

Cambridge University

Alternative

Prospectus

2009-2011 entry



Cambridge University Students' Union
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Typeset in Myriad by Michael Derringer, www.derringer.co.uk

Printed and bound by Pensord Press Ltd in Wales



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Introduction

STUDENT LIFE

Welcome to the Cambridge University Alternative Prospectus. Everything you are about to read has been written by current students at the University, and is designed to give you information about what it's like to be a student at Cambridge. From the social life to student welfare, the subjects to the Colleges, this prospectus aims to give you honest information from a student perspective. We're not trying to 'sell' Cambridge University, but we do want to make sure that you can make an informed decision as to whether it's for you.

Unfortunately, Cambridge is surrounded by many myths and stereotypes, often perpetuated by the media. Hopefully, as you flick through the pages of this prospectus and read the student profiles, you'll start to realise that they are no longer true, and that Cambridge is made up of a mix of people from all sorts of backgrounds. Where you've come from, what your parents do for a living, the type of school you went to: these things cease to be important. It's not all work, work, work, either. Reading the Student Life pages, you'll see the range of social activities on offer: from the nightlife to the societies, the sports to the music, Cambridge is full of opportunities to enjoy yourself.

Applying to university is, for many, a complicated process, and applying to Cambridge is no different. This prospectus is designed to be used alongside the official University prospectus, giving you a different type of information to guide you through the decision making process. In Choosing a Subject, current students talk about how they made their choices, before we profile each subject from a current student's view. It's important to remember, though, that they are the opinions of an individual, and that people's experiences are likely to differ and some course details might change from year to year. It's always a good idea to look at the information

provided by the University, and the web addresses are included on each subject page.

The collegiate system is something special to Oxbridge, and something that can often be an unnecessary source of worry and confusion. In Choosing a College, we take you through what the College system is all about, and how to start thinking about which College to pick. At the end of the day, everyone loves the College they end up at: as students guide you through their own experiences of their College, you'll soon start to realise that every College and subject is 'the best'.

“

Written by students, for students: the information you need.

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We hope that this prospectus will give you an impression of what it's like to be a student here, but the best way to get a feel for Cambridge is to visit for yourself. On top of the University and College open days (which can be found at www.cam.ac.uk), the Students' Union runs their own set of events. For more information about these schemes, or to ask any questions about applying and studying at Cambridge University, go to www.applytocambridge.com, or contact the Students' Union Access Officer on access@cusu.cam.ac.uk.

Enjoy your reading and good luck with your university applications!



The City of Cambridge



To call Cambridge a city can be a bit misleading: with a total of 110,000 people, 22,000 of whom are students, it's a little on the small side for a city. Cambridge tends to provoke images of King's College chapel, students on bikes and people lazing about in punts on a summer's day. It's easy to see why it is seen like this, but there's much more to Cambridge as a place to live, and it's surprisingly easy to get beyond (as you'll hear the swarms of American tourists say) its "quaintness".

The centre of Cambridge is dominated by the University, and the Colleges and departments are sprawled across it. Geographically, the centre of Cambridge is also fairly small and flat. The easiest way to get around is by bike and you can get from even the most distant College to the city centre and departments within twenty minutes. This makes Cambridge a great place to be a student: everything you could need is packed into a small space, and you'll never have to go far to get anywhere. At least during term-time, the town is the University, if you want it to be.

Cambridge has most of the benefits of being a city, whilst being more laid back in pace and surrounded by countryside. There's a good collection of high street chains both in town and in the Grafton shopping centre, as well as individual shops and a market that runs every day. There's an absence of cheap shops - they got rid of Woolworths a few years ago - but we manage to get by, and the new H&M bodes well for future student-priced shopping developments. Cambridge is well catered for in terms of places to eat, too. There are restaurants and cafés abound, many at decent prices with student discounts and happy hours, which are useful when parents come to visit. On top of this, there are plenty of supermarkets and food shops, from Sainsbury's in the centre of town, Tesco and Asda a five minute cycle from the centre, to international shops, where you can buy Asian and African food. Whatever you are looking for, it's likely

you'll be able to find it.

There are loads of places to hang out in Cambridge, from traditional pubs to new bars and several night clubs with a variety of music (though if you are a serious clubber, you are likely to be disappointed), with student nights run by the Students' Union offering you discounts. In addition, each College has its own bar, a good way to catch up with people and unwind on an evening. Several bars and clubs have live music ranging from jazz to alternative, and there are three cinemas showing mainstream and independent arts films. There is also an Arts Theatre and an amateur dramatic theatre for student productions.

If you miss the big city life, transport routes in and out of Cambridge are pretty good. You can get to London in 45 minutes and for £11 with a rail card by



There's loads to Cambridge as a place to live and it's easy to get over its 'quaintness'.



train, and Cambridge is well networked by rail. Driving within the city is a nightmare, with little parking and perhaps the most complicated one way system ever, but there are good Park and Ride buses coming in from all directions. The large majority of students don't have cars, parking is extremely limited and you require a University permit to keep a car as a student.



Student Life

STUDENT LIFE

It is something of an understatement to say that there is a lot going on at Cambridge. It's clichéd, but we go by the motto: work hard, play hard. If you have an interest, there will be a society that shares it and you will be able to get involved as much – or as little – as you want. The education you get at Cambridge isn't just about essays and supervisions: it's also about the people you're here with and the opportunities you can take while you're here. Carpe Diem and all that.

So, what is there to get involved with? Whilst we could fill the next pages with information about all our societies, we've instead decided to give you a few high profile examples of the things that you can do here. All the societies are organised and run by students, and if there is something you want to do, but can't find a group, you can set up your own and even get funding.

Politics

For those of you with a political bent or those interested in the needs of students, there's the Students' Union, CUSU. This is where students get the chance to influence the University and have their opinions heard. You can get involved with organising social events, campaigning, listening to and representing students' views, making things like this Alternative Prospectus.

As well as the central University wide Students' Union, each College has its own student association, known as a JCR (for undergraduates) or MCR (for graduates). These tend to be the centre of College social events, as well as representing students to the College. We've included their website addresses on each of the College profile pages.

Journalism and Media

Cambridge is one of the best universities in the country for student media. Budding journalists and broadcasters will, frankly, be spoilt for choice. Our two high quality student newspapers – Varsity and The Cambridge Student – are published every week and always on the look-out for more writers, editors and photographers. If you need any further convincing, this is the place that, among others, Jeremy Paxman started his career. Even if you have absolutely no desire to be a journalist they are a great place to meet people and get the inside track on how newspapers are put together.

There is also CUR 1350 – the Cambridge University Radio station, regular winner of numerous national student radio awards and great experience for anyone interested in radio and broadcasting generally. Training



is provided and if you are a budding DJ, broadcaster or sound engineer, you probably couldn't find a better place to get experience.

Charity and Volunteering

If, however, you feel like something a little more light-hearted, or a little more charitable, there's RAG, the largest fundraising organisation in the University. In the past few years, RAG members have blagged their way to Hawaii, organised blind dates across the university, walked across burning coals and auctioned some very interesting items. Last year they also raised nearly £155,000 to donate to local, national and international charities. Student Community Action co-ordinates student volunteering in the community, from peer mentoring to guiding, working with disabled children to visiting the elderly. It's hard to think of a more fun way to make such a big difference to people's lives in so many ways.

If your interest lies in the wider world, environmental issues and how we can reduce our carbon footprint, students here form one of the most active green campaigns you'll find. From raising awareness among students to lobbying the University, working with the City Council to improving recycling facilities, there is plenty to get involved with.

Drama and Music

Cambridge has a lively drama and music scene. Whether you are a budding actor, director, writer or technician, there will be hundreds of plays you can get involved in. Generally, the standard of theatre in Cambridge is high, but there are also less serious

Key Fact

Over 600 registered University student-run societies.

Key Fact

Two weekly student newspapers and an award winning student radio.

Student Life



endeavours for you to get involved with.

There's also the Cambridge Footlights, a world famous comedy group, which has included in its membership John Cleese, Sacha Baron Cohen (aka Ali G / Borat), Stephen Fry and Emma Thompson, to name but a few.

There are loads of music societies in Cambridge, both within Colleges and the big University groups. Whatever your musical standard and style, there will be something to cater for you. Some groups will be audition based or require a minimum standards; others will be open to any student. Chapel choirs are renowned for their high standards, and many go on tour and do frequent recordings. There are orchestras, jazz groups, gospel choirs throughout, and several Colleges run acoustic and open mic nights. There are also venues in the Colleges and the town for bands to play, perform and record.

Sport

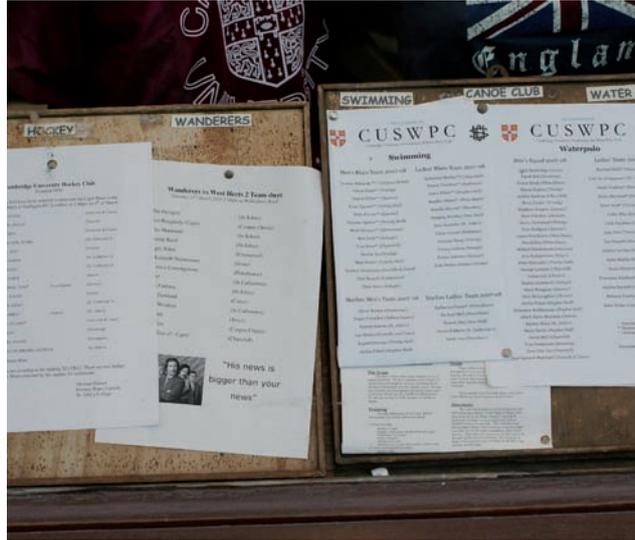
The sport scene at Cambridge is huge. With every mainstream and many obscure and eccentric sports catered for, there will be something to challenge, fulfil and entertain every sportsman and athlete.

Key Fact

University-wide sports facilities, coaching and teams.

One of the best things about the College system is that it allows you to join in with activities at any level. If you're really good, willing to put in time and commitment, you can go for a University sports team.

These teams will represent Cambridge in competitions around the country, receive top quality coaching and support, and (most importantly) take on Oxford in the annual 'Varsity' match, the most famous of which is the Boat Race that takes place on the Thames. You don't need to have done a sport before:



some of the country's best rowers, for example, had never been in a boat until they came to Cambridge. All major sports have teams, as well as a lot of more obscure sports, from Ultimate Frisbee to Korfbal.

If you want to join in at a more relaxed level, you can join a College team. These teams will cater for all levels, and give you a great opportunity to get involved, keep fit and have fun. They often have a great social side attached to them, and they can be a good way to meet people across years, subjects and Colleges. College teams get loads of opportunity to compete, too, especially in 'cuppers', the inter-College annual competition.

Most facilities are at a very high standard and easily accessible to students. You usually don't have to travel outside your College to get access to a gym, and practice courts, pitches, cricket nets, squash and badminton courts and boathouses will never be more than a short cycle-ride away. There's a fully lit athletics track and a large indoor fitness suite. We don't have a University swimming pool, but there is a 25m eight-lane pool in the centre of town, with very good diving facilities in an adjacent pool. Cambridge also has the largest outdoor swimming pool in Britain, useful for the more daring, foolish or those with an interest in triathlon.

Religious and Cultural

All mainstream religions and cultures have a student society or support group, and there is good networks between the University and the town. Inter-faith relations are also very strong, with an active Faiths Forum and many cultural awareness events, from a food festival to an anti-racism campaign and awards event.

If you want to take a look at the range of societies, take a look at the Cambridge University Students' Union website, go to the societies page and flick through the directory.

Student Life: *Entertainment*

STUDENT LIFE

Cambridge (deservedly) doesn't have the greatest reputation in the world for its nightlife, but despite this there are plenty of decent places to unwind and go out. Colleges all have their own bars and 'ents' (student organised entertainment and events), and there's loads of good pubs, bars and clubs in the town.

College bars are really popular, and a great place to meet up with your friends and have a couple of drinks. At student prices, they're cheap and a good way to start your evening, with the added bonus of being only a couple of minutes from your room. Some College bars are run by students, and others use professional companies, but all are well stocked and designed with student needs in mind – you'll often be able to pick up some quick food, too. The College bars aren't alco-centric, either. You can quite happily go to the bar every evening without feeling any pressure to opt for alcohol.

Cambridge has a great selection of traditional pubs, and with 119 pubs in the local area, you won't suffer from lack of choice. The most famous of these is probably The Eagle, where Crick and Watson apparently first announced the form of DNA, and there's several pubs along the river, which can get pretty busy.

Key Fact

DJ Sammy, Dirty Pretty Things and The Pigeon Detectives have all played recently.

Cambridge has three cinemas, which show everything from the latest blockbusters to art and foreign films. There are also a couple of theatres, which host both student and touring companies. The standard of the theatre is really high, and there are shows on every night, with both a main show and late night productions at the ADC Theatre. From serious drama

to improvised comedy, new writing to Shakespeare, there's a huge variety of things to see.

Cambridge is pretty good for music, too, with three main venues: the Corn Exchange, the Junction and the Soul Tree. They attract big-name bands and students can get cheap tickets. In the last year, the Pigeon Detectives, the Long Blondes, Scouting for Girls, DJ Sammy and Annie Mac have all featured on the Cambridge music scene. There's a mix of genres, with a good amount of alternative music and upcoming bands. The clubs also cater for pretty much everything, and there's a healthy injection of cheese most evenings and regular guest appearances, with Karl from Neighbours and Rhino from Gladiators both visiting Cambridge clubs in the last couple of months.

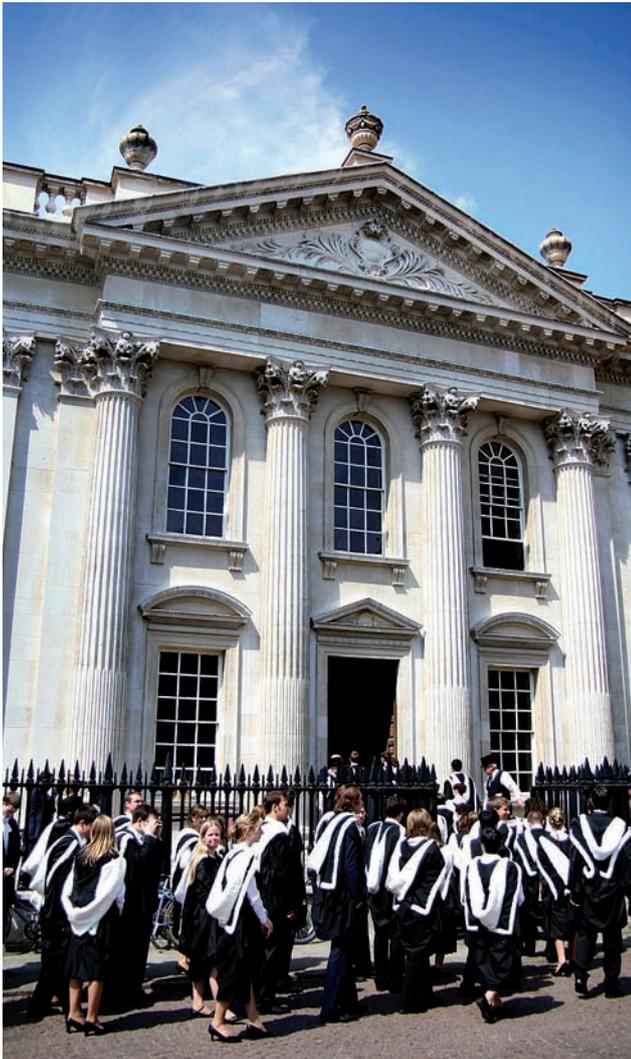
If your taste is more classical, there's always a good run of concerts, either at the West Road Concert Hall or at the Corn Exchange. With regular touring orchestras and featured individuals, as well as Cambridge's home-grown talent and an array of performances within the Colleges, there will be something most nights of the year.

The summer also sees a different type of Cambridge entertainment, in the form of May Balls, which are (naturally) held in June. These are huge parties, planned and run by a large student committee, which take place across the Colleges. They last from 8pm to 6am, involve a serious amount of food, drink, music, games and pretty much anything within the realms of imagination. For the evening, the College will be transformed, decorated, and complete with dodgems, laser quest, and top name bands.

Whatever your interests and tastes, you'll find people who want to do the same thing and it's seriously unlikely that you'll ever be stuck for something to do on an evening.



Student Life: *Why apply?*



So, why apply?

Cambridge is renowned across the world for the standard of its teaching and education, making Cambridge graduates some of the most employable, but there's more to the University than just reputation and prestige. Cambridge is a great place to be a student, giving you the academic and social opportunities to take you where you want to go.

At Cambridge, you'll be taught by some of the best people in the world for your subject. This doesn't just mean that you'll be sat in a lecture of a couple of hundred students listening to them, either. Though some courses are heavily dependent upon lectures, you'll also get the chance to learn from these people in weekly supervisions, the small-group work (usually in pairs or one-on-one). These can sound petrifying, and it takes a couple of weeks to get used to them, but supervisions are the big highlight of studying here. Supervisions give you the opportunity to talk about the things you're really interested in, to get detailed feedback on your written work, to develop ideas

and ask any questions. It also means you can tailor the teaching to suit your interests and develop your strengths. Though the large amount of contact time does inevitably mean that there is a lot of work (lots of which you'd rather not do), it's a great way to develop your knowledge of your subject, give you confidence, and get the most out of your degree.

More generally, whatever you need, you'll be able to find it. With each College having its own set of facilities on top of the general University sites, everything is close at hand. Each College has a library, computer room, bars, gyms, common rooms, music rooms, sports pitches, kitchens and canteens. The quality of these will vary between (and even within) Colleges, but basic facilities will be provided and there are usually central facilities at a good standard available for student use.



From the academic to the social, Cambridge takes you where you want to go.



From the academic to the social, Cambridge offers you the chance to excel. Whether you want to try something new or take an existing talent to a new level, there is something to cater for you. On a social front, there are hundreds of societies you could get involved with: music, sport, drama, journalism, religious groups – the list goes on. Within your subject, there are chances to take things further too, and the Careers Service is always on hand to prepare you for the inevitable (and often unwelcome) step into the real world of work.

The university sprawls itself across the city, and as you walk around you're constantly aware of the presence of other students: the Colleges, the departments, the bikes. It's not too small to feel suffocating, and has all the main chains of shops and pubs. At the same time it's not too big that you ever feel lost, and you're more than likely to always see familiar faces. Safe, friendly, and extraordinarily pretty, Cambridge is a great place to spend a few years!

Key Fact

Flexible one-on-one teaching with experts in your interests.

Student Life: *Finance*

FINANCE



Cambridge isn't an expensive place to go to university: in terms of tuition fees, it is no more expensive than any other university in the country (and has never been so in modern times), living costs are substantially cheaper than many places, and there are many pots of money for travel, sports and hobbies waiting for students to find. Cambridge is committed to ensuring that no student should ever feel that they cannot apply or that they cannot continue their studies here because of financial reasons. As a student anywhere, it's important to think about things like budgeting and watching what you spend, but if for any reason you have genuine problems, the University will be able to help.

Cambridge charge top-up fees in line with nearly all other universities in the country and, at the time of publication, charge tuition fees of £3,145 per year for undergraduate courses. The important thing to realise is that you don't have to pay this whilst you are a student, but that you can take out a loan which is repaid in small, barely noticeable instalments once you are earning over £15,000 a year. It's clichéd, but really is an investment in your future, and you're likely to see a massive financial return in earnings, as well experiencing the best three years of your life.

As well as a loan to cover your tuition fees, you can take a maintenance loan to cover your living costs: things like rent, food, travel, social life. This loan is partially income assessed, which means that how much of the last 25% of the loan you can get is dependent upon your household income. Whether this will cover your living costs depends very much upon your lifestyle, and many students decide to work in the holidays to give themselves extra cash.

A bursary or a grant is essentially free money that you do not have to repay. The government provide maintenance grants to full-time students from lower income families, and the value of these depends upon

your household financial situation.

On top of this, Cambridge University offers one of the most comprehensive bursary packages in the country. If your family income is below £60,000, you'll also be able to pick up a Cambridge Bursary. A full Cambridge Bursary is in the region of £3,100 a year, with smaller bursaries available to those receiving partial government maintenance grants. Mature students are eligible for a higher bursary of up to £5,150 a year. There are also hardship grants available: if you find yourself in unexpected difficulties, there are funds to help you.

There are also a range of non-income assessed grants that you can apply for. If you fancy going somewhere in the summer, for example, and you can tenuously relate your holiday to your course, there's a good chance you'll be able to get a travel grant – a contribution to the cost of your holiday.

Living in Cambridge as a student is surprisingly



**Cambridge isn't expensive...
living costs are cheap and
there are substantial bursaries.**



cheap, and you'll find that you can make money last much longer here than you might expect. With so much in the city aimed at students, you'll be able to make the most out of both your time and your money.

Nearly all students 'live in', taking accommodation in the Colleges throughout their whole time at university. This means that not only is the accommodation subsidised (they don't make a profit out of renting the rooms to you), but more importantly you only have to pay for your accommodation during the 32 weeks of term time. At many other universities, second and third years have to seek accommodation through the private market, where they rent houses for 52 weeks a year, even when they are not living there. Weekly rent here varies between about £50 and £110 a week, depending upon facilities (en suite, size etc), and you usually get a choice of what type of room you want (and therefore how much you want to pay).

Colleges offer food in their halls and canteen for all three meals, and these are at subsidised costs. There are also (often basic) self-catering facilities, so you

Key Fact

Cambridge offers a bursary of up to £3,100 per year

Student Life: *Finance*

can choose to cook for yourself. Cost and standard of College food tends to vary (from meal to meal as well as between Colleges), but you can expect to get a decent meal for £2-3. Colleges also offer 'formal hall', a three course meal in College for around £5, which is a great cheap alternative to eating out. If you do want to eat out, you'll be able to get a good range of discounts: students make up a huge section of the Cambridge population, and businesses make the most of this.

You'll find that you won't incur any real transport costs. Cambridge is geographically compact and completely flat, so it's really easy to walk or cycle everywhere. Buses are used very rarely, and there are stops by most University sites. Cambridge is also really safe, so you can walk home from nights out, rather than get a taxi.

Cambridge has an amazing set of libraries, with College libraries, faculty libraries, and the University Library, a legal deposit library which stocks every book published in the UK (yes, you can find Playboy and Postman Pat). There's no need to buy any books, as borrowing is really easy and cost-free (until you forget to return the book). If you are the kind of person who likes their own copy of everything, there's a huge Oxfam bookshop where you'll find a surprising amount of course material as well as light reading.

Work

The long holidays (the summer holiday is three months) give you loads of opportunity to work and earn extra money. As well as the normal summer jobs, there are hundreds of internships where you can earn a fortune at the same time as getting incredible work experience. Though some students will work a few hours in a College bar or library, the University doesn't like people to work during term-time, and from a student perspective, you're unlikely to either want or need to work.



Key Fact
Accommodation is subsidised at the University

A financial week in the life of ...

Emma Blackburn, Peterhouse, English, 3rd Year, Leeds

Monday:

Meals in the canteen – **£4**
Cycle to lectures – **free**
Get books from library for this week's essay – **free**
Meet with friend and grab coffee – **£1.50**
Trip to the College bar – **three drinks @ £1.50**

Tuesday:

Pick up breakfast on my way out – **£0.50**
Day in the department – **free**
Go to 'formal hall' for a friend's birthday – **£4**
Go on to the student club night – **£3**

Wednesday:

Try to research essay, but spend time on Facebook in computer room – **free**
Cook tea with friends, and back to work – **£2**

Thursday:

Sit in Starbucks to read – **£2.50**
Go to the College gym – **free**
Lunch and tea in the canteen – **£4**

Friday:

Essay writing day, incl. buying one bar of chocolate as 'motivation' – **£0.39**
Cook meals for myself – **£3**
Trip to the bar as a reward for writing essay – **£1.50**

Saturday:

Sleep in, then go to the College tennis pitches for a game with friends – **free**
Start planning Students' Union event I'm running – **free**
Go to see a friend in a theatre production – **£4**

Sunday:

Start work on a translation exercise I'd forgotten about – **free**
Sunday lunch in the canteen – **£3**
Finish the work from this morning, then go to a meal at another College with the football club – **£4**
Help with student club night – free entry, drink – **£2**

Total: £43.89

Student Life: *Welfare*

STUDENT LIFE

Even for the most happy-go-lucky student, there's going to be a time when you need a bit of a pick-up. Life at Cambridge is relatively relaxed, but the work is hard and busy and things can easily get on top of you without you realising. Cambridge University is exceptionally good at taking care of us, and has the lowest drop-out rate in the UK.

One of the best things about the College system is that it's very difficult to feel isolated or not know where to turn. Though you still feel part of a big university, there are amazing support networks within your College. On an academic side, Cambridge students get a lot of contact time with tutors through the supervision system, so there is always someone on hand to help you if you get stuck and they'll stop you from falling behind. You also have a Director of Studies, a tutor in your College who monitors your progress and guides you through your course.

Though Directors of Studies are usually willing to talk about any problem you might have, there are non-academic support staff in College. You are allocated a personal tutor, who isn't related to your course, but who you can contact about anything. Many Colleges have their own nurse and nondenominational chaplains, who take an active interest in students' welfare, whether you are looking for help and advice or just a cup of tea and chocolate. The University also has a professional Counselling Service, which has regular hours and gives free and confidential support.



Whether you want advice or just a cup of tea and chocolate, there's always someone to help.



