnham) consider applications from women students only. Information about the different Colleges can be found in the *Undergraduate Prospectus* and on the Colleges' own websites. Students may also find it helpful to explore the Colleges by visiting our Virtual Tour.

 [www.virtualtour.study.cam.ac.uk](http://www.virtualtour.study.cam.ac.uk)

## A collegiate university: who does what?

The key functions for which the University (through its faculties/departments) and Colleges are responsible are outlined below, to show how they fit together.

### The University:

- determines course content
- organises lectures, seminars, practicals and projects
- sets and marks examinations
- awards degrees

### The Colleges:

- admit undergraduate students
- organise small-group teaching (supervisions)
- provide accommodation, places to eat and recreational facilities
- are responsible for academic and pastoral support



### Open applications

If a student doesn't have a College preference, they can choose to make an open application instead.

After the closing date, each open application is allocated to a College which, in that year, has received fewer applications per place in that subject than the average number across all Colleges.

Once allocated, open applications are treated exactly the same as any other – interviewers aren't told whether an applicant made an open application or stated a preference College, and candidates won't be asked about their choice at interview. The success rate for equally well-qualified applicants making open applications is the same as for those applying to a preference College.

Before submitting an open application, students should be sure that they'll be content whatever the outcome of the allocation, as it can't be changed once the UCAS application deadline has passed.

### A few extra notes

- Your students can also find advice about how not to choose a College (eg based on application statistics, specialisms of College Fellows) on our website (below).
- If a student has unusual qualifications or particular requirements, it's advisable to apply to a specific College having sought advice at an early stage rather than making an open application.
- Students can only submit one application to the University in a year, either choosing a preference College or an open application, and once the UCAS application deadline has passed this choice can't be changed.
- Students from the same school can apply to the same Cambridge College.



### Will students need to apply to a particular College for their chosen course?

Students can apply to any College that offers the course they want to study. Regardless of their College, all students on the same course are taught together by the University's academic faculties/departments; attending the same lectures, seminars and practicals and sitting the same exams. The key functions that the University and Colleges are responsible for are outlined opposite.



### Further information

[www.cam.ac.uk/choosingcollege](http://www.cam.ac.uk/choosingcollege)



## UCAS application

To apply to the University, students must submit a UCAS application online, listing Cambridge as one of their options in the 'Choices' section (institution code CAM C05) as well as a College (UCAS campus) code or '9' if they're making an open application.

To ensure that there's sufficient time for all applicants to be assessed equally and fairly, the deadline for applying to Cambridge for 2024 entry for most students is **16 October**.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to a UCAS application, students must submit an additional application(s) if:

- they are applying for the Graduate Course in Medicine
- they are applying for an Organ Scholarship ([www.cam.ac.uk/musicawards](http://www.cam.ac.uk/musicawards))

If there are extenuating circumstances such as health or personal problems, disability or difficulties with schooling, the school referee should also complete and submit the Extenuating Circumstances Form (see p9). For further guidance, please visit our website ([www.cam.ac.uk/apply](http://www.cam.ac.uk/apply)).

Please also note the separate registration deadlines for written assessments (see p11-2).

## Additional application forms

To ensure complete and consistent information about applicants, students will need to complete an additional application form, known as 'My Cambridge Application', following receipt of their UCAS application.<sup>2</sup> This form collects information that isn't on the UCAS application but which we find useful when assessing an application to Cambridge. Students will also have the opportunity to complete an optional Cambridge-specific personal statement. If we need any other information from the applicant, we will contact them via email. You can find out more on our website: [www.cam.ac.uk/apply](http://www.cam.ac.uk/apply).

## Application outcome

### Applicants may be made an offer.

This might be from the College the applicant applied/was allocated to, or from a different College as a result of their application being 'pooled' (see opposite). If they've already gained all the qualifications required, they may be made an unconditional offer. If they're still studying, an offer will usually be conditional and dependent on them achieving particular grades in those qualifications. We do not make unconditional offers to students who have not already achieved the qualifications required for entry onto their chosen course.

### Applicants may be unsuccessful.

With around six applications per place, every year we have to turn down many students with good grade predictions whom we'd like to have taken. Disappointing though this may be, we hope that all applicants find the process a useful experience and valuable preparation for their other university choices. We hope students won't be deterred from applying by the prospect of not being successful. We can only offer places to those who apply.

## Feedback on decisions

All undergraduate admissions decisions are the responsibility of the Cambridge Colleges. As a matter of course, many Colleges provide written feedback to schools after interviews have taken place (usually on request), and all Colleges are happy to discuss the outcome of applications by letter after the cycle closes in January, providing the applicant has given us permission to do so. This is a requirement of the Data Protection Act, and applicants will normally be asked for their consent before their interview, if invited to attend. We prefer to send feedback to teachers/referees, rather than directly to students, and teachers should decide what information it is appropriate to pass on.



