

Making an application to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge



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Why Oxford or Cambridge?

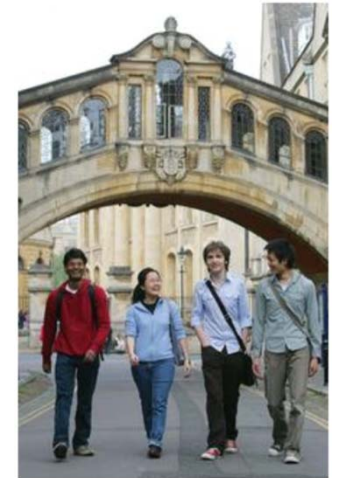


- Broad range of courses
- World-class teaching and facilities
- Small-group teaching – tutorials/supervisions
- Collegiate structure
- Academic and pastoral support
- Wide range of extra-curricular options
- Excellent graduate opportunities, irrespective of degree discipline
- Subsidised living costs through college system

Universities and departments

Students are members of the University, a department and a College.

- Course content
- Lectures, seminars, practicals and projects
- Assessments and exams
- Award degrees
- Careers advice



Colleges

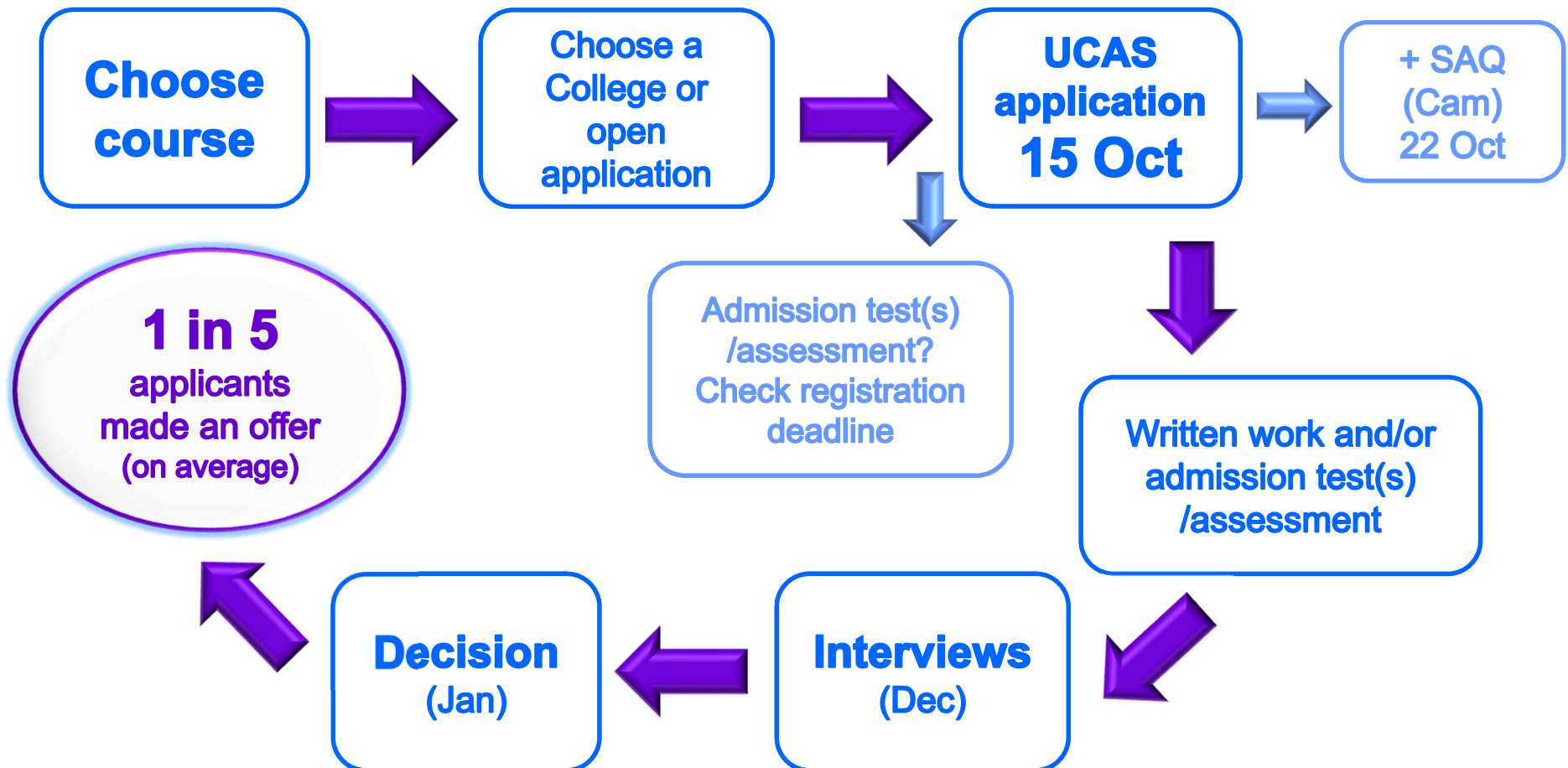
A College is like a mini campus, providing a base for students.

- Admit students
- Academic and pastoral care
- Accommodation, dining and recreation
- Organise small-group teaching
- Facilities for academic study

Open application or state a preferred college



The application process



What information do we use to assess applications?

We consider every application individually, taking all aspects into account:

- Academic record
 - Pre-16 achievement
 - Post-16 achievement and predictions
 - Subject combinations
- UCAS Personal statement
- UCAS Teacher's reference
- Admissions test or written assessment results (where required)
- Written work (where required)
- Interview (if interviewed)



Why use admissions assessments/tests?

- Differentiate between well-qualified candidates
- A common set of data with which to compare applicants to a specific course
- To stretch and challenge applicants
- Assess the aptitude and potential of applicants
- If appropriate, assess subject knowledge and understanding/application of knowledge

www.cam.ac.uk/assessment

www.ox.ac.uk/tests

Interviews

The interview is designed to emulate the tutorial/supervision system

- ✓ Academic ability and potential to be successful on the course
- ✓ Self-motivation, commitment and passion for the chosen course
- ✓ Ability to think independently and critically
- ✓ Ability to self-monitor
- ✓ Engagement with new ideas



There are no trick questions and it's not the 'final hurdle'

What are Admissions Tutors looking for?

✓ **Academic
ability and
potential**

✓ **Subject
requirements**

✗ **'Crafting a class'
with particular
personalities or
backgrounds**

✓ **Fit between
applicant and
chosen
programme**

✓ **Genuine subject
interest
– motivation and
enthusiasm**



✗ **Whether or not an
applicant's family
has made a
donation**



✗ **Too much focus on
extra-curricular
activities, including
athletic
achievement or
musical ability**

✗ **Who an
applicant's
relations are and
where they went
to university**

Common Pitfalls



- Wrong subject
- Track record in exams causes concern
- Inconsistent UCAS reference
- Thin UCAS personal statement - lack of reflection or super-curricular exploration
- Lack of practice for admissions tests or written assessments – lack of awareness of time pressure
- Interview challenges
 - Subject knowledge insecure
 - Insufficient analytical ability or clarity of thought
 - Unwillingness to re-think ideas in the face of contrary evidence



Preparing to apply

P Programme of study

- Course choice is the most important decision – personal interest(s), research thoroughly

R Results

- Work hard to do as well as they can in their current studies

E Engage and explore

- Be proactive in their learning – current studies and interests relevant to their intended degree

P Practise

- Discussing their academic interest(s)
- Past/example admissions test and written assessment papers
- Time management – generally and for tests/exams



University of Oxford

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University of Cambridge

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