On top of this, there are student-run welfare networks. Within both CUSU (Cambridge University Students' Union) and the College Students' Union, there is a Welfare Officer, who organises events, occasionally puts sweets in your post box and is a constant port of call for any problems. You've also got your friends: one of the best things about University is that you live with so many people and make lots of really close friendships.

The way the system works in practice will vary depending on your College and (mostly) how you



get on with your tutors. Everything is informal and, quite often, you'll find someone you feel comfortable talking to and go to them throughout your time here. This informality is the greatest plus and the weakness of the system: sometimes, it doesn't work so well and things can seem fragmented or disjointed. Whatever happens, though, there will always be people to point you in the right direction.

Ethnic Minorities

Though Cambridge has a smaller percentage of people from ethnic minorities than the big cities like London and Manchester, it is on a par with other universities and still in the process of increasing as more people apply. The student body in Cambridge is fairly culturally diverse and very culturally aware, and you won't have any problems getting involved with whatever you want to. There is an active Black Students' Campaign and many cultural or faith-based organisations. Generally, university is a great opportunity to meet people you might otherwise not had you stayed at home, and your background and your ethnicity does not need to be an issue.

Student Life: *Welfare*

LBGT

LBGT stands for Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgendered. Cambridge University is a very LBGT friendly place. Whatever your sexuality means to you, you'll find people who are supportive, understanding and accepting. There is a strong LBGT group, which puts on regular events, including the popular weekly club night, and provides a contact network. There is no pressure to come out at Cambridge, but it's easy to do so: there is no stigma or assumptions, and people recognize that sexuality is only one aspect of a person. Cambridge is renowned as one of the most progressive areas of the country, and this stretches beyond academia, so people's sexuality never stands in the way of getting the most out of university.

Women in Cambridge

Women have studied in Cambridge for well over a century, and the male:female ratio is even. Gender isn't an issue that should, or does, impact upon your education or your university experience. Women are actively involved with every sport, society and niche of student life. Cambridge has an active Women's Union, which works with the University to provide for women's academic and social needs. There are three women's only Colleges, which offer an all female environment in which to live and study.

Students with Disabilities

It is estimated that there are a thousand students in Cambridge with a disability. This figure includes

students with Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia), mental health difficulties, unseen chronic health conditions and many other disabilities. Happily, there has been much progress over recent years to make the University more accessible. A lot of advice and support is now available for students as they anticipate their arrival and adjust to the new environment. The University is committed to making sure that everyone should be able to participate fully within the University environment. The Disability Resource Centre provides information, advice and support, and has a range of equipment on loan. The Students' Union also has a Students with Disabilities Officer and a full time Welfare Officer who are able to offer more informal, student orientated help.

Key Fact
The Students' Union is one of the most inclusive in the country.

Mature Students

If you are over 21 on the first day of your course, you will be a mature student. There's an increasing number of mature students across Cambridge. There are four Colleges who only admit mature and graduate students: Hughes Hall, St Edmund's, Wolfson and Lucy Cavendish (women only). Cambridge isn't just orientated towards young students, and you can take life here at whatever pace you like. There are comprehensive bursaries and accommodation for couples and families, though this is sometimes hard to find and varies in quality. The Cambridge system, with its personal contact and focus on you as an individual is perfect for students returning to education, allowing you to feel confident that you are re-honing your skills and knowledge correctly.

Student Parents

Cambridge endeavours to be accessible to everyone, and provisions are made for student parents. There are a range of child care facilities in the University and the city and a full time child care advisor, as well as a variety of government and University loans and bursaries for those needing help supporting children. Many Colleges have joint facilities, though these nurseries are usually heavily oversubscribed and provision isn't great, though this is something that the University is under pressure to reform. At some Colleges there is a strong network of student parents, with student-organised social events happening around the year. The University website offers a much more detailed breakdown of support and services offered.



Applying to Cambridge

APPLICATIONS

The application process might seem complicated at first glance, but it's not as bad as it looks. It's surrounded by myths and uncertainties, despite the fact that interviewing is becoming more common-place at other universities. It's important to emphasise that there's no magic formula to 'getting it right', but with forward planning you can make it as stress-free as possible. The best way to help your application is really just to work hard at sixth form and to think about your subject outside the confines of the curriculum. You don't have to be incredible at your subject, but you do need to be doing really well, be genuinely interested and really want to study this subject for the next few years. At the end of the day, the people who will admit and teach you spend their life researching the subject and want students who share their enthusiasm. They don't want to battle to keep you motivated.

Cambridge is like all universities, in that you apply through UCAS. This needs to be done by the 15th October, earlier than the general deadline, so that there is time to process the application and organise interviews. UCAS applications are fairly simple, though many people worry about their personal statement. This lets you talk about your academic achievements and interests, and may be a starting point for your interview, but it's not something to lose sleep over.

By applying to Cambridge you don't risk anything: you still have four other spaces on your UCAS form. It's easy to use the excuse that you don't want to waste a choice by applying to Cambridge when you 'won't get

in', but the majority of people who actually get offers think exactly the same thing. What is certain is that you won't get in if you don't apply.

Once you've submitted your UCAS application, you'll be asked to fill in an online questionnaire, with some additional information, such as your UMS (module) marks if you have sat AS levels. Depending upon your subject, you may be asked to submit written work. This is your chance to show off your best work. This might be AS coursework or an essay you wrote a couple of weeks ago. Most College websites give you an indication of whether they request work and you'll be given plenty of notice. You shouldn't need to write anything new, but it's worth re-familiarising yourself with the



Interviews are universally feared, but they're not that bad – many people even enjoy them.



topic and essay before you go for an interview.

Some Colleges may ask you to sit written tests. This will vary from subject to subject and College to College, but there will be plenty of information on the University website. Remember that tests and interviews are just one part of the process and that they look at the way you think and apply knowledge, rather

Key Fact
90% of applicants will receive an interview.



Applying to Cambridge



than asking you to learn new information.

You will hear in December whether you have a place, you have been unsuccessful or placed in the pool. Around 20% of candidates will be placed in the 'pool', and from this 20% will receive an offer. This is a moderation process, which allows other Colleges to consider you and make you an offer. You may be called to another interview in January. The pool ensures that, however competitive a College, you have an equal chance of receiving an offer.

Interviews seem to be universally feared by applicants, yet almost everyone (whether or not they gained a place) will admit that they weren't actually that bad. They might not be your idea of a fun day out, but some people (unexpectedly) enjoy them. There are a lot of myths that surround Cambridge

interviews, but nine times out of ten they are just myths. Don't be put off by stories of tweed-jacketed professors: in reality, interviews take the form of a conversation about your subject, and give you a good opportunity to get a feel for Cambridge's

small-group teaching. It's also a great way to meet other students and the people who might be teaching you for the next few years.

You are likely to have at least two interviews, lasting

in the range of 20 to 30 minutes with either one or two interviewers at a time. Interviews are a lot like supervisions (the most important and useful part of Cambridge teaching), which is why they are used in the admissions process. They are an opportunity to talk about something that interests you and that you will already know things about. The interviewer is not out to trick or intimidate you. Be yourself: there isn't any 'Cambridge type' that you should try to be. Similarly, it genuinely doesn't matter what you wear: jeans and a jumper is just as fine as a suit. Interviewers are only interested in finding out the way in which you think and how you handle a challenge.

It's difficult to know how to prepare for an interview, and there's no set of questions they are going to ask you. It's certain, though, that you're going to have to talk about your subject and it will probably help to practice speaking about this out loud, whether this is volunteering answers in class, arranging a mock interview with a teacher, or talking to yourself whilst making breakfast. Think about why it is that you want to study your subject and what specific aspects of the course you find interesting. At the same time, it's not helpful to sound over-rehearsed, and interviewers will pick up on 'set pieces'. If you are asked to send written work or you've filled in a pre-interview questionnaire, keep it fresh in your mind, as you may be asked about it in the interview. In general, though, the best preparation is simply to be yourself and read around the work that you enjoy.

There are a lot of people and companies who will try to sell you things that they claim will increase your chance of getting a place. We strongly discourage you from buying materials or interview practice from private companies - we have never seen any reliable evidence that paying any such company increases your chance of getting a place. And in reviewing many such services and publications, we have found many to be riddled with misinformation and inaccuracies about the application process and how best to approach it. Authentic and more accurate resources are available from the Cambridge Admissions Office, the University website and the Students' Union. You will never be asked to pay for advice or materials from these sources.

It's easy to say and harder to do, but try not to worry about the interview. It's easy to get worried about the little things and to replay every answer you gave in your head, but this won't help you and won't make your Christmas particularly fun. Make the most of the experience, spend a night in Cambridge for free, meet new people and give it your best shot.

Key Fact

One in four candidates will receive an offer of a place.

Applying to Cambridge

APPLICATIONS

There's no hidden formula or secret handshake in Cambridge admissions: what matters is your academic record and academic potential. Despite this, nearly everyone tends to worry about aspects of applications and assessments. We've asked a few of your questions to an admissions tutor.



Dr Geoff Parks
Director of Undergraduate Admissions for
the Cambridge Colleges

If I apply to a College which receives fewer applicants, do I have a better chance of getting in?

Many applicants think, or are advised, that choosing a College that attracts fewer applications will increase their chance of getting an offer. In fact, careful analysis of our admissions statistics shows that the chance of winning a place at Cambridge is independent of College choice. Through our pool system applicants who have been squeezed out in the competition at their College can be made an offer by another College. Colleges would rather admit a strong applicant from the pool than a weaker applicant who chose them.

What do you look for in the UCAS personal statement?

The personal statement is much more important for applications to universities that do not interview than those that do. Also, the sad reality is that no admissions tutor believes the personal statement is the sole work of the applicant, so it is not possible to significantly advantage an application by producing a good one.

We look for information about why you have chosen the course you have, evidence of your wider exploration of that subject beyond the school curriculum, and something about how you balance your academic life with your other interests and commitments.

Why does Cambridge ask for UMS marks?

We started asking for UMS marks in order to ensure that we had consistent information about all our applicants. Our experience is that, by and large, schools and Colleges have welcomed our decision to ask for this information. They would rather we use finer-grained information available from the public examination system to help the selection process rather than placing further weight on interview performance or introducing further admissions tests.

Is taking a gap year viewed well by all Colleges?

Gap years are generally discouraged for Mathematics unless a student's plans for the gap year will ensure that their mathematical skills are kept well honed. Gap years are widely encouraged for Engineering where there are excellent gap year schemes, particularly the Year In Industry. The Year In Industry scheme provides similar opportunities for Computer Science and Natural Sciences students.

Beyond these particular cases, the general attitude to gap years is supportive as long as you are planning to do something positive and worthwhile during the year. There is no necessity for your gap year plans to be connected to the subject you want to study at Cambridge.

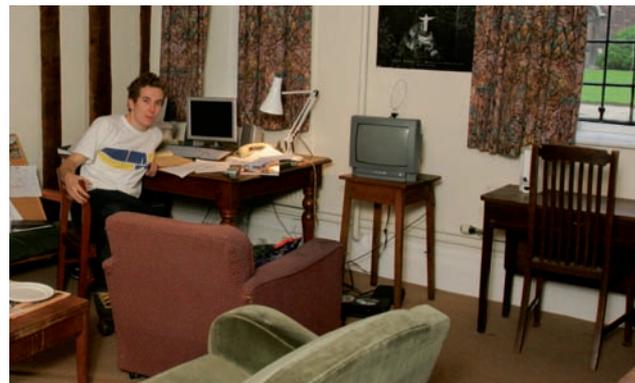


The chance of winning a place at Cambridge is independent of College choice.



Will my application be helped by extra-curricular activities?

All admissions decisions are based on academic criteria, and excellence in an extra-curricular activity will never compensate for lower academic potential. That said, extra-curricular activities are looked at, as they can be helpful in showing how an applicant balances their academic and personal commitments, demonstrating time management skills. It does not matter how these are developed: we do not value some activities over others. To us, achieving well at school while holding down a part-time job stacking shelves at your local supermarket is no less impressive than achieving well at school while representing your county at hockey.



Applying to Cambridge

We've put together some top tips to preparing your UCAS and Cambridge application. This is by no means a definitive list of what to do, but a few suggestions from students who have already been through the process. At the end of the day, there's no right or wrong way to prepare, and no preparation that will guarantee you a place.

Top Tip: 1

Be yourself. It's your application, your interview, your interests.

Be yourself. There's no 'Cambridge type' that you should try to be. The University is made up of a huge mix of people; admissions tutors want to meet you. Make your personal statement personal, not something that feels unnatural to write. When you talk about your

interests, talk about your real interests. You don't need to feign an interest in something because you think it makes you sound more academic: it will be obvious if you're not genuinely interested and you'll look (and feel) pretentious. At interview, you don't need to be what you think the interviewer wants you to be. There's no need to be anything other than yourself.

Your parents, teachers, friends and next-door neighbour will probably be volunteering suggestions about your university, subject and College choices. Don't necessarily believe everything they say. Whilst they're likely to give you good advice, and it's often worth taking on board

their input, any decision has got to be yours. Going to university is about independence, and this is the first step. These are your choices. Read the official information (the University website and prospectus) and make sure that what you've been told correlates.

If you plan ahead early enough, use some time in the summer to read around your subject. If you're applying for a subject you already study, think about where your interests

lie. If you like a particular text in English, for example, try other works by the same author or written at the same period. Essentially, think outside the curriculum.

Top Tip: 3

Read around your subject.

Top Tip: 2

Don't always believe everything you hear...

Your subject teacher should be willing to give you suggestions (teachers will be touched by your enthusiasm and your desire for their opinion). Not only will this help you to decide whether you do want to study the subject further, but it will also give you something genuine to talk about in your personal statement or at interview, as well as developing study skills and knowledge that will pay off in your school exams.

Take a copy of any work that you've submitted and your personal statement when you go for interview. On the way down or an hour or so before, read over what you've written. You might not get asked about any of it, but it helps to know what you've said, so that you don't feel caught out if it does come up in conversation. If you've mentioned an interest in your personal statement (even if only in passing), it's probably a good idea to be able to talk about it. You don't need to stun with your in-depth knowledge of particle physics, but it will help to show that you've pursued your interest a little further than the Wikipedia page.

It's not by any means essential, but it might help you feel more confident and relaxed going into your interview. There are different ways of doing this. You can try to arrange a mock interview with a teacher at school. You can volunteer answers in classes. You can try to explain to your mum what you studied today and why it's important or interesting (or, if you're lucky, both).

At the same time, prepare answers to the obvious questions, such as why you want to study your subject. They often get used as an ice-breaker, but they can also be quite hard to answer, and you'll feel more confident if you have an idea beforehand.

Most importantly, try to enjoy yourself. Sit back, relax and take it all in your stride. Everyone will be nervous and everyone will be in the same boat as you. It's easy to be intimidated by other candidates, but there's no need. Often, the ones who seem the most polished are the ones who won't get in.

Top Tip: 4

Read over any submitted work before an interview.

Top Tip: 5

Practice talking out loud about your subject.

Choosing a Subject

CHOOSING A SUBJECT

As you start thinking about university, the most important thing to decide is what subject you want to study. Some people will know what they want to do, but for others the decision can be more difficult. Teachers, parents and friends are likely to be volunteering their opinions, but it's important that it is you that makes the decision. You'll spend three years of your life studying the subject, so you need to make sure that you enjoy it. It might be that you continue a subject you already study or you might choose to go for something new. It's a good idea to look at subjects you might not automatically consider: for example, Land Economy (despite its slightly ridiculous name) is a combination of Law, Economics and Environment. In the next few pages, we've put together profiles of each subject, from a student's perspective. If something catches your eye, look further on the Cambridge University and department websites or take a look at www.applytocambridge.com, where you can ask a student any question about any subject.

There is a common misconception that your choice of degree will determine the type of career you go into once you graduate. With the exception of Medicine, there are very few degrees that lead into specific careers. Doing an English degree, for example, does not mean that you will become a teacher or a journalist. The destinations of graduates are varied, and Cambridge has the highest employability rate in



the country. Companies and employers are interested in the 'transferable skills' you acquire doing a degree (management speak for useful things that we apparently learn to do), rather than the subject you studied. The Director of the Cambridge Careers Service says that "the large proportion of employers approaching Cambridge are keen to meet our students with any degree discipline". Cambridge graduates go to do a huge mix of things: work in the City, further study and research, voluntary work, travel, to name but a



Employers are keen to meet our students with any degree discipline.

Gordon Chesterman
Director of the Careers Service



few. Whatever you find yourself interested in, your choice of subject is unlikely to spoil your chances: if you decide you want to go into law, for example, there are conversion courses that you can be sponsored to complete once you've graduated.

Cambridge subjects tend on the whole to be traditional, but there's a lot of scope for you to explore your own interests. As you go through the course, you'll get a greater element of flexibility and the chance to specialise. Some courses are unique to Cambridge: Natural Sciences, for example, allows you to mix familiar and new science modules, before narrowing down in your second and third year. Cambridge doesn't offer joint honours degrees (where you can mix two subjects), but you can sometimes manage to do a module in another subject, where there is overlap. The system also allows a certain amount of flexibility to change subjects, although this isn't always easy or possible, and it's important to try to get the subject choice right first time.

The best way to work out whether a subject is for you is to read up about what it entails, talk to students, look at the department websites and (most importantly) to read around the subject. It's important to check the course requirements to make sure that you're studying the right subjects for the course, too...

Choosing a Subject

CHOOSING A SUBJECT



Will Knock
Jesus
English, 2nd Year
Essex

Why did you choose your course?

I took English Literature, German, Maths and Physics at A Level. When I chose my A Levels I really didn't have any idea of what I wanted to study at university, and didn't even know whether I wanted to study an arts or science subject. I took subjects that I found interesting, but would leave me able to pursue either end of the spectrum at degree level. I chose English at the last minute, and did so because I love to read, and to read any type of literature from any period. Like many arts subjects,

it gives me the opportunity to follow up other interests at the same time.

What do you want to do next?

I still haven't got much of an idea of what I'd like to do after university, and normally find that those ideas I do have change from term to term. For now, I'm just enjoying studying a subject I love, safe in the knowledge that my degree will provide me with plentiful and varied options when I finish.

Hint

Take a look at new and unfamiliar subjects. You don't always need to have studied the subject before starting a degree.

Hint

You often don't need to match a degree to a career. You don't need to do a Law degree to be a lawyer, for example.

Why did you choose your course?

For me, science explained the workings of the world around me. I thought that everything from the structure of atoms to the nature of living creatures could be mine for the learning. Of course, as I got through my degree, I discovered that this was not quite the case! I enjoyed studying science at school, so it was logical to carry it on to degree level.

How did you decide what to do next?

During my degree, I realised that to work as a scientist would involve the intense study and research of a single, narrow subject. In the end, I'd discovered



Chris De Mauny
Kings
Natural Sciences, Graduated
Redhill, Surrey

that this was not what I had looked for so I turned instead to a profession with more human interest. A legal career offered the chance to be of practical help to people with real life problems.

Once I'd graduated, I studied a one-year law conversion course in lieu of a law degree before beginning professional training. This course alone provided a new and deepened understanding of British society. I now work in London as a lawyer, having studied a science degree that allowed me to explore my academic interests.

Anglo-Saxon, Norse & Celtic

www.asnc.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	25
Male : Female ratio	52: 48
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	no specific subjects

Interesting fact: Cambridge is the only university in the country to offer this degree course.

ARTS

Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic (ASNAC) is probably the most unusual course available at Cambridge. No other university in the country offers it and a lot of Cambridge students have no idea that their own University does either!

The course can be summarised as the history, languages and literature of North-West Europe in the 5th to 12th centuries, but what you actually study will depend to a large degree on which papers you choose. ASNAC offers a large degree of flexibility from the very first day: there are no core papers; you just choose those which appeal. This means that an ASNAC degree can consist entirely of History, or be made up solely of language and literature options. For a lot of people, this is the course's greatest attractions.

The ASNAC department is part of the English faculty, and so we are housed inside a big pink cube on the Sidgwick Site. Whilst the building itself is deeply controversial, the location and facilities are great. The English library is contained within the faculty building and stocks a thorough assortment of ASNAC books. Within the ASNAC department, there is a terrific sense of community. Because nobody studies Pictish history

The Best

A small and friendly department

or Old Welsh at A-level, everybody starts their degree as a beginner. Combined with the fact that we have our own departmental common-room (very rare for undergraduates), and a popular weekly pub meet, ASNAC is probably the friendliest department in Cambridge.

The teaching of ASNAC takes a number of different forms. History and literature are taught in lectures of 15 - 40 people (small by Cambridge standards). Language instruction is done in classes of about 5 - 25. Each term, you will have supervisions in one of your papers. These involve researching and writing an essay during the week, and then discussing it for an hour with a specialist in that field. The level of the teaching is generally pretty good, although some papers are better than others. The palaeography paper is currently a bit of a mess, so what format it will take is rather uncertain.

There can be no doubt that if you choose to study ASNAC you will have to be prepared to deal with blank faces and bemused questions throughout your time at Cambridge – and probably long afterwards too! It is a field that a lot of people know nothing about, and for some ASNAC students that is a big part of the attraction, although others find it harder to deal with. You should be sure that your interest in the topics we cover is great enough to sustain at least two years of study; but if it is, then I cannot recommend ASNAC strongly enough.

The Worst

The palaeography paper - we hope it will improve...

ASNAC is the most unusual course at Cambridge... and everyone starts as a beginner.



Chris Lillycrop
St Catharine's
ASNAC, 2nd Year
Little Meadle

Archaeology & Anthropology

www.archanth.cam.ac.uk

Archaeology and Anthropology ('Arch and Anth') will appeal to those interested in a broad interdisciplinary degree. It may not provide you with a definite career path, but what it lacks in vocational training, it makes up for in challenging you to think critically about the world around you, your own beliefs and assumptions, other societies and ways of life. No specific subjects are required and the only qualities really needed are curiosity and a healthy interest in humanity and what it means to be human. If you're interested in pursuing the biological anthropology part of the course, previous knowledge of Biology is useful. The department



Arch and Anth makes you challenge your own beliefs and assumptions.



doesn't emphasise enough that in the first year you are expected to have some basic scientific knowledge, so if you can't remember your Biology GCSE, it might be useful to flick through a biology text book over summer and find out what a gene actually is! If you don't know your alleles from your elbow, though, you'll be in good company, as many 'bio anthers' come from an arts background. Similarly, if you haven't written essays before, you'll be given ample practice and guidance once you get here.

So what is 'Arch and Anth' actually about? You probably have a vague idea about archaeology through watching Time Team or Indiana Jones. As an academic subject, it uses 'material culture' (objects and artefacts) to understand the form and development of past societies. It's not just about digging up stuff (though that is large part of it!); it also explores heritage and how the past is used in the present. Anthropology is 'the study of mankind' and at Cambridge is split into two disciplines. Biological anthropology ('bio anth') studies humanity from a biological perspective (unsurprisingly!) – genetics, primates and human evolution. How does where we live effect what we look like?

Key Facts

Students per year	70
Male : Female ratio	20: 80
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	no specific subjects

Interesting fact: Indiana Jones is probably the most famous (and controversial) archaeologist.

When did we become human? Social anthropology, 'philosophy with the people left in', is closely related to sociology but differentiates itself by refusing to privilege Western Euro-American perspectives. You'll study ritual, nationalism, Marxism, ethics, witchcraft, human rights, tribal law, art.

Teaching is world class and many of those lecturing you and marking your essays are likely to have written your textbooks. If this hasn't convinced you, there are very few 9am lectures making it easier to be very social anthropologists the night before. In general, the lecture load is not too heavy, around 8-12 per week in the first year. It's not a 'doss subject' (that's a lie spread by jealous scientists!), so expect to work long hours. However, your rate of progress will be astronomical and it's satisfying see how far you've come.

For me, the best thing about arch and anth has been belonging to a close knit and sociable department. Arch and anth overlaps with virtually every other subject and envious friends will constantly tell you how fascinating it sounds.

The Worst
The Friday 10am social anthropology lectures.

ARTS

The Best

Close knit, sociable department.



Becca Faulkner
Jesus
Arch and Anth, 3rd Year
London

Architecture

www.arct.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	44
Male : Female ratio	47: 53
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	some Colleges

Quite Interesting fact: Oxford don't offer an Architecture course.

ARTS

I suppose the first thing that springs to mind if I was asked to write about my course would be the amount of time spent in studio. It really does take up a tremendous section of your week and it can seem like the work never ends, even if you do love it as much as I do. There is lots of help with studio work though, so if the arty side of architecture isn't your forte, don't worry. It

The Best
Great location,
great atmosphere.

is the level of personal attention you get that was one of the things that attracted me to Architecture at Cambridge, and I wasn't disappointed. It really is difficult to feel unwanted or unaided here. The one negative point about studio work is the amount of money you spend on the materials. It is

a large drain on the pocket and some Colleges, mine included, don't give you any additional funding towards this.

Lectures can be boring and there are a lot of them, meaning that you are constantly trying to find extra hours in the day and night to get all your work done. But the exams are set by those who give the lectures, so it makes sense to go to them.



The level of personal attention attracted me... you never feel unaided.



Don't worry, by the way, if you don't have Art A-level. I know Architecture students who didn't do Art A level and a student on another course who didn't apply to

do Architecture because he thought Art was necessary, even though he would have liked to. So don't be put off and don't make his mistake!

