



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE



# Alumni Toolkit

## Frequently Asked Questions

This is information we present on the Undergraduate Study website ([www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk)) which represents some of the most common questions we encounter from prospective applicants.

### Q. What courses are available at Cambridge?

A. At Cambridge more than 65 subjects are offered within our 32 full-time undergraduate courses, which range from Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic to Veterinary Medicine, and lots in between. A list of all the courses available can be found in the Prospectus and online ([www.cam.ac.uk/courses](http://www.cam.ac.uk/courses)).

### Q. What's a College?

A. A College is where you live when studying at the University of Cambridge, but it's much more than a hall of residence. Colleges are responsible for admitting students, and they also arrange supervisions (small-group teaching sessions that support the lectures and practicals that you attend). For more information about the College system at Cambridge, and profiles of each of our 29 undergraduate Colleges, have a look at the *Undergraduate Prospectus* or website ([www.cam.ac.uk/ugcolls](http://www.cam.ac.uk/ugcolls)).

### Q. How do I choose a College?

A. It might seem a bit daunting trying to choose a College, but don't worry: Colleges are more alike than they are different! And the cross-College moderation procedures mean that your choice of College doesn't affect your chances of being made an offer. You may want to consider the following points.

- Course – most Colleges take students on all courses, but there are a handful that don't.
- Admission criteria – these are similar for all Colleges, but there can be small differences in subject requirements and arrangements at interview.
- Your age – four Colleges are for mature students (aged 21 or older) and their facilities are geared accordingly.
- Your gender – three Colleges consider applications from female students only.
- College size (number of students), location and building type
- Special facilities (eg for certain sports, performing arts etc)
- Personal instinct – if you simply feel drawn to one for some reason!

Each College has a profile in the Prospectus (including links to their own websites), and we also provide some guidance on how *not* to choose a College here: [www.cam.ac.uk/choosingacollege](http://www.cam.ac.uk/choosingacollege). It can be helpful to make a shortlist of perhaps half a dozen Colleges based on their profiles and then either contact the Colleges for further information or arrange a visit.

### Q. Do I have to choose a College?

A. No, you don't have to choose a College. Instead you can submit an 'open' application. Open applications are allocated by a computer program to individual Colleges after the closing date. They go to Colleges which happen in that year to have had fewer applications per place than the Colleges generally. Once allocated to a College your application will be treated exactly the same as any other application to that College. For more information about open applications please see [www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/colleges/open-applications](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/colleges/open-applications).



### Q. How do I apply?

**A.** The application process is really quite straightforward. To apply to the University of Cambridge you need to submit a UCAS application by 15 October the year before you wish to start at the University (other deadlines may apply for some overseas and mature applicants). Guidance about filling in the application can be found on the UCAS ([www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)) and University websites. If you want to know what happens to your application once it is submitted, the Applying section of our website has all the details ([www.cam.ac.uk/apply](http://www.cam.ac.uk/apply)).



### Q. When's the application deadline?

**A.** The deadline for your UCAS application is 15 October. A slightly earlier deadline affects applicants for Organ Scholarships (1 September) and those wishing to be considered for interview overseas. There's also a later deadline for mature applicants who meet certain criteria – see the Prospectus for more information. Applicants for courses with a pre-interview admission assessment need to be registered for the assessment by an authorised centre by 15 October (or by 1 October for those applying for Medicine).



### Q. Will I be interviewed?

**A.** Around 75 per cent of applicants to the University are invited to interview. Interviews usually take place during the first three weeks of December, and advice about what to expect can be found at [www.cam.ac.uk/interviews](http://www.cam.ac.uk/interviews). The interview forms just one part of our holistic assessment of applicants – performance at interview isn't considered in isolation and it's not a pass/fail test.



### Q. Will I have to sit an admissions assessment?

**A.** The majority of our courses require applicants to take a course-specific written admission assessment, either before interview or as part of the interview process (if interviewed). The written assessments are designed to gauge your abilities relevant to the course applied for and are part of our holistic assessment. For pre-interview assessments, advance registration is required. In addition, some Colleges ask applicants for some courses to submit examples of their written work. For more information see [www.cam.ac.uk/assessment](http://www.cam.ac.uk/assessment).



