



Aspire

Applying to the University of Oxford or the
University of Cambridge
(collectively known as Oxbridge)



Mythbuster



~~Oxford is only for geniuses (or genii)~~

Oxbridge wants highly intelligent, interested individuals:

Intellectual curiosity

Agile, insightful critical thinkers

You can find aspects of your subject challenging, and still apply



Mythbuster



~~It's only worth applying if you achieved all grade 9s at GCSE~~

Oxbridge expect you to have grades 9, 8 & 7 at GCSE, but they don't require a fixed number

Obviously the better your GCSEs are, the more your application will stand out



Mythbuster

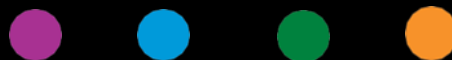


Oxbridge is only for the wealthiest people

Oxbridge is determined to counter this stereotype

Rising proportion of state school students – 68% in 2023 at Oxford, 73% at Cambridge

Keen to encourage applicants from diverse cultural, racial heritage and all income groups (widening participation)



Mythbuster

4 Oxbridge is boring – all the students do is work

Definitely the biggest myth of all!

Work hard, play hard
College and university sports,
drama, music, politics,
journalism

Extensive choice of activities
and facilities



Mythbuster



You need a lot of money to afford Oxbridge

You only pay tuition fees back once you have finished your degree and are earning above a certain threshold

There are a range of bursaries and scholarships available from the two universities, and individual colleges, to help students with low household incomes (search for info. on widening participation)

Oxbridge graduates typically earn higher salaries (along with other top Russell Group graduates)



Why apply?

- Intellectual stimulation
- Tutorials as well as lectures
- Tuition from experts
- Diverse student population
- College system
- World-class facilities
- History & Prestige
- Career prospects



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- An aerial photograph of the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford, England. The building is a circular, two-story structure with a classical facade featuring a row of Corinthian columns. The roof is a large, ornate dome with a lantern on top. The building is surrounded by a green lawn, and the city of Oxford is visible in the background under a blue sky with scattered clouds.



Research Universities and the Russell Group

- ‘Research Universities’ focusing particularly on research – breaking new ground
- The Russell Group consists of 24 research universities, generally seen as the best in the UK
- Highly valued by students and employers

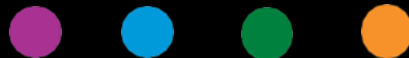
[Russell Group Universities](#)

University of Birmingham
University of Bristol
University of Cambridge
Cardiff University
Durham University
University of Edinburgh
University of Exeter
University of Glasgow
Imperial College London
King's College London
University of Leeds
University of Liverpool
London School of Economics
and Political Science
University of Manchester
Newcastle University
University of Nottingham
University of Oxford
Queen Mary University of London
Queen's University Belfast
University of Sheffield
University of Southampton
University College London
University of Warwick
University of York

Key attributes for the Aspire programme at Bohunt 6th



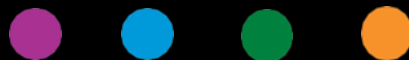
- Intelligence
- Lateral, agile thinking
- Love of learning
- Diligent
- Resilient
- Articulate
- Independent and Driven



What are the universities looking for?

- Ability 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 by the exploration of their subject beyond the school curriculum e.g. by wider reading or academic competitions
- Commitment and self-discipline – successful applicants are self-motivated, self-disciplined and academically committed. This could be shown by skilful time management in balancing various academic and personal commitments plus extent of super curricular endeavours

Source: <https://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/what-are-we-looking-0> [Applying to Oxford](#)



Aspire Timeline

Autumn/Spring Term 25-26

- Students choose course
- Meet with Lucy Hunter & Academic Mentors & Student Mentors
- Reading and preparation
- Super curricular activities
- Apply for summer schools
- Essay competitions
- Visits to institutions
- Online seminars with Oxbridge outreach teams

Summer Term 2026

- Write personal statements
- Reading and preparation
- Meetings with Lucy and Aspire academic mentors
- Super curricular activities
- Workshops with outreach teams
- Admissions tests practice
- References written by teachers



Summer Holidays 2026

- Reading and preparation e.g.
- [Oxplore | University of Oxford](#) or
- [Suggested Subject Resources | University of Oxford](#) or [HE+](#)
- Summer schools e.g. [Sutton Trust Summer Schools](#)
- Online experiences, including podcasts & lectures: [University College Oxford Staircase 12](#) or [University College Oxford Resource Hub](#) or [Cambridge University Virtual Pre-University Summer](#)



Autumn Term 2026

September 2026

- UCAS applications submitted
- Applicants to Oxford or Cambridge must submit UCAS form by October 15th, register for any **admissions tests** and complete Supplementary Application Questionnaire (SAQ) for Cambridge
- Student preparation for admissions tests and interviews

October/November 2026

- Admissions tests
- [University of Oxford Admissions Tests \(OAT\) certification testing with Pearson VUE](#)
- [Admission tests and assessments | Undergraduate Study](#)

December 2026

- Oxford and Cambridge interviews in the 2nd/3rd weeks



2027



January 2027

- Cambridge winter pool (a small number of additional interviews of pooled candidates)
- Oxford final decisions by mid January
- Cambridge final decisions by end of January

August 2027

A-Level exam results – confirmation of whether conditional offers have been met



What Aspire at Bohunt Sixth Form Offers You

- Regular sessions focusing on key skills/attributes
- Fortnightly meetings and regular updates with information, advice and guidance about opportunities offered by universities
- Workshops with Oxford and Cambridge outreach teams
- Support for super curricular e.g. academic competitions
- Academic mentors - staff and undergraduate student mentors
- Support with all aspects of application process: personal statements, admissions tests and interviews



How to Apply for Aspire

1. Personal statement/letter of application
2. Summarise your achievements to date - academic, super curricular & extra-curricular
3. Academic interests e.g. EPQ topic, what you enjoy most about your subjects - demonstrate intellectual curiosity, a love of learning and ambition to study at a higher level in a prestigious setting
4. Discuss what you have read/are reading and how it changed or challenged your thinking - what impact has it had on you?
5. What are your aspirations for the future?

Please deliver by hand to Lucy, care of the sixth form reception team by Monday 10 November.



Enjoy the journey



BOHUNT
SIXTH FORM



Follow the universities or specific colleges/departments on social media.
Look for student created content as well as official marketing materials.
Don't forget the other Russell Groups universities
Look out for taster days or online lectures, competitions or summer courses -
be proactive!

