

Applying to Oxbridge 2019-2020

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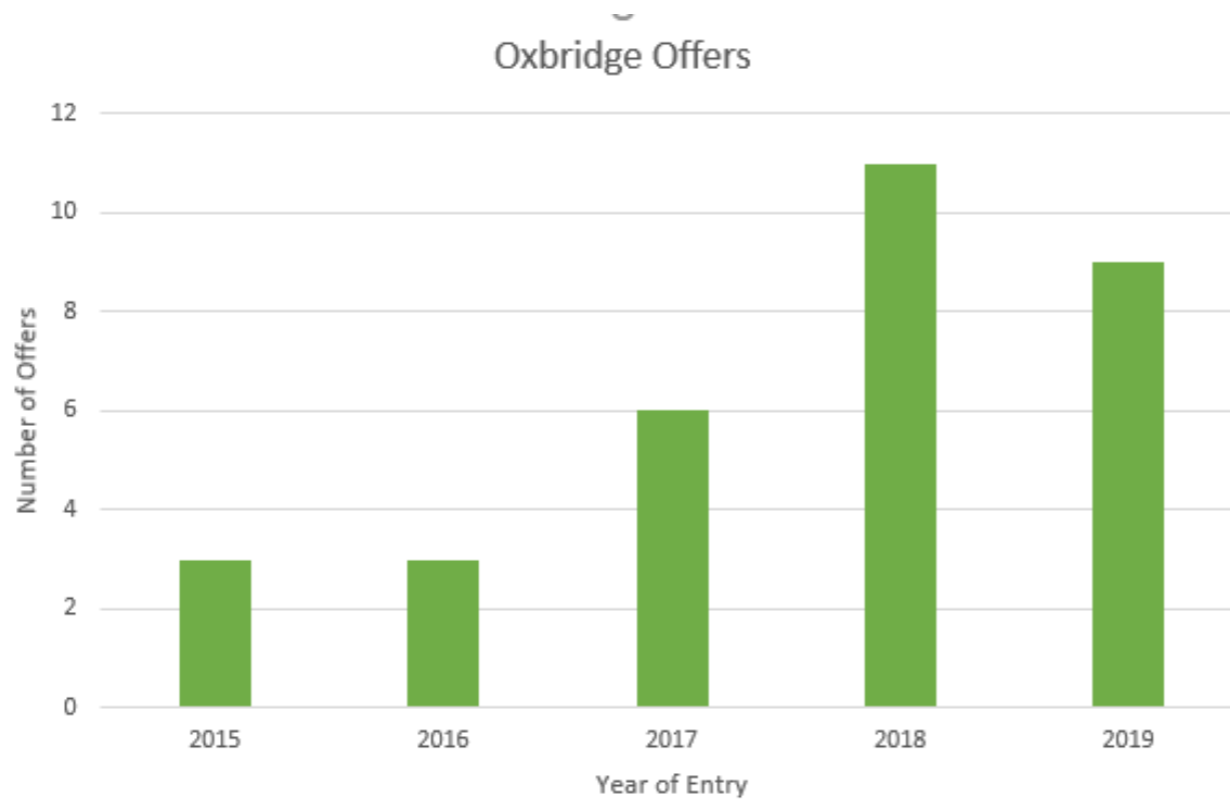
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Oxbridge outcomes

Improved SHS Oxbridge outcomes in Worsening climate for Independent Schools (last two years, circa 10% of year group)