### Further information

[www.cam.ac.uk/admissionspolicy](http://www.cam.ac.uk/admissionspolicy)

## Does the University take part in Clearing?

The University of Cambridge doesn't enter Clearing. However, we anticipate that we may have places available for some widening participation applicants during our August Reconsideration Pool (previously known as Adjustment). You can find out more information about this at

[www.cam.ac.uk/august-reconsideration](http://www.cam.ac.uk/august-reconsideration).

## The pool system

The pool system is designed to ensure that the best applicants are offered places, no matter which College they applied or were allocated to.

If a College is over-subscribed in a particular course, strong applicants are put into the 'winter pool' for other Colleges to consider. All Colleges can consider pooled applicants and Directors of Studies in each subject meet during the admissions period to discuss the overall standard of applications so that they can see how their own College's applicants compare – Colleges would rather admit a strong applicant from the pool than a weaker applicant who applied directly/was allocated to.

As a result of being placed in the winter pool, a few applicants may be asked to attend another interview at a different College, usually in January. Alternatively, they may be offered a place at another College without further interview; or they may be unsuccessful, in which case they'll be notified by their original College.

For 2022 entry, 750 pooled applicants were made an offer of a place by a different College from the one they applied/were allocated to.

A second smaller pool (of offer holders who narrowly miss the conditions of their original offer and widening participation applicants – see left) takes place in August after examination results are released and places can be confirmed. This again helps to ensure that the best applicants secure places.

## What's the typical success rate?

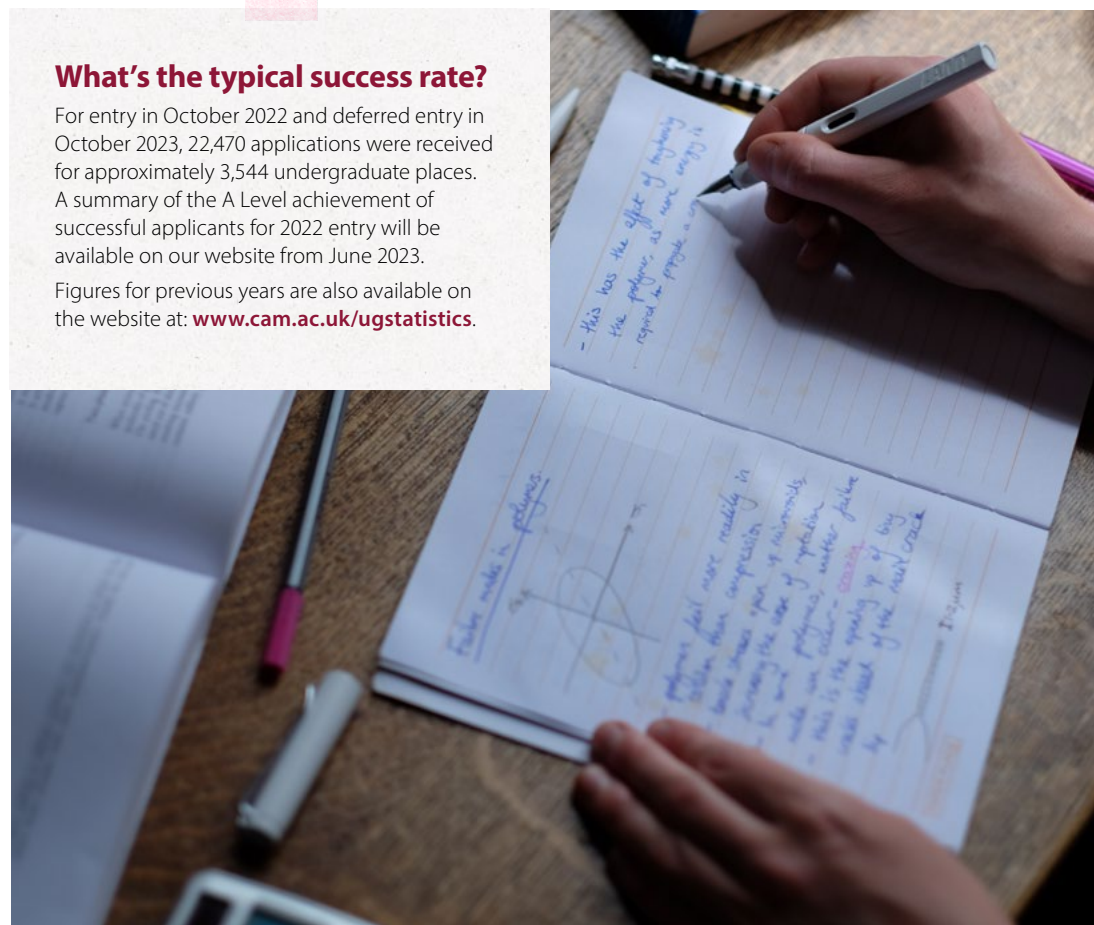
For entry in October 2022 and deferred entry in October 2023, 22,470 applications were received for approximately 3,544 undergraduate places. A summary of the A Level achievement of successful applicants for 2022 entry will be available on our website from June 2023.