### Q. What qualifications are acceptable?

A. The majority of applicants apply with A Levels, although other school/national examinations at an equivalent level (such as Scottish Advanced Highers, Irish Leaving Certificate, Welsh Baccalaureate, French Baccalaureate, German Abitur and International Baccalaureate) are also acceptable. If in doubt, please check that the qualifications you're taking provide an appropriate preparation for study at Cambridge by contacting a College admissions office.

### Q. What grades do I need?

A. Whatever school or college system you're being educated in, our entry standards require you to have studied to the highest level available for school students, and to have achieved top grades. For A Levels, typical offers require A\*A\*A or A\*AA. For the International Baccalaureate, typical offers require 40-42 points overall, with 776 in Higher Level subjects. For details of typical requirements for other qualifications please see the website ([www.cam.ac.uk/entrancerequirements](http://www.cam.ac.uk/entrancerequirements)) or contact the College you're thinking of applying to or the Cambridge Admissions Office.



### Q. Are there any subject requirements?

A. This depends on the course you're planning to study. For certain courses at Cambridge, some subjects are essential (either for all or some Colleges), whilst for others there are no subject requirements. Information about subject requirements for all courses is given on the Undergraduate Study website ([www.cam.ac.uk/courses](http://www.cam.ac.uk/courses)) and individual College websites.

### Q. I have a disability, can I still apply?

A. Yes, of course. There are a number of students with a disability studying at the University. The Disability Resource Centre (DRC) and the College system will ensure you receive the support that you require. More information about the support available and things that you should consider when applying can be found at [www.cam.ac.uk/disability](http://www.cam.ac.uk/disability).

### Q. Is the application process the same for disabled applicants?

A. Having a disability doesn't change how you apply to the University. You're advised to get in touch with the DRC and a College admissions office as early as possible to discuss your application and specific requirements. We also encourage you to visit before applying to assess the suitability of your intended College and department, including their locations relative to each other. We strongly recommend that you indicate your disability in your UCAS application. Such disclosures are looked at separately from academic assessment and allow us, for example, to make appropriate adjustments to the interview process, if needed.



**Q. What fees will I have to pay? Will there be any bursaries/scholarships available?**

**A.** For up to date fee, finance, bursary and scholarship information, please see [www.cam.ac.uk/studentfinance](http://www.cam.ac.uk/studentfinance).

**Q. Is Cambridge an expensive city to live?**

**A.** The cost of studying at Cambridge is comparable with the costs at other universities in England, and in fact it can be more cost effective thanks to the extensive financial support available to Cambridge students. The Colleges can offer accommodation to undergraduates throughout their studies, and many other facilities (from libraries and computers, to sports and social facilities) also help to keep living and study costs down. Financial support is available to undergraduates who need it at both a University and College level.

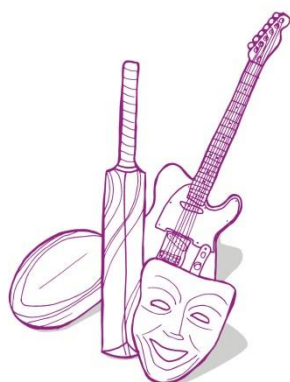


**Q. Can I visit Cambridge before I apply?**

**A.** There are more than 100 open days and events in Cambridge that are organised by the University and Colleges throughout the year. These include the Cambridge Open Days (4 and 5 July 2019), College open days, department open days and specialist events/activities. To find out more, including dates and booking instructions, please see [www.cam.ac.uk/outreachevents](http://www.cam.ac.uk/outreachevents).

**Q. What clubs and societies are there?**

**A.** Where do we start? There are hundreds of clubs and societies with which you can get involved: everything ranging from table football and yoga to archaeology and film. More details are available at [www.cam.ac.uk/studentlife](http://www.cam.ac.uk/studentlife).



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