SHS Oxbridge offers tripled

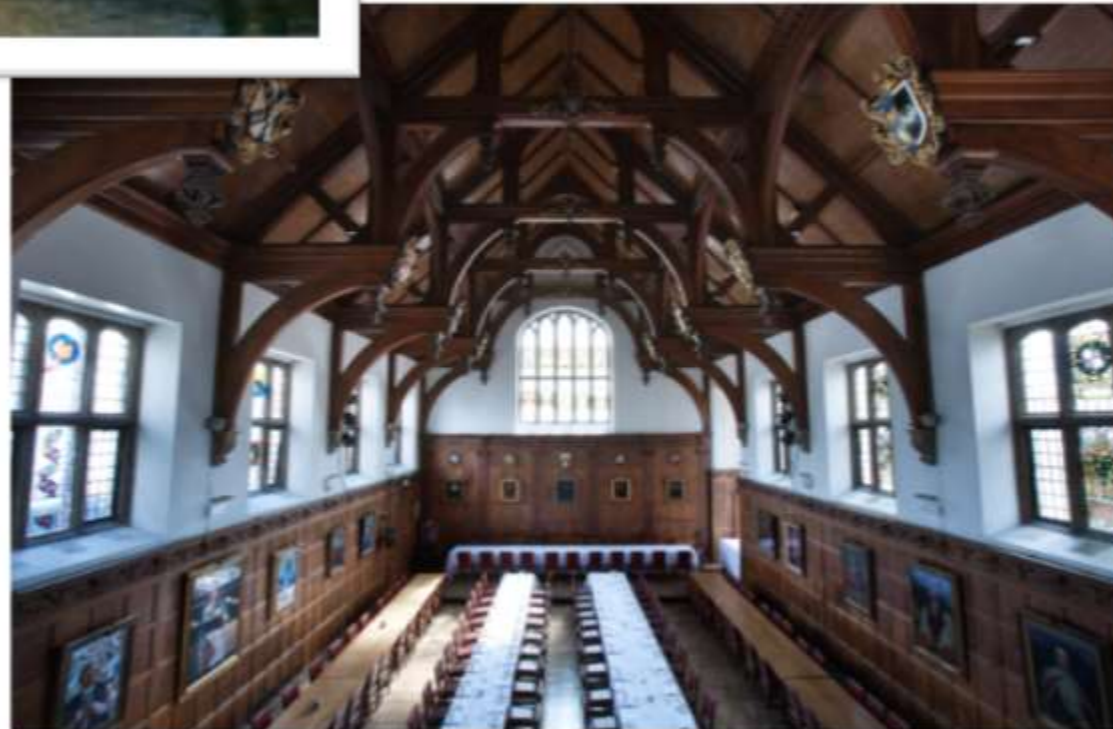


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Colleges



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Supervisions/tutorials



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Unique aspects of application

- Can only apply to Oxford OR Cambridge (in addition to 4 other choices) via UCAS
- Earlier UCAS deadline – 15 October Year 13
- *Some* subjects require entrance tests (pre-interview or at interview) and school essays
- SAQ form for Cambridge – 22 October (*easy but need to complete!*)
- All courses interview (December Year 13)



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What are good
reasons for
applying (or not)?



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I'm not
academically
suited to it?



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“Geeks” welcome but...



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I risk wasting a UCAS space

| Institution | Course | Decision | Reply | Conditions |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (D86) Durham University | (F800) Geography | Conditional offer | | This offer is subject to you obtaining GCE A level Grades AAA in Chemistry Geography Mathematics Thank you for your application to study at Durham University. Congratulations on receiving an offer! Your college allocation will be confirmed directly by one of our colleges. College allocation is due to commence in February 2015. |
| (E56) The University of Edinburgh | (F800) Geography | Conditional offer | | This offer is subject to you obtaining GCE A-Levels at AAA in one examination diet, including 2 from Geography, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Geology, excluding General Studies. This offer is made on the basis that we consider your fee status on the relevant date to be England/Wales/Northern Ireland fee rate. If our assessment of your fee status subsequently changes, then your application may be reassessed and your offer may be withdrawn. |
| (E84) University of Exeter | (F800) Geography (Science) | Conditional offer | | This offer is subject to you obtaining grades AAA at A-Level in 3 subjects including a science subject but excluding General Studies |
| (G28) University of Glasgow | (F800) Geography | Conditional offer | | This offer is subject to you obtaining GCE A level Grades AAB This offer is made to you on the basis that you are a UK student paying tuition fees. You have 30 days from receipt of this offer to challenge the fee status. To be classified as an EU student, see http://www.gla.ac.uk/scholarships/feestatus/ |
| (S36) University of St Andrews | (F800) Geography | Conditional offer | | This offer is subject to you obtaining AAA at A-Level in 3 subjects. The University considers you to be England/Wales/NI (RUK) for tuition fee purposes. If your fee status is subsequently amended the University will re-evaluate your application under the appropriate fees framework, and may revise or rescind your offer. |

Because I will have an interview?

- Just one part of the selection process
- What you may get is probing your interests (e.g. in your personal statement, reading you've done), responding to unseen material, talking about written work you have submitted, topical questions in your subject and random questions
- Inevitably, much will be unexpected and programme should encourage you to embrace that

I might get rejected?



