



SHREWSBURY  
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

*Unlocking potential...Shaping futures*

# A GUIDE TO APPLYING TO OXBRIDGE 2011 ENTRY



## DATES TO REMEMBER

<b>Mid September 2010</b> UCAS start accepting applications
<b>27 September 2010</b> College deadline for handing in your completed Oxbridge/UCAS application at Student Services
<b>December 2010</b> Candidates are interviewed
<b>January 2011</b> Offers of places made

## WHY APPLY TO OXBRIDGE?

- Worldwide reputation
- Collegiate structure
- Excellent facilities
- Contact with world class teaching staff through tutorials/supervisions.
- Excellent employment opportunities for graduates.

## THE IMPORTANT FACTS

- You can only apply to Oxford **OR** Cambridge.
- You will need to be aiming at **AAA for Oxford and A\*AA for Cambridge** to be considered.
- The ratio of places to applicants is **1:3 or 1:4**, although it may vary according to subjects.
- Remember to check carefully what the **requirements** are for the subject you are interested in. You may need to take an additional **test** or be expected to submit marked **essays**.
- Make sure you attend an **Open Day** advertised on the university websites. These are very popular, so book your place early.
- The **College deadline** for handing in your completed application is **27 September 2010** as applications must reach UCAS by **15 October 2010**.
- You will probably have to attend an **interview**.
- Every year there are 10,000 unsuccessful applications to Oxbridge – don't be put off – just make sure you have a plan B.

## GENERAL ADVICE

- It should be the course that interests you and not just the thought of being at Oxbridge!
- Admissions Tutors will always expect you to be passionate about your subject. Make sure you know exactly what the course involves and be prepared to talk about it at interview.
- You will need to undertake additional reading and have additional knowledge in your target subject (beyond that which is required for the A level course syllabus).
- You will need to demonstrate enthusiasm and self-motivation.
- Admissions Tutors are looking for 'rounded individuals'.
- Extra-curricular activities (ie sports, hobbies, projects etc) or relevant work experience are important to support your application.
- We recommend that you discuss your application with the College Student Guidance and Progression Manager or the Personal Adviser from Shropshire Youth Connexions, and with the appropriate subject staff.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

- Study the university prospectus/website, which has lots of useful information on how to choose a college and a course. Make sure you have read the general prospectus, the college prospectus and the alternative prospectus.
- When choosing your college, check subject availability, ratio of applications to offers and if additional tests are required.
- Consider making an open application rather than applying to one particular college.
- Make sure you keep your results slips from the June exams as you may need to include your UMS scores on your application.
- Use the '**Thinking of University**' booklet and have a look at the **Personal Statements folder** in the Careers area to give you guidance on writing your personal statement.
- UCAS accept applications from mid September 2010. Your completed application must be handed in at Student Services by **27 September 2010** in order that the College can process your application by the Oxbridge deadline of **15 October 2010**. Remember that it is not just your Oxbridge application form that needs to be submitted by 27 September; it is the entire UCAS application, so make sure you research other universities as well.

## THE INTERVIEW

- Candidates will be called for interview in December 2010.
- Interviews may take place over 2-3 days. Students stay free of charge at the university.
- The interview will be demanding, but Admissions Tutors are genuinely trying to find out whether the course and style of teaching will suit you. They are not trying to 'catch you out'.
- Make sure you know why you want to study at Oxbridge, why you have chosen that college and the reasons you have chosen that particular subject and course.
- Admissions Tutors are looking for rounded individuals who can demonstrate logical thought, reasoning skills and the ability to understand unfamiliar material.
- If you are asked a question you do not understand, tell them! They will do all they can to put you at your ease and help you answer as much as you can.
- Get help with your interview technique. You can book a mock interview with a member of staff at SSFC or alternatively you can arrange a mock interview at Shrewsbury School. Ask at Student Services for further details.
- Have a look at the university websites, which provide lots of information. Also consult the **University Interview folder** in the Careers Department, which contains really useful advice as well as examples of interview questions.
- Every year the College arranges for someone to come in from Oxbridge to discuss the interview and give useful hints.
- You will be informed by January 2011 whether you have been successful.

## ADMISSIONS TESTS

Although we have tried to list all the additional tests required, you must check with individual subject departmental websites for any further information about tests, samples of works required etc.

### Law – Law National Test (LNAT)

The LNAT is a uniform test to be taken by candidates applying to study undergraduate Law at Oxford. The test is taken on-line and involves multiple choice and essay questions. Information about the test will be available from 10 July 2010 and testing begins on 1 September 2010.