Figures for previous years are also available on the website at: [www.cam.ac.uk/ugstatistics](http://www.cam.ac.uk/ugstatistics).



<sup>1</sup> Other deadlines may apply for some mature students ([www.cam.ac.uk/mature](http://www.cam.ac.uk/mature)), Foundation Year applicants ([www.cam.ac.uk/foundationyear](http://www.cam.ac.uk/foundationyear)), and Organ Scholarship applicants ([www.cam.ac.uk/musicawards](http://www.cam.ac.uk/musicawards)).

<sup>2</sup> Students must regularly check both the inbox and 'spam/junk' folder of the email account they give in their UCAS application as they'll be contacted by the University and/or UCAS by email at various stages of their application.





# Selection

Admission to Cambridge is highly competitive and staff are required to make very difficult decisions when choosing between students.

Applicants are assessed on their academic ability, their suitability for the chosen course and their potential to benefit from and thrive in the Cambridge learning environment.

## What we're looking for

There's no blueprint for an ideal Cambridge student. However, there are certain academic qualities that Admissions Tutors look for.

- **Achievements and potential** – in addition to an applicant's academic record, selectors are assessing their potential for study here (how well they can explore and discuss ideas and opinions, whether they're capable of logical and independent thought, and whether they show intellectual flexibility and willingness to engage with new ideas).
- **Motivation and suitability for the chosen course** – applicants should show enthusiasm for their chosen course, and the desire and potential to go beyond what's required for their studies. This could be demonstrated, for example, by the exploration of their subject beyond the school curriculum and through deeper reading or other engagement (see also p10).
- **Commitment and self-discipline** – successful applicants are self-motivated, self-disciplined and academically committed. This could be shown, for instance, by good time management in the balance of their various academic and personal commitments.

## Information we use to assess applications

We want to give applicants as many opportunities as possible to demonstrate their strengths and potential. Therefore, each application is considered individually and holistically, using all information available (as outlined below and on the pages that follow):

- academic record
- school reference
- personal statement
- any written work or portfolio submitted
- performance in any written assessment
- contextual data
- performance at interview

## Extenuating circumstances

The Extenuating Circumstances Form (ECF) has been designed to ensure that the Cambridge Colleges have the information they require to accurately assess any applicant who has experienced particular personal or educational disadvantage.

The information provided on the ECF will help Admissions Tutors by giving context against which they can judge the applicant's academic record (whether the student has excelled in spite of, or been hindered by, their personal/ educational circumstances), and provide information that's useful when assessing performance at interview.

The ECF should be used where an applicant has experienced health or personal problems, disability or difficulties with schooling, for example:

- a serious, acute chronic medical condition (especially since the age of 14)
- significant caring responsibilities, recent bereavement or serious illness within close family
- serious disruption to educational provision at school
- other circumstances where disruption has occurred – the school is welcome to contact a College admissions office to discuss an applicant's particular circumstances

The student should apply in the usual way. The ECF is available online and should normally be completed and submitted by the applicant's school – please see the website (below) for more details.

In those rare cases where the applicant's school is unaware of the full circumstances, a doctor or social worker may complete and validate the form on the applicant's behalf.



## Further information

[www.cam.ac.uk/extenuating-circumstances](http://www.cam.ac.uk/extenuating-circumstances)

## Academic record

Successful applicants are amongst the most high-attaining students in their school in the subjects most closely related to their chosen university course. See the relevant course entry on our website ([www.cam.ac.uk/courses](http://www.cam.ac.uk/courses)) and College websites for subject requirements.

All Colleges may modify offers to take account of individual circumstances. As such, some applicants may be set less or more challenging offers than those listed, and some offers may specify grades to be achieved in particular subjects.

One of the strengths of the Cambridge admissions system is its ability to assess all applicants individually.

You can find more information and a full list of entry requirements on our website.



## Further information

[www.cam.ac.uk/entrancerequirements](http://www.cam.ac.uk/entrancerequirements)



## What's the University's position on exam resits?

Applications from students resitting entire qualifications will normally only be considered when there were significant extenuating circumstances during the initial teaching or examination period, so extenuating circumstances in relation to resits should be provided via the Extenuating Circumstances Form (see opposite). For those in a modular rather than linear examination system, a student's application is unlikely to be adversely affected by resitting one or two modules; any intention to resit such modules should be indicated during the application process. Arrangements for mature applicants may differ. Please see [www.cam.ac.uk/mature](http://www.cam.ac.uk/mature).

Students should check our course pages ([www.cam.ac.uk/courses](http://www.cam.ac.uk/courses)) for details of the assessment methods used for their chosen course, both before making an application and accepting a place. Most students will be examined at the end of each year. The University does not offer resits as part of its normal examining process.