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Doesn't offer my course/don't like their course

1. They don't offer the course: "I'm applying for English and drama Mr McDermott; Oxbridge don't offer that so I shouldn't apply"
2. I don't like their course: "Cambridge psychology is too scientific; I prefer Bath"
3. Are you making a mountain out of a mole hill? "I will have to study medieval English"



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Pressure



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So how do you explore?

Sources of inspiration:

Your current subjects

Subjects related to current
subjects/interests



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University Websites

<http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/courses/natural-sciences>

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/courses-listing/classics?wssl=1>

See related courses for each course



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Undergraduate Study

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Why Cambridge

Courses

Colleges

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Applying

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Find out more

English

If you have a passion for literature, we have a challenging course that will inspire you in your reading, and develop your critical and imaginative abilities.

Overview

Course Outline

Entry Requirements

Resources

Unistats

English at Cambridge

Over the centuries, many writers have studied in Cambridge: Spenser, Marlowe, Milton, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Tennyson, Forster, Maith, Hughes, Byatt and Zadie Smith. When established, the Cambridge course was considered daringly innovative and its ethos continues to shape teaching and research.

Today's course balances a strong grounding in the core of English literature with the chance to explore literature from around the world, other art forms, the English language, and related intellectual traditions.

Teaching and resources

You are taught by some of the most eminent writers and thinkers who, between them, teach and research almost every aspect of literature. We have no set approach beyond instilling the valuable skills of critical thinking, scholarly rigour and good writing.

You have access to the vast resources of the University Library, and to the Faculty Library, which houses around 80,000 books and provides computer facilities, skills training and welcoming features such as 'Tea @ 3'. Our modern Faculty building also includes a drama studio and garden.

Socially, many English students pursue interests in creative writing, journalism and the performing arts.

What we're looking for

English students need an intellectual curiosity which drives them to try new things and ask probing questions. We look for reading beyond the syllabus, and for independent, well-informed critical thinking.

Additional course costs

There are no compulsory additional course costs for English. Prior to arrival, students may be required to undertake some preparatory reading (depending on papers taken). Often, students choose to purchase their own copies of certain texts relevant to the papers they take, the cost of this is approximately £50-100, depending on texts chosen. New students are provided with a recommended list of texts. Throughout the three years of the course, costs of purchasing books will vary depending on how individual students source and subsequently dispose of those books. Purchasing brand new books can be very expensive, but many students use the vast online secondhand market both for purchasing and later selling on course texts. English students should make use of the substantial library collections, especially for expensive secondary reading. Most College librarians will take requests for new books as well, sometimes with the approval of that College's Director of Studies for English. Most out-of-copyright texts are available online as free e-texts that can be loaded onto an e-reader. The cost, therefore, of Cambridge English course materials will depend on the resourcefulness of the individual student - but £500 would be a reasonable upper limit over three years. Full course details are available on the Faculty of English website and if you have any queries about resources/materials, please contact the Faculty.

Changing course

To be able to change course, you need the agreement of your College that any change is in your educational interests, and you must have the necessary background in the subject to which you wish to change - in some cases you may be required to undertake some catch-up work or take up the new course from the start/an earlier year. If you think you may wish to change course, we encourage you to contact a College admissions office for advice. You should also consider if/how changing course may affect any financial support arrangements.

After English

Over the years, the skills of critical reading, analysis, and writing developed in the English course are highly valued by employers in a wide range of professions.

Course Film



Fact File



UCAS Code
Q100

Course Duration
Three years - BA (Hons)

Colleges
Available at all Colleges

2017 Entry
Applications per place: 4
Number accepted: 212

Open Days 2018
College open days: Arts
Cambridge Open Days: 5 & 6 July

Related Courses
Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic
Classics
Education
Linguistics
Modern and Medieval Languages
Theology, Religion, and Philosophy of Religion

Course Website
www.english.cam.ac.uk

Classics

Classics at Cambridge isn't just studied as a period in the past, it also looks at how classical culture, language and philosophy have affected the history of Western civilisation right up to the present day.

