



Head of Sixth Form / Oxbridge Coordinator

February 2016

Dear Colleague

I am writing to inform you that the Colleges of the University of Cambridge are introducing a system of common format written assessments for applicants, specifically tailored to each subject. This will provide Admissions Tutors with valuable additional evidence of our applicants' academic abilities, knowledge base and potential to succeed in the Cambridge course for which they have applied. This move is a result of responding to teacher and student feedback, a desire to harmonise and simplify our existing use of written assessments and a need to develop new ways to maintain the effectiveness and fairness of our admissions system during ongoing qualification reform. The new arrangements will be in place for those applying for 2017 entry onwards.

Written assessments will be undertaken either pre-interview or at-interview, depending on the course applied for. They will form part of our holistic assessment of applicants, rather than being a stand-alone mechanism for interview selection. Our pre-interview assessments will be scheduled in early November on the same day as the University of Oxford's pre-interview tests, to make them easier for schools and colleges to administer. We remain very grateful for your assistance in helping applicants at this stage in the process. At-interview assessments will take place during the December interview period, usually on the same day as the academic interview(s), as currently happens in assessments such as the Cambridge Law Test and the Cambridge Philosophy Test. No advance preparation will be needed, other than revision of relevant recent subject knowledge where appropriate. Most at-interview assessments will be one hour in duration, and most pre-interview assessments will last no longer than two hours.

The pre-interview assessments will be administered for us by the Admissions Testing Service, who will provide copies of all materials needed. There will be no charge for applicants taking a pre-interview assessment at their school or college in the UK. Schools and colleges will be responsible for registering their applicants no later than 15 October, and your examination offices will receive a separate communication from us detailing these arrangements in due course. For those applying to courses with an at-interview assessment no advance registration is required, as these arrangements will be made by the interviewing College.

Courses with pre-interview written assessments	Courses with at-interview written assessments
Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Chemical Engineering Economics Engineering English Geography History History and Modern Languages** History and Politics* Human, Social, and Political Sciences Medicine (BMAT) Natural Sciences Psychological and Behavioural Sciences Theology, Religion and Philosophy of Religion Veterinary Medicine (BMAT)	Archaeology* Architecture Classics (3-year and 4-year) Computer Science Education History and Modern Languages** History of Art Land Economy Law Linguistics Modern and Medieval Languages Philosophy

*New course for 2017 entry

**New course for 2017 entry; applicants for History and Modern Languages will take both the History pre-interview and the MML at-interview assessment.

Please note there is no common format written assessment for Mathematics or Music, but Colleges will assess aptitude, knowledge base and potential through short tasks at the time of interview. The Mature (over 21) Colleges will ask all their applicants to take common format written assessments at interview (BMAT excepted).

From next month a dedicated website, www.cam.ac.uk/assessment, will provide further information, including the precise duration, subject content and format of each assessment. We will also write to all schools and colleges with a copy of our 2017 entry prospectus and a dedicated guide for teachers and advisers containing further information. If you would like to receive email communication from the University please leave your details at www.cam.ac.uk/teachers to allow us to keep you updated. In the meantime should you have further questions please do not hesitate to contact us via assessment@admin.cam.ac.uk

As the new Director of Admissions for the Cambridge Colleges I look forward to working with you and your students over the coming years.

Dr Sam Lucy
Director of Admissions for the Cambridge Colleges