## What's the University's position on qualifications taken early?

Although the University is in favour of stretching and challenging learners, this shouldn't be at the expense of levels of achievement, and we discourage students from being entered for public examinations early unless top grades will be obtained.

In addition, where students are successfully taking qualifications early, we'd still want to see evidence that they can cope with a workload equivalent to three A Levels taken simultaneously; offers are normally made on the qualifications taken in Year 13 (or equivalent).

There are also potential disadvantages to taking qualifications early in subjects where the knowledge and understanding will be required at university. Students who haven't studied a key subject in a structured way in the year before they arrive at university can find that their knowledge has atrophied.





### School/College reference

You may be aware that UCAS is making changes to UCAS references for the forthcoming admissions round. Academic references are an important part of our admissions process and we will be providing more information on our website about how you can incorporate academic information about your students during the UCAS process. This information will be available from the end of April.

[www.cam.ac.uk/school-college-reference](http://www.cam.ac.uk/school-college-reference)

### Personal statement

Personal statements allow students to tell us about their subject interest(s), and the process of writing a personal statement can often help a student better understand their academic interests and intellectual motivations.

#### What a personal statement should contain

Students are advised to follow the UCAS advice about what to include ([www.ucas.com/personalstatement](http://www.ucas.com/personalstatement)).

At Cambridge, all admissions decisions are based solely on academic criteria (ability and potential). Therefore, in their personal statement, we're looking for applicants to:

- explain their reasons for wanting to study the subject at university
- demonstrate enthusiasm for and commitment to their chosen course
- express any particular interests within the field
- outline how they've pursued their subject interest in their own time.

Such information is often used as a basis for discussion at interview.



### Extra-curricular activities

Our admissions decisions are based on academic criteria (ability and potential) and we expect to see evidence of students' wider engagement with areas of academic interest, such as reading and other explorations relevant to the course for which they've applied.

Extra-curricular activities which are of no relevance to the course will not increase a student's chances of receiving an offer. If, however, particular extra-curricular activities have enabled a student to develop transferable skills, such as organisation or time management, then these can be included in their personal statement. Such activities might include significant caring responsibilities or paid employment, which can help us fully contextualise an application, as well as sport, physical activity, music, drama and volunteering.

### Cambridge-specific comments

Applicants can make additional comments particularly relevant to their Cambridge application in an additional personal statement. We recommend that these focus on interest in the specific Cambridge course, rather than (for example) reasons for choosing a particular College.

This additional personal statement is optional. Applicants won't be disadvantaged if they have nothing to add and shouldn't repeat information provided in their UCAS personal statement here as we'll already have received a copy of this.

See [www.cam.ac.uk/apply](http://www.cam.ac.uk/apply) for more information on how applicants can submit their optional additional personal statement.

### Submitted work

Applicants may be asked to submit examples of their written work from a relevant A Level/IB (or equivalent) course (as submitted to and marked by the teacher), particularly for arts and social sciences subjects. A discussion of this may then form part of the interview.

Details of the Colleges that typically ask for written work can be found in the relevant course entry on our website. However, if this is required the College will advise the student about what sort of work this should be, where it should be sent and the deadline for its submission (usually by mid-November). If an applicant has any queries, they should contact their College's Admissions Office as soon as possible for clarification.

Applicants are asked to complete a cover sheet confirming that it's their own work and detailing the circumstances in which it was written. We recommend that students submit work they'll be happy discussing during an interview, and that they keep copies of anything they send so they can re-read it in preparation.





## Written assessment

Most applicants are required to take a course-specific written assessment. Depending on their chosen course, this might be before decisions about interview shortlisting are made, or taken as part of the interview process should the applicant be invited to attend.

These assessments are designed to supplement the information in their application and provide a gauge of their existing abilities – to assess skills (such as writing and language skills) and, where appropriate, levels of current knowledge and understanding relevant to the course applied for.

See the course information online ([www.cam.ac.uk/courses](http://www.cam.ac.uk/courses)) for details of the associated written assessment. Please note that a student's written assessment performance is not considered in isolation, but taken into account alongside the other elements of their application (see p9).



### Further information

[www.admissionstesting.org/administering-our-tests](http://www.admissionstesting.org/administering-our-tests)

## Written assessments – pre-registration required

Pre-registration assessments require applicants to take a written assessment for which they must be registered in advance via an authorised assessment centre. With the exception of the National Admissions Test for Law (LNAT, see below), these are organised by Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing and taken at an authorised centre local to the applicant. For most UK students, this will be their school or college.

Schools that already offer the Biomedical Admission Test (BMAT)<sup>1</sup> and/or University of Oxford's pre-interview tests will automatically be registered to offer the Cambridge written assessments as well, but applicants will still need to be registered by the school.

UK Schools that aren't authorised for the BMAT and Oxford tests must apply to Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing to become an authorised centre and offer the Cambridge written assessments ([www.admissionstesting.org/administering-our-tests](http://www.admissionstesting.org/administering-our-tests)). There's no charge to schools to become an authorised centre or to offer the Cambridge assessments.

