



# Godalming College

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Careers Department

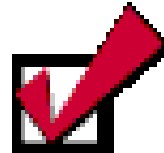
**Oxford and  
Cambridge Entry**



## Oxford and Cambridge - Why Go?

- Quality of resources
- Quality of teaching
- Support for students

**NOT**



- My uncle went there
- I want to be in Footlights
- Social cachet
- It's so pretty

etc.



## Oxford and Cambridge - Why Not?

- **Early application** – will your candidate be sure by early September?
- **Interviews** – how will your candidate feel about these?
- **Course availability** – is the right course available, e.g., joint honours?
- **Course structure** – is the structure of the course the right one for the abilities or choice of career of the candidate?
- **Qualifications** – can the GCSE and AS scores match?



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## Oxford and Cambridge Entry

Entry is based on the UCAS application

There must be:

ucas.com

- An appropriate range of choices
- A well structured and persuasive personal statement
- A carefully completed application

These will be based on work with the personal tutor from the Summer term onward



Principal differences to “ordinary” applications

- **Early Applications**

We have an internal college deadline of **Friday 23 September**

- **Even higher demand** – intense competition – even good candidates struggle

- **Additional “hurdles”**

- Online Forms (Cambridge)
- Personal statements which might be for contrasting subjects
- Tests
- Interviews



## **Cambridge Entry – Some Specifics**

- **Offers will typically be **A\*AA** at A level – will not consider less**
- **Additional College form completed online**
- **Will include UMS scores on EVERY AS and A2 module taken**
- **Tests**
  - **BMAT test for Medicine in College**
  - **Cambridge Law Test**
  - **Other tests taken at interview – e.g., TSA**
- **Examples of completed work**
- **Interviews spread through December**
- **Possible pool to mid/late January**



## Cambridge Entry – Some Specifics

- The use of individual module scores means that departments may be looking for a **minimum of 85-90% in ALL modules at AS**
- There is an expectation of **A\* grades at GCSE** (although this will be checked against school average)
- No pre-interview test regime as for Oxford BUT Medics will be **expected** to have high BMAT scores, and testing whilst there for interview (e.g., the TSA) will be rigorous
- Emphasis on **further qualifications**, e.g., Maths students will be asked for STEP papers.



## Oxford Entry – Some Specifics

- **Tests in various subjects to be taken in College**
  - **BMAT**
  - **History**
  - **English**
  - **Maths**
  - **Computer Science**
  - **PPE**
- **LNAT test for law taken with Pearson Vue (as with the Driving Theory test)**
- **Examples of completed work**
- **Interview week usually including an interview at a second college**



## Oxford Entry – Some Specifics

- Offers were **AAA** at A level this year – will not consider less (AAAA for Mathematics) – *to rise to **A\*AA** in selected subjects – especially Maths and sciences (Maths and Further Maths **A\*A\*AA**)*
- The UCAS form combined with tests will pre-screen students – removing at least **15%** of applicants before interview week
- They will expect **A grades** in all AS subjects and **A\* grades** as the majority of **GCSEs** (although this should be checked against the original school's average)



## This Year's Figures

**2009** 20 offers (2 unconditional) – an unprecedentedly good year

Predominantly an increase in numbers for Oxford (8/23 Cambridge, 12/23 Oxford)

**2010** just 5 offers!

**2011** 19 offers (all conditional)

Predominantly an increase in numbers for Oxford (14/21 Cambridge, 5/34 Oxford)



**Two interesting generalisations:**

- **Successful candidates typically 2:1 bias state vs private school background**
- **We currently have a good “hit rate” with a few Cambridge Colleges**

**BUT**

**The sample is always very small so generalisations are often low in validity**



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# **What Are They Looking at?**

**AS Grades/  
UMS scores**

**Sample Work**

**The Reference**

**GCSE results**

**A level  
predictions**

**Interview  
Performance**

**The Personal  
Statement**

**Specialist test  
results**



**And then ...**

**Meeting the conditional offer**

**Specific Course  
Requirements**



## What Are They Looking for?

- **Enthusiasm** for the chosen subject
- **Knowledge** of the chosen subject (if the candidate is that interested, what have they already learnt?)
- **Intellectual interest and initiative** – and especially the confidence and capacity to respond to demands of tutorial/supervision systems
- Evidence of forethought and research
- Relevant work experience where necessary (though opportunities can be limited)
- The phrase most used by admissions tutors is “**the self-motivated learner**”