One major advantage of this place is the trip to Rome during the spring vacation. As Architecture is a smaller year group than most other subjects you do get to know your fellow architects better than your friends at your College might know their classmates, and the Rome trip just accentuates this. There is a great buzz in the studio now as a result of this, which makes working a pleasant experience.

The resources at the department are still a little bit in turmoil after construction work for the new building, but things are better and more organised than when I started earlier this year. The staff we come into contact with seem to be doing everything they can to make things better for us and I'm sure that behind the scenes work will continue.

There is a quiet undercurrent of competitiveness in the department, but it isn't hostile or anything like that. It's more a feeling of "Wow, that person's work is really good. I'd better up my game", which I personally see as a good thing, as it does help you see your work up against the rest, which it will be in seven or eight years time when you're out in the big wide architectural world.

So, despite moaning about the lack of sleep and late nights I have to do to get the work done, I do love this course and can't imagine being anywhere else!

The Worst

Lack of department resources and cost of materials for studio work.



Luke Bushnell-Wye
King's
Architecture, 1st Year
Manchester

Asian & Middle Eastern Studies

www.ames.cam.ac.uk

The first lecture of the year started with the declaration that “this course will be tough”, something that has definitely proved to be true. Asian and Middle Eastern Studies will push you to your academic limits and you’ll need to be able to cope with an immense workload. But for those who persevere, the rewards are incredible. You’ll learn some of the hardest languages and most complex histories in the world. And you’ll never be short of dinner table conversation.

The Best

You’ll never fail to impress.

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (formerly known as Oriental Studies) has been revamped and given a facelift for 2009. Much of the course is being restructured and it is hard to say exactly how it will play out, particularly in regard to the compatibility of oriental and modern European languages. In practical terms, nearly all your work will be done in the faculty. It’s a small subject, which means that you’re likely to feel more affiliated to your department than your college, and you’ll build really strong allegiances. The ratio of students to lecturers is awesome; you’ll be more than looked after by those who teach your subjects. This personal interaction does have its downside: if you don’t turn up to a lecture, your absence will be noted and you’ll need to explain yourself.



You’ll learn some of the most complex languages in the world. And you’ll never be short of dinner-table conversation.



In the first term, you’ll be submerged in vocabulary. Nearly everyone on the course will have no knowledge of the language, but after a few weeks, you’ll be expected to have a grasp of the basics. The language teaching is fairly traditional; whilst you won’t necessarily be verbally fluent by graduation, you will be able to read your language’s equivalent to Shakespeare. This can be frustrating, but the year abroad is flexible and allows you to develop any aspect of your subject (particularly useful if your language isn’t an ancient one).

Key Facts

Students per year	55
Male : Female ratio	52: 48
Length of course	4 years
Entry requirements	no specific requirements

Quite Interesting fact: James Bond claimed to be a graduate of Oriental Languages at Cambridge.

Much about Asian and Middle Eastern Studies is quirky. Studying Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew, Persian or Japanese in itself sets you aside from the average student and earns you a certain amount of kudos. The lecturers have a tendency to be slightly odd (if fantastic). The hot and cold taps are labelled the wrong way round in the department. You can take a module on Japanese food, if you like.

On a day-to-day basis, you’re likely to be frustrated by the department. Lecturers are notoriously bad at co-ordinating with each other. The ceiling in the library is currently cracking in places. That having said, you’re studying the most interesting, stretching and (ultimately) rewarding course on offer, and you’ll never be short of impressive conversation.

ARTS

The Worst

Lack of co-ordination within the department.



Sven Palys
Selwyn
Japanese, 2nd year
Bahrain

Classics

www.classics.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	80
Male : Female ratio	33: 67
Length of course	3 or 4 years
Entry requirements	Latin for 3 year course

Quite Interesting fact: Third year courses include sex, death, pleasure, tragedy and the supernatural.

ARTS

How do you know that all you know is that you don't know? Can you compare notions of sex in the modern world to those in the ancient? What is a voiceless pharyngeal fricative (and is it catching)?

Do you want to be battling with questions such as these for the next three years? Or do the words 'translate and discuss' fill you with dread?!

Happily, there's no such thing as a 'typical' Classicist. Unfortunately the subject comes with the reputation of being just for public school students who've been chanting *amo amas amat* from the age of five. Though such a stigma might have been warranted 10 years ago, today it is simply not true. We come from a variety of social and academic backgrounds: some have A-levels in Greek and Latin, but around half the year group starts one language from scratch. Or you could be like me and start your language learning when you get here and conquer Latin in your first year then start Greek in your second year via the four year degree.

The language learning element is one of the best but also most demanding aspects of the course. You can have up to four classes a week, which are so intensive that you could be reading Homer within your first few weeks. This gives Classicists a good body of subject friends with a sympathetic ear when translations get impossible.

The emphasis in the first two years is on language and literature, although you'll also study two additional topics. You could be supervised in a Cambridge café by graduate students or 'celebrity' Classics professors surrounded by the books they've recently published. You get one essay per week, a few translations and (if you are learning a new language) some class prep. This means you can factor in time to direct a play, compete in a university sport or socialise. You do need to remember to sleep occasionally – our common room helps with comfy chairs, vending machines stocked with coffee,

The Worst

A huge amount of translation and vocabulary.



You can enlighten the masses on the historical inaccuracies of the 300.



internet access and the student papers.

The Classics faculty often arrange visiting speakers and we've had visits from the likes of Boris Johnson and Tom Holland. There is also the Herodoteans – a student society which puts on pub crawls (often toga themed), pub quizzes, and garden parties. There are field trips, recently to Rome, Munich and Verulamium, and digging in Sussex, outside Rome or even in Lefkandi! You can also receive extensive funding for travel – say if you want to see the Parthenon for yourself, the faculty can fund your trip. We are also lucky to have our own museum, so you can check out the finer details of a kouros. The Fitzwilliam museum also has an incredible collection of pottery, statuary and sarcophagi.

As for life after Cambridge, Classicists follow a range of career paths from journalism to the civil service to law. More importantly, having a Classics degree means you get to enlighten/irritate the masses with fascinating details on what it really is to 'burn' with desire or to what extent the 300 is historically accurate.

The Best
Friendly, sociable department.



Hannah Perry
Downing
Classics, 2nd Year
Wolverhampton

Economics

www.econ.cam.ac.uk

Economics is a highly competitive subject, with a high-class reputation both nationally and beyond. One of the largest faculties in the country, it has contained many leaders in the field, economists who have won Nobel Prizes, shaped the current thinking in today's economic world and who advise governments both at home and abroad on economic policy. Yet many of these people are also those who lecture you, meaning that you really do learn from the best.

Economics at Cambridge has a mathematical rigour that will allow those who have a penchant for understanding concepts through maths to take this further. For those who are less inclined to work through pages of formulas, the course gives you freedom to limit how much of this you undertake (though there is no getting away from it completely). At the heart of the Cambridge course are two major branches: macroeconomics and microeconomics (macro and micro), with core papers in all three years. In the first year, you cover three further papers: Politics, Economic History and Quantitative Methods (the paper covering maths and statistical techniques used in

The Best

Taught by world leaders in the subject.

later years). The second year gives you slightly more freedom to choose and diversify, with micro, macro and a core paper in econometrics (the application of statistics and maths to economics), and an optional module.. The final year is the highlight of the course. You

choose two option papers from a choice of over ten papers, such as Public Economics, Industry Economics, and various sociology and politics papers. This gives you an ability to choose to specialise or just take advantage of the wide range of topics available. You also do a dissertation, where you get to research and write on any topic of your choice.

The Faculty is an interesting example of some of the odd bits of architecture you get in Cambridge, and dates from the decades where they like to forget that they ever engaged in building design. The good thing is that most of your lectures are based in one place, and that the library is not too far away. The Marshall Library (the department library) is a good resource, well stocked with numerous copies of the main textbooks, as well as large quantities of books on a range of topics, though it's heavily used so sometimes books are hard to get. As well as the books, there are good electronic resources and the library staff are always helpful.

The thoroughness of the course, combined with the

Key Facts

Students per year	170
Male : Female ratio	58: 42
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	A Level Maths

Quite Interesting fact: Fastest time for library check-out of five books is 76 secs from entry to library.

wide range of choices in specialist subjects in later years makes Economics at Cambridge an excellent choice. While requiring hard work and perseverance at times, it gives you the flexibility to enjoy the other activities Cambridge has to offer, while at the same time learning to understand economics and what it means in the wider context of what goes on in the world around us.

The Worst

Library borrowing can be difficult and text books get taken quickly.

ARTS

“

We have economists who advise governments both at home and abroad on economic policy.

”



Pete Coulthard
St John's
Economics, 3rd Year
Portsmouth

Education Studies

www.educ.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	110
Male : Female ratio	15: 85
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	A Level in specialist subject

Quite Interesting fact: Education Studies is the only subject that can be studied as a joint honours.

ARTS Studying Education at Cambridge is a fantastic experience for anyone interested in how and why people learn. Here you have the chance to study current educational debates in one of the oldest seats of learning in the country. And when all this learning about learning gets too much for you, your specialist subject provides an alternative focus on something which you are (hopefully!) equally passionate about.

However, if the thought of teaching in a school makes you run frantically in the opposite direction, don't panic! Not everyone doing this course wants to teach, and many um and ah all the way through before deciding on completely different career paths. The course is flexible enough to allow you to increasingly focus on education or your specialist subject as you progress through your degree, so there are plenty of chances to change your mind.

The undergraduate courses focus on four main areas: Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy and History. Each of these subjects you apply to an educational context, so you could be studying the psychology of child development in one lecture and the philosophy behind the National Curriculum in the next. While all this jumping around can get a little confusing, the faculty makes an effort to ensure that each discipline makes sense in itself, and in time you work out how the four are interdependent.

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All this takes place in the shiny new Education Faculty building, which is situated on Hills Road. The well-stocked, bright library boasts 'lily-pads' on which to work and some very friendly librarians. And if you need to mull things over or just talk to your subject friends, the faculty has an excellent café and some

bright orange comfy chairs in which to do so. We don't study educational environments for nothing!

Education Studies is now accepted at the majority of Colleges across Cambridge, so although its history is tied to that of Homerton, both the faculty and the College are actively diversifying their intake. So don't be put off by the fact that the faculty doesn't appear on any maps of the city centre – I assure you it is just off the bottom corner and can easily be reached by bike or bus!

“

Whether you loved school, hated it, or still wonder what it was about, you can investigate the questions for yourself.

”

Whether you are someone who loved school, hated it, or is still wondering what it was all about, you will find lots of open-minded, enthusiastic people here who are keen to help you investigate these questions for yourself. Along the way you can gain an insight into some fascinating aspects of education that you may never have thought of as you sat chewing your own pencil all those years ago.

The Worst

Balancing Education and specialist subject work.

The Best

The wide range of study topics.



Julie Christie
Homerton
Education Studies, 2nd Year
Banff, Aberdeen

English

www.english.cam.ac.uk

I'm guessing if you've made it this far in exploring English at Cambridge, you've probably read the University prospectus and discovered that we spend our first two years studying British Literature from 1300 to the present day. Don't worry if this sounds utterly daunting – the simple truth is that for most of us it is. That said, jamming 700 years of literature into just two years is quite exciting, although it does restrict your options. You quite simply have no choice: you do have to study a bit of everything, so be warned!

The Best

Studying a bit of everything from 800 years of literature.

All this doesn't necessarily mean you don't have any choice as a Cambridge English student. In fact there are lots of choices to be made: when to work and when not to work, how much work to do, which lectures to attend (or not, as is more likely!).

Truth is, there's a lot of flexibility in studying English here; you may have to study everything, but there's a lot of everything to choose from! And the supervision system puts you in the perfect place to tailor the course to suit you and study what interests you in each of the periods covered in the first two years. And in your third year, the sky is quite simply the limit! In fact, most of us find it too difficult to choose what to study in our final year, as the options really are undeniably vast!

The other great upshot of this flexibility is that it gives you the room to do whatever else it is you want to be doing while in Cambridge. Loads of us seem to find the time to join orchestras, sit on committees, act/produce/direct (quite possibly all at the same time!), write for student newspapers, play for sports teams and still get our weekly essays handed in on time (usually!). And the really great thing (that makes us the envy of many another Cambridge undergrad) is that we don't have proper exams in our first year – most of us just sit what are called prelims, essentially a type of mock exam, which leaves us carefree and reading Shakespeare in the sun for most of the Easter term.

If you're thinking this all sounds a bit hectic (albeit exhilarating), then you'd be right. The obvious downside of such an amazing course and the freedom it leaves us for doing loads of other stuff as well, is that the pace is unbelievable – you'll be expected to write

The Worst
Not specialising until your third year.

Key Facts

Students per year	200
Male : Female ratio	27: 73
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	A Level English Lit or Lit/Lang

Quite Interesting fact: The English Faculty won an architectural award. It is salmon pink and ugly.

an essay on a different work of literature/author (at least!) a week, and that means that by the end of term you'll be utterly exhausted, fed up of books and will just want to sleep solidly for a week.

But a week or so into the holidays I always inevitably find myself yearning for Cambridge with the amazing libraries, expert teaching and varied social life. And it's then that I know for sure that it's definitely worth it.

ARTS

“
Supervisions let you tailor the course to suit your interests in each of the periods.
”



Will Knock
Jesus
English, 3rd Year
Southend-on-Sea, Essex

Geography

www.geog.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	115
Male : Female ratio	42: 58
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	no specific subjects

Quite Interesting fact: One of the course's first lectures is on Victorian Prostitution.

ARTS

Choosing Geography at Cambridge is to choose one of the most diverse, cutting edge courses in the country. Whatever your interests, they will be fully catered for with topics spanning a huge range of academic disciplines. It's not just three years of colouring in.

The first year course covers both the Human and Physical side of the subject, taking in globalisation, colonialism and development alongside environmental change and its processes. Everyone studies the same course for the first year, specialising afterwards. This allows you to experience all areas of Geography and make choices based on more than two lines in a prospectus. The time together also means other geographers are friends, not just faces in the library.

The Best
The breadth of the course.

The difference from geography at school is vast, but not unrecognisable. It's an essay based subject with very little maths, and you will be taught both to the level required. There is also training in geographical skills and methods, aimed at developing expertise in the techniques used for gathering data in first hand research.

One of the best parts of Geography is the field trips, the highlight of this in the second year, where students choose between locations such as Morocco, Portugal or Berlin for a week's fieldwork. This builds to your third year dissertation: detailed, original study of a topic that interests you. Whatever you choose, whether the UK, a quiet European village or the bustling business world of Shanghai, this is the most enjoyable part of your academic experience.

Of course, not everything is about work. Geography is widely regarded as one of the most sociable courses and students can be found in all types of places, from theatre, politics, sport and especially social or environmental issues. In addition the student's Geography society CUGS runs a large number of socials throughout the year, helping freshers' week pass in a blur, and helping create a community spirit

that many other subjects lack.

The department itself is in the city centre, easily accessible from all Colleges. The main building is on the Downing site, a mere stone's throw from Wetherspoons and the cinema, an easy way to relax and soothe the mind after a stressful lecture. The rest of the department is based in the Scott Polar Research Centre, located on the other side of Downing College. You can't fail to be inspired when the room littered with equipment last used in an Antarctic Exploration (and the consistently late arrival of everyone who went to the wrong building).

The Worst
Rush hour bike traffic for the 9 am lectures.

“

The department is littered with equipment last used in an Antarctic Exploration.

”

In essence, the idea of Cambridge is not to consume every waking moment with work, but to push you to the limits of your abilities. If you're looking for a diverse, friendly department on the cutting edge of current events, Cambridge could be the place for you.



Pete Wood
Robinson
Geography, 3rd Year
Birmingham

History

www.hist.cam.ac.uk

History at Cambridge is unique. The selection of papers is extensive and you'll cover a range of topics in your first two years, from the ancients, to the History of Africa, to the political thought of the world's greatest thinkers. First year historians have an advantage over students in nearly every other subject: there are no official first year exams, leaving time to adjust to the Cambridge system of lectures and supervisions. This leaves freedom to develop your own interests, whether sporting, academic or theatrical. You can even spend time getting to grips with a foreign language, and even put those skills into historical practice.

One of the best things about History here really is the range of topics. Depending on your decided speciality, there are opportunities to get your hands on statistics with Social and Economic History, get inside the minds of some of the world's greatest thinkers with the Political Thought modules, and you get a chance to write a 15,000 word dissertation in the third year. Of course, no exams in the first year means that you will be tested on two years' work in the second year. The third year is more an exercise in specialisation – using the more

The Worst
 Don't let them lie to you that it's a work of architectural genius. The History Faculty is ugly.

generalised content to try and narrow down your historical interests. This is probably when becoming a true historian comes into play. Equally, if you don't like dusty archives and find the idea of 15,000 words quite off-putting, it is by no means compulsory (as it is in Oxford). Again, there are a wide

range of alternative papers on offer.

The Cambridge course really gives you the freedom to study what you find interesting. This same diver-



There are no first year exams, leaving time to adjust to the system and develop your own interests.



sity is reflected in the make up of the lecturers and students alike: History is an international subject, and

Key Facts

Students per year	200
Male : Female ratio	47: 53
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	A Level History

Quite Interesting fact: Options include a paper on 'The Body' and lectures called 'Sex and the City'.

there are people from around the world, with hugely varying interests. If there is an expert on a certain historical area, it is likely they will be in Cambridge.

In the first two years, you will concentrate on one paper per term which means you can devote adequate attention to eight essays per term – one essay per week in an eight week term. One-on-one supervisions are usually preceded by handing in your essay, so that it can be discussed in the supervision. There is significant freedom in how you schedule your week, and usually just involves e-mailing your supervisor to arrange a day that suits you, testament to the excellent teaching structure here and the support networks offered.

Ultimately, studying History at Cambridge provides you with an intellectual challenge, a range of possible options and an excellent set of skills applicable to the world post-academia.

The Best
 Diversity of the Subject

ARTS



Maria Staiano-Kolaitis
 Selwyn
 History, 3rd Year
 Leeds

History of Art

www.histoa.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	25-30
Male : Female ratio	39: 61
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	no specific subjects

Quite Interesting fact: The Fitzwilliam has a department dedicated to conserving easel paintings.

ARTS

Boasting architectural masterpieces and the outstanding Fitzwilliam collection, Cambridge is an artistic treasure trove and without a doubt the best place to study History of Art.

The first year gives you a broad overview of the history of art and architecture, from ancient times through to the modern day. Your eye is trained to identify techniques and recognise symbols and motifs in artworks. One of the great things about the subject is that, although the primary focus is art, you learn about history, religion and literature at the same time.

In the second and third years you choose special subjects, with options ranging from Venetian Renaissance Architecture to Surrealism, Art in Medieval Europe to French C19th Painting. Inevitably, some subjects are more popular than others and as priority is given to third years you may find yourself doing a course in your second year that wasn't your preferred option. Don't worry too much though: this happened to me and I ended up thoroughly enjoying a course I had initially been sceptical about.

Alongside your choices, you study a compulsory course, teaching you to examine critically art historical theory through the ages, the running of museums and galleries, the conservation of paintings and the staging of exhibitions.

Undoubtedly the best thing about the subject is the first-hand experience of works or art through the Fitzwilliam Museum.

Many first year lectures and classes take place there, in front of paintings and artefacts. You'll handle ancient Greek vases, study the architecture of College gatehouses and examine the Medieval Corpus Christi manuscripts. This really brings the subject to life, as you can see the authentic objects right before you eyes.

Work mainly takes the form of essays, although you

may occasionally prepare presentations for seminars. A genuine interest in the subject is essential as the weekly essay requires much self-motivated reading.

College libraries may not have particularly large collections of History of Art books but the faculty library is well-stocked, with art journals and bulletins, as well as a small assortment of rare books. As an Art Historian you will also trek to the sixth floor of the University Library, which is veritable attic of delights for the artistically minded.

You will get more out of the subject if you have a reading ability in one or two modern languages. The Cambridge University Language Centre is excellent for improving or learning a language from scratch. I took weekly Italian classes with a group of art histori-

The Worst
Few fellow art historians at your College.

Cambridge is an artistic treasure trove... really bringing the subject to life.

ans which was great fun and beneficial.

With only 25 to 30 people in a year, you'll know everyone and foster a community feel with fellow students. The disadvantage is that you might be the only Art Historian in your year at your College, which can be quite difficult at times. However, it does mean that there's less fighting over books!

The Best

Afternoon trips to local cathedrals, museums and galleries



Lisa Kelly
Jesus
History of Art, 2nd Year
Hitchin

Land Economy

www.landecon.cam.ac.uk

Land Economy is a multi-disciplinary degree that offers a dynamic way to study law, economics, and things that affect the world we live in. In the first year, you'll be taken through a light introduction, giving you the skills and grounding for the rest of the course. With about 10 hours a week of lectures, you have the opportunity to get involved in lots of things outside your subject, but (despite Land Economy's reputation of being an 'easy' subject) it's not all fun and games. The work load in the second year is more intense as you start exploring the subject in depth, and you quickly develop good time management skills. By the



You'll study a range of topics, from localised case studies to national and global issues.



time you get to the third year, you should have the discipline to manage a dissertation on any topic that you find interesting, on top of your other exam papers.

One of the best things about the Land Economy course is the huge range of topics on offer: you'll move from localised case studies to a spectrum of national and global issues. The course gives you the freedom to study what you find interesting, to focus upon any topic you like. This diversity is reflected in the make up of the lecturers and students alike: Land Economy is an international subject, and there are people from around the world, with hugely varying interests.

The Land Economy department isn't a great building, and there have been plans to build a new one for several years. That being said, the library is very well equipped, the librarians are fantastic, and they will get in resources for you whenever you need them. In terms of extra support, the department is quite wealthy, and able to offer support to students. Despite this, you'll sometimes run into frustrating problems with the co-ordination of timetabling, and this means that you have to take responsibility for your own studies, and

Key Facts

Students per year	43
Male : Female ratio	53: 47
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	no specific subjects

Quite Interesting fact: Cambridge is the only University globally to offer such an undergraduate course.

be pro-active in your work.

Land Economy is a reasonably small subject, with about 130 undergraduates. Though this might mean that there aren't very many Land Economists in your College, it does make it easy to get to know people in the department. There is a strong Land Economy social scene, and lots of opportunity to meet up with Land Economists across the University.

Land Economy is a degree which sets you up perfectly for the world of work, reflected in the employability of its graduates: last year, it had a 100% employment rate, with some of the highest starting salaries. It opens up a huge range of careers, with people often going into things as diverse as investment banking, accountancy, law and environmental agencies. Wherever it is that you want to go, Land Economy is great preparation and a fantastic subject to spend three years studying. Don't be put off by its slightly ridiculous title – Land Economy is actually a relevant, interesting and constantly developing subject.

The Best
Diverse subject - you can cover nearly anything.

ARTS

The Worst
The stigma. You'll get accused of doing a 'doss' subject.



Mark Fletcher
Jesus
Land Economy, 3rd Year
Doncaster

Law

www.law.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	220
Male : Female ratio	43: 57
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	no specific subjects

Quite Interesting fact: The Law faculty has the best cafe and snack bar of any University department.

ARTS

When you tell someone that you are reading Law at Cambridge, a frequent reaction is a short intake of breath with a comment about how difficult and time-consuming it must be. In truth, Law at Cambridge is what you make of it. Without focus it is difficult, without organisation it is time-consuming, and yet provided that it interests you, learning the intricacies of the law can prove hugely fulfilling. In fact, much to the despair of my friends, I've come to find myself wandering down the street pointing out the various crimes or torts going on. The law is quite simply inescapable.

In the first year, you study four subjects: Criminal Law, Roman (Civil) Law, Constitutional Law and the Law of Tort. Second year brings a little more choice and the third year offers more still, with the chance to write a dissertation and sit two half-papers instead of just one single option.

Teaching is a combination of lectures and supervisions, which work through the syllabus in tandem, the supervisions providing an opportunity to ask questions and undertake further study. These are the more useful of the two, since we are in essence walked through the syllabus by questions we prepare in the preceding week.

Provided you do the supervision work (which is admittedly a hefty workload), you can go out and party with a clear conscience!

Lectures take place in the faculty building which is a ten minute walk from the town centre. It houses a massive library, great IT facilities, and most importantly for those of us who managed to crawl out of bed in time for lectures – Nadia's – which sells some of the tastiest baguettes, pasties and pastries around, causing frequent invasions by hungry music and history students. All in all, we have a pretty great deal.

Studying Law at Cambridge also opens up an opportunity to learn in a foreign country: you can take an additional year in Germany, France, Spain or

Holland.

You might hear some people say that Law leaves little time for a social life. Ignore them! A vast proportion of students seem to take the old maxim 'work hard, play hard' as gospel, and law students are no different. The Law Society organises a feast of social events, including the annual law ball, dinners, garden parties, mootings and mock trials. For those who just can't get enough of all things legal, the faculty is also home to lunchtime and evening lectures from visiting speakers which always prove a good source of free food and drink – though we all, of course, go for the intellectual stimulation.

All in all, you can't really beat life as a law student at Cambridge: the course is interesting and diverse, the facilities are great, and the social life's even better. So long as you're actually interested in the law and willing to work hard, it's difficult to find the experience anything but rewarding!

The Best

Great facilities, social activities and free things.

The Worst

Hefty workload.

The course is interesting and diverse, the facilities are great, and the social life's even better.