Applicants who won't be able to take their assessment at their school must find an open authorised centre instead. Details are available online at: [www.admissionstesting.org/find-a-centre](http://www.admissionstesting.org/find-a-centre).

Applicants have to be registered online (separately from their UCAS application) in advance to take the relevant assessment. In most cases the assessment centre must register applicants, students cannot register themselves. Please see the Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing website for more details.



### Further information

[www.admissionstesting.org](http://www.admissionstesting.org)

<sup>1</sup> Students must only take the BMAT once, see details at: [www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/courses/medicine](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/courses/medicine).

## Registration deadlines

Registration deadlines and test dates can be found below for pre-registration assessments (excluding the LNAT):

- **15 September 2023:** deadline for schools who want to apply to become an authorised test centre and the registration deadline for candidates with additional/access requirements.
- **29 September 2023:** registration deadline for all pre-registration assessments (excluding the LNAT).
- **18 October 2023:** test date for all pre-registration assessments (excluding the LNAT).

For more information about registration deadlines, please visit the Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing website (left).

## LNAT

For Law, applicants are required to take the LNAT, which has earlier deadlines and different arrangements to other Cambridge pre-registration assessments.

Applicants should usually have taken the LNAT before they apply, and they'll need to register themselves for the assessment at an authorised test centre.

Further information and details about how to register can be found on the LNAT website ([www.lnat.ac.uk](http://www.lnat.ac.uk)).

### Please note:

- with the exception of the BMAT for Medicine, LNAT for Law and the TMUA for Computer Science and Economics, there's no entry fee for the pre-registration written assessments but some open assessment centres may charge candidates an administration fee – for students concerned about the cost of the BMAT, LNAT or TMUA, financial support may be available
- in addition to any course-specific assessments, some Cambridge Colleges require applicants for some courses to take an additional College-set assessment. See individual College websites for details
- mature applicants to Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology, Computer Science, Engineering, Law, Medicine, Natural Sciences, and Veterinary Medicine are required to take the relevant assessments.

In order to be registered, applicants must provide the following pieces of information to their assessment centre:

- UCAS Personal ID
- name as it will appear on their UCAS application
- gender
- date of birth
- details of any access requirements/arrangements
- the university/institution (and Cambridge College or open application) they're applying to
- the course (including UCAS course code) they're applying for.

Successful registration generates a candidate number (a letter followed by five digits), which should be forwarded to the applicant as confirmation – they may be required to provide their candidate number as part of their application, and will need it on the day of the assessment.

## Pre-registration assessments

The following courses require applicants to take a written assessment for which they must be registered in advance via an authorised assessment centre:

- Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology
- Computer Science
- Economics
- Engineering
- Law
- Medicine
- Natural Sciences
- Veterinary Medicine

Assessment centres are advised to register their candidates well in advance (please check the website for relevant deadlines). If an applicant isn't registered by the relevant deadline they won't be able to take the appropriate written assessment, which will mean their application to the University of Cambridge won't be valid.



## Land Economy

There are no written assessments as part of the admissions process for Land Economy at any Colleges for 2024 entry.







### Written assessments – Cambridge College registered

For some courses, if applicants are shortlisted for interview, they will be required to take a written assessment, normally shortly before their interview. Applicants will not need to register for these assessments in advance and our Colleges will provide details directly to the applicant.

For 2024 entry, applicants to all Colleges for the following courses are required to take a written assessment if shortlisted for interview:

- Archaeology
- Architecture
- Classics
- Design
- English
- History and Modern Languages
- History of Art
- Linguistics
- Modern and Medieval Languages (MML)
- Philosophy
- Theology, Religion, and Philosophy of Religion

For 2024 entry, students applying to the following courses may be required to take a written assessment **at some Colleges if shortlisted for interview:**

- Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic
- Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES)<sup>1</sup>
- Education
- Geography
- History
- History and Politics
- Human, Social, and Political Sciences
- Mathematics
- Music
- Psychological and Behavioural Sciences

The assessments for these courses (where required) may vary by College. Please see individual College websites for details of which Colleges require applicants to take a written assessment and the expected format of that assessment.

There are no charges associated with taking any Cambridge College registered written assessments, and students don't need to be registered in advance. Details will be included with the information inviting applicants to interview.



**Further information**  
[www.cam.ac.uk/assessment](http://www.cam.ac.uk/assessment)

<sup>1</sup> All Colleges require AMES applicants wishing to study a European language to take the relevant MML admission assessment.