[Overview](#)[Course Outline](#)[Entry Requirements](#)[Resources](#)[Unistats](#)

Find out more about Classics at Cambridge

- [Faculty of Classics website](#) - Explore Classics in more detail on the faculty website.
- [Three-year course](#) - A guide to the three-year Classics course, for applicants with A-level Greek and/or Latin.
- [Four-year course](#) - A guide to the four-year Classics course, for those with neither Greek nor Latin at A level.
- [Classics FAQ](#) - Frequently Asked Questions about the Classics course.
- [What students say](#) - Students describe their experiences of studying Classics at Cambridge.
- [How We Teach](#) - How students are taught and assessed in Classics.
- [The Greeks, The Romans & Us](#) - Discover more about why the Classical world still fascinates people today and learn about studying Classics at Cambridge, with short videos, articles, and blogposts.
- [Teachers and Schools](#) - Outreach and admissions information for teachers.

Course Film



Fact File

UCAS Code

Q800 (3 year course)

Q801 (4 year course)

Course Duration

Three or four years - BA (Hons)

Colleges

Available at all Colleges

2017 Entry

Applications per place: 2

Number accepted: 102

Open Days 2018

Oxford and Cambridge Classics open day



What do you want to discover today?

| | | | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|-----------|---------------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| BIOLOGY | CHEMISTRY | ECONOMICS | ENGINEERING | ENGLISH | GEOGRAPHY | HISTORY |
| LAW | MATHEMATICS | MEDICINE | MODERN LANGUAGES | MUSIC | PHYSICS | POLITICS |
| PSYCHOLOGY | RELIGIOUS STUDIES | SOCIOLOGY | VETERINARY MEDICINE | | | |

[View all subjects & topics](#)

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Religious Studies

Subject Overview

What does studying religion involve?

Religion is central to world history, society and human life. It is a major force in making the world we live in what it is. The study of theology and religion enables students to explore a wide variety of disciplines to understand the history, practice and thought of the major world religions. There are opportunities to explore religious ideas through the study of Philosophy, Sociology, History, Languages, Anthropology (the study of humans), Art, Literature and Politics.

Theology and religion today

The study of theology and religion is particularly pertinent in a world where religious beliefs are increasingly impacting on social and political events. An understanding of the importance of these beliefs, their broader contexts and their impact on thought and culture is crucial to understanding the world around us. Theology and Religious Studies is a fascinating, diverse subject that can help us to understand and interpret the role of religion and religious beliefs in the past, present and future.

Thinking about studying Theology, Religion, and Philosophy of Religion at university?

Theology, Religion, and Philosophy of Religion is a critical, thought provoking academic degree that will challenge you to respond to key religious questions that have concerned historic and contemporary societies across the globe. You don't have to be religious to study the subject, students come from all faiths and none. Nor do you need to have studied Religious Studies at A-level. This course might interest those who have previously studied Philosophy and Ethics, History, English Literature, Modern Languages, Sociology or Classical Civilisation.

Some graduates are employed by non-governmental organisations, in education, religion or government and use their knowledge to directly inform their work. However, many others use the transferable skills of time management, accessing and analysing vast amounts of information, and expressing themselves clearly and concisely to go on to a wide range of careers, for example in banking, business, charities, law, and the media.

The Historical Figure of Jesus of Nazareth

In this topic, we will look at the area of theology known as Historical Jesus research. This is the attempt to study Jesus of Nazareth as an historical figure in order to reconstruct his life and his teachings.

You may also like...



ENGLISH

Useful Links

British Religion in Numbers

Numbers aren't just for statisticians! This online religion data resource asks (and helps to answer) questions about British religious trends.

BBC Religion and Ethics Pages

This BBC website is regularly updated with fascinating articles exploring controversial religious and ethical issues. Also check out the "Religion A to Z".

Why Study Religion?

This website gives a great introduction to the study of religion and where it could take you.

New Testament Greek

Start exploring New Testament Greek with these online units for beginners.

Philosopher Kings

Explore learning resources written for students studying A-level Religious Studies and Philosophy.

BBC Radio 4's Beyond



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Podcasts

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Thank you for visiting! Please consider filling out our questionnaire. This will help us improve our service providing free educational media recorded from the University of Oxford. Many thanks!

[Click here to access the survey \(3 minutes to complete\).](#)

Units

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Institute of Archaeology | Exeter College | Alumni Office | Department of Politics and International Relations (DPIR) | Medical Sciences Division | Faculty of History |

Also consider...