Matt Thorne
Jesus
Law, 2nd Year
Wakefield

Linguistics

www.mml.cam.ac.uk/ling

Linguistics, rather than being the study of particular languages, is the study of language as a phenomenon and how it can be analyzed. Analysis skills are more important than knowledge of particular languages, though the latter may be useful. Linguistics, as a bridge between the arts and sciences, teaches you many new skills: analysis skills, basic sound tech skills. Experimental design and analysis form an even greater part of the psychology option.



Most students come from languages courses, but this need not be the case.



Linguistics is a second or third year subject taken by around 12 undergraduates each year. This small size has both its advantages and disadvantages. Most students do their first years in either Modern and Medieval Languages or English, but this need not be the case. I know one student who changed from Maths, which actually can be very useful if your interests lie in syntax and semantics & pragmatics. Linguistics can be taken as a one-year version or a two-year version, leading to the same qualification.

Linguistics is located with Modern and Medieval Languages and Philosophy on the Sidgwick Site, 10 minutes from the centre of town.

Both Linguistics and Experimental Psychology have on-site libraries. However, since Linguistics is an interdisciplinary field, other libraries such as Social and Political Sciences, History and Philosophy of Science and, bizarrely, Archaeology & Anthropology- which at times holds a better range of phonetics books than Linguistics - are useful.

Papers in the Linguistics Tripos are divided into three Groups. The Group A papers are General Linguistics and Language Variation and Linguistic Theory, which bridges several linguistic disciplines. Group B papers are the core linguistic ones:- phonetics, syntax, semantics & pragmatics, phonology & morphology, historical linguistics, structure of English and foundations of speech communication, which studies

Key Facts

Students per year	18
Length of course	Part II (one or two years)
Entry requirements	completion of Part I

Quite Interesting fact: This sentence 'buffalo buffalo buffalo buffalo buffalo' is grammatically accurate.

speech production and perception from a bio-physical perspective. Structure of English has a strong comparative Germanic perspective, so knowledge of German or Dutch is useful and will make the course much easier, but not essential. Historical linguistics is the theoretical study of the mechanisms of language change. Group C papers involve the history of language, for which the relevant language is obviously necessary. Also in Group C is Experimental Psychology, which I found fascinating, and gave me insight into many areas relevant to linguistics, such as memory and social interaction. Some science background is useful, but no longer formally required- extra maths supervisions are available for the statistics part- I needed them!

Have you ever asked questions like: What is language? Do you have an interest in finding out ways in which it can be defined and analyzed? Are you interested in how we produce and perceive speech, and come to learn these abilities (or 'acquire' as Generativists claim)? If so, perhaps Linguistics is for you.

ARTS

The Best
Variety of options and skills.

The Worst
No socio-linguistics final year paper.



Max Barnish
Corpus Christi
Linguistics, 3rd Year
London

Management Studies

www.jbs.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	70
Male : Female ratio	
Length of course	1 year
Entry requirements	on completion of Part I

Quite Interesting fact: Sir Paul Judge (the founder) has a Christmas party at his house for all students.

ARTS

Management Studies (MST) can only be taken having already completed two or three years of another subject. You do not need to apply to Cambridge specifying an interest in taking this course. However, competition is fierce, and you will need to have achieved high grades in your first two or three years.

The course is taught mainly at the Judge Business School. Teaching is varied with a combination of standard lectures and supervisions with newer initiatives such as group sessions, workshops, seminars and presentations; all useful for teaching real world skills that employers love to see. The Judge has its own well stocked private library and resource centre which are invaluable when writing essays and preparing presentations. Newspapers are also free to read everyday.

There are six core courses and a variety of optional ones. Maths is a big component of this course, and it is true that some numerical skills are preferable, but no prior knowledge is assumed. Students, including myself, come from a wide variety of academic backgrounds including Philosophy, Geography, Economics and History and we all coped

with the mathematical demands. All subjects are encouraged to apply and your first subject has no effect on whether you receive an offer.

60% of the course is assessed by examination at the beginning of Easter term. Although this pretty much wipes out your Easter holiday, there is an advantage (with library space and sanity) in not being drawn into the 'exam term' mode at the same time as everyone else. The work-load is less intense after the exams, but it does not end completely. Easter term is spent doing a four week project with a company. At the end of this you will produce an assessed report and presentation. It is essentially a consulting project whereby you apply what you have learnt from the course to a real life situation and was for me the

most enjoyable part of the whole year. The project counts for 15% of your final grade.

The management course for me was an experience I will always be thankful for. It is not a typical Cambridge degree and goes where many other subjects wouldn't dare. It involves a fair amount of management theory but is still the most hands-on and practical course you can take in Cambridge. Because the course runs a little bit differently in terms of lectures and exams to most others, you'll end up getting to know the other students and spend a fair amount of time with them while everyone else is revising for exams. Doing management isn't just a stepping stone to the city. Employers will value the mixture of your

The Best
Not doing a typical Cambridge degree.

“

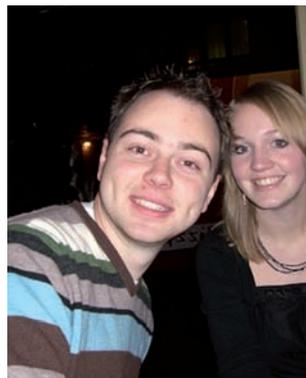
It's not a typical Cambridge degree, going where other subjects wouldn't dare.

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first degree and management and it often gives you a head start against people who won't know as much about corporate issues as you do. Definitely a course for anybody who wants a great grounding before going to the city.

The Worst

So many stairs in the department.



Simon Burdus
Girton
Management Studies, 3rd Year
Sunderland

Modern & Medieval Languages

www.mml.cam.ac.uk

Doing a degree in Modern and Medieval Languages at Cambridge means studying different aspects of the languages and cultures of the countries you are interested in. The course is really varied, with modules on literature, history, thought, linguistics and language teaching, and is a complete break from the tedious work of learning vocabulary lists at school.

You have to start off by studying two languages, although if you want to learn more outside your degree there is always the opportunity to do extra courses at the Language Centre. You can either do both languages at post A-Level standard or you can pick up a new language from scratch (ab initio). Doing an ab initio language is often more exciting but can be exceptionally challenging if you come to university

The Best
Great opportunities to travel.

The course is a complete break from the tedium of vocab lists at school.

with absolutely no knowledge of the language. It's a good idea to take one up but sensible to familiarise yourself with it beforehand.

The Worst
Missing people when you're travelling.

The most rewarding part of the degree is that you develop practical skills that you are constantly called upon to use; Cambridge is full of foreign students, tourists and academics and I often end up overhearing conversations in French, Spanish and German when I walk around town.

The course lasts four years, with the third year spent abroad, either studying or working. This can be both the best and the worst part of the course. It is an amazing opportunity to travel, get to know a different culture and get some valuable and much sought after work experience. Students come back having fallen in love with the country they have spent a year in. The downside to this is that you graduate a year later than

Key Facts

Students per year	190
Male : Female ratio	31: 69
Length of course	4 years
Entry requirements	A Level foreign lang.

Quite Interesting fact: Every MML student should be able to get money for a language course abroad.

the majority of people in your year group, missing out on a year of student life with the friends that you have spent two years making. Despite this, I have never talked to any fourth years who have regretting taking the year abroad.

A great thing about languages at Cambridge is the availability of travel grants from both your College and faculty. This means you can get money to travel to do language courses or sometimes simply to explore.

As a languages student you will be expected to study quite a bit of literature from the beginning of your course. It is also possible to choose a linguistics option and some departments offer great History and Thought papers. If you love literature, you'll definitely find papers that interest you, but if not, make sure you check out which alternatives are available.

In the first year, I tended to have around 13 hours of lectures, classes and supervisions a week, which meant that I was busy but not completely overwhelmed. By the second year, this dropped to about 9 hours of contact time. I find that I spend the majority of my time studying on my own, in libraries or in my room, and that I have more free time than most Science students but less than English or History students.

ARTS



Imogen Hagarty
St Catharine's
German and Spanish, 2nd year
Guildford

Music

www.mus.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	64
Male : Female ratio	55: 45
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	A Level Music

ARTS

The degree course at Cambridge is incredibly diverse, and will give you the opportunity to study a range of different aspects of music: history, theory, composition, analytical skills, performance, ethnomusicology and many more. Although you can't choose what you study in your first year, there is increasing freedom in later years to choose the courses that suit you best. The option of doing a dissertation even allows you to research any aspect of music that interests you.

It is important to be aware, however, that the course is very academic, and in this respect unlike similarly-titled degrees at other universities. Performance isn't available until the third year, and even then it represents only a small proportion of your degree if you take it as an option. Many undergraduates who are inclined towards performance

arrive in Cambridge to be disappointed by the academic nature of the course. Equally though, if you'd rather perform more for your enjoyment and are passionate about the more theoretical and academic aspects of music, the course is ideal.

Nevertheless, the opportunities to get involved in music-making are some of the best in the country, whatever you are studying. Cambridge is full of ensembles at both College and University level, so you can get involved in practically whatever type of music takes your fancy – orchestral, jazz, musical theatre and gamelan to name but a few. Many undergraduates go on to study performance after their degree, and are all the better prepared to do so, having a solid understanding of how music works.

The first-year course is particularly varied, and everybody studies at least one subject they know little about. There are courses in Harmony and Counterpoint and Analytical Techniques, and history courses cover Plainchant, Renaissance Polyphony and

the History of Opera too (though these change a little each year). You will also spend time improving Aural and Keyboard skills. Many people do find the first year difficult, which is simply because you don't choose what you study, but often go on to do much better in their second and third years.

Music students, like many others studying arts subjects, tend to have less contact time than their scientifically-inclined friends. Despite what such types will let you believe, that does not mean musicians do less work, but it does mean much of your time is free, so being self motivated and well organised is helpful. You can expect to have around ten to fourteen hours' contact time each week, but plenty of work to prepare for supervisions and significant commitments to your social life making music.

Before you apply, it is important to decide how much you value performance, and if academic music really isn't your thing, you could consider applying to do another course – students doing another subject are often even keener to make the most of getting involved.

The Worst

Having to wait before you can choose courses that most interest you.

The Best

Being a central part of the incredible Cambridge music scene.



The opportunities to get involved in music-making are some of the best in the country.



Ed Bell
Selwyn
Music, 2nd Year
Wakefield

Philosophy

www.phil.cam.ac.uk

The free time you will enjoy as a philosopher will make you the envy of your Cambridge friends. One or two lectures a day, a weekly essay and supervision leaves lots of time for philosophers to become successful sportsmen/women, musicians, writers and actors, and there is definitely time to lead a healthy social life!

Unfortunately, though, you do have to spend some time pondering the world's biggest unanswered questions: how should we view morality? Do we really have free will? What is the meaning of meaning?! These are split in your first year into four subject areas - Metaphysics and Philosophy of Mind, Logic, Ethics and Set Texts. You can then choose from more options in your 2nd and 3rd years.

The Worst

Constantly being told that we might not actually exist....

Many people worry that they come to Cambridge with little knowledge of Philosophy – but this really isn't a problem. Philosophy at Cambridge is much more about how you think through issues, respond to new ideas and construct good arguments than about

how many facts you can remember. If you like arguing, are a deep thinker and enjoy a challenge then you will get a lot out of the Cambridge Philosophy experience.

The main focus of your work will be your weekly supervision essay of about 2500 words. The one-on-one supervision is a useful and relaxed experience, allowing you to discuss the issues from your essay which you enjoy or have found challenging. As well as these supervisions and the lectures, in the first year you benefit from logic classes and discussion groups arranged by the faculty. These classes are friendly and helpful – it is often very reassuring to know that everyone else was stuck on the same bit as you!

The Best

Real-world relevance of the course.

The philosophy faculty on the Sidgwick site is easily accessible for most Colleges, located just a ten minute walk away from the town centre. The philosophy library is relatively small compared to other subjects, but it has most of the books that you will need. You can also use your College library and the University Library, so you'll never be short of a book! The atmosphere is relaxed and friendly, and you will often see lecturers and supervisors chatting away with students over a coffee

Key Facts

Students per year	50
Male : Female ratio	57: 43
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	no specific requirements
Quite Interesting fact: In Ethics you get to discuss whether it's right in certain circumstances to kill people by pushing them in front of trains.	

in the canteen.

A big advantage to studying philosophy at Cambridge is definitely the flexibility of the course. As well as the ability to plan your work roughly around your own timetable, you have a say in what topics you want to study and write about. The downside to philosophy would have to be the amount of reading! As with most subjects you are expected to do a lot of reading, but with philosophy it can take hours to read and understand just one page! But if you are willing to persevere and discuss it with others then you will get there in the end, and there are always people around to help you.



We spend time pondering the world's biggest unanswered questions.



Philosophy at Cambridge is a challenge, but one that is enjoyable, rewarding and definitely interesting!



Helen Neale
New Hall
Philosophy, 3rd year
Guernsey, Channel Islands

ARTS

Politics, Psychology and Sociology

www.sps.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	120
Male : Female ratio	39: 61
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	no specific requirements

Quite Interesting fact: The electron was discovered and DNA figured out in the room used for lectures.

ARTS

Politics, Psychology and Sociology (PPS) (also known as **Social and Political Sciences** or **SPS**) is one of the most wide ranging degrees on offer at Cambridge. In the first year you study all three disciplines and one other topic, and specialise in your second year and third year in either one or two of these. The flexible nature of the course means you can also take papers from departments as wide-ranging as Education Studies, History, Oriental Studies and Natural Sciences. Learning four different but related disciplines in the first year poses a challenge that is unique to Cambridge but the different perspectives each subject brings really helps you to understand the ideas and concepts that you study. Plenty of people also end up loving a subject that they never considered before Cambridge.

Most of the teaching is done by lectures and supervisions. Although many scientists will call you a slacker for the small number of lectures you have to attend (about 10 hours a week), this is more than compensated by the large reading lists provided in order to write your essays. The PPS library will have most of the books and journals you need. It is very central and also close to your lectures but can often be cramped and hot in the summer. If you can't find what you need in

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Your less enlightened friends will call you a slacker – but don't be fooled.

”

the PPS library, or fancy a change of scenery, you have access to any other department library and the central University Library.

Almost all your work will be assessed in supervisions, which are held in small groups or one-on-one with an academic related to the subject you are studying. Both the positive aspects of your essay and those areas that could be improved are discussed. It also allows you the chance to ask questions about the lectures and the material you have covered. Whilst this can be quite nerve racking, especially when the supervisor has written some of the books on the reading list, you soon get used to it and appreciate the benefits it brings. The flexible nature of the course means your final exams can be examined as a mixture of unseen papers, long essays and a dissertation.

Those who study PPS go into a wide range of fields afterwards. Whilst a career in politics often springs to mind, plenty of students choose to go into law, advertising or do further studies. Those who specialise in Psychology can also be accredited by British Psychological Society, which is the first step towards becoming a Psychologist.

PPS is a fantastic degree that gives you both the breadth and depth of knowledge to challenge your views on society and politics and a wide range of skills to take into jobs afterwards. The only negative aspect of the course is that your less enlightened friends will call you a dosser or a slacker.

But don't be fooled!

The Worst
Being called lazy and a slacker the whole time.



Greg Patton
Jesus
PPS, 3rd Year
London

Theology & Religious Studies

www.divinity.cam.ac.uk

Theology is the oldest subject at Cambridge, yet our 'Faculty of Divinity' is a thoroughly modern institution. World-renowned, forward-looking and friendly, the Faculty has top class academics and inspirational teachers. Studying here offers intellectual opportunities unparalleled elsewhere and the chance to make friends for life.

The varied nature of the course allows you to approach the subject in

breadth or depth. You choose from a range of modules so you can focus on areas which particularly fascinate you be it history, philosophy, sociology or christianity. Studying a scriptural language (compulsory in the first year), though daunting initially, lets you explore the various layers of meaning in your set texts and is also useful for understanding the origins of scriptural religion. Though at first centred on Christianity, in the second year you can branch out and look at Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism in more depth.

The optional 'Greek Week' (also for those doing Hebrew) before Michaelmas Term begins is a useful introduction to your chosen language. It is also an opportunity for you to settle into College, explore Cambridge and make friends with your fellow theologians before the tumult of Freshers' Week.

The Faculty of Divinity is centrally located on the Sidgwick Site, ten minutes walk from town and near to most Colleges. Its well-appointed library is stocked with most of the books you need, though sometimes it's necessary to visit the imposing University Library in search of an obscure journal on your reading list. For a snack between lectures, try the Buttery and Nadia's Patisserie whilst the Anchor and the Granta pubs are best for a post-supervision drink.

The timetable is relatively unstructured, with approximately four lectures and five classes a week. Two to three written essays a fortnight is normal, with a supervision to discuss each one. Good time management is essential for juggling reading, essay writing and language work. You

will become no stranger to essay crises and perilous cycle rides to meet your deadline. But do not fear! The flexibility of the workload is fantastic for arranging your

The Best
The library has almost every book you'll need..

The Worst

It only has one copy of every book you'll need.

Key Facts

Students per year	55
Male : Female ratio	32: 68
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	no specific requirements

Quite Interesting fact: There is a strange mixture of student atheists and future archbishops.

work around your social life and other commitments. Many assume that theologians have chosen their subject as a vocation. This is not true of most undergraduates. Religious belief is certainly not a prerequisite for,



Religious belief is certainly not a prerequisite for the course.



nor does it preclude you from, the subject and teaching is not approached from a specific faith perspective. In fact, the eclectic mix of students and lecturers allows for dialogue, mutual respect and the chance to approach issues from wide-ranging view points. Theology at Cambridge equips you with many skills to prepare you for a diverse and rewarding range of careers. If you want an interesting, modern approach to the study of religion you'll have an amazing time!



Primrose Lovett
New Hall
Theology, 3rd Year
York

ARTS

Computer Science

www.cl.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	90
Male : Female ratio	90 : 10
Length of course	3 years
Entry requirements	A Level Maths

Quite Interesting fact: According to their website, geekiness is not an admissions criterion.

SCIENCES Studying Computer Science (often called CompSci) at Cambridge offers much more wide-ranging science instruction and deeper theoretical learning that you might expect from a subject that tends to be associated with specific technical work or the gadgetry of the day. For admissions, knowledge and interest in maths and physics tends to be more important than prior experience with computing skills or programming. In your first year of the CompSci course, you will spend one half of your time studying core modules specific to computer science. The remainder of your work will be in Mathematics (one quarter) and other chosen science (which can be Maths again) or social science subjects. You may also choose a CompSci option as part of the Natural Sciences course. In this track, you will spend one quarter of your first year in CompSci and then be given the option, with some catch-up work, to spend your second and third years as a Computer Scientist rather than a Natural Scientist.

The Worst

Saturday morning lectures, and distance from town.

Most first year teaching in CompSci takes place at the University Computing facility on New Museums Site, which is in the heart of Cambridge. This facility includes a 24-hour computer lab in addition to teaching rooms and other resources that you will use as part of the course's practical

instruction. Your first year exams will involve one set question on each course you have taken.

For the second and third years, the course shifts to a pure focus on computer science. This umbrella, however, encompasses more than just hardware and programming. You will have the opportunity to study topics such as e-commerce, electronic security, and entrepreneurship and work simulating the real-world experience of doing IT projects as a team. The teaching location also shifts to the West Cambridge Site, where the facilities include a well-frequented café and

hangout, another 24-hour computer lab, and a comprehensive library. Between the department's library and your College library, you should usually be well covered in being able to access essential materials: there should be little if any need for you to buy books while on the course. The second and third year exams also tend to include more flexibility in choosing the questions and topics that you would like to cover. Socially, students in CompSci tend to be fairly tight-

You'll be in high demand for students' computing and software problems...

knit, with less than 100 students per year in the subject. They come to know each other quite well across colleges, and many spend time in the café near the main department at West Cambridge. There are also numerous student-led societies and projects in the University including managing the Student-Run Computing Facility, a structure that provides many vital services throughout the University. Cambridge Computer Scientists are educated to go beyond the boundaries of technical knowledge in their course and career, and they play an important role in the life of the University as an institution.

The Best

Cool building



Chemical Engineering

www.cheng.cam.ac.uk

Chemical Engineering has a reputation in Cambridge of being something of a “doss” subject, especially amongst fellow sciency types. To an extent this reputation is justified. The course in Cambridge is unusual in that it is second year entry only, with the majority of students having taken Part IA Natural Sciences or Part IA Engineering. Because of this, Chem Eng is often as the easy way out, with the amount of contact time vastly reduced from the first year Nat Sci and Engineering courses. This is not the complete truth though - a large amount of material in Chem Eng (approx 30% in Part I) is continually assessed. As a result of this anyone wishing to study Chem Eng has to have the self-motivation to complete longer projects as well as the normal supervision work and labs. The continually assessed work is a feature of all three years in the department, culminating with a year long research project in Part IIB.

The atmosphere in the department is a good one, everyone is very friendly. This is certainly helped by the fact that the department is small (though ever growing). As such you'll get to know pretty much everyone in your year as well as people from other years through the wide range of social events organised by the incredibly active student society (CUCES). The friendly atmosphere is fostered by the almost ritual usage of the department tea

room every day. Lectures are organised such that there is a twenty minute break in the morning for everyone to grab a cup of tea (free of course!) and have a natter.

Chem Eng is a stimulating course which results in you gaining an incredibly useful degree. Chemical Engineers are in high demand around the world and hence command high salaries. This is aided by the fact that Chem Eng is a highly technical degree and that the Cambridge course is so highly respected. All members of the department become members of the Institute of Chemical Engineers (IChemE) for free. Completion of four years results in students gaining the MEng degree, showing a high degree of technical competence and allowing a career in industry to be followed. A few people decide that Chem Eng isn't for them at

The Best

Interesting and genuinely useful course..

The Worst

Large number of lectures and labs.

Key Facts

Students per year	122
Female : Male ratio	26 : 74
Length of course	4 (or 3) years
Entry requirements	A Level Maths and Chemistry

Quite Interesting fact: There is a twelve-week lecture series on rust.

the end of the third year and either leave with a BA or choose to take a year of Management Studies.



This is a highly technical degree, and we're in demand around the world.



If you're considering a career in industry then apply for Chem Eng, there isn't really anything to lose. Chem Eng is a good course in a great department (supervisors have been known to provide cake and cookies during supervisions) and is a highly employable degree. It is of course, hard work, but then any Cambridge degree is, and no matter what anyone tells you, it is incredibly rewarding. Go on, apply!



Iain Lingwood
Robinson
Chemical Eng, 2nd year
Manchester

SCIENCES

Engineering

www.eng.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	300
Male : Female ratio	81 : 19
Length of course	4 years
Entry requirements	A Level Maths and Physics
Quite Interesting fact: Lecturers will sometimes complement you if you throw a particularly well-designed paper aeroplane.	

SCIENCES The Cambridge Engineering course differs from many other Universities in that the first two years are broad and common to all students. Though you do eventually specialise in one specific area in your third year, you will have a basic grounding in everything: electronics to materials, thermodynamics to computing.

For some this variety is an attractive feature of the course, allowing them to experience all aspects of the subject before specialising. For others, it is frustrating to take modules that may be irrelevant to their favoured field of study. In either case, this breadth of knowledge is considered beneficial for your future Engineering career, and provides great flexibility in course choices from the third year onwards.

The range of modules available at this stage is truly huge. You can also switch departments to Chemical or Manufacturing Engineering, or spend a year in the USA at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. All courses lead to an accredited MEng degree after four years, with the option to graduate after three years with a Bachelor's.

The Engineering course is academically challenging. Like most Cambridge degrees, there is a fairly heavy theoretical bias and this does require you to engage your brain at least some of the time. However that is not to say that it is all just dull and arduous maths!

In the first year, you can expect to be in the Engineering Department between 9am and 1pm, five days a week. This will include 12 hours of lectures and 8 hours of practical sessions, ranging from technical drawing and computing to lab experiments (similar to A Level Physics practicals). Most labs do help to deepen understanding of the course beyond lectures and, though on occasion they prove incomprehensible, they can be interesting too. The good news is that although attendance is compulsory and coursework carries 20% of the first year marks, only a handful of

students lose any credit in this area each year.

Outside of timetabled hours in the department your main work commitment will be to answer 'examples paper' questions for each lecture course. Work on these papers is not directly assessed, but forms the basis of supervisions; the single greatest feature of the Cambridge degree. Three times a week, you and one other student will meet with an experienced academic to spend an hour discussing problems on each lecture course. These are organised by your College and vary with individual supervisors, but are invaluable when it comes to actually learning.

The Worst
9 am starts for lectures.

It's fairly theoretical, but not just arduous maths.

The Engineering Department accounts for 10% of the University's students. It is not glamorous, but is well equipped and centrally located within Cambridge. It is a world-renowned academic institution offering undergraduates a great breadth of possibilities leading to all sorts of future prospects. The course may not be for everyone, but it is definitely worth thinking about.

The Best
Martin's coffee house, just opposite the department..



Dave Wood
Robinson
Engineering, 3rd year
near Chester

Manufacturing Engineering

www.ifm.eng.cam.ac.uk/met

The Manufacturing Engineering Tripos is probably the most misunderstood course in Cambridge. It isn't burly northern men telling you how to bash bits of metal and afternoons spent bodging things out of 2x4. It is a quality education in business for people who have demonstrated an ability to find the square root of a concrete block and want to know whether making concrete blocks is going to make them a millionaire.