### Contextual data

In order to assemble a more complete picture of the educational and social circumstances that underpin students' applications and performance in our assessments, we also use several types of contextual data (where available):

- rates of progression to HE in an applicant's local area
- the socio-economic characteristics of an applicant's local area
- whether an applicant has spent time in care at some point (declared in the UCAS application)
- GCSE and A Level (or equivalent) performance of an applicant's school
- recent school history of entry to Cambridge or Oxford
- eligibility for free school meals
- any information provided in the Extenuating Circumstances Form (where submitted, see p9)

This information allows us to assess applicants more holistically and may result in applications being 'flagged' to receive particularly careful attention. However, academic achievement and potential remain central to all admissions decisions – flagged applicants won't necessarily be called for interview, be made an offer or be made a lower offer.



**Further information**

[www.cam.ac.uk/contextualdata](http://www.cam.ac.uk/contextualdata)







### Interview arrangements

The exact form and length of interviews vary from College to College and between subjects, applicants will have one, two or three interviews (most commonly two), normally making for a total of 35-50 minutes of interview time.

Interviews may be in person or online. Details about the interview format for 2024 entry will be available on our website in July ([www.cam.ac.uk/interviews](http://www.cam.ac.uk/interviews)). Colleges send out detailed interview information and advice to applicants; explaining arrangements such as the format of the interview, and what will be expected of the applicant, including arrangements for any written assessment (if relevant).

For in-person interviews, applicants may be asked to stay overnight, in which case they'll not normally be expected to pay for accommodation or meals. Please note that some applicants may be eligible for financial support for travel to interviews (see the website for further details).

### What the interviewers are looking for

The main focus of interviews is to explore applicants' academic potential, motivation and suitability for their chosen course. Questions are designed to assess applicants':

- problem-solving abilities
- assimilation of new ideas and information
- intellectual flexibility and analytical reasoning

Interviews help selectors to gauge how an applicant would respond to the teaching methods used at Cambridge, while also giving the applicant the opportunity to experience this style of teaching.

It's important for applicants to realise that interviewers won't be trying to 'catch them out', but will be challenging them to think for themselves and to show how they can apply their existing knowledge and skills laterally to less familiar problems, in a manner comparable to that required by the supervision system.

It's also important for students to understand that their performance at interview alone doesn't determine their application outcome. Admissions decisions are made holistically, using all available information (see p9).

## Interviews

Every applicant with a reasonable chance of being offered a place is invited to attend an interview, so it's sensible for the applicants you are supporting to be aware of what might happen at interview so they can be fully prepared.

### When the interviews take place

Most interviews take place in the first three weeks of December and students are strongly advised not to make any unbreakable commitments for this period.



### Helping students prepare for interviews

Interviews are discussion-based, and predominantly academic and subject-related, so applicants will be asked questions relevant to the course they've applied for and about the information provided in the written elements of their application. Therefore, you can help students prepare for their interviews by encouraging them to talk with insight and enthusiasm about their subject and wider interests.

A mock interview given by a teacher or someone the student doesn't know can be helpful to give them the experience of expressing their ideas and opinions to a stranger in response to unknown questions.

However, students aren't expected to have ready-prepared answers – over-rehearsed answers can be counterproductive if students are preoccupied with recalling set speeches rather than listening to the interviewers' questions and responding accordingly.

Students should be encouraged to read more deeply in areas of their A Level/IB Higher Level (or equivalent) subjects that they find particularly interesting and about topical issues and developments connected to their chosen course.

Students must be prepared to think quite hard in their interviews but should also be reminded that often there aren't right or wrong answers to the questions asked. It's the process of reaching their answer that's generally of most significance, rather than the answer itself.

Short films about what happens in and preparing for an interview, as well as further information about the interview process are available on our website.



**Further information**  
[www.cam.ac.uk/interviews](http://www.cam.ac.uk/interviews)

### Please note

We're aware of private companies and individuals who offer, at a charge, information and advice on our admissions process, assessments and interviews.

We DO NOT support or encourage any of these commercial enterprises. None of these companies/individuals has access to any information that's not already available free of charge to all schools, colleges and individual students from College admissions offices, the Cambridge Admissions Office or Cambridge SU; and we're unable to verify the accuracy of information these companies/individuals may provide.

Please contact the admissions office at any College or the Cambridge Admissions Office for more information.







## Support

There's an extensive welfare system in place at Cambridge. Throughout the University and Colleges there are numerous individuals and services that offer academic and personal support and guidance, if and when students need them.

### College welfare

Within their College, undergraduates have a Director of Studies (DoS) who looks after their academic welfare – eg advising them on subject and course choices, monitoring their progress, and helping with any queries or difficulties arising from their studies – and also have access to a Tutor who can advise on any personal or financial matters. In addition, Colleges have a variety of other staff, such as a nurse and/or counsellor, and Welfare Officer(s) on the College students' union committee who can all offer advice and support.

### University support

The University's Counselling Service is a free and confidential service available to all students, and the University Students' Union (Cambridge SU) provides welfare services as well (for instance, the professional and confidential Cambridge SU's Advice Service). The University's Childcare Office offers guidance and advice to student parents.