Competitions – see Careers Newsletter in January

Your EPQ – align with your subject of application

Reading lists – “google subject + Ox/Cam”

MOOCs – mini university courses online

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the course page for 'Law for Non-Lawyers: Introduction to Law' on FutureLearn. The page features the Monash University logo and a pink button that says 'Email me when I can join'. Below the course title, there is a navigation menu with tabs for 'Overview', 'Topics', 'Start dates', 'Requirements', and 'Educators'. The main image shows a stack of green law books and a white legal wig. At the bottom, there are four key statistics: 'DURATION 4 weeks', 'WEEKLY STUDY 3 hours', 'LEARN Free', and 'UPGRADE £52'. A 'Support' button is visible in the bottom right corner.

Masterclasses



Subject Masterclasses

- Undergraduate Study ^
- Events ^
- Subject Masterclasses**
 - > [Subject Masterclasses FAQ](#)
 - [How We Use Participant Data](#)
 - [Open Days](#)
 - [Oxford & Cambridge Conferences](#)
 - [Sutton Trust Summer Schools](#)
 - [The Subject Matters](#)
 - [Events for care leavers and estranged students](#)
 - [Higher education fairs](#)
 - [Events for teachers](#)
 - [International events](#)



What are they?

Subject Masterclasses are subject-specific events that offer academically able students in Year 12 (or equivalent) the chance to experience typical undergraduate teaching at the University of Cambridge, and to get a flavour of what it's like to be a student here.

The Masterclasses cover a range of subjects and provide students with an opportunity to explore topics of interest beyond what's covered within the school curriculum.

Each Masterclass includes:

- two taster lectures delivered by leading academic staff from the University
- the opportunity to discuss and ask questions
- an introduction to the Cambridge admissions process
- the opportunity to hear about life as a Cambridge student from current undergraduates

When are they?

Subject Masterclasses take place throughout the year. New subjects and dates will be

Subscribe to our mailing list

First Name *

Last Name *

Email Address *

School Year (2019-20) *

First subject of interest *

Second subject of interest

Third subject of interest

* required field



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Am I academically
suited?

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Results

- ≥ 5 A*s/8,9 at GCSEs, but...
- May vary by subject
(economics, PPE, medicine,
natural sciences, physics,
computer sci probably higher –
languages, theology, 5 x 8/9
might be ok)
- Potential, not actuality



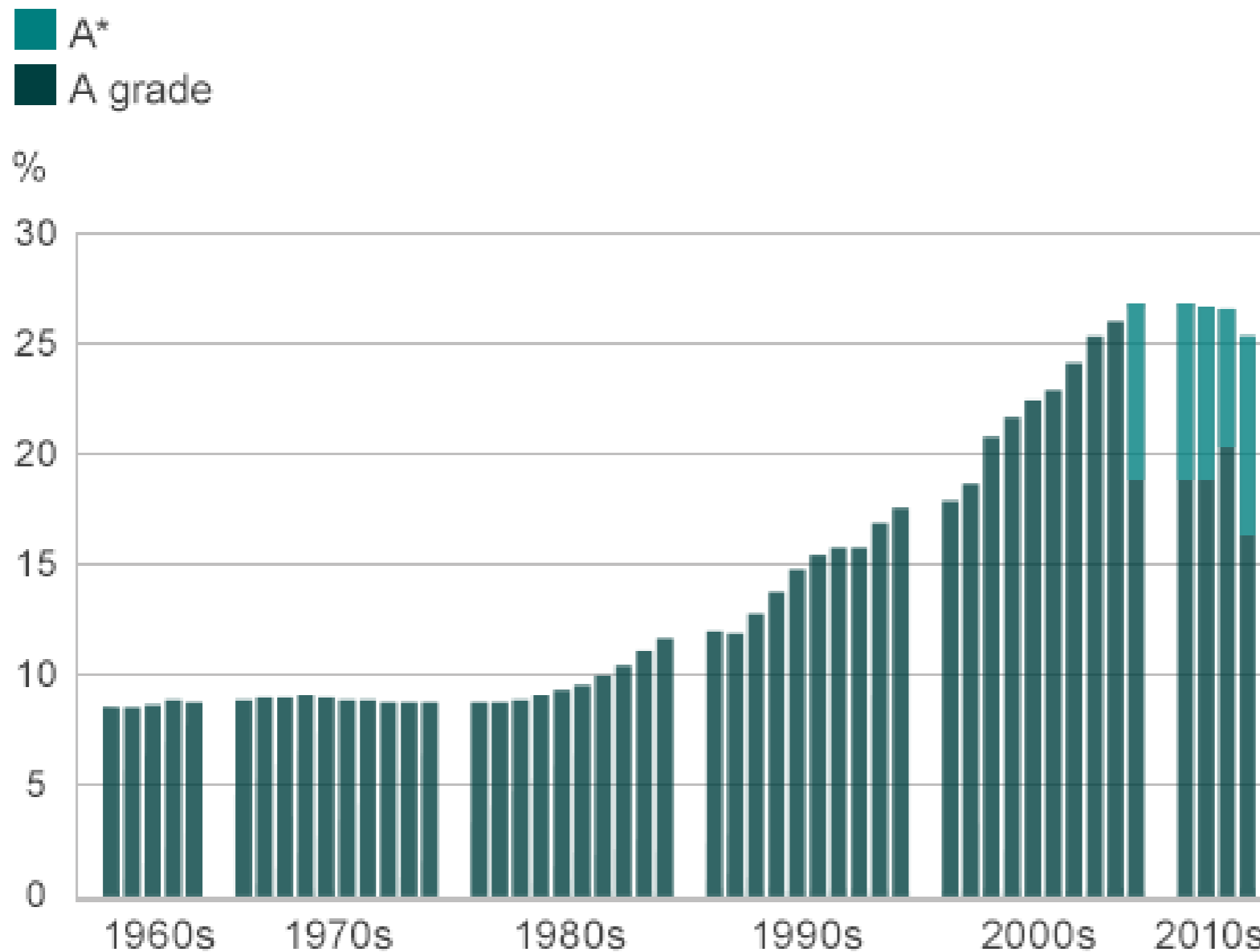
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Good exam results are not enough