The first year concentrates on the skills you need to know to run your own business. This includes how you finance it, HR issues, factory organisation, materials processing and design of real products. One of the best things about MET is the opportunities you get to apply these skills – teams of four put together a business proposal with the help of a local bank manager: the product can be nearly anything as long as you can demonstrate its ability to make money.

Projects have ranged from a special feedback glove to help blind people to the "Water Mortar" water gun. Whether you lean more towards technical, design, finance, management or some of each, you have the opportunity to get as much out of it as you want, even take the idea forward commercially. The glove has already paid off a few overdrafts.

You'll learn and apply skills in business strategy, marketing and design.

The final year of MET is much more outward looking. You'll learn about and apply lots of skills such as business strategy and marketing, although the best thing is the two weeks you'll spend overseas researching a project of your classes' choosing. This year we're off to California to study sustainability, a hot topic at the moment. The class organise everything, from sponsorship to the itinerary, which (as well as being a lot of fun) looks great on your CV.

Whilst some of the course takes place in fairly

Key Facts

Students per year	44
Male : Female ratio	81 : 19
Length of course	Part II (two years)
Entry requirements	as Engineering

Quite Interesting fact: Playdo, spaghetti and lego will play an important part in your course.

informal seminars, a lot of it is project based in teams and involves visits to companies outside Cambridge. Ask any MET about the banter in the minibuses or company project stories and you'll quickly realise that not only have they gained valuable experience of the real world, they've learnt more about themselves and others than any other degree allows.

We've learned from the experience of successful start ups, multinationals and an Emmy award winner. We've tried automating a production line, making jam and solving a company's problems in 3 days. We've been offered jobs by companies we've done projects with, by multinationals and management consultants. In fact, rumour has it that the Money Earning Tripos has the highest average starting salary of all in Cambridge.

So, if you're tempted by engineering, but worried that you'll spend the rest of your life worrying about decimal places and conversion factors, then this is the course for you. If your dream is to be the next Richard Branson, this course is for you. If you want to have 40 best mates when you leave uni, this course is for you.

SCIENCES

The Best

Two week overseas research project.

The Worst

Jealousy from other Engineers.



Bernadette Hall
Queens'
Engineering, 3rd Year
London

Mathematics

www.maths.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	220
Male : Female ratio	83 : 17
Length of course	3 or 4 years
Entry requirements	A Level Maths, AS Further Maths

Quite Interesting fact: Carol Vorderman got a third (lowest exam mark) in all three years.

SCIENCES

If you're looking for a challenge, Maths at Cambridge certainly won't disappoint. Without a doubt Cambridge has one of the leading Maths centres in the world, and the undergraduate degree is arguably one of the best, and definitely toughest, courses out there.

The first year consists of eight compulsory courses; the essential building blocks to help you on your way to becoming a mathematician. Almost everyone will have done at least AS Further Maths or equivalent, and the fact that most of the A-level Further Maths syllabus is covered in the first few weeks should give you some indication of the pace and volume of work!

In the second year there is some opportunity to concentrate on your interests and strengths. The third year offers nearly 40 courses, from Pure Maths (rigorous proofs, analysis, groups etc.), Statistics, Applied Maths (methods for solving mathematical problems, fluids etc) and Theoretical Physics.

There are also optional (but strongly advised) computing projects – the most technological the course gets; for most of it, no calculators are required or indeed

allowed.

For each course you take there will be lectures organised by the department and attended by everyone in the year. You'll be given an example sheet containing questions on the material covered, which you will be expected to work through and go over in pairs in a supervision. These are organised by your College and are normally with Fellows or PhD students.

You (should!) spend much of your time going over the lectures and working on the example sheets. Most people work in their room and find the notes adequate, but College libraries offer a change of scene, as well as having most of the recommended books. There are plenty of other working places around Cambridge, including the faculty library and cafeteria, coffee shops and the University Library.

If you apply to do Maths with Physics, you do three quarters of the maths course and one quarter of the Physics course. At the end of the first year you choose which subject to carry on - though there may be extra work to catch up on.

One of the benefits of the collegiate system is getting to know the other 'mathmos' at your College, and many people find this forms a good support network, for both work and revision. There is a university maths society, who organise regular talks by outside speakers, publish a journal and run a second hand bookshop,

As well as being at the forefront of academic research, the maths faculty is involved in both the local and wider communities, with opportunities for those interested to help promoting maths amongst school pupils.

The Worst
Saturday lectures.

It's not a typical Cambridge degree, going where other subjects wouldn't dare.

Whatever the challenges, if you enjoy Maths you'll find the course useful and enjoyable; it is extremely rewarding and provides excellent preparation for any career path you might want to follow.

The Best
The faculty building is a glorified version of tellytubby land.



Kathryn Coffin
Jesus
Maths, 3rd year
Hampshire

Medicine

www.med.cam.ac.uk

Cambridge is one of the few remaining institutions that adopts the traditional approach to Medical training. Your first three pre-clinical years therefore you spend studying 'Medical Sciences'- a three year foundation in all the sciences essential to medical practice. As with most sciences in Cambridge, you will have an intensive week of lectures and practicals, generally based at the Downing site, with supervisions often at your College. Soon into your degree, you will realise the scientific focus of the course, and so it is important to get to grips with this early on in order to do well. Over the first two years as a Cambridge Medic (part I), you will cover your basic sciences required to practice medicine. In your third year, you have a free choice of Part II subject, the BA Tripos with which you will graduate. Your part I exams will consist of a multiple choice paper, practical paper and an essay paper, with part II format varying between subjects. Many medics choose to study a specific science in their third year, often with the opportunity to pursue in depth research. Several, however, have taken the opportunity to further their interest in other subjects of interest ranging from Italian to Theology.

The Cambridge course is undoubtedly intensive - it is aimed at developing thoughtful and well-grounded scientists to go onto Clinical School. You will therefore have to learn a lot of detail that most other medical schools across the country avoid. You do however have the

The Best

Amazing resources throughout your course.

The course is intensive, letting you fully explore your scientific interests.

opportunity to explore your interests within the sciences by virtue of the art II choices, 2nd year subject options and the supervision system. As the Medical Sciences are taught as a collection of individual sciences, we do not have a central

Key Facts

Students per year	280
Male : Female ratio	48 : 52
Length of course	3 years, plus clinical
Entry requirements	A Level Chemistry, at least 2 Sciences/Maths A Levels

Quite Interesting fact: Medics can study any subject of their choice in their third year.

department as such. This does, however, come with the advantage of benefiting from the resources of up to five different departments. Consequently, you will find it hard not to find any resources you may require. Coupled with the extensive University Library and, of course, College libraries, 'sorry professor, I couldn't find the textbook, doesn't seem to work anymore.

Due to the nature of the course, there is limited patient interaction in your pre-clinical years at Cambridge. Many students, however, make the most of the ample opportunities throughout the University to volunteer within healthcare and counselling services. You can also make use of the 14 week summer vacation to pursue such endeavours, with many international schemes on offer (for which help with funding is often available).

Work hard, play harder...intense courses often cause for intense fun and relaxation, and medics are found involved all over the University, in sports and societies, none more so than CU Medical Society, which holds many socials and talks for medics across all years.

The Worst

Three years before you'll do any real hands-on medicine.

SCIENCES



Yasmin Al-Asady
New Hall
Medicine, 3rd Year

Medicine (Graduate Course)

www.med.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	20
Male : Female ratio	48 : 52
Length of course	4 years
Entry requirements	A Level Chemistry, undergrad degree at 2:1 or first

SCIENCES

The Cambridge Course in Graduate Medicine (CGCM as it's affectionately called) is a rewarding vocational course, but certainly not for the faint hearted! The course offers graduates from all degree disciplines to cover medical training in just 4 years. In order not to compromise on the level of teaching, the course is action packed, and holidays are short relative to the undergraduate scheme (6 weeks in your first year). But if you're a late starter along the medic route this is good way to get into the working environment a.s.a.p. In addition there are funding benefits to being on a graduate programme: tuition fees are paid by the government after your first year. If you do want to go into medicine and already hold an undergraduate degree other options to consider include the undergraduate medical course minus the intercalated BA Hons in the third year.

A brief rundown of the course goes something like this... The first 2 years cover preclinical sciences alongside undergraduate students, with MBBS examinations at the end. These are generally multiple choice or short answer papers, though don't let this fool you as they can be quite tricky! One advantage is that we don't sit the essay based university exams,

The Best
Amazing group of people with different life experiences.

required for the undergraduate medical students. In between each 8 week term in the first 2 years you will be rushed off to do a short clinical attachment, ranging from 4 to 10 weeks. In the first year you will be based at the West Suffolk Hospital in Bury St Edmunds, the main teaching hospital for the CGCM. It's a very friendly place and the teaching staff make you feel welcome and valued. In the second year you do a number of Student Selected Components in hospitals / departments of your choice in the region. Hospital accommodation is provided for each attachment. By the time you finish year 2 you have effectively covered the preclinical sciences and the equivalent of

the first clinical year for standard course students. The final 2 years follow the pattern for clinical years 2 and 3 on the standard course, and prepare you to go into the world as an FY1 doctor!



The course attracts a diverse mix of ages and academic backgrounds.



So what are the advantages and disadvantages of the CGCM? Disadvantages include the fast pace of learning and the highly scientific nature of the Cambridge course, if this isn't really your thing. On the other hand you know that by the time you qualify you will have a sound knowledge basis and deserve the title Dr! If you do accept the challenge you will meet some fantastic people, as everyone on the course has a stories of their past life to tell! The course really does attract a diverse mix of ages and academic backgrounds, and being in a small group (roughly 20/yr) allows you to get to know everyone pretty well. There will be times of stress, and feeling that you can't possibly remember where to put the stethoscope, but there will be lots of fun along the way.

The Worst
Learning bio-chemistry.



Megan Daniel
Lucy Cavendish
Graduate Medicine, 1st year
London

Natural Sciences

www.cam.ac.uk/natscitripes

Natural Sciences, or “NatSci”, is one of the largest and most flexible courses. It is split broadly into biological and physical, “Bio NatSci” and “Phys NatSci”, but in first year at least you can select subjects from both camps and you don’t need to decide what to specialise in until the start of second year.

The Best

Exceptionally flexible course.

In first year you have to do a maths option, which ranges from fairly advanced maths to Quantitative Biology. You also choose three modules out of: Physics, Chemistry, Materials

and Mineral Sciences, Geology, Biology of Cells, Physiology of Organisms, and Evolution and Behaviour. You can choose to do all physical or all biological subjects,

“

There’s something to suit everyone’s interests and ways of learning.

”

or a mix which may be appropriate if you hope to do, for example, biochemistry, or simply want to keep your options open.

In second year you choose three subjects. By third year you can focus sharply on one subject, from Astrophysics to Zoology, or can choose to study more subjects in less depth. Some subjects, mainly physical sciences, offer a fourth year leading to an M.Sci degree.

All subjects are taught with a mixture of lectures and supervisions and most have practicals as well, so there’s something to suit everyone’s way of learning.

Supervisions are the most striking part of the Cambridge teaching system – an hour with a specialist and one or two other undergraduates. These small groups mean the teaching can be tailored to your needs – if you understand one topic you needn’t

The Worst
Split priorities between modules in your first year.

Key Facts

Students per year	600
Male : Female ratio	54 : 46
Length of course	3 or 4 years
Entry requirements	at least two Science/Maths A Levels

Quite Interesting fact: Darwin’s microscope was discovered in a department cupboard a few years ago.

spend an hour discussing it, but if you’re stuck you can work on it and talk through it until it makes sense.

Each department has its own library but you’re unlikely to need to spend much time there unless you’re doing a specialised project. I’m not sure I even knew where my department library was in first year! Lecturers tend to give out comprehensive notes and the nature of the courses means that books are mainly to read around the subject, or have a particularly obscure point explained in a different way. Many journals can be accessed online from within the University, and paper copies of most things are available in at least one library.

In first year you’ll spend quite a bit of time running across the centre of town as lectures are held in three fairly central sites. After that you’ll spend more time in your own department, which is fine unless that means trekking to the Physics Dept, though we do have a large pond and lawns, good for building snowmen and currently inhabited by a family of geese.

In the first year you have three lectures and one supervision a week in each of your four subjects, and around eight hours of practical work a week, although this varies depending on your subject choices. The number of structured hours decreases in later years but you’ll find you spend more time working on your own.

SCIENCES



Harriet Johnston
Newnham
Natural Sciences, 4th Year
near Edinburgh

Veterinary Medicine

www.vet.cam.ac.uk

Key Facts

Students per year	65
Male : Female ratio	19 : 81
Length of course	3 years plus clinical
Entry requirements	at least two Science/Maths A Levels

Quite Interesting fact: The UK's Vets Party is banned from Cambridge due to an illicit release of cows.

SCIENCES As one of only seven UK universities offering Veterinary Medicine, Cambridge has to be a serious consideration for any would-be vets. Even though the course is longer than the standard five years, the University and its unique setting mean that your time here will fly by.

Veterinary students experience both sides of Cambridge, with the majority of lectures and practicals in the town centre, but venturing out to the vet school even in the pre-clinical years for additional lectures, practicals and supervisions. As the course progresses, increasing amounts of time will be spent at this new facility (10 minutes by bike from the town centre) which has received huge investments to ensure top class facilities.

The Cambridge course is split into two parts – the 1st and 2nd years termed 'pre-clinical' and years 4, 5 and 6 'clinical'. This has led to misconceptions that pure scientific theory dominates the first two years, with no animal contact until the second half of the course. Whilst the majority of contact time is lecture based, there is plenty of 'hands on' learning. Two practicals are spent in the labs, and another three in the dissection room each week. This is complimented by fortnightly visits to a local farm, where basic handling skills and stock control are taught.

Work experience is important in preparing for later years, but not an essential part of the application process. In the first three years, you will do 12 weeks of work experience, covering the main domestic species (horses, cows, pigs, and sheep), which can be both fun and lucrative with the right placements.

In the third year of the course, we can study absolutely anything. This is an exciting aspect of the Cambridge course, which adds diversity to your education (and CV!) as well as earning you a B.A.. People with no imagination will go for Zoology or Pathology, but in the past students

have cast aside their latex gloves and taken up alternatives such as Maths, Geography or a Language.

Obtaining this B.A. allows progression to the vet school and the beginning of clinical training. Here, lectures gradually decrease in number and the stresses of exam term are relieved by shorter modular tests spread evenly throughout the year. The direct relevance of course content to clinical situations means you'll be too engaged to notice the increasing workload.

The Best
There are lots of girls.

Most contact time is lecture based, but there is plenty of hands-on learning.

Although Vets will inevitably be faced with a packed timetable, it is possible to work hard and play hard. As well as College and social events, there are several dates for the Vet calendar, including a Vet Ball, Panto, and a whole "sports" weekend spent with vets from elsewhere in the UK. These events, combined with a small year size, ensure you'll make great friends with vets of all year groups as well as friends within your College.

If you are looking for one of the most challenging, but ultimately rewarding courses available, and would never stoop to medicine, then look no further.

The Worst
There are not many boys.



Philip Manning
Robinson
Vet Med, 1st year
Chelmsford

Feeling inspired? Want to find out more?

The Cambridge University Students' Union gives you the chance to talk to current undergraduates and to see what Cambridge is really like for yourself. Visit our website to ask a student any question or see what other prospective students think. Come and see Cambridge first-hand on our open days. Take part in our unique Shadowing Scheme. Contact access@cusu.cam.ac.uk or call 01223 333313



www.applytocambridge.com

Choosing a College

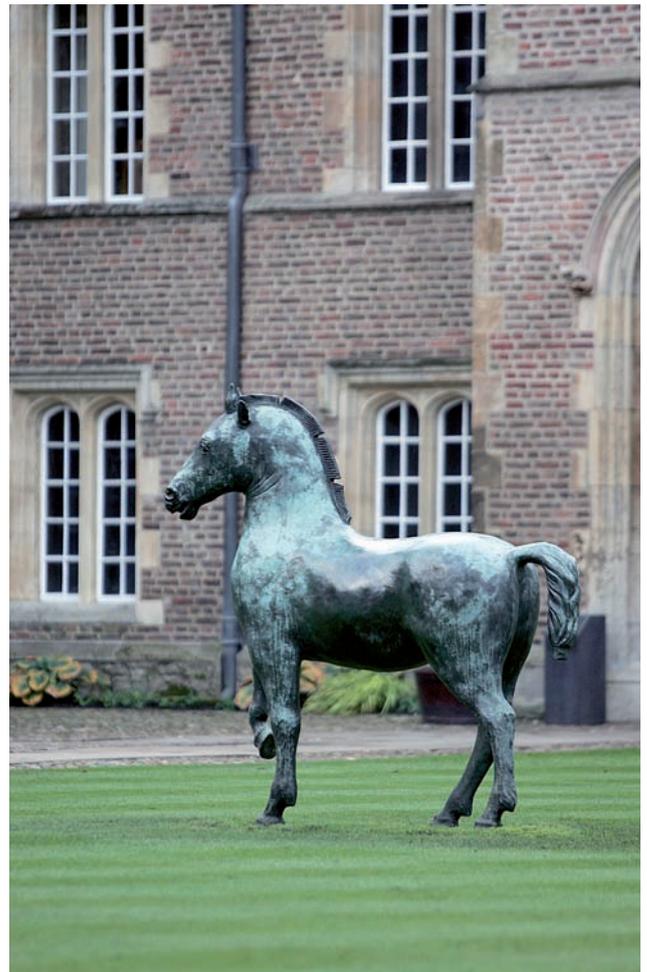
CHOOSING A COLLEGE

Choosing a College is something that people often agonise over, with little need. They are all very similar and the quality of your course, the people you meet and the opportunities you get will all be pretty much the same.

So, what is a College and how do you choose? Think of it like a mini-campus or halls of residence. The College is the place where you'll sleep, eat, do some of your work and a lot of your socialising. A College will have bedrooms, kitchens, a canteen, a bar, social areas with TVs and (if you're lucky) Nintendo Wiis, pool tables, quiz machines. It will have a library, a computer room, study areas. It will have music rooms, sports facilities, a gym. It will also have offices and some of the people who teach you will probably work in the College during the day. In your College, you'll find students from every year and subjects, both undergraduates and postgraduates.

It's likely that you'll join a College organisation, from sports teams to music groups, the students' union to the College charity group. Colleges cater for pretty much every activity you can think of, and they provide a relaxed environment to do what you want with your time. You can choose to join a committee and help run a College society, spend your time in the common room or the bar or simply watch DVDs with friends; Colleges make sure you can spend your free time in the way you want. Whether you choose to join these groups or not, you will more than likely start to get a pretty strong College allegiance within your first week. Nearly every student in Cambridge will insist that their College is the 'best'. As you read through the profile pages in the next section of the Alternative Prospectus, look out for the number of students who claim their College is "the friendliest", and you'll get the idea.

So, how do you choose a College? There's really no magic answer. Some people choose a College to suit a certain interest, such as whether the College has sports pitches or an orchestra. Some people choose a College because they flicked through the prospectus and liked the pictures. Some people prefer Colleges



which are old and pretty, some prefer modern Colleges with new facilities. Some prefer Colleges in the centre of town, others like the quietness and space of the Colleges on the outskirts. Some prefer Colleges with lots of students, others look for small numbers, where they can know everyone. College choice can be personal, instinctive and it doesn't need to be something that you can explain.

There's a school of thought that you can play the statistics game and choose a College based on the numbers of applications : acceptances. This is a Very Bad Idea. Not only is it seriously unlikely to work (the system is set up to ensure that College choice doesn't affect your chances), it will cause you undue stress and take up time that would much better be spent on school work and (in fact) having fun. If, once you've looked through these pages, you really don't know where to start, you can also make an open application, where a central computer will allocate your application to a College. Once allocated, the application is treated as though you applied directly to that College. This is a common option, and won't advantage or disadvantage your application.

**All statistics on the following and preceding pages were as of July 2008.*



College choice can be personal, instinctive and doesn't need to be explained.



Choosing a College

CHOOSING A COLLEGE



Charlotte Richer
Jesus
English
York

Why did you choose your College?

I really didn't know very much about Cambridge and I only decided to apply just before the application deadline, so I didn't visit Cambridge beforehand. I decided I'd like a fairly old College near the centre of town: if I was going to get in to Cambridge, I wanted to be able to take advantage of its prettiness. I also have a tendency to be fairly lazy, so proximity to Tesco and Sainsbury's was a definite advantage. I went online, looked at a couple of websites and flicked through the

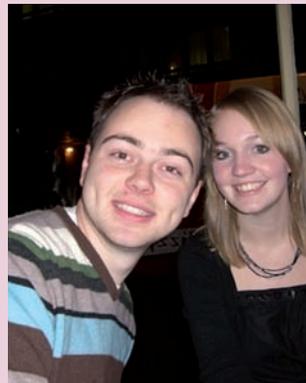
University Prospectus. In the end, I chose Jesus College, largely because I wanted to be able to print writing paper saying "you've got a friend in Jesus" (there is endless potential for puns, and I'm still not quite used to people shouting "go on Jesus" at sports matches). It's a silly reason to choose a College, but I couldn't really tell them apart. Despite the fact it was a pretty arbitrary decision, I wouldn't dream of going anywhere else - but neither would any of my friends at other Colleges.

Hint

Don't worry about your decision. Colleges are pretty much the same, and everyone loves the College they end up at.

Hint

If you want to, take a visit to Cambridge. There are regular open days, and you can walk around Colleges during most of the year.



Simon Burdus
Girton
Geography and Management
Sunderland

Why did you choose your College?

I was lucky enough to take part in the CUSU Shadowing Scheme a year before I applied to Cambridge and I was even luckier to spend my time at Girton. A lot of students dismiss Girton as the College buildings are slightly removed from town, but having spent a few days there, I realised that this is what makes the College the best. Everyone knows each other and there is a family atmosphere which can be lacking in other Colleges. Just by spending a few hours with current students of the College, the community feel in the student mentality will become immediately

apparent. This atmosphere was something that was really important to me. The College provides just as much support and facilities for other activities as they do on academic study, and to me university was about developing as a rounded individual. I was convinced I wanted to apply to Girton because it provided me with all the facilities I could want. All sports pitches are on site, a new pavilion is on its way and the facilities of College for all interests are second to none. All this, combined with an indoor heated swimming pool, one of the most diverse student bodies and the fact you live in a castle. Perfect!



Christ's

www.thejcr.co.uk



COLLEGES

Holiday brochures always seem to scream 'location, location, location' and with Christ's College, location is exactly what you get. Slap bang in the middle of Cambridge, everything you need is within easy walking distance, from the main shopping street and market to the two main nightclubs, which are in easy staggering distance (20 seconds from club bar to bed!).

Alongside the location, the highlight of the College is the friendly atmosphere created by the students. It probably seems a bit cheesy but, being quite a small College with around 400 undergraduates, everybody knows everybody and all the years integrate well. With all first, some second and all third year students living in College, Christ's is a closely knit community and your friends are not necessarily those in your subject or year. Most first years live together in one building, making those first few days that little bit easier, but even those in other parts of College (like me) find fitting in straightforward.

This integration is further aided by a wealth of societies covering all the major sports, drama, film and music. The sports teams have traditionally been very successful: the football team, for instance, has won Cuppers more times than any other College, but all levels of ability are catered for in every sport. The College has a

The Best
Great location.

The Worst
Bar opening hours in exam term are 6-7:30 and 9:15-11.

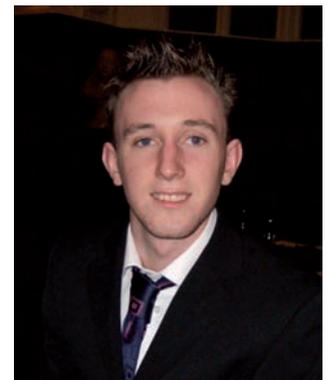
very active music society, who put on one big concert and a host of other performances throughout the year. As one of the few Colleges in Cambridge to possess its own theatre, the amateur dramatic society puts on a range of performances including a panto, a freshers' play and a number of sketch shows, culminating in a May Week show. The theatre also shows weekly films, ranging from old classics to those only just finished showing at cinemas.

Sadly though, as with any College, Christ's isn't all play and no work, and the College has a reputation for its hard-working students. However, whilst it is true that Christ's students traditionally do well academically, the College is no more high pressure than any other. The prizes on offer for academic success (a fancy room and dinner) are more carrot than stick. One great aspect is the number of travel bursaries available, allowing students to travel all over the world on (loosely) work related tasks, such as researching dissertations. Christ's also has excellent financial support, such as a room bursary and a grant for students playing university sport. Alongside this, the on-site canteen is cheap (though by no means gourmet in quality), as is the College bar. This means that finance is never an issue for any student, as long as you aren't buying a new pair of jeans everyday – but that's the same anywhere in the country.

This excellent student support system, combined with quality staff, means Christ's is a good place to learn but (more importantly) the facilities available and, most of all, the students here, make the College a great place to have a fun three (or four or more) years.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	128
Range of rent (per week)	£65-95
Price of a pint	£1.80
Avg. price of lunch	£1.60
Distance to sports pitch	10-15 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes



Stephen Harrison
Christ's
History, 2nd year
Newcastle



Churchill

<http://jcr.chu.cam.ac.uk>

Let's start off by giving you a little bit of historical info about Churchill. Churchill is one of the more modern Colleges in Cambridge. It was built in the 1960s primarily for science. Although it still has a majority of science students, there are many friendly arts students here too. Churchill is in many ways opposite to the Cambridge stereotype: we don't have to wear long black gowns to dinner, you can walk, run, jump and do handstands on the grass, and we don't have locked front entrances. We have all the fantastic facilities and advantages of Cambridge, but without the pointless rules and regulations, which can sometimes make University life a little bit tedious.



