



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE



Postgraduate
Guide 2020

Welcome



For hundreds of years, Cambridge has nurtured generation after generation of students.

The collegiate University is bound together by a deep-rooted sense of community, shared purposes and a willingness to share resources and talents. Our commitment to excellence in education, learning and research is uncompromising and lived out in practice every day in our lecture theatres and supervision rooms, our libraries and labs.

My student days at Cambridge offered me the precious opportunity to challenge and deepen my knowledge. But they also provided the space and the time to broaden my intellectual horizons, allowing me to read voraciously and widely, and to interact with one of the most stimulating and diverse groups of people I had ever met – staff and students from around the globe.

At Cambridge, we continue to reach our hands outward. As we do so, we welcome an ever more diverse group of students who have the desire and ability to learn and produce new insights that shift our understanding of the world around us.

Professor Stephen Toope

Vice-Chancellor

Welcome to Cambridge

Consistently rated among the top universities in both national and international league tables, the University of Cambridge offers a world leading postgraduate education. With a global outlook and reach, our mission is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

140+

countries represented among undergraduates and postgraduate students

Top 5

for academic and employer reputation (QS World University Rankings 2019)

Top 10

Cambridge is one of the top ten universities most often targeted by Britain's leading graduate employers (*The Graduate Market in 2019*)

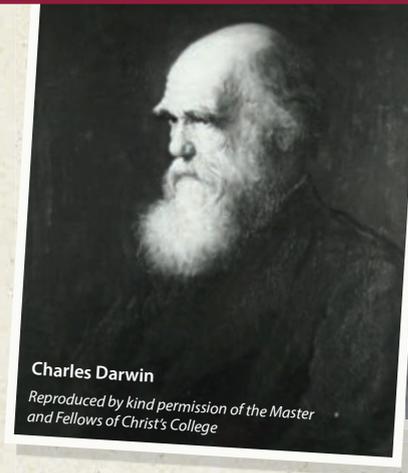
98

affiliates of the University have been awarded the Nobel Prize since 1904

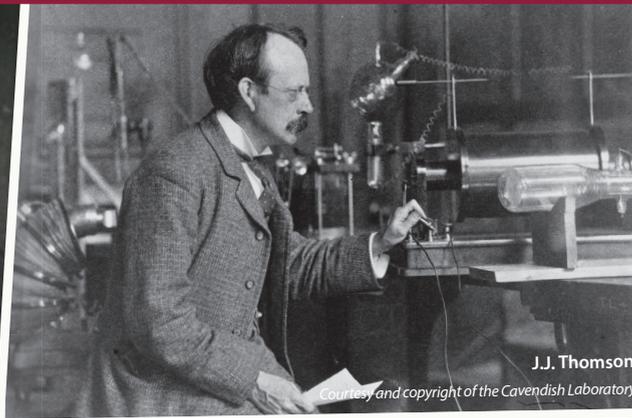
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Timeline of people at Cambridge



Charles Darwin
Reproduced by kind permission of the Master and Fellows of Christ's College

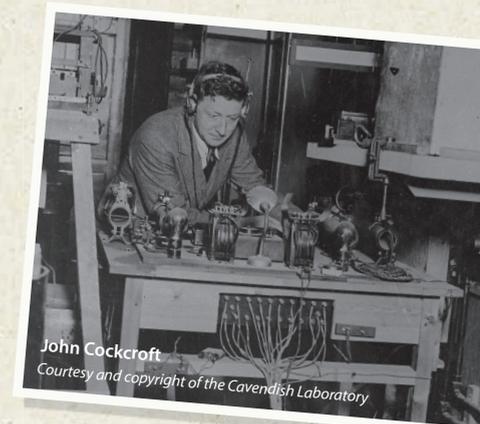


J.J. Thomson

Courtesy and copyright of the Cavendish Laboratory



Xu Zhimo



John Cockcroft
Courtesy and copyright of the Cavendish Laboratory

1687

Isaac Newton publishes 'Principia Mathematica', establishing the fundamental principles of modern physics.

1831

Charles Darwin is recommended by Botany Professor John Stevens Henslow to join HMS Beagle as the naturalist on its scientific survey of South American waters.



Emily Davies
Acknowledgement: The Mistress and Fellows, Girton College, Cambridge

1869

Emily Davies, suffragist, and others found Girton College, the first residential university-level institution of higher learning for women.

1897

J.J. Thomson, Cavendish Professor of Physics, discovers the electron. In following years, inventors use his work to develop new devices such as the telephone, radio and television.

1912

Lawrence Bragg discovers the mechanism of X-ray diffraction. Three years later, he shares his Nobel Prize for Physics with his father, W.H. Bragg.

1928

Xu Zhimo composes his influential poem 'On Leaving Cambridge' whilst studying at the University as a visiting scholar.

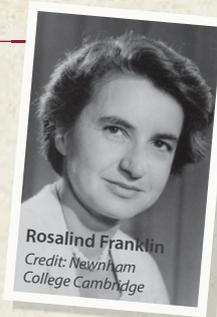
1932

The atom is split for the first time, creating the study of nuclear physics, by **John Cockcroft** and **Ernest Walton** under the direction of **Ernest Rutherford**. Their Nobel Prize for physics is awarded in 1951.

In this year, **F.R. Leavis**, Lecturer in English, also publishes 'New Bearings in English Poetry'. His distinctive style of literary and cultural criticism influences generations of students in the 1930s, 40s and 50s.