A-level entries awarded A and A* grade



Source: Centre for Education and Employment Research, University of Buckingham/JCQ



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Good exam results are not enough

In 2015, circa 15% of candidates scored 3 'A's, but...

only 1.2% of UCAS applicants go to Oxford or Cambridge, which is why...

...many universities other than Oxford and Cambridge demand AAA or higher.



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Good exam results are not enough

A* now part of the standard Cambridge offer (A*AA or A*A*A for Sciences), and of the Oxford sciences offer. But...

...both Oxford and Cambridge are unwilling to put too much emphasis on the A*.

So what ARE they after?



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Independent thinking, not re-gurgitation

“The mind is not a vessel to be filled,
but a fire to be ignited” (Plutarch)

Someone who thinks critically about issues...

Someone who recognises things are messy and
complicated...

Someone who can verbalise thinking

Doesn't necessarily mean “confident”

NB. These skills can be developed



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Genuine enthusiasm, not feigned 'passion'

“A magician bumps into you on the first day of school in Year 12. He offers you, for free, a pill which, he claims, can instantly give you all the knowledge and understanding that you need in order to score A-grades in all your AS and A2 examinations. You believe that he is speaking the truth. Would you take the pill?”



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BUT... No one type of student

Great to be independent thinker and passionate about your subject BUT...



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Some of most oversubscribed courses % success rate

Architecture: 8% Cam

Computer Science: 11% Cam, 7% Oxford

Physics: 15% Oxford

Medicine: 17% Cam, 9% Oxford

Law: 14% Cam, Oxford

Politics, Philosophy, Economics (PPE): 12% Ox

Maths: 14% Cam, 13% Oxford



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Some less oversubscribed

Anglo Saxon Norse and Celtic: 33% Cam

Archaeology: 33% Cam

Languages: 50% Cam, 35% Oxford

Earth Science: 29% Oxford

Linguistics: 33% Cam

Geography: 33% Cam

Music: 50% Cam, 38% Oxford

Classics: 50% Cam, 38% Oxford

Theology: 33% Cam, 32% Oxford



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Apply strategically?

No, this is not licence to apply for a subject you are not interested in

But, *properly* explore new subjects where relevant as often not encountered at school and if appeals then do consider

NB. You may be able to change degree at Cambridge after your “PART I”

NB. Oxbridge choice does not necessarily restrict course choice elsewhere



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Remember if you do get a place

Oxford and Cambridge have the lowest drop out rates of any English university:

Oxford – 0.4% Cambridge – 0.35%

No. awarded First/2.1 – amongst highest



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Over to people with
finger on the pulse...