#### Further information

[www.studentwellbeing.admin.cam.ac.uk](http://www.studentwellbeing.admin.cam.ac.uk)



#### Further information

[www.cam.ac.uk/disability](http://www.cam.ac.uk/disability)

### Disabled students

The University's Accessibility & Disability Resource Centre (ADRC) provides information and support to disabled applicants. The ADRC supports applicants, offer holders and students with disabilities including:

- specific learning difficulties (including dyslexia and dyspraxia)
- physical/mobility impairments (including people with upper limb disorder/WRULD)
- sensory impairments (eg hearing, Deaf, visual)
- mental health difficulties (eg depression, anxiety disorder)
- long-term health conditions (eg cancer, chronic fatigue syndrome, HIV, diabetes, epilepsy, long Covid)
- Asperger syndrome, autism, and ADHD

Applicants and advisers/supporters are welcome to contact the ADRC (see p16) to arrange visits and discuss support needs. The ADRC also advises on College and department accessibility and facilities on offer ([www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/building-access-guide](http://www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/building-access-guide)).

Prospective applicants are advised to contact the ADRC and a College admissions office as early as possible to discuss their application and particular circumstances. We also strongly recommend that they disclose their disability/ disabilities and provide any relevant information in their UCAS application so that appropriate adjustments to the interview process can be made, if needed.

### Care-experienced students

Further support is available for care-experienced students at the University, including a guarantee of 365-day accommodation, if required. Care-experienced students could also receive enhanced financial support, such as a higher level of the Cambridge Bursary (see p4).

In order to ensure applicants get the support available to them as a care-experienced student, they should indicate in their UCAS application that they've spent time in care.

[www.cam.ac.uk/careleavers](http://www.cam.ac.uk/careleavers)

### Estranged students

Support is available for students who are estranged from their families. This includes 365-day accommodation, and estranged students can also receive enhanced financial support, such as a higher level of the Cambridge Bursary (see p4).

If you're supporting a young person currently or previously in care or who is estranged from their family and would like to find out more about visiting or studying at the University, please see the website or contact the Widening Participation Team. Students can also contact the team when they arrive in Cambridge to find out more about the support available.

[www.cam.ac.uk/estranged-students](http://www.cam.ac.uk/estranged-students)



### Refugee students

Refugees, asylum seekers or anyone from a forced migration background may have specific concerns when considering or starting university, and it's important to us that they feel supported during this time. We recognise that they may have experienced barriers and difficulties that can have a significant impact on educational opportunities and outcomes, which can be declared through the Extenuating Circumstances form. More information about applying with international qualifications can be found at [www.cam.ac.uk/entrancerequirements](http://www.cam.ac.uk/entrancerequirements). You can also get in touch with any College admissions office for further advice.

[www.cam.ac.uk/refugees](http://www.cam.ac.uk/refugees)

### Young carers

At the University, we offer a wide range of support for all of our students, including those with caring responsibilities. If the student you are supporting cares for a family member or friend, whether that's due to illness, disability, a mental health condition or addiction, they can access help and advice both before applying to the University and once they join us as a student.

If you are supporting a student who has ongoing caring responsibilities, it's important that they find out more about living at the University before deciding whether to make an application. We do have a residency requirement – during term time, students are expected to live in College accommodation, unless they've been given permission to live elsewhere in Cambridge. Your student can discuss their particular situation with any College admissions office before applying.

[www.cam.ac.uk/young-carers](http://www.cam.ac.uk/young-carers)

### Further information

Widening Participation Team

✉ [realise@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:realise@admin.cam.ac.uk)



## Settling in

### Arriving in Cambridge

Once offer holders meet the conditions of their offer, their College will start to contact them about arrangements for their arrival in Cambridge.

Undergraduates may also find it helpful to have a look at the Cambridge SU website ([www.cambridgesu.co.uk](http://www.cambridgesu.co.uk)), which covers many aspects of starting university.

Colleges and faculties/departments usually offer an induction/orientation programme in the first few days of students' arrival to cover key information (eg finding their way around, facilities/resources etc) and to help them get to grips with their new environment.

Most Colleges assign 'College families' (students in other years) to new undergraduates to help them settle in – in many cases, new students will be able to contact their 'College family' in advance to ask any questions – and the elected officers of each Colleges' students' union (also called a JCR) will be on hand when they arrive.

### Meeting people

One of the many benefits of a collegiate university is how easy it is to meet people. Students get to know others from different Colleges on their course who share their academic interests; through clubs, societies and sports they get to know people with similar recreational interests; and in their College they get to know students on different courses and in different years.

Because our student body is so diverse – coming from a wide range of backgrounds, and from all over the country and the world – all new undergraduates find plenty of others with shared experiences. Our students also embrace opportunities to develop friendships with others who have similar interests to their own (academically or socially) but who may be from entirely different backgrounds.

We encourage undergraduates to get involved socially – not only is an appropriate work-life balance essential for their wellbeing, it's also important that they take advantage of all (not just academic) opportunities available here.