Nearest test centre: Pearson Professional Centre  
Suite 2 Canon Court West  
Abbey Lawns  
Abbey Foregate  
Shrewsbury SY2 5DE

More information is available on the LNAT website [www.lnat.ac.uk](http://www.lnat.ac.uk).

### Cambridge Law Test

Most colleges will be using the Cambridge Law Test, which is paper-based and will be taken during the interview process. More information is available at: [www.law.cam.ac.uk/admissions](http://www.law.cam.ac.uk/admissions)

## Mathematics – Sixth Term Examination Papers in Mathematics (STEP)

Students applying to study at Cambridge University may be required to sit STEP papers which are used to supplement A Level in assessing applicant's aptitude for university study in Mathematics. Examinations are taken immediately after A Levels at SSFC on **21 and 23 June 2010**. You will need to discuss this with the Mathematics Department and Examinations Officer. More information is available from Cambridge Assessment Admissions Tests website: <http://www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/adt/>

## Mathematics/Physics/Computer Science Aptitude Test

All students applying to study Mathematics/Physics/Computer Science at Oxford University will need to sit an aptitude test. The test is scheduled to take place on **3 November 2010** at SSFC. More information is available from: [www.maths.ox.ac.uk](http://www.maths.ox.ac.uk) [www.physics.ox.ac.uk](http://www.physics.ox.ac.uk) [www.comlab.ox.ac.uk](http://www.comlab.ox.ac.uk)

## Medicine and Veterinary Science - The Biomedical Test (BMAT)

Students applying to the following courses will be required to sit the BMAT before coming to interview:

- **Medicine and Veterinary Science** (Cambridge University)
- **Medicine and Biomedical Sciences** (University of Oxford Medical School)

The test is normally sat at SSFC and the key dates are:

- Registration Opens: **1 September 2010**
- Standard Entry Closing Date: **30 September 2010**
- Late Entry Closing Date: **15 October 2010**  
(subject to penalty fees)
- Test Date: **3 November 2010**

A sample test paper and more information is available on the Cambridge Assessment Admissions Tests website:

<http://www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/adt/>

## History – History Aptitude Test (HAT)

Students applying to any course involving History at Oxford University will be expected to sit the HAT. The 'test aims to examine the skills and potentialities required for the study of History at university and will give an objective basis for comparing candidates from different backgrounds'. It is designed to be challenging in order to differentiate effectively between the most able applicants for university courses including those who may have achieved or can be expected to achieve the highest possible grades in their examination. The test will be sat on **3 November 2010**.

More information and specimen papers can be seen at:

[www.history.ox.ac.uk/prosundergrad/applying/hat\\_introduction.htm](http://www.history.ox.ac.uk/prosundergrad/applying/hat_introduction.htm)

## Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA)

Cambridge and Oxford use the TSA, a non-subject-specific test, as part of the admissions process for the following courses:

Cambridge	Oxford
Computer Science	Psychology & Philosophy
Economics	Experimental Psychology
Engineering	Economics & Management
Land Economy	Philosophy, Politics & Economics (PPE)
Natural Sciences	
Politics, Psychology & Sociology (PPS)	

The test is either taken as part of the normal interview process (Cambridge) or at SSFC on **3 November 2010** (Oxford). More information is available from Cambridge Assessment Admissions Tests website:

<http://www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/adt/>

## Modern and Medieval Languages

The Modern and Medieval Languages test (MML) will be used by Cambridge University as part of their admissions process. The written test will form part of the interview process. More information is available from:

<http://www.mml.cam.ac.uk/prospectus/undergrad/test.html>

## English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT)

Oxford University will be using the ELAT as part of the admissions process for students applying to study:

- English Language and Literature
- Classics and English (3 and 4 year courses)
- English and Modern Languages (including Celtic, Czech (with Slovak), French, German, Italian, Modern Greek, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish).

The test is scheduled to take place on **3 November 2010** at SSFC. Candidates applying for English and History will be required to take the ELAT and HAT.

More information is available from Cambridge Assessment Admissions Test website:

<http://www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/adt/>

## USEFUL WEBSITES

- Cambridge University  
[www.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cam.ac.uk)
- Oxford University  
[www.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ox.ac.uk)
- Cambridge University Student Union  
[www.cusu.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cusu.cam.ac.uk)
- Oxford University Student Union  
[www.ousu.org](http://www.ousu.org)
- Samples of past interview questions  
[www.oxbridgeapplications.com](http://www.oxbridgeapplications.com)