Katie Lancaster – Former
SHS pupil and second year
student in Philosophy and
Religion at Keble College,
Oxford....



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Oxbridge Programme
Application Process
and
Support we give SHS pupils
on it

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Identifying realistic applicants

Interested in applying? Research courses over Christmas

Please reply to email sent to your school e-mail by Monday 6th January stating the following:

i) Subject(s) (please indicate if considering more than 1)

ii) choice of university (Oxford or Cambridge if known)

iii) Your A level subjects and EPQ with area

iv) GCSEs Results

v) Any extenuating circumstances to explain GCSE underperformance



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Leave your teachers alone for the moment...we'll be talking with them!

Then I will see whomever applies to determine whether they should join the programme and who their mentor(s) should be



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Oxbridge Programme

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Meet the Oxbridge Management Team



Mr McDermott

Oxbridge
Co-ordinator
Law (Cam)



Miss Parker

Assistant
Oxbridge
Co-ordinator

Natural Sciences
(Cam)



Mrs Adams

Assistant
Oxbridge
Co-ordinator

Classics (Cam)

Meet the Mentors

- Mr Gibbons - Maths (Ox)
- Mr Howells – Maths (Ox)
- Ms Daniels – Biology (Ox)
- Ms Dean – Natural Sciences (Cam)
- Ms Evans – Education Masters at Oxford - Archaeology, English, Education and Classics Mentor
- Ms Woods – Spanish (Ox)
- Ms Lintott – Art History (The Courtauld)
- Many more.... (including Oxbridge Team)



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Mentoring

**Usually meet once per week from approx.
February 2020 until Interviews in December 2020**

Explore your interests (particularly early on) and aspects of course you are unfamiliar with (eg. sociology in Theology)

Help finalise your subject (if relevant)

Agree **reading**, galleries to visit, work experience to do, etc...



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Mentoring cont.

At future meetings discuss what you have read and done and engage with new material (replicating Supervision/Tutorials)

Over time, **practice responding to unseen material** and multistage questions, among other things

Develop technical skills – eg. if computer science or physical/chemical sciences, maths maths maths, particularly if not doing further maths

Support you with application – e.g. personal statement, written work submissions



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Year 12

In addition to mentoring, fortnightly Oxbridge Meeting by Oxbridge Team which we recommend you attend (currently after school on a Tuesday)

Epsom Down Oxford and Cambridge Conference
March 2020 – date TBC

Mock entrance tests – you may do with your mentor but Oxbridge Team will aim to arrange additional practice testing **(important you take feedback from this)**

-Trip to Open Days at Oxford and Cambridge (2 and 3 July 2020 – Activity Week)

-Mock interview day

-Lecture Day



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Year 13

Finalise your choices on return in Sept – subject, institution, college
(ideally done by end of summer term)

Personal Statement complete by beginning of Sept 2020 – support from
Mentor and oversight by Oxbridge Team

UCAS References – written by teachers and edited by Oxbridge Team

Early UCAS Submission for Oxbridge – 15 October 2018

Help with written work submission for **most** Arts and some Social
Sciences (1 or 2 essays – work on from Summer Year 12) – **submit early
November 2020**

**Pre-interview entrance tests: avoid booking holidays end Oct
beginning Nov 2020 until we confirm pre-interview test dates (LNAT for
law taken different date)**

Usually at least two mock interviews (Autumn Term)

December 2020 – interviews from 1st – 18thish (sometimes late November)



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Oxford or Cambridge; College Choice?

We will advise and guide on this...

Historically: Oxford – more entry test focussed;
deselect more for interview; Once at interview,
Cambridge more data driven, Oxford more interview

Colleges – size, old/new, selection requirements,
etc...

**... Focus on exploring subject choice for now
REMEMBERING to consider related subjects
(particularly if we advise this in your post Christmas
meeting)**

NB. Your Oxbridge choice does not necessarily affect
choices elsewhere



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In summary...

Lots of reasons to apply. Take your pick !

There is no one type! Generally, strong GCSEs and likely to achieve 3 As or A*s at A level

If you've got a chance, go for it ! You have NOTHING to lose **but do listen to our advice**

What next ? Research subjects (including related) and respond to my email by 6/1/20

Watch SHS Oxbridge student tips on choosing degree (3.43):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7AdINGV6tBs>

(Surbiton High Youtube Channel – search Oxbridge)



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Any questions for us?

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