### Adjusting academically

All of our applicants are academically very high-achieving and we have every confidence that those we admit will thrive in the learning environment Cambridge offers.

However, it's important that students understand that studying at university is quite different from school (eg pace of work, styles of teaching and learning, level and expectation of independent study etc). At Cambridge, during term time students are expected to spend an average of 42-46 hours a week on their academic studies (including teaching/contact time and independent study).

They should be prepared for an initial adjustment period while they get to grips with the demands of their new timetable and workload.

This adjustment period is normal, and how long it takes naturally varies between students. At Cambridge there are plenty of people who can support undergraduates while they settle in and throughout their degree (including lecturers and supervisors, as well as those already mentioned) and we encourage students to access this support if they have any queries or uncertainties.





## Further information and resources

We're committed to ensuring that all relevant information and guidance about applying to and studying at Cambridge is readily available to all, free of charge. If you have any other queries or require specific advice, please get in touch using the contact details below.

### Cambridge Admissions Office (CAO)

The CAO can help with general enquiries about the application process and studying at Cambridge.

✉ [admissions@cam.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@cam.ac.uk)

🌐 [www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk)

### Cambridge Students' Union (Cambridge SU)

Cambridge SU offers advice and guidance, as well as organising events and initiatives for prospective applicants.

☎ 080 1641 222

🌐 [www.cambridgesu.co.uk](http://www.cambridgesu.co.uk)

[www.applytocambridge.com](http://www.applytocambridge.com)

### Accessibility & Disability Resource Centre (ADRC)

The ADRC provides advice, information and support to applicants and current students with a disability, long-term health condition or specific learning difficulty (see p14).

☎ 01223 332301

✉ [disability@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:disability@admin.cam.ac.uk)

🌐 [www.cam.ac.uk/disability](http://www.cam.ac.uk/disability)

### Colleges

See College websites for more information, and contact an Admissions Tutor for further advice about College admissions policies and other matters.

🌐 [www.cam.ac.uk/choosingacollege](http://www.cam.ac.uk/choosingacollege)



### Thinking ahead?

If you're supporting younger students who may be applying to Cambridge for entry after 2024, you can find more information and advice, including booking details for online and on campus events, on our website.

🌐 [www.cam.ac.uk/teachers](http://www.cam.ac.uk/teachers)

## Online resources for you

### Undergraduate Study website – Teachers

- Keep up-to-date by subscribing to our free regular newsletter.
- Download copies of this guide and other publications.
- Area Links Scheme information and contacts.
- Admissions research and findings.

🌐 [www.cam.ac.uk/teachers](http://www.cam.ac.uk/teachers)

### Advancing Access website

- CPD resources and online events for teachers and advisers to help you support your students' progression to university.

🌐 [www.advancingaccess.ac.uk](http://www.advancingaccess.ac.uk)

### Online resources for you and your students Undergraduate Study website

- Details of our courses and Colleges.
- A guide to applying – including dates and deadlines, information about interviews, and application statistics.
- Virtual Tour, open days and events.
- Student finance.
- Support and welfare.

🌐 [www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk)

### HE+ website

- Subject enrichment resources for Years 12 and 13 students considering research intensive universities.
- Guides to university level study.

🌐 [www.myheplus.com](http://www.myheplus.com)

### Student finance

Information about government financial support.

🌐 [www.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.gov.uk/studentfinance)

Join our  
mailing list

Sign up to our mailing list for regular emails with information, resources and events to support students applying to the University.







## Application timetable 2023-24

### March 2023

- 2024 entry *Undergraduate Prospectus* posted to all UK schools and colleges and available to download online.
- Cambridge Colleges' and department open days (Mar-Oct).
- Undergraduate Study Website updated for 2024 entry ([www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk)).
- 2024 entry Guide for Teachers and Advisers available online.

### July 2023

- Cambridge Open Days for Year 12 students.

### September 2023

- Cambridge Open Day for Year 12 students (College focused).

### November 2023

- College-registered assessments (see p12).

### January 2024

- Applicants will be advised of our decision before the end of January.

### August 2024

- Confirmation of university places.
- August Reconsideration Pool (see p8).

### April 2023

- Booking opens for University-wide Cambridge Open Days (see p3).

### August 2023

- Applications for Cambridge SU Shadowing Scheme open (see p3).

### October 2023

- Pre-registration assessments (excluding the LNAT - see p11).

### December 2023

- Most Cambridge interviews take place. Students are advised to keep this time free (p13).

### February 2024

- Applications open for government student financial support.


### October 2024

**Students start at university!**







**Cambridge Admissions Office**  
admissions@cam.ac.uk

 [www.cam.ac.uk/teachers](http://www.cam.ac.uk/teachers)

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**Feedback**

We welcome your feedback on this guide.  
If you have any comments, please email:

 [CAOPublications@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:CAOPublications@admin.cam.ac.uk)