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## **Use the Available Support**

**Other  
Teachers**

**Personal  
Tutor**

**Careers  
Department**

**Other  
Students**

**Admissions  
Tutors/  
Departments**

**Websites**



**Oxbridge  
Coordinator**

**Other  
Sources**

**Other Guides**

**Godalming  
Online site**

**Prospectuses**

## The Careers Department's Role

- Support student applications – double checking all Oxbridge entries
  - Providing realistic guidance
  - Administration and support
- BUT WE CAN NOT**
- Allow or forbid an application
  - Provide everything needed
  - Tell candidates where to go
  - Liaise with everyone (especially parents) in the process at all times



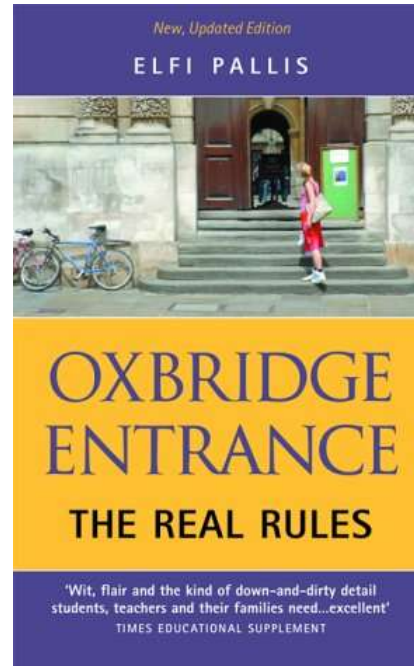
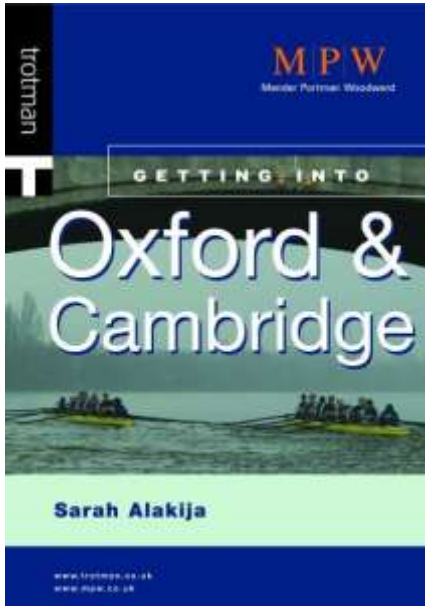
## What Can You Do?

- Encourage reading around both about the **subject** and university/college choice
- Review and be familiar with **Websites/prospectuses/student guides**
- Attend individual college and faculty **Open Days** or otherwise just **visit**
- Read and comment on the **personal statement (but beware plagiarism software!)**
- Lend support with **college choices and the other 4 UCAS choices**
- **Help with work experience** if necessary and available (Law, Teaching, Med, etc), with courses, summer schools etc.
- Discuss **choices for A2**
- **Encourage revision for examinations – every module counts**



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# Some useful books specific to Oxbridge Candidates





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## Some essential websites for Oxbridge Candidates

- [www.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ox.ac.uk) – *Oxford University*
- [www.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cam.ac.uk) – *Cambridge University*
- [www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/adt/](http://www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/adt/) – *for potential BMAT and TSA entries*
- [www.lnat.ac.uk](http://www.lnat.ac.uk) – *for potential law students*
- [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) – *for all applicants*
- [www.godalming.ac.uk](http://www.godalming.ac.uk)

- \* Show all \*
- General Information
- Noticeboard
- Oxford Entry
- Cambridge Entry
- Choosing a Course
- Choosing a College
- Participants
- Gradebook
- Calendar

- My courses**
- SOCIOLOGY A2
  - SOCIOLOGY AS
  - 09-SOCIOLOGY A2 (S D&MR)
  - 09-SOCIOLOGY AS
  - Careers
  - Careers-OXBRIDGE
  - iSkills
  - Activities - Overview
  - Good Practice
  - Staff Training & Development
  - HODs and Subject Leaders
  - Social Sciences Staff Area
- All courses

**Topic outline**

## Oxford and Cambridge Candidates


Welcome to the Oxbridge sub-site on Godalming Online. I will be posting materials here over the year to assist you with possible Oxford or Cambridge applications next year. Please give any feedback you feel might help to improve the site - we want to make this site work for you.