COLLEGES

The Best
Friendly and relaxed.

Churchill has the space to house all undergraduates on the same campus, unlike many town Colleges, which means that you get to know people from all years and all subject groups. This helps to create the sense of community and means you are never far away from your friends and the facilities.

Churchill is a 15 minute walk and 7 minute cycle from the town centre. This does have its advantages: you won't be plagued by tourists when you are trying to meet that essay deadline, and the extra exercise keeps Churchill students among the fittest and most toned in the University.

On site we offer many facilities: squash courts, tennis courts, netball courts, a gym and sports fields for rugby, football and frisbee. If you are not sporty, there is a games room with pool tables and table football and a TV room with Sky in the bar, where major sports are screened. The bar is a social area in Churchill, with newspapers, a variety of drinks and snacks as well as a juke box to service all your musical needs. In the evening there are often bar quizzes and PAV, our free weekly disco where no one will judge the quality of your dancing or worrying enthusiasm for cheesy music. We have a music and an arts studio and

a theatre for films and plays.

The rooms here are well heated and all come with internet access. The rooms are generally spacious with prices depending on size and whether rooms are on suit or not, they typically range from £65 to £105 per week. Room selection is by ballot, so, although you

The Worst
On the outskirts of town.

aren't guaranteed your first choice, you can opt for a certain type of room. There are several showers and toilets on each staircase, so you'll never have to wait. There are also shared cooking facilities on each staircase which have fridges freezers, and stoves. If you're not into cooking then don't worry: the

College is fully catered, with a selection of meal deals at £2.90.

Academically, we have a well stocked library and study rooms open 24/7. Around most communal areas there is a wireless internet connection. We have computer rooms with photocopiers and printers.

So if you're looking for a College with fun and friendly people, with a fantastic academic record, lovely grounds, excellent music, theatre and sports facilities, no stupid traditional rules, and place where you can enjoy the best three or four years of your life, then this is the perfect place for you.

Key Facts	
Number of undergraduates per year	156
Range of rent (per week)	£65-105
Price of a pint	£1.95
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£3.50
Distance to sports pitch	onsite
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes



Emma Burrow
Churchill
Engineering, 2nd year
Leicestershire



Clare

<http://ucs.clare.cam.ac.uk>



COLLEGES

Often referred to as the 'friendly College', Clare is home to the best gardens in Cambridge, with lovely riverside vistas, and boasts an active and vibrant social life. Known for its chapel choir and strong classical music tradition it is also home to the infamous Clare Cellars. Most days this is a chilled out place to relax with friends over a few cheap pints but once a week this beautifully refurbished bar hosts an Ent (entertainment event) that attracts students from all over Cambridge. Hosting the likes of the Scratch Perverts, Dillinja, and Pendulum, as well as holding nights of good old cheese for when you just fancy reliving the best of your childhood, the Cellars has something for all tastes.

The Best
Great social scene.

Clare has a great reputation for amateur dramatics and comedy. The Clare Actors produce entertainments and great plays, giving students a chance to flex their creative muscles in a relaxed and comfortable environment. Regularly touted as Cambridge's best-kept secret, Clare Comedy, compered by ex-Clare student Matt Kirschen, brings you a night of stand-up every month. We mix seasoned student acts with first-timers, and bring in top London circuit headliners to round off the night.

Many first years get spacious en-suite "sets" (bedroom, living room, and bathroom) and rents are

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	156
Range of rent (per week)	£70-98
Price of a pint	£1.80
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.50
Distance to sports pitch	15 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes, 2
Gym	no

surprisingly affordable. This accommodation is well located for the library, the University Library and the Sidgwick site. The centre of town is also only a five minute walk away, so Clare is well placed: it is central, near to libraries, lectures, shops etc. but just off the hustle and bustle of the shopping streets.

The one gripe about Clare's location is that its playing fields are a fifteen minute cycle from the College. Nevertheless, when you do get there, they are some of the best in Cambridge. Cambridge City train on the football pitches and Anna Kournikova has trained for Wimbledon on the grass tennis courts, which provide a welcome distraction from our summer studies.

The Worst

Seeing arts students in pyjamas when you're coming back for lunch.

While there is much to be proud of, most would agree that the best thing about Clare is the level-headedness of its students and the atmosphere that avoids pretentiousness and is supportive of all interests and student undertakings. This is complemented by a healthily non-patronising relationship between College authorities and students. Student committees run the bar, the May Ball, the College entertainment programme and all range of sporting, musical and artistic societies. Fellows show a genuine interest in these and are supportive, whilst avoiding being overbearing. All forms of sports, societies and artistic activities are encouraged. All major sports have teams. Most are reasonably competitive within the university leagues: cricket, hockey, badminton and football have all enjoyed recent success. Emphasis is placed more on participation and on the social elements of sport. Music is excellent, with an impressive choir, orchestra and jazz groups.



Mark Walmsley
Clare
History, 2nd year
Chester



Corpus Christi

www.corpus.cam.ac.uk/jcr

Corpus is one of the smallest and oldest Cambridge Colleges. The main part of the College is made up of two courts: Old Court, all beams and slanted ceilings, and New Court, a really pretty light stone job, which opens just past King's College. There are several other Corpus buildings around Cambridge. Most second years live in Newnham House, a five minutes walk away. There is another accommodation block, the Beldham Building, which is new and ensuite. This is great as Corpus students have the option of old (and cold, ill-fitted and charming) or new (and a bit more generic but well equipped) accommodation. There is also Leckhampton, about ten minutes walk away, where all of the post grads live and where Corpus has vast and lovely grounds.

Corpus is bang in the centre of Cambridge: close to lectures (for most subjects), Sainsbury's and places to go out. You get accommodation in or near College through your time here.

Corpus is pretty great no matter what you are interested in.

The Best
The theatre and accommodation.

There are some really good sports facilities, including a stunning (but outdoor) swimming pool. As a small College, those interested in sports are pretty much guaranteed a place on Corpus teams and can use the gym and

playing fields. Corpus has one of the best student-run choirs in Cambridge and a beautiful chapel to sing in, along with an active music society, although the practice spaces aren't great.

There are innumerable other societies and Corpus is particularly good for drama, with its own continually running theatre. The Fletcher Players run anything from three to eight plays a term and perform both University and College based pieces. The College is pretty generous in funding just about anything the student body is interested in. We now have the biggest TV in Cambridge! Having said this, it is also



pushy academically, which isn't for everyone: rooms are partly based on academic results and, as one of the highest Colleges on academic results, the College does not react well to poor grades during your degree.

On the nitty gritty, the meals in Hall vary but are always edible and pretty well priced. There are generally kitchens for every six or so rooms, although this varies from the super gyp-rooms to small cupboards with microwaves. Formal Hall is great at Corpus, with the 6th best food in Cambridge according to a student magazine. This happens three times a week and is decently priced at about £7 for three waiter-served courses. You never need to go far for a shower or a bath (unless you live in Old Court, where the sacrifice is well worth it), and all the rooms are decently sized and priced below the Cambridge average.

The Worst
The academic room ballot for second and third years.

Most importantly, Corpus is really friendly. As a small institution, everyone knows each other and there is always someone you know in hall, the bar or the JCR (the common room). It is really unpretentious and people generally get on really well here. I realise everyone says this, but there is genuinely no difference between any of the students based on, well, just about anything.

COLLEGES

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	83
Range of rent (per week)	£52-112
Price of a pint	£1.90
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.50
Distance to sports pitch	10 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes, 2
Gym	yes, offsite



Andrew Diver
Corpus Christi
History, 1st year



Downing

www.downingjcr.co.uk



after alumni Quentin Blake) hold social and academic events. These societies provide the opportunity to get to know your professors outside the slightly more formal supervisions.

Academically, we have a strong reputation in Law and Medicine.

Whilst the lawyers enjoy a large and sociable group in College, those in smaller groups such as Philosophy end up making more out of subject friends in addition to their College ones.

Scientists, Medics and Geographers often cite Downing's location next door to lectures as one of the reasons they came here.

Whilst Downing students do well, this isn't a College with a high pressured environment. As a professor reminds me: don't let the degree get in the way of learning! The College has a strong sense of community from the students to the fellows to the porters. You can get an idea of this from the JCR website (www.downingjcr.co.uk – there's a section for applicants with useful information and a forum).

As far as practicalities go, the Hall food improves year on year – the nickname 'slops' is now more affectionate than accurate. The dining hall is being completely refurbished, and we also have the Butterfield Café/Bar. Accommodation is of a high standard. Many first years have en suite rooms and live in College, as do final years. Second years live on Lensfield Road, which borders Downing, in College houses.

Freshers' Week is extensive, with a focus on all day fun as well as themed parties, and our team of Freshers' Reps make it an exciting and welcoming week for everyone. College 'parents' will be on hand for any worries you might have later and take you out for a meal in your first week. The worst? The gravel path were certainly not designed with high heels in mind...

The Worst
The gravel paths in high heels...

COLLEGES

Downing is on the edge of the city centre, only a few minutes from the central market place. The central area is the most spacious in Cambridge, giving the College a peaceful feel from the moment you enter from chaotic Regent Street. Tourists don't tend to find their way inside, so you have a College that is your own space. We're lucky to have the paddock – a stretch of grass just past the central formal lawn, where sports teams practise, students play Frisbee or just read and chat in the sun.

Downing has a deserved reputation for being a sporty College, but there are plenty of non-sports activities: the Downing Dramatic Society, with opportunities to act, direct, design; the choir; a very active JCR; a College debating society; the termly student magazine; a May Ball; a student-run bar. We have an enthusiastic rowing club, with some of the best facilities in Cambridge and a packed social life. There's rugby, football, netball, hockey, cricket, tennis and many more. Finally, we have various subject related societies.

The Cranworth Law Society, the Maitland Historical Society, the Whitby Medical Society, the Danby Society (for scientists, engineers, mathematicians and computer scientists) and the Blake Society (named

The Best
The variety of activities to get involved with.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	131
Range of rent (per week)	£60-116
Price of a pint	£2.20
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£1.80-£4
Distance to sports pitch	partly onsite
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes



Emily Wilson
Downing
Law, 3rd Year
Malton, North Yorks.



Emmanuel

<http://ecs.u.ac.uk>

Emmanuel – or “Emma” – has a reputation for high academic standards and a thriving social scene, and, as corny as it sounds, working and playing hard makes Emma the place it is. Nonetheless, the only pressure you will feel here is from your supervisor; socially, Emma is easy-going. The College is an ideal place for anyone with a passion for their subject and, while involvement in College life is encouraged, it is by no means compulsory to be the life and soul of every party.

Emma is located in the centre of town, with easy access to the shops, bars, pubs and clubs. It is flanked by two of the city’s greenest spaces, which help its peaceful atmosphere off the beaten tourist trail. It’s easy to forget your location in the middle of the city: the quiet, spacious grounds afford a tranquil environment in which to work, rest and play.

Our grounds are enjoyed as well as admired. In the summer, grass tennis courts are set up on the paddock and you can sit in the sun with the famous ducks or lounge around the unheated outdoor pool – the oldest in the country – and even take a dip if you’re feeling brave! Indoors, there are squash courts on site and our sports grounds and boathouse are only a short cycle away.

The chefs who run our hall have won awards and, whilst often unremarkable, there is a large enough range of food to suit most tastes. With three meals a day six days a week, hall is quick, easy and fairly cheap, as well as forming the basis of the College’s social life. Sunday brunch is particularly popular: a late-morning affair with fry-ups or pastries and the Sunday papers. If you’ve got something to celebrate, formal hall is a good option - three courses, waiter-served (bring your own wine!).



Accommodation is provided for all years, with first years living in College and second and third years choosing between rooms in College or College-owned property around town. In the second and third years you pick where you live, who you live with, and how much you’re willing to pay (from £55-£85 per week), so most people live in an environment that suits them.

There’s a range of clubs and societies, from singing in the chapel choir to ice-cream tasting with the Real Ice-Cream Society. Of course, this entry would not be complete without mentioning our famously cheap student-run bar, home to one of Cambridge’s most popular weekly dance nights, Funk da Bar. Emma bar also hosts our twice-termly bar extensions – where fancy dress is compulsory – and Indie in D Bar, with DJs catering to more alternative tastes.

Emma is a place where everyone can fit in – and as long as you’re willing to work hard, you don’t even have to do that. With an emphasis on pastoral care, Emmanuel provides a supportive environment and space for students to be themselves - just don’t tell anyone you get your laundry done for you!

COLLEGES

The Best
Great weekly ents,
free laundry..

The Worst
Lack of self-catering
facilities in College
rooms.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	169
Range of rent (per week)	£58-85
Price of a pint	£1.35
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.60
Distance to sports pitch	8 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes, 3
Gym	no



Grace Jackson
Emmanuel
English, 3rd Year
Bristol



Fitzwilliam

www.srcf.ucam.org/fitzjcr



COLLEGES

Fitzwilliam – or ‘Fitz’ as it’s normally known – is one of the newer Colleges and, architecturally, this shows, especially in the older bits of College. The words ‘multi-storey car park’ spontaneously spring to mind. However this impression is tempered by some amazingly well kept gardens (full of squirrels. All the time. Also a very friendly cat who visits us from New Hall.) and because of its newness, Fitz also has exceptional facilities.

The auditorium was built last year and, as well as an excellent performing space for the active drama societies, the complex contains a squash court and state of the art music practice rooms, available for all students to use. A new library complex is also nearing completion – which will make Fitz (with its playing fields and myriad other sporting facilities) one of the best ‘facilitated’ Colleges.

The Best
The atmosphere (and the showers).

Food wise, the buttery is, well – mediocre but very reasonably priced. Formal food is slightly better (amazing cheesecake) and by far one of the cheapest formals in Cambridge, operating six out of seven nights a week. You do also have the option of cooking for yourself (you might want to take it) and some of the kitchens have actual ovens, which is very rare for Cambridge.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	166
Range of rent (per week)	£65-100
Price of a pint	£2.05
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£3.05
Distance to sports pitch	5 min walk
Music practice rooms	yes, 2
Gym	yes

Second years have the option of living out, with some houses close-by. Most second and third year accommodation is, well, awesome. The bathrooms in particular are new and the showers are legendary, redefining the term ‘power shower’. Unfortunately you get what you pay for (although on a par with most other Colleges) and in the nicer rooms you have to move out during the holidays to make room for conference guests. However at Fitz there are always cheaper options and you can always stay somewhere over the holiday, even if you need to move your stuff.

While Fitz is a little way out of town (about ten minutes or less on a bike, twenty minutes walking) this does give you a bit of space from the Cambridge claustrophobia, especially in summer and at the weekends when the town gets flooded with tourists. It also gives Fitz a tangible community feel – and this is the real strength of the College: most people feel at home here.

This doesn’t just come from the students but also from the approachable fellowship and the College’s ability to actually take students’ needs into account.

For me and many of my friends coming from state schools and sixth form Colleges the culture shock wasn’t great. We’re a pretty diverse bunch at Fitz. There were all kinds of new academic challenges and opportunities, but none of us ever felt like we didn’t belong and everyone is an important part of the College community. It felt like home within a few weeks of getting here.

We also have very, very good Events (or Ents). Andy C and Annie Mac have played in College and there’s a lot going on for a wide range of tastes.

The Worst
The food.



Elly Shepherd
Fitzwilliam
English, 3rd Year
Newcastle



Girton

www.girtonjcr.com

If you ask anyone in Cambridge what Girton is like, they will almost certainly tell you that it's a long cycle journey from the city. If you ask anyone who has studied at Girton, they would probably agree. However they would also add that life at Girton surpasses that of any other College. A friendly atmosphere is probably the defining characteristic of Girton's vibrant community. It is both relaxed and unpretentious (yes, we're allowed to walk on our grass). The College is one of Cambridge's largest and has a good social mix with a large number of state school students. In the three years or more years that students are here, they become part of an extensive but close knit group.

The College is set in beautiful spacious grounds away from the milling tourists who are such an irritation to the students of the central Colleges. Girton also boasts all its facilities within the grounds, which is not the case at many other Colleges. All our sports pitches, gym, squash court, tennis courts and even an indoor, heated swimming pool are on site. It is hardly surprising that given this access to training facilities, Girton excels at a number of sports. Most of our teams are in the top divisions and many students go on to represent the University, whilst there are also a number lower level teams to cater for all abilities. And if sporting activity isn't your thing, walking through the orchard or simply sitting by the pond would surely provide you with ample excuse to get away from your studies.

Girton's facilities extend far beyond sport. The College has a bar and common room which are popular after a hard day's work and form the hub of the community. The same can be said for the canteen, which has a well deserved reputation for serving some of the best food you will find in any Cambridge College. It is also a place where students from all years



and subjects mix with academics and graduates, which makes it seem more like a giant family than a place just to work and live.

And if you would give up all these benefits for ten minutes less cycling in the morning, you should probably know that Girton's secret is its second accommodation site. Wolfson Court is a self-contained annexe for second and third years that is situated within a stone throw of both town and the arts faculties. Alternatively, the College also offers more independence in its houses, which are scattered about the Girton grounds. In short you will find that Girton has something to offer any prospective student.

Choosing a Cambridge College can be a daunting task, given the variety and sheer number involved. Girton stands out by having the unique benefit of a strong community due to its location as well as offering the choice to live close to town in Wolfson Court. Before you apply, it is well worth making a visit to Girton and if you do it will definitely make your shortlist.

COLLEGES

The Best
Everything you need's within College grounds.

The Worst
Cycling on a wet and windy day.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	173
Range of rent (per week)	£65
Price of a pint	£1.95
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.40
Distance to sports pitch	onsite
Music practice rooms	yes, 2+
Gym	yes



Dave Walsh
Girton
History, 3rd Year
Harrogate, North Yorks.



Gonville & Caius

<http://gcsu.cai.ucam.org>



COLLEGES

Caius (pronounced 'keys') is renowned as one of the most popular Cambridge Colleges and this is a reputation I have come to appreciate during my time here. There are many things I love about Caius, particularly the buzzing evening atmosphere, which results from the fact that Caius students are obliged to eat in hall most nights of the week. Whilst this is often criticised (the food can be a bit dodgy and on the pricey side at times), the concept of dining in is a good one: it provides opportunities for all the students from every year group to come together. This creates a close-knit College community, which is unusual given that Caius has one of the largest numbers of students of all the Colleges.

The Best
College bar is cheap and has nice decor.

Dining often spills over into an evening in the College bar, which has a vibrant and friendly atmosphere and a reputation as the social epicentre of the College. Caius, as a city-centre College, is in a fantastic position and students can take advantage of all aspects of Cambridge: the numerous library facilities including Caius Library (a beautiful old building next to the Senate House), the boutique shops, book shops, pubs, clubs and river punts. Caius is also a College which is constantly developing: the brand new first year accommodation, the Stephen Hawking Building (he

used to live on the site of the new building when he was a research student here) has state of the art facilities, with an en suite bathroom in every room. Plans are also in place for a new gym on this site.

College sport is another great aspect of Caius, giving all students the opportunity to get involved in sport on a less competitive level. Our main sports ground on Barton Road includes tennis courts (both grass and hard), squash courts, football pitches and cricket pitches. The range of sports teams and societies are too diverse to list in entirety, but we have top league football and hockey teams, as well as successful rugby, tennis, lacrosse and many other teams for both men and women. I have been a member of the women's football team for the past two years, even though I had very little experience playing football: the ethos is very much fun based and provides yet another opportunity to get to know other people in your College and the teams you are competing against.

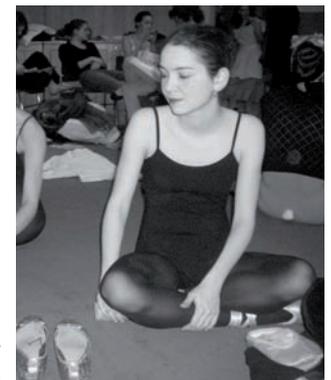
The Worst
Food can be a bit dodgy and pricy.

Sport gives rise to more social opportunities in the form of annual dinners and formal swaps with other teams, where you visit their College for a meal and/or drinking! Rowing is undoubtedly the greatest sporting achievement for Caius, having won 'bumps' for the last five years. We also have a brilliant choir who sing in chapel every Sunday evening and perform around the UK and abroad.

In general, the atmosphere and environment you will experience as a Caius student is wonderful; it is relaxed and down-to-earth providing a welcoming and supportive home to all new students, as well as maintaining excellence in the academic and sporting arena.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	183
Range of rent (per week)	£70-95
Price of a pint	£1.90
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.20
Distance to sports pitch	10 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes



Portia Harris
Gonville and Caius
Law, 2nd Year
Southampton



Homerton

www.hus.org.uk

Homerton College is a fantastic place to be - with beautiful grounds, supportive staff and an energetic student body, it is ideally suited to anyone who wants to really enjoy their time at Cambridge. It was recently voted the 'friendliest College in Cambridge', which may seem surprising as it is also has the most students. As a result, College has a very outgoing yet caring community, which is great to come home to after a busy day of lectures.

Homerton started life as a teacher training College, but now accepts applications for almost every subject. And although it may seem a bit of a thought cycling to lectures in town, College is NOT as far away as the map suggests! Cheap buses and flat cycle routes (if you don't count the bridge) allow plenty of opportunities to get to the town centre for lectures, shopping and socialising.

Homerton is represented at many University societies and sports, and has a strong social scene of its own. The Griffin's Club (the College sports team) is extremely active and invites anyone to join, whether they are beginners or play at University level. HCMS (the College music society) plays some fantastic concerts and comprises an orchestra, swing band, choir and even a steel-pan group! Homerton is perhaps most famed for its drama scene, with HATS (Homerton Amateur Theatrical Society) putting on several highly successful productions a term at various venues in town. Rather than being stuck for something to do, most Homertonians find it difficult to fit everything in!

Another great aspect of Homerton is the accommodation. The modern accommodation blocks blend in with the nineteenth-century architecture, so you won't find any concrete tower blocks hidden behind the Great Hall. Most College rooms aren't huge but they do have lots of storage and are almost all ensuite.



This means there is no queue for the shower, so you might actually make that 9 o'clock lecture...if you're awake, that is!

When you do get round to working, there is internet access in every room and plenty of computers in the library and computer room. The library itself is a beautiful place to study, with core textbooks for every subject - so you don't have to fight over the ones in your faculty library. The collection is growing and it is an ideal place to read for essays.

If you need a break, have a parcel to collect or have lost your room-key (again), our super-friendly porters are always there to help you out or cheer you up. And if that doesn't work, you can catch up with friends over dinner in the Great Hall, or in the newly-refurbished bar/buttery. The regular ents and fantastic welfare support provided by the Homerton Union of Students (HUS) mean that a smile can never be far away - however bad that essay crisis might seem!

If you want to be away from the bustle of tourists but still enjoy everything that Cambridge has to offer, Homerton is the College for you.

COLLEGES

The Best

Supportive, fun-loving atmosphere.

The Worst

The cycle ride (but it's not that bad...)

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	201
Range of rent (per week)	£94 (incl. bills)
Price of a pint	£2.30
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.60
Distance to sports pitch	onsite
Music practice rooms	yes, 6
Gym	no



Julie Christie
Homerton
Education Studies, 2nd Year
Banff, Aberdeenshire



Hughes Hall – *mature only*

www.hughes.cam.ac.uk



COLLEGES

Hughes Hall is a mature and post graduate College, admitting students over the age of 21. It's located in the city centre, just next to a large square of grass used for frisbee, football and the Cambridge Film Festival. Hughes Hall backs onto Cambridge's main swimming pool and gym, allowing students to make the most of both College and town facilities. The facilities within the College are good, with a new library, a well-stocked computer room, conference rooms and quality accommodation, largely on-site. There are additional houses slightly off the main 'campus' for married couples, though family accommodation can be hard to get. The canteen provides decent food, and you can get a full meal for around £4. The College charges an additional charge of £237, which pays for the overheads in the Hall and accommodation. The centre of the student social life is the MCR (or Middle

Common Room). There is a student run bar, recently refurbished with some very comfortable leather sofas, which can be found in the club room. It is designed to be somewhere you can go on an evening to meet up with friends, have a drink, and generally take a well earned (or not) break from studying. During opening hours there's always someone in there to talk to. Twice a week, the MCR put on free tea and cakes, offering a useful way to relax and refuel. The club room is fitted out with a pool table, television (useful for the essential sports matches), table football, a coffee machine and giant jenga. It also plays host to

The Best

A very full, yet relaxed, social scene across the College.

termly discos, usually themed. These events are known by the somewhat 1950s title of 'bops'. We also have our own punt (moored at St John's College) called Bubbyfish. Most extra-curricular activities are catered for within the College.

We have a strong music society, which puts on regular performances. We have teams in squash, netball, rowing, badminton, basketball, cricket, tennis and rugby, as well as having several University and international sportsmen within our members. We have a series of research seminars through the 'hat club', which puts on lectures and seminars by people associated with the College.

The Worst

Nobody knows where it is.

Whilst we are not the biggest, richest or most famous College in Cambridge, we are very social and diverse, with students from a range of personal and academic backgrounds. Our small size allows us to interact more directly with the College administration and helps make Hughes Hall a more close knit community.

“

We even have our own punt called Bubbyfish.