*Dave King*

[Oxbridge forum](#)

**General Information**

- It is cheaper to live at Oxford and Cambridge than most other universities, even though they are less than an hour from London (assuming the income level you have is eligible for grant/bursary support). Both universities can provide financial support for less well off students.
- Oxford and Cambridge have some of the best academic resources and recreational facilities of any university.
- Both Cambridge and Oxford are based on a collegiate organisation - this provides support within the wider structures of these universities. Entry is made to a college first.
- Entry is based on some combination of GCSE, AS and A level scores, tests, interviews and submitted work. Whilst many very able candidates do not gain entry, this is not based on a specific "Oxbridge type".
- Over 85% gain first class or upper second class degrees, and the terms are shorter (3 x 8 weeks p.a.). The "tutorial" or "supervision" is the basis of teaching - creating an intensive educational experience.



And the 'drop out rate' is much lower than elsewhere, Oxford claims the lowest in the country.

- [UCAS](#)
- [The Russell Group](#)
- [Cambridge on YouTube](#)

**Noticeboard**

### Emirates Trip – 25th March 2011

**Calendar**

February 2011

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

**Events Key**

- Global
- Course
- Group
- User

**Useful News Feeds**

- [University of Cambridge News Stories](#)
- [Artificial pancreas in pregnancy promises fewer diabetes deaths](#)
- [European art in focus as Gallery 1 reopens](#)
- [Research aims to encourage top class performances from children in care](#)
- [Killing Kings](#)
- [Was the fox prehistoric man's best friend?](#)
- [BBC News - Education & Family](#)
- [Child protection 'too tick-box'](#)
- [Children's screen habits revealed](#)
- [Loneliness 'hidden killer' of old](#)
- [University principal is suspended](#)
- [Child reviews to be speeded up](#)

 UNIVERSITY OF



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**Keep in Touch**

**Please send queries (or even good information) to**

**[daveking@godalming.ac.uk](mailto:daveking@godalming.ac.uk)**

***Careers Department***

***Room 234***

# Some Questions Previously Asked

- Can we apply to both Oxford and Cambridge at the same time?
  - *No – only one application to one of these universities in any given year is allowed.*
- Must grades be all A\* at GCSE?
  - *No – GCSE performance will be assessed against the original school's overall success rate. However, if there is a more specific reason for underperformance in GCSE then this needs to be explained elsewhere on the application. More important by far is progress over this year and next.*
- Are 4 A levels needed?
  - *Except for Maths (when including Further Maths) generally not. Other universities may require more.*

- **Must there be 90+% in every module?**
  - *It would help – but these universities will be aware that modules can occasionally “go wrong”. There could be a problem if they all do – and the candidate will be competing against students for whom they have not. 90% applies to the highest demand subjects – especially Medicine and Law.*
  - *Oxford will not ask for individual percentages (they use admissions tests) but Cambridge will.*
- **Do they mind retakes?**
  - *They would rather there were none. But a retake could show that high standards are being set, or that a module was taken too early.*
  - *Again, consider the field. They will be good!*

- Does the DofE scheme help?
  - *Not here specifically, unless it demonstrates other things – e.g., the ability to cope under pressure (useful in Medicine, less so in English Literature). The Personal Statement will need **evidence**, not just assertion.*
  - *Other universities will value this sort of activity far more.*
- Is a gap year a good idea?
  - *Oxford and Cambridge prefer deferred entry candidates to apply in the year off. (However, check for Maths).*
  - *BUT gap years can be of immense benefit to grow as a person. It's not (or should not be) just about ticking boxes on a university application.*

# What should your son/daughter be doing now?

- Booking open days – Oxford 6 & 7 July, Cambridge 7 & 8 July (NB our Careers Day is 7 July)
- Giving serious thought to their Additional Study for next year (eg EPQ, Critical Thinking)
- Working hard for AS exams
- Making sure they're on Dave's 'list'
- Using the summer holiday well – personal statement, wider reading, appropriate visits/work shadowing

# What will we be doing?

- Trip to Mansfield College Oxford on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July as part of the University of Oxford FE Access Initiative.
- Careers Day on Thursday 7 July includes talks by University Admissions tutors, a Careers Fair where Oxford will be represented, UCAS registration.
- Help with personal statement preparation in tutorial time.
- Careers staff available to offer support to students individually.