”

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	31
Number of postgraduates per year	100
Accommodation for couples	yes
Accommodation	mainly onsite
Sports facilities	many
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes





Jesus

<http://jcsu.jesus.cam.ac.uk>

"The College of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. John the Evangelist and the Glorious Virgin St. Radegund, near Cambridge" is more commonly known by its other name – Jesus College. Tucked away from the tourist drag and set back on Jesus Lane, the old convent of the nuns of St. Radegund is probably most well known for its beautiful grounds and buildings.

The buildings range from the 12th century College chapel and medieval cloisters, which are among the oldest buildings anywhere in the university, to the obligatory 60s concrete number. Accommodation, one of the College's greatest assets, is probably the best to be found in Cambridge. In your first year you can expect to live in one of the main College courts in rooms ranging from vast 'sets' with separate bedrooms, studies and 'gyp' rooms (kitchenettes), to bed-sit rooms with communal kitchens, to en suite rooms, some with balconies. Recently the College spent £10 million renovating North-Court making them some of the most desirable student rooms in the College. Second and third years have the option to move into College house which are so close to College that they might as well be inside the walls.

Personal kitchen facilities have improved in recent years (though in some rooms they still aren't fantastic) but if cooking isn't for you then let the College cook for you. 'Caff' is open everyday and the food is fantastic; weekly highlights include 'your menu' Mondays, Sunday Carvery and Saturday Brunch. If you're looking to impress parents or just have a meal with friends, our very Cambridge 'Formal Hall', a three-course meal served in hall for under £5, would be perfect. After which you could head out and sample some of the City's nocturnal delights or head down to the College bar which is extremely popular and always busy.

Jesus has a reputation for its sports but certainly not all 'Jesusans' play sports. But if you do want to play



then a huge bonus is the onsite rugby, football and cricket pitches as well as tennis (inc. grass) and netball courts and gym. There's a lot of College support for its sports teams which culminates in June with the major rowing event of the year which sees almost the entire College turning out to cheer on our boat club.

The College's library is brilliant. It contains almost all the books you'll need for your first two years, and many more specialised books for research topics, and, along with the computer facilities, it is accessible 24/7. Like the rest of College, it is a tranquil and open space full of artwork provide a soothing antidote to the ravages of exam term. The library, and the College as a whole, is fully wheelchair accessible.

Past the bricks and mortar, the thing that makes or breaks a College are its people. The students are hugely active in all fields of university and College life and this is demonstrated through the strength of the JCSU (Jesus College Students Union) and the May Ball, which are both run by students. You'll find lots of people who are like you and lots who aren't, but with the strong collegiate atmosphere and its exciting eclectic mix of undergraduates, you certainly won't fail to find friends.

The Best
The people.

The Worst
Red and black are hard colours to dress with..

COLLEGES

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	153
Range of rent (per week)	£60-110
Price of a pint	£1.80
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£3.00
Distance to sports pitch	onsite
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes



Justin Hutcherson
Jesus
Theology, 2nd Year
London



King's

www.kcsu.org.uk



COLLEGES

If you've heard anything about Cambridge, chances are the image of King's chapel will spring to mind. A fifteenth century masterpiece rooted in that dreamy-spires-tradition of angelic choristers and academia...

The Best
A College as famous for its students as its architecture.

Behind the stained glass façade lies reality. The buildings may be old, but King's reputation for shaking the foundations of tradition is unrivalled in Cambridge.

Whether your revolutionary spirit lies in twisted electro, political uprisings or the restoration of King's sporting reputation, King's will unleash that individualism you never knew you had. From dancing, sweat-drenched in its legendary underground club, sketching in the sunlit art studio, or pacing the creaky boards of the library, King's students have no limits to means of self expression.

Whilst maintaining its heritage as one of the most historic and beautiful sites in Britain, King's pushes boundaries, twists the rules and celebrates the outrageous. Its reputation speaks for itself, as the following extract from Cambridge's student newspaper shows:

"The décor in this place is fantastic; they have framed a hammer and sickle lest the students forget their revolutionary mission. They hold regular pop

quizzes and gigs; if you're really lucky you may even gain entry to the fabled King's Cellar" In the "Top College Bar Guide" February 2007

King's cellar is an entirely student run enterprise, with the opportunities for DJing, lighting design, bar management and events organization. Every Friday and Saturday nights sees Cambridge's finest dancing and drinking with hedonistic abandon like only King's students can.

The predominant ethos at King's is that you work hard and play hard. On the political side of things, King's has one of the highest turnouts at student elections and is a pioneer in the campaigns for College sustainability, campaigns against the arms trade and top up fees. Whilst its formal meals are voted best out of all the undergraduate Colleges, they avoid unnecessary formality with an absence of gowns and high tables for fellows.

On the more practical side, the College is pretty much as close as possible to the centre of Cambridge, though the two large lawns mean that you never feel closed in. Main lecture sites such as the Sidgwick and New Museum sites are also just a five minute walk away. Student accommodation is either within College grounds or just a few minutes from College, maintaining a sense of community that avoids claustrophobia.

All these qualities mean that King's continues to attract students and academics from a broad range of backgrounds. This gives the opportunity for international students, graduate students and the entire undergraduate body to meet and share constantly-evolving thoughts and ideas. It is this atmosphere that allows King's to maintain a reputation as being the forward-thinking College in Cambridge at the same time as retaining those traditions for which it is famed world-wide.

The Worst
Being plagued by swarms of camera-wielding tourists.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	129
Range of rent (per week)	£67-101
Price of a pint	£1.95
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.45
Distance to sports pitch	10 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes, but poor quality



Kat Hanna
King's
Theology, 3rd Year
London



Lucy Cavendish – *mature female only* www.lucy-cav.cam.ac.uk

When friends from other Colleges visit Lucy Cavendish, known to us as Lucy, they always comment on the relaxed and friendly atmosphere. They love the peaceful gardens, the lack of a high table in the dining hall, and the way that staff and students all seem

The Best

Inspiring and friendly students and tutors.

to know each other – it’s very different from larger, more traditional Colleges with more Cambridge hierarchy and formality. For older students returning to education, the friendliness and excellent tutorial support of Lucy is a big plus for those juggling study and adult life.



For older students returning to education, the friendliness and excellent tutorial support of Lucy is a big plus.



The modern on-site accommodation with en-suite bathrooms and full kitchens makes up for the limited catering. The standard of the external accommodation is a little more variable. Some people find it a little quiet – the college bar only really comes to life on Thursdays after formal hall, for example, and there isn’t the range of societies or activities you’d find in a larger college – but for students who want to get involved there is plenty going on, from a successful boat club to yoga and choir.

On the academic side, Lucy has its own teaching



COLLEGES

fellows for a broad range of subjects, and particular strengths in vocational subjects including law, veterinary science and medicine

– Lucy is one of the Colleges supporting the graduate medicine course.

Students of minority subjects may find themselves with an external director of studies and no teaching in college, but the combination of faculty teaching and college tutorial support works very well.

The Worst

Other people’s image of the College.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	39
Number of postgraduates per year	30
Accommodation for couples	yes
Accommodation	some onsite
Sports facilities	boat club
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes



Carol Atack
Lucy Cavendish
Classics, 2nd Year
Wakefield



Madgalene

<http://jcr.magd.cam.ac.uk>



Magdalene rents are not so bad either, ranging from £52.50- £83.50.

Kitchen facilities vary, but all students are equipped with the basics! There is also a subsidized canteen available to students three times a day, with a cooked meal costing between £2- £3. Magdalene is unique in that formal hall takes place by candlelight every night, for a measly £3.95! The College Bar although small, is a great place to relax and unwind with other undergrads – a pint of lager will set you back around £2, whilst a spirit and mixer comes in at around £1.60 – a bargain for the south!

Magdalene's library is open 24 hours a day during term time, so you can study at whatever time suits you! A downside to studying an arts subject at Magdalene is that the library's stock of books is small, however most of the arts faculties are about 5 minutes by bike, and the College has already confirmed plans for an enlargement of the library in the future.

Magdalene has many societies and sports that you can get involved in. For music and drama enthusiasts, there is Magdalene Drama Society, and Magdalene Musical Production Society,

As well as our Music Society, Law Society, Science Society...the list is endless! Although Magdalene is small, sport is big within the College with most people trying something at least once. Rugby and rowing are seen as the College favourites but there are loads more including football, tennis, cricket, hockey, and ultimate frisbee (!). Several of Magdalene's undergrads compete in sports in the University, whilst College teams tend to be less serious and more about having fun. Because of Magdalene's size, we do not have our own pitches but we use John's College facilities, which are only a few minutes walk away.

COLLEGES

Less austere, smaller and older than the other Colleges, Magdalene has a relaxed ethos, where its students work hard but play hard too. If you want to be part of a close-knit, community where most people know each other and there is a large amount of socialising between years, Magdalene is for you.

Magdalene has a great location in Cambridge. It's just five minutes walk to the town centre, and with the longest river frontage of any College, the 'beach' (a grass lawn by the river !) is where everyone goes to relax and soak up some sun in the summer.

Magdalene's buildings are a mixture of beautifully old in the main grounds and very modern in the new Cripps Court development. All students are accommodated either in or within 2 minutes walk of College for the entirety of their degree. There are some en-suite rooms, but mostly there are 4 to 6 students per bathroom. When you arrive as a first year, your rooms are dotted around College amongst the other years, so you really start to get to know the rest of the College quickly, and your College family - a mixture of second and third years - help you learn the ropes and settle in. Access for people with mobility issues can be a problem in the older part of College, but there is complete disabled access on the new site.

The Best
Fun atmosphere.

The Worst
Canteen food.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	110
Range of rent (per week)	£52-83
Price of a pint	£2.00
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£3.10
Distance to sports pitch	5 min walk
Music practice rooms	yes, 5+
Gym	yes, but poor quality



Jess Town
Magdalene
History, 2nd Year
South East London



New Hall

www.srcf.ucam.org/nhjcr

New Hall is a modern and outgoing female College situated on the hill. It was built in the 1950s and is home to 360 undergraduates who live and work amongst the second largest collection of women's art in the world.

Being an all-female College is only one aspect of New Hall's identity. We are also politically active and innovative. In late 2006 we became the first institution in Western Europe to divest from Sudan and earlier this year, at a time when public opinion was generally suspicious of Iran, we hosted an exhibition celebrating the works of female Iranian film directors and photographers. To live in New Hall is to be a member of a vibrant student community which is also one of the most diverse and culturally representative within the University.

On site facilities for students include an airy and well stocked 24 hour library, a fully equipped computer room, a multi-gym as well as tennis and squash courts. There are also practice rooms for the musicians among us and an art room with dark room facilities for the artistically inclined. At College level there are lots of clubs and everyone can get involved in College sport. Our boat club, the mixed frisbee team, the Fitz/New Hall football squad and our pool team are all particularly popular.

Students eat in the Dome, which is a beautiful and striking piece of architecture and the meals served within it are both tasty and reasonably priced. Formal hall, a silver service meal which costs around £6, happens once or twice a week. However, it is the fantastic brunch on a Saturday morning which is the culinary highlight of the week (and is a miraculous hangover cure)!

Our students are to be found in nearly every extra-curricular society in the University, in areas such as sport, music, drama and journalism. Among our



The Best
Friendly, supportive environment.

members at the moment we count the current President of the ADC Student Theatre, several University lacrosse players and a University cross country runner.

In New Hall, friendships span the year groups and you will come to recognise almost everyone. Jake, our cat, lives in the laundry (he has a tendency to sleep on piles of clean, freshly ironed clothes) and is usually keen to be cuddled. Our TV room is one of the cosiest places in College where the girls go to watch films and chat at the end of the day.

Ents in New Hall are fun, well organised and becoming popular with students from all Colleges. There is one large event every term and several smaller music nights in our bar. Our huge annual Garden Party is one of May Week's must-attend events and this year we sold out of our 800 tickets in under two weeks!

New Hall is a friendly, relaxed College. We have no "type" of student and there is a niche for everyone. If you want to be challenged and excited by the people around you in an unusual Cambridge College, this is the place for you.

The Worst
Cycling up the only hill in Cambridge to get home.

COLLEGES

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	118
Range of rent (per week)	£80-110
Price of a pint	£2.10
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.60
Distance to sports pitch	tennis onsite
Music practice rooms	yes, 3
Gym	yes



Lindsay Stronge
New Hall
English, 3rd Year
Northern Ireland



Newnham

www-student.newn.cam.ac.uk/jcr



COLLEGES

Choose Newnham! It really is a great College. Newnham was founded in 1871 to help women to reach their full academic and personal potential in (what was then) an all-male university. We are a friendly, supportive community from all walks of life, and you'd fit right in. Don't worry: Newnham's not a convent or a girl's boarding school, and boys are certainly not stopped at the door. Even my boyfriend admits he'd rather be at Newnham!

All of the College is on the same site; the stunning gardens are surrounded by 19th Century architecture which houses all students for all years. Everyone lives together, off the tourist trail and in gorgeous surroundings, making Newnham a comfortable and sociable place to live and work. If you're an arts student, Newnham is perfectly positioned across the road from the Sidgwick Site, and most science faculties are just a short walk away.

The rooms in College are all pretty good - many of them have the original features intact and contain antique furniture. Everyone pays the same rent, so rooms aren't dependant on budget.

Unlike most Colleges, Newnham has good self-catering facilities, with ovens, hobs, microwaves, grills and fridges in each kitchen. What can be better than

learning to cook and sharing a meal with friends at the kitchen table? Well, if the thought of self-catering isn't so appetising, don't worry - Newnham has a fantastic new Buttery, offering a good variety of meals. There's always a vegetarian option and catering staff are happy to cook kosher, gluten-free food etc. on request. With comfy sofas to lounge around on, chatting to friends or working on your laptop connected to the WiFi network in the Buttery is easy.

If this wasn't enough, Newnham has amazing facilities: Newnham has a well-stocked and beautiful library (more than 90,000 volumes) and the Old Labs, which now exists as an exciting rehearsal and performance space for music and theatre, right in the middle of the gardens! In addition, Newnham has an art room, a photographic dark room, an observatory and music rooms, a sports field, netball and tennis courts onsite. There are also two computer rooms with printers and photocopying facilities, as well as three JCR common rooms, where you can relax with your friends, watch TV or read the papers.

There's no such thing as a typical Newnhamite: we come from all over the world, all religions and backgrounds. There is a very well-established support network which is tailored to suit the needs of students here. Most of the College has disabled access; Newnham are experienced with catering for the needs of their disabled students.

As a women's College at the heart of a mixed University, Newnham is an outgoing College and students here have friends across all the Colleges. Newnham is like a great big house where your best friends live - going back to College is like going home, and that's why so many of us love it here!

The Worst
Petty housekeeping rules.

The Best
Fantastic facilities in spectacular grounds.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	128
Range of rent (per week)	£92.30
Price of a pint	
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.55
Distance to sports pitch	onsite
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes



Holly Corfield-Carr
Newnham
English, 2nd Year
Stafford, West Midlands



Pembroke

www.pembroke-jp.co.uk

Do you like beautiful gardens and characteristic buildings? Do you want to be able to name your entire College year? Would you like to be close to the centre, but not so close that tourists take pictures through your windows? If any of the above apply to you, Pembroke is the College to which you should apply.

Pembroke's beautiful buildings and gardens make it one of the best-looking Colleges and in the summer students spill out onto the lawns to enjoy the sunshine. Located less than five minutes walk from the town centre, and no more than 10 minutes from many of the faculty buildings and lecture halls, Pembroke is at the centre of Cambridge academic and social life. It is, however, relatively free from the busloads of tourists you can find at other Colleges.

All first years are guaranteed accommodation in College, meaning you quickly get to know everyone and settle into College life. In the subsequent years, there is a choice of living in Pembroke, or in College-owned houses, of which the majority are no more than ten minutes away.

As a fully catered College, we offer varied and tasty meals on a pay-as-you-eat system. Vegetarians always have several options and other dietary requirements are catered for. There are also shared cooking facilities in the accommodation areas, so you are not bound to what College has prepared.

Pembroke may be one of the oldest Colleges in Cambridge, but it has some of the newest facilities. It is not particularly rich, but these new facilities are amongst some of the best going. We have wireless internet access in the library so that students can use both laptop and library books simultaneously; there are several computer workstations available for those without laptops. Photocopying and printing facilities in the library itself saves time, and the library is open



from 8am – midnight. The Computer Room is open all the time, so there is always an abundance of computers and printers. Onsite we have a 24-hour gym (free to all students), music practise rooms fitted with grand pianos and the New Cellars venue, used for everything from drama productions to gigs and parties.

We have sports teams to pander to all abilities, and our own grounds. On the arty side, Pembroke has several societies, such as the renowned "Pembroke Players" which often stages plays and comedy nights in our versatile theatre venue. Music is also strong, with a dedicated society and a distinguished Chapel choir.

Politically, Pembroke is fairly active with a respectable College student union dealing with issues that directly affect Pembroke students. The College itself is receptive to student input and ideas, and provides important support to those who need it. In addition, Pembroke was recently appointed a fair-trade College, making it the second College to receive this honour.

So, if you are looking for a College with a strong academic reputation, in a great location, offering great opportunities for both academic and extra-curricular development, ask for our own Alternative Prospectus from our Admissions office.

COLLEGES

The Best
Friendly atmosphere.

The Worst
It can feel claustrophobic.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	143
Range of rent (per week)	£60-80
Price of a pint	£2.00
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£1.80-4
Distance to sports pitch	10 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes, 1
Gym	yes



Nofertumkhira Fari
Pembroke
MML, 2nd Year
London



Peterhouse

www.srcf.ucam.org/pet-jcr



COLLEGES

Peterhouse is the smallest and the oldest Cambridge Colleges - and we're proud of that. Peterhouse has all the quirks that you would expect from Cambridge: formal hall, gowns, a croquet pitch... , but because of its small size these traditions are not as daunting or overbearing as you might think.

One of the best things about Cambridge is that you can stay in College for the whole of your degree. First years are all housed together in what is possibly the best first year accommodation in Cambridge, a row of houses three minutes from College, which means you get to know everyone very quickly. In the second, third and fourth years the choice is either a room in one of the courts in College or a house 10 minutes from College.

Rooms in the first year are chosen according to cost and size, but even the smallest room is comparable to the biggest rooms at other universities! There are no en-suites, but toilets are shared at the most between four people, and there are sinks in most of the rooms. The kitchens are not very well equipped, but are enough as the College is fully catered.

Food at Peterhouse is not gourmet, but it's cheap, with one of the cheapest and most frequent formal halls (a three course sit down meal) in Cambridge, at

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	87
Range of rent (per week)	£65-120
Price of a pint	£1.80
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£3.00
Distance to sports pitch	10 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes

around £4.50. Bops (themed parties) are held around twice a term, which are always fun, as you know most of the College will go. The bar has been refurbished over Easter and is now decked out with the leather sofas and a flat-screen! We have an active theatre and a music room with a grand piano available for students to practise, so there is something for everyone. It is also very easy to start your own society, for example this year an Amnesty group was set up.

The College is also well equipped academically, with a beautiful library, which is connected up to the College network so you can take your laptop in with you, and two computer rooms.

During freshers' week you will get the opportunity to sign up for College sports and societies. These are great, and because of the small size of the College it is very easy to get onto the College team, even if you've never played before! Peterhouse still does surprisingly well in sports considering its size, especially in pool, as we have one of the only free tables in Cambridge.

The College is centrally located, with most of the facilities, shops, bars, clubs and departments nearby. It is the perfect location for Engineering particularly (with a 1 min bed to lecture time in the first year), but nothing is far away. Additionally, we're just a little bit too far from the nearest McDonald's to be bothered by tourists.

Peterhouse is a beautiful College and easy to fit in. Ask any Petrean: we love it here. Don't be put off by the JCR website (it's short for sexcentenary), and don't hesitate to email us or to come visit at an open day.

The Best

Small, so you get to know everyone very quickly.

The Worst

Small, so everyone knows everything about everyone...



Natacha Tiemann
Peterhouse
Engineering, 1st Year
London



Queens'

<http://jcrwww.quns.cam.ac.uk>

One of the best things about Queens' College is its location. Spanning the River Cam and its world famous Mathematical Bridge, the main site is divided into the modern "light side" and the older "dark side". Access to the river means that the College keeps its own punts, available quite cheaply for lazy trips up and down the river. The College itself is situated quite centrally: the shops, bars and clubs of the city centre are only a four-minute walk, and most of the departments are also located close by.



Another good point is the myriad of facilities on the main site, including squash courts, a multigym, table tennis and the Fitzpatrick Hall. This can be put to a variety of good uses: a badminton court, a theatre for the regular plays staged by the amateur dramatics society (BATS) and a dance studio. On weekends, however, the "Fitzpat" is the site of Queens' University-renowned club nights. Queens' Ents are a University byword for some of the best student nights out in Cambridge, attracting both big-name DJs and students from afar afield as Girton!

In my opinion, the best feature of Queens' is the students themselves. They are open, friendly and welcoming and their enthusiasm is responsible for the huge number and range of teams, societies and clubs, and our reputation as the friendliest College in Cambridge. Despite a relatively large intake of around 150 undergraduates a year, most students get to know other freshers within a few days and build friendships with the older years within the first term. Another aid to socialising is the recently refurbished College bar, complete with quiz machines, table football and pool tables. The bar staff are friendly and make the effort to get to know the "regulars" who routinely take advantage of some of the best prices in Cambridge. The bar also opens at lunchtime to provide a tempting alternative of sandwiches, wraps and paninis to the standard

food in the canteen. Queens' boast a Michelin-starred chef on their catering staff – but to be honest, the proof is mainly in the pudding and the Friday night sushi in the bar. Meals are reasonably priced: usually around £3 for a main course and dessert and there is a choice of three main courses, one of which is always vegetarian. There is also a salad bar and baked potato bar. Catering staff can accommodate other dietary requests, but need to be informed in advance. Students choosing to prepare their own meals can do so with varying degrees of success in the small kitchens. These contain hobs, a sink and a fridge, but vary in size. First year kitchens are all reasonable, as are the rooms. Some lucky freshers may get an en-suite room, but most will share toilets and showers with 2-3 fellow students. Once here, students have the option to get involved in sport, music, drama or anything they choose at whatever level they feel comfortable. Queens' is vibrant and active, and I have loved being a member of this College since I arrived.

food in the canteen.

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Once here, students have the option to get involved in sport, music, drama or anything they choose at whatever level they feel comfortable. Queens' is vibrant and active, and I have loved being a member of this College since I arrived.

The Best

Queens' students - we're fantastic!

The Worst

The vegetable terrine: not even dedicated vegetarians relish the sight of this dish.

COLLEGES

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	167
Range of rent (per week)	£80-100
Price of a pint	£2.00
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£3.50
Distance to sports pitch	10 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes



Michelle Allan
Queens'
Medicine, 3rd year
Aberdeen



Robinson

www-stud.robinson.cam.ac.uk/rcsa



COLLEGES

Robinson is the newest College in Cambridge, and has a reputation for being one of the most relaxed and friendly. With around 120 undergraduate students in each year, Robinson has a communal atmosphere and diversity in the student body.

The College is a ten-minute walk from the city centre and is next door to the University Library. It is mostly tourist free; a definite bonus in the summer. It is very close to the Sidgwick site, home to most of the arts faculties. Also nearby is the West Cambridge site which houses many new science facilities.

Robinson's trademark red bricks can get a bit much, but what Robinson lacks in grand architecture, it makes up for with excellent facilities; the accommodation is some of the best in the university. Most student rooms have a balcony, and kitchens are shared between 4-8 students. Around half the rooms are ensuite, and for the rest a bathroom will be shared by no more than three people. For those who prefer not to live in the main College building, second and third years can live in College-owned houses.

The College cafeteria is supposedly one of the best in Cambridge. Food is inexpensive and there is a wide choice of meals, including special dietary requirements.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	139
Range of rent (per week)	£75-110
Price of a pint	£2.10
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.30
Distance to sports pitch	5 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	weights room

The Best
Great food and gardens.

The Worst
Red brick overload.

The beautiful gardens are centred round a lake with a fountain and students can walk and sit on the lawns – a rare privilege in Cambridge! In summer, the gardens offer the perfect setting to play frisbee or relax in the sunshine.

Robinson is home to the Brickhouse Theatre Company, which puts on a play each term. There are many opportunities to get involved, be it through acting, directing, backstage work or holding a position on the committee. Robinson's 240-seat auditorium has been recently refurbished, and is an amazing facility that provides the perfect setting for Brickhouse plays as well as external performances and speakers. There is also an outdoor theatre in the gardens.

Robinson College Music Society puts on regular recitals and holds a termly concert, open to all musicians. There is a thriving College choir and two music practice rooms. Robinson Film Society puts on twice-weekly showings of classic and up-to-date films in the auditorium, and there is a well-stocked CD library. There is a huge variety of sports teams: rowing, football, darts, Ultimate Frisbee, hockey and rugby to name just a few, and just across the road are real tennis and squash courts. College teams and societies focus on inclusion, so students of all abilities are encouraged to take part.

Robinson students tend to have a good balance between work and socialising. The College bar is the perfect place to chill out, with regular quiz and karaoke nights and Sky TV for those all-important sports matches. The College has a common room with daily newspapers and an additional TV room.

As a relatively new College, Robinson takes the best from Cambridge tradition and integrates this into a modern, relaxed setting, making it a fantastic place to live.



Anna Brydges, Lucy Clements
Robinson
SPS, 3rd Year
Milton Keynes, London



St Catharine's

<http://hadriel.caths.cam.ac.uk/jcr>

St. Catharine's College, better known as Catz, is centrally located about three minutes from the town centre and close to most departments. It is easily identifiable from the large black gates with the Catharine wheel on top that keep out most nosey tourists. This town centre site is where all first and third years live. All incoming freshers can choose between rooms in older, traditional buildings where they will share a bathroom and kitchen with about 6 other students or smaller, more modern rooms with en-suite facilities. Third years choose their rooms based on a ballot and second years all live together at off-site College accommodation at St Chad's, which is located away from the central site. In the second year accommodation site, students live in flats of four or five, all of which contain two bathrooms, a kitchen and spacious octagonal bedrooms to represent the eight points of the Catharine wheel. This site is a 10-minute walk from the main site, but it proves to be very useful for most arts students, as their faculties are literally just across the road at the Sidgwick and the University Library (with tea room and very good scones) is just across the road.



Catz provides catered food, with the canteen offering a varied range of (usually edible) meals at a very reasonable price. An average meal costs approximately £2.30 and dietary requirements are well catered for. Three times a week, students can choose to go to formal hall, where £7.25 buys a served, four-course meal (Catz is one of the few Colleges to offer a cheese course!). Students can bring their own wine and they are not charged to do so. This is a good setting for birthdays and any celebrations. The College bar, with jukebox, pool table and the much loved quiz machine, is always very lively and provides a great place to relax after a day of lectures. The décor is interesting, but the atmosphere makes up for the

The Best
Good central accommodation.

slightly lurid wall colour. Drinks are very reasonable, with a pint costing £1.90. There is also a common room, with a giant-screen TV and Sky, which is always busy for moments of great national importance such as Neighbours, sporting events and American sitcoms. Catz has two libraries, and three computer rooms, all of which are open 24 hours.

There's no obligation to play sport, but we have great facilities for a fairly small College, so there are plenty of good opportunities to compete or take up something new. The College has its own Astroturf and sport pitches, as well as courts for badminton, squash and volleyball and an onsite gym.

The College also offers music facilities with an organ and a piano in the chapel and practice rooms for those keen to play. There are also many concerts put on every year by the active music society, which is run by a committee of students within the College. Catz also hosts a drama society, which produces a play during term time for budding thespians, set designers and directors.

The Worst
Small size: it's hard to keep a secret..

COLLEGES

Key Facts	
Number of undergraduates per year	149
Range of rent (per week)	£50-95
Price of a pint	£1.90
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.80
Distance to sports pitch	10 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes



Jess Williams
St Cath
MML, 3rd Year
Lutterworth, Leicestershire



St Edmund's – *mature only*

www.st-edmunds.cam.ac.uk



COLLEGES

St Edmund's' strength is undoubtedly its students, who boast an unrivalled diversity both in terms of culture (with over sixty nationalities represented) and life experience. Many of the postgrads here will have studied at undergrad level elsewhere in the world. Several of the over-21 undergrads will have pursued other passions before coming to get a Cambridge degree so you will find musicians, dancers, artists, and those who have pursued various careers. St Edmund's is home to several university sportspeople, some of whom with flourishing international sports careers.

The academic and social environment is unpretentious. Fellows, undergrads and postgrads socialise in a single combination room and eat together. The smaller size of the college means people quickly get to know each other and there is a close-knit atmosphere at socials. The May Ball is less ostentatious than those of the larger Colleges but has double the amount of spirit.

The Worst

Lacks the funds and financial resources of some of the older Colleges.

Impressive new en-suite accommodation has recently been built, and a new building with rooms for couples is about to open its doors. This goes a long way towards meeting the needs of the student population, but you may still be required to live

out during the intermediate years of an undergraduate degree. Those who do, either rent privately or find surplus rooms at nearby Colleges.

A new facilities building contains a gym, air-conditioned library, music practice and conference room. The library does not offer a wide selection of books, yet is constantly expanding and students can request books from their reading lists to be ordered.

Sport at College level has in recent years been marked by impressive initiative and determination from students, resulting in the college being put firmly on the map. St Edmund's boasts neither the history nor facilities of some of the older Colleges as far as rowing is concerned, yet this year the boat club won the Mitchell Cup for the most successful performance in the May Bumps races, the culmination of the college rowing calendar.

St Edmund's does not have the financial resources of some of the older Colleges, yet is constantly addressing its provision of sport, study and accommodation facilities, and offers bursaries to students. The bar can be quiet some evenings but the wider university will always be at your doorstep.

As a student here, you will have conversations with people from all over the world, and live in a small and supportive community. You will be able to take your pick from what Cambridge has to offer yet St Edmund's will offer you a place to retreat and people from whom to gain a sense of perspective.

The Best

You'll have conversations with people from all over the world.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	39
Number of postgraduates per year	60
Accommodation for couples	yes
Accommodation	some onsite
Sports facilities	boat club
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes



Anne Waller
St Edmund's
MML, 3rd Year



St John's

www.sjcjr.com

Central, beautiful, friendly, rich. The question you really should be asking is why shouldn't you apply to St. John's? We really are the best College – ask anyone here and they'll tell you so!

John's is the third biggest College in terms of undergraduate numbers, with around 180 students in each year. It's big enough to always meet new people, but small enough to form secure relationships. It also means there'll be more people studying your subject and an amazing array of resources.

Our central location means you're just a stone's throw from everything, be it lectures, restaurants, or the clubs. This proves very handy when you have a 9 a.m. lecture and you wake up at 8.55! Sainsbury's is just across the road, and John's is accessible by road, so no car parking hassles when moving in and out!

We have some of the most beautiful grounds in Cambridge. You'd think seeing sights such as John's Chapel (the highest point until Ely Cathedral), the beautiful courts, sweeping lawns, and the gothic splendour of New Court would eventually wear off, but they really don't.



Being the second richest College yields many benefits for students. Access grants, travel exhibitions, bursaries - you name it, we offer it.

John's is thriving in every scene possible: politics, charities, music (from classical to club), LGBT or just subject related. Whatever you're interested in, John's will help you find people who are interested in the same thing. No existing society? Well, the College will happily fund any new society (within measure!).

John's is a progressive, liberal College, surrounded by tradition. Nowhere else will you get a delicious candlelit three course dinner served by waiters in the traditional setting of "Harry Potter" Hall for a mere £3.85, or the cheap and (occasionally) delicious canteen food. We also have the John's May Ball: according to TIME Magazine, it's the 7th best party in the world. The 6th being the Oscars. Enough said.

John's people are the friendliest around. There's no "typical Johnian", with the vast mix of people making John's an amazing place to meet people of like-minds. An unpretentious, exciting atmosphere combined with great diversity makes John's a great place to spend the best years of your life!

COLLEGES

The Best

Having some of the most beautiful surroundings in Cambridge.

John's provides accommodation for the entire duration of your degree, offering some of the best rooms in Cambridge. Our rooms are absolutely massive (yet affordable), many are en suite, and the arrangement in staircases makes socialising exceptionally easy. Our gym and laundry are completely free, and our library has most books you'll need for your course. We also have a cinema, playing fields on site, squash courts, a well-equipped boat-house, snooker and pool, practice rooms, and televisions.

There are a million and one things to get involved with, from our notoriously successful sports teams to our thriving music and drama community. You will never find yourself bored.

There are a million and one things to get involved with, from our notoriously successful sports teams to our thriving music and drama community. You will never find yourself bored.

The Worst

Listening to "I'd rather be at Oxford than St John's".

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	198
Range of rent (per week)	£87-96
Price of a pint	£2.00
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.50
Distance to sports pitch	onsite
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes



Vishnu Parameshwaran
St John's
Natural Sciences, 2nd Year
Ilford, Essex



Selwyn

www.selwynjcr.org



COLLEGES

Selwyn is a relatively new Cambridge College. Situated to the west of Cambridge on the doorstep of the Sidgwick site, it is great for Arts students, as lectures are less than five minutes from their rooms. Slightly out of the centre, Selwyn is a quiet College with none of the hustle and bustle of the central Colleges. Being out of town does have its disadvantages. The city centre is ten minutes walk away, which is a bit of a pain when you need a cash machine or food from Sainsbury's.

Selwyn is currently undergoing a huge expansion project, the first phase of which has been completed, providing a smart new accommodation block with en-suite rooms. Selwyn houses all students doing a three year course within 400 metres of the Old Court site, which means you are never too far away from the College services.

The Best

Awesome community feel, with very little 'clique-iness'!

Selwyn, like every Cambridge College, has its own bar at relatively cheap prices. The bar is quite modern, and one of the better looking in Cambridge. Selwyn has many sports teams ranging from cricket and football to lacrosse and water polo and catering for all levels of skill. Although Selwyn's

sporting facilities are not the most modern, the sporting clubs nonetheless seem to be thriving. Music is

especially strong at Selwyn with an excellent choir and music society. We also have other societies from subjects to hip hop dancing, and many others.

The atmosphere at Selwyn is very relaxed and cosy. With just over 300 undergraduates you soon get to know most of your contemporaries by face, if not by name. As such you hardly ever walk to town without bumping into a friendly face and having a chat. Some people find this intimacy suffocating, but many thrive in the familiarity of the College. Almost everyone knows everyone else. This atmosphere is reflected in the welfare provisions at Selwyn; the College chaplain is very approachable and understanding towards all students, regardless of their religious persuasion.

Food in Selwyn hall is generally pretty good and the menu is visible on the JCR website in advance. Vegetarian food is always available and seems to be improving. The Head Chef is very helpful and open to suggestions, regularly inviting comments. Recently the hall started providing a halal option once a week at the request of some students. There will rarely be a day that there is nothing on the menu to tempt your appetite. Selwyn formal has a good reputation, recently coming third in a review of a Cambridge student newspaper. College accommodation always features the two-hobs and a fridge setup, and some of the College-owned houses include ovens for the more culinarily adventurous.

Best of all, only a short time after arriving, most people feel very welcome and treat Selwyn as home. It's very much like enjoying the benefits of a town and campus University experience without the disadvantages of either. The pretty, blooming gardens and ever-helpful porters only sweeten the deal.

The Worst

It can feel claustrophobic at times.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	127
Range of rent (per week)	£60-110
Price of a pint	£2.00
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.90
Distance to sports pitch	5 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes, but poor quality



Ardil Salem
Selwyn
Law, 3rd Year
Manchester



Sidney Sussex

www.jcr.sid.ucam.org/sscsu

There is no such thing as a typical “Sidneyite” – though one of the smaller Colleges, the College boasts a diverse student body, meaning that nobody who comes here ever feels like a loner. Being small also means that we have a very tight-knit community – “friendly” and “cosy” are two words often associated with this College, and it’s a reputation that definitely hits the mark.

Many students are jealous of our location – our 16th Century courts, set amongst beautiful greenery, are right in the centre of town, opposite Sainsbury’s and Fopp. Being this central also means that tourists



The Worst

Sports ground is shared with St John’s College.

rarely find us, so we often get to enjoy having the College all to ourselves. The College’s facilities are pretty good, and anything else you would ever need is only a short walk or bike ride away. The library and computer suite are open 24/7 (for anyone who is feeling a bit nocturnal); there is a basic but

decent gym, squash court and music room on site. Our sports grounds are shared with a couple of other Colleges and, although they are about ten minutes walk away, they are extremely large and very well-kept. We also boast a fantastic bar – officially the cheapest in Cambridge – which puts on a fantastically cheesy fancy-dress ‘bop’ event every two weeks. Our canteen is reasonably cheap and serves meals three times a day, so if you don’t feel like cooking, you don’t have to! We also hold formal hall – a 3-course meal in candle-light in our beautiful College hall - ideal for any sort of celebration and a great way to start a good night out.

Accommodation is eclectic, ranging from suites in the old College courts to cosy shared flats, terraced housing to recently built en-suite rooms. It is comfortable and reasonably-priced, and most students never share kitchens and bathrooms between more than 4 people. All first year students live on College grounds

or in Cromwell Court, 2 minutes down the road, with the following years’ accommodation decided by a random room ballot.

In terms of extra-curricular activities, there’s plenty to keep you occupied. Sport is all about the participation – Sidney aren’t exactly known for their sporting prowess, but anyone can have a go, and we have thriving rugby, rowing, football and hockey clubs, just to name a few. Music and drama flourish here – we have a growing music society and choir, who regularly tour around Europe and a newly-revived drama society, for the budding thespians amongst us. There’s also a weekly newsletter – Sidnews – that is circulated amongst the students, which lets you keep track of all the gossip within College (if you haven’t already heard about it...)

In short, if a small, chilled out and close-knit College community, who work hard and play much harder, is what you’re after, come and visit or drop us an email. Whatever your interests there will definitely be something here for you, so get keen and definitely think about applying!

The Best

Best location in Cambridge.

COLLEGES

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	116
Range of rent (per week)	£65-85
Price of a pint	£1.10
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2.50
Distance to sports pitch	10 min walk
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes



Priyanka Rao
Sidney Sussex
MML, 3rd Year
Wirral



Trinity

www.tcsu.net



COLLEGES

Trinity is a large, central, wealthy and prestigious Cambridge College. Its location means that the centre of town is quite literally on your doorstep, with Cambridge's shops (including Sainsbury's), bars, restaurants, pubs and clubs just seconds away. However, whilst Trinity is in the centre of town, it's also situated on the River Cam and Cambridge's 'backs' (massive green open space) meaning that you get the best of both worlds.

The buildings, with their beautiful courts and historic character, are one of the major benefits of living in Trinity. But Trinity is not all old and traditional. The main block of fresher accommodation (the 'Wolfson Building') was recently refurbished, with modern rooms and excellent facilities (most rooms being en suite). The huge number of rooms at Trinity means that you can stay in residence for your entire time here and that there is a good choice of rooms. In addition to this, the quality of the choice of rooms is not reflected in their cost, because the room rents are low (typically around £700 - £800 a term).

Where finance is concerned, Trinity's wealth means that your food (and drinks in the bar!) as well as your

rent will be heavily subsidised. You are given a £50 book grant every year, as well as lots of opportunities to take advantage of a number of bursaries, prizes and funds.

The facilities are among the best in Cambridge; with a large and well-stocked library, a law library, a gym, badminton and squash courts, football and rugby pitches, netball and tennis courts, computer rooms and laundry rooms. There is also a modern College bar as well as common rooms, party rooms and public rooms available for use. In addition to this, Trinity has a well-equipped boat house for budding rowers. And for those who wish their boating experience to be less strenuous, members of Trinity can hire out punts for a reduced price.

Trinity has numerous competitive sports teams and players, often within the top divisions of intercollegiate leagues, but there are also opportunities for absolute beginners. Becoming part of a team is a good way to meet new people at Trinity, but there are also many societies to join; from the Music Society to the Cocktail Society (a.k.a. cocsoc), it often feels like there is so much to do, but so little time. And even if you feel like there just isn't a society/club for you, Trinity will always give you the opportunity to start your own!

All of this means that socialising is fairly easy, and on top of the nightlife offered by clubs, pubs and bars around Cambridge, there are usually themed 'ents' (or parties) within Trinity about three times a term.

Trinity is a prestigious and traditional College, but it's also a friendly place with students from a variety of backgrounds. Trinity's size means that you are constantly meeting new people. Despite this, there is still the sense of a collegiate atmosphere in which everyone is proud to be at Trinity.

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	233
Range of rent (per week)	£65-105
Price of a pint	£1.80
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£2
Distance to sports pitch	5 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	offsite

The Best
Big and beautiful.

The Worst
Too big to know everyone.

Sarah Leiper
Trinity
Law, 2nd Year
London





Trinity Hall

www.srcf.ucam.org/thjcr/wiki

Trinity Hall may be less well known than its larger neighbour but what we lack in size and fame we make up for in spirit and community. Trinity Hall is one of the oldest Colleges in Cambridge with a beautiful, central location on the river.

The College is small enough to ensure you don't simply become one of a faceless student body. The familiarity that you quickly develop with both your surroundings and other students mean that, whilst by the third year you may be feeling the downsides of everybody knowing what's going on in everybody else's lives, the supportive community allows you to settle in quickly.

All first years are housed on our central site which offers a variety of accommodation at a wide range of prices, but it's all of a good condition and friendships are quick to form. One of the downsides with being a small College is that our second year accommodation is located a ten minute cycle from College. However, much of the accommodation there is new, en-suite and of a phenomenally high standard. In second year there are benefits to being removed from the 'bubble' of College and you are located next to our sports pitches and re-vamped sports pavilion.

Many students choose to eat 'in hall' and whilst not amazing the food is consistently good and the powers that be are listening to students with recent improvements in choice and quality.

Trinity Hall has a modern library, a cosy bar and a JCR with Sky TV offering a place to relax with friends on the central site. Admittedly our bar is small and not the most modern, but there are plans to redevelop the bar and social areas of College.

Students from Trinity Hall are involved in all areas of University life, in sports, theatre and music. College clubs and societies provide opportunities to pursue extra-curricular activities. Our boathouse gives students the



chance to take to the river and there are active male and female teams for sports from hockey and rugby to water polo. We have an active drama society which puts on four plays a year and offers opportunities for participation from directing and acting to set building and costume design. Choirs, bands and music societies give musically minded students lots of choice.

Trinity Hall provides a supportive academic environment but students also know how to have a good time and social events are organised within College. The legendary Viva!, a student run club night in College, offers a popular way of letting off steam with a selection of the best cheesy music. Other events such as stand up comedy, film nights and open mic nights mean that College entertainment provides for you even if cheese isn't really your thing!

Our ethos is all about getting involved; it's what makes our sense of community so strong. We're lucky enough to be immersed in all the tradition of Cambridge and to combine that with a vibrant and forward thinking student and College body.

COLLEGES

The Worst

Small library gets overcrowded in exam term.

The Best

Friendly atmosphere..

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	124
Range of rent (per week)	£55-96
Price of a pint	£1.90
Avg. price of lunch (with pudding)	£3.00
Distance to sports pitch	5 -10 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	offsite



Meghan Ormerod
Trinity Hall
History, 3rd Year
South London



Wolfson - *mature only*

www.wolfson.cam.ac.uk



COLLEGES Situated in the leafy suburbs of Cambridge, near the University Library and the Sidgwick site, Wolfson is a contemporary college for mature and graduate students. Wolfson's reputation as the most cosmopolitan college in Cambridge is well deserved. Meeting students from all five continents of the world is part of everyday life, whether taking part in college societies, sitting in the bar or eating dinner.

“

Everyone eats meals together, which helps break down barriers between students and fellows.

”

The international profile of Wolfson students has resulted in a diverse range of college societies. These include the renowned salsa night, which draws crowds from all over Cambridge; mainstream and international film societies and the Wolfson Science Colloquium, a forum for students to present and discuss their

Key Facts

Number of undergraduates per year	38
Number of postgraduates per year	120
Accommodation for couples	yes
Accommodation	some onsite
Distance to sports pitch	5 min cycle
Music practice rooms	yes
Gym	yes

projects. A recent addition to the social scene has been stand up comedy nights which have rapidly made Wolfson the home of comedy in Cambridge. Frequent parties and chill out sessions are held in the bar, open nine p.m. until midnight, seven days a week. There is also a library, a well appointed gym, a tennis court, two television rooms and a full size snooker table.

Accommodation is comfortable and is usually provided for all three years of study. Rent is about average compared to most Colleges, though the emphasis should be on small for some of the small en-suite rooms. There are no Kitchen Fixed Charges (additional charges for catering and services) and the canteen serves typical college fare that is reasonably priced. Students get discounts in both the canteen and the bar. Formal Hall is not cheap, but the price does include wine. It is at Formal Hall that Wolfson's more informal and relaxed atmosphere is best observed; there is no high table, which helps break down the barriers between students and fellows.

The Best
Social, friendly and laid-back atmosphere.

Wolfson may not be steeped in history, but it more than makes up for this with its informal atmosphere, diverse student body and social scene. Whether studying or socialising, you will find Wolfson a great place to be.



Richard Brown
Wolfson
PhD Biochemistry, 3rd Year
Northampton

The Worst
Distance from the town centre.

Glossary

Bursaries

Bursaries, scholarships, grants: they're all free gifts of money. If you receive a bursary from the University or the government, you won't be asked to repay it (unlike your student loan). Cambridge has an extensive bursary system, which gives money based on your household income. Colleges and some departments may offer grants for things like travel, sport and music or to reward exceptional academic achievement.

College

A College is a mini hall of residence or campus. There are 31 Cambridge Colleges in total, 26 of which admit standard-age undergraduates.

CSAS

The Cambridge Special Access Scheme, or CSAS, allows students who have experienced substantial disruption to their education to provide greater context in their application. The CSAS is also open to students whose school does not send students to Oxford or Cambridge and who are the first in their family to proceed to Higher Education. This additional information allows the University to assess candidates fairly and to make appropriate offers.

Director of Studies

A Director of Studies (DoS) is a tutor in your subject who monitors your progression, helps you with your academic choices and organises your small-group teaching, known as **supervisions**.

Department

A department (or **faculty**) is the name for both the physical building and the collection of students,



lecturers and staff that make up your subject

Dissertation

A dissertation is essentially an extended essay. Undergraduate dissertations tend to be anywhere from 5,000 words to 15,000 and will require a considerable amount of self-directed study. In many subject, a dissertation is optional and can be taken in lieu of an exam.

Ent

An 'ent' is a Cambridge term for an organised social event in College, usually involving music.

Formal Hall

Formal Hall or Formal is the name given to a three-course, waiter-served meal in the College hall. These are part of the more traditional side of Cambridge, but (at roughly £5) are good options for birthdays and special occasions.

Mature Student

A mature student is any student who will be over 21 on the first day of their undergraduate studies.

Postgraduate

A postgraduate (or graduate) student is studying for a second advanced degree, having already completed a degree course.

Practicals

Practicals are laboratory sessions that form an important part of scientists' timetables. Practical allow hands-on scientific work.

Supervision

A supervision is a one-on-one or small group teaching method. Supervisions last an hour and allow you to focus on aspects of the course that you find particularly interesting or challenging. You'll often submit work prior to the supervision, on which you will receive detailed feedback.

Tripes

This is the term for the three part structure of the Cambridge degree. Degrees are split into Part I and Part II, with University exams at the end of each. Part I tends to be broad and general; Part II allows you to specialise.

Undergraduate

A student studying for a first degree, usually after sixth-form.

Cambridge Map

KEY

The undergraduate Colleges of the University

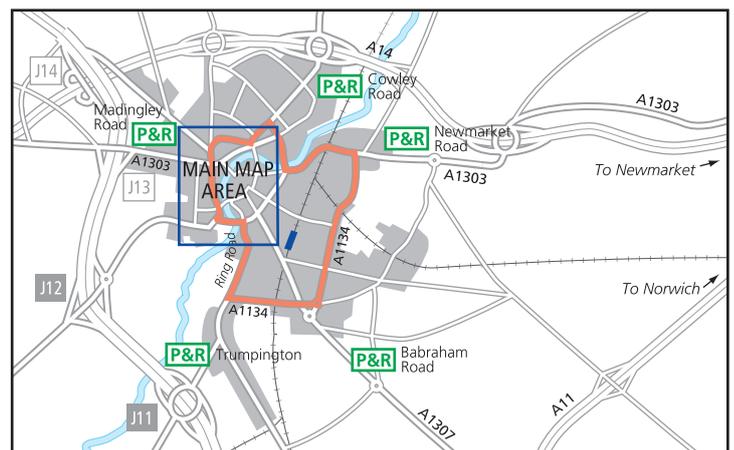
- 1 Christ's
- 2 Churchill
- 3 Clare
- 4 Corpus Christi
- 5 Downing
- 6 Emmanuel
- 7 Fitzwilliam
- 8 Girton
- 9 Gonville and Caius
- 10 Homerton
- 11 Hughes Hall
- 12 Jesus
- 13 King's
- 14 Lucy Cavendish
- 15 Magdalene
- 16 New Hall
- 17 Newnham
- 18 Pembroke
- 19 Peterhouse
- 20 Queens'
- 21 Robinson
- 22 St Catharine's
- 23 St Edmund's
- 24 St John's
- 25 Selwyn
- 26 Sidney Sussex
- 27 Trinity
- 28 Trinity Hall
- 29 Wolfson

Location of subjects within main University sites

- B Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic
- E Archaeology and Anthropology
- L Architecture
- B Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
- G Chemical Engineering
- B Classics
- K Computer Science
- B Economics
- N Education
- C Engineering
- B English
- E Geography
- B History
- L History of Art
- F Land Economy
- B Law
- J Management Studies
- F Manufacturing Engineering
- A Mathematics
- E G Medicine
- B Modern and Medieval Languages
- B Music
- D E G K Natural Sciences
- B Philosophy
- G Social and Political Sciences
- B Theology and Religious Studies
- E G K Veterinary Medicine
- H Old Schools (Administration)
- I University Library
- M Cambridge Admissions Office



- College of the University
- University building
- Site entrance (no vehicle access)
- Main entrance to building
- Porters' lodge
- Taxi rank
- Car park
- P&R Park & Ride free parking
- Park & Ride stops
- One-way street
- Limited vehicular access
- Pedestrian street/cycle way (cycling restrictions may apply)
- Public footpath/cycle path (cycling restrictions may apply)



For more information contact:

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Old Examination Hall
Free School Lane
CAMBRIDGE
CB2 3RF

Telephone: 01223 333313
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www.applytocambridge.com