1960

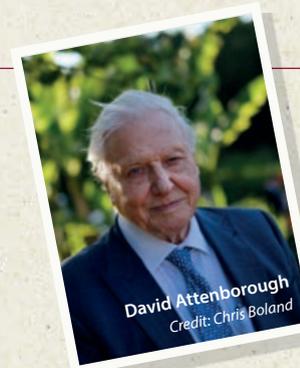
Sir Charles Oatley, Professor of Electrical Engineering at the University's Department of Engineering, leads a team which develops the first scanning electron microscope.



Rosalind Franklin
Credit: Newnham College Cambridge

1953

Rosalind Franklin, **Francis Crick** and **James Watson** discover the structure of DNA. Their discovery opens the door to the study of an entirely new science - genetics.



David Attenborough
Credit: Chris Boland

1947

David Attenborough graduates having studied Natural Sciences.

1941

The first aeroplane to be powered by one of **Frank Whittle's** revolutionary new jet engines takes to the air.

1938

Dorothy Garrod is elected to the Disney Professorship in Archaeology, the first woman Professor at Cambridge.



Dorothy Garrod
Credit: Newnham College Cambridge

1968

Anthony Hewish and **Jocelyn Bell** discover pulsating stars or 'pulsars' using Cambridge's Mullard Radio Astronomy Observatory. Their work alters the course of modern cosmology.

1988

Professor Stephen Hawking, Lucasian Professor of Mathematics, publishes his book, 'A Brief History of Time', one of the best-selling scientific books of all time. He is already eminent for his work on black holes and the Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe.

1999

Cambridge scientists identify the gene causing diabetes and high blood pressure.

2000

Alumna Zadie Smith releases her debut novel, 'White Teeth', which becomes a best seller and wins a number of awards.

Zadie Smith
Credit: David Shakbone



2009

The University of Cambridge celebrates its 800th anniversary.

2019

Her Majesty the Queen opens the Papworth hospital on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus.



Her Majesty is the Patroness of Queens' and visited the College for lunch with more than 80 Fellows, students and staff.

Our Research

In Cambridge, we are committed to achieving excellence in research, and to ensuring that our research contributes to the wellbeing of society. Here are a few examples of recent research topics at Cambridge:

1. Using AI to avert 'environmental catastrophe'

A new Centre at the University of Cambridge will develop artificial intelligence techniques to help address some of the biggest threats facing the planet.

2. 'Murder map' reveals medieval London's meanest streets

First digital map of the murders recorded by the city's coroner in early 1300s shows Cheapside and Cornhill were homicide 'hot spots', and Sundays held the highest risk of violent death for medieval Londoners.

Credit: Violence Research Centre

3. Developing technique to 'listen' to a patient's brain during tumour surgery

Surgeons could soon eavesdrop on a patient's brain activity during surgery to remove their brain tumour, helping improve the accuracy of the operation and reduce the risk of impairing brain function.

Credit: Kai Schreiber

4. Exploring viral charity campaigns and their psychological 'recipe' and all-too-brief lifespan

New work focusing on the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge reveals the very brief shelf life of such viral campaigns, and suggests the nature of 'virality' and social tipping points themselves may be a stumbling block to deeper engagement with social issues that campaigns aim to promote.

Credit: Charlie Baker

5. Rapid melting of the world's largest ice shelf linked to solar heat in the ocean

An international team of scientists has found part of the world's largest ice shelf is melting 10 times faster than the overall ice shelf average due to solar heating of the surrounding ocean surface.

Credit: Poul Christoffersen

6. Researching how washable, wearable battery-like devices could be woven directly into clothes

Based on cheap, safe and environmentally-friendly inks and woven directly into fabrics, washable, wearable 'batteries' have been developed by researchers at the University of Cambridge.

Credit: Felice Torrisi

7. Pioneering a new way to turn sunlight into fuel

The quest to find new ways to harness solar power has taken a step forward after researchers successfully split water into hydrogen and oxygen by altering the photosynthetic machinery in plants.

Credit: Katarzyna Sokół

8. Discovering how multilingualism could benefit India's poorest schoolchildren

Multilingualism is the norm in India. But rather than enjoying the cognitive and learning advantages seen in multilingual children in the Global North, Indian children show low levels of learning basic school skills. Professor Ianthi Tsimpli is trying to disentangle the causes of this paradox.

Credit: Ianthi Tsimpli

<http://cam.ac.uk/202172>

9. How AI system may accelerate search for cancer discoveries

Searching through the mountains of published cancer research could be made easier for scientists, thanks to a new AI system. Global cancer research attracts massive amounts of funding worldwide, and the scientific literature is now so huge that researchers are struggling to keep up with it. It is the first literature-based discovery system aimed at supporting cancer research.

Credit: NIH Image Gallery

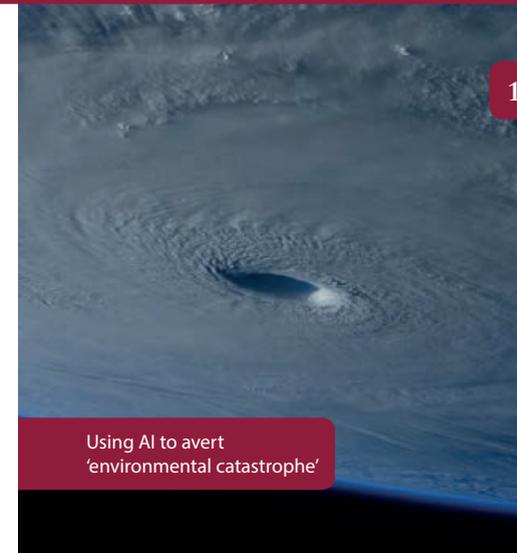
10. Solar storms could cost USA tens of billions of dollars

The daily economic cost to the USA from solar storm-induced electricity blackouts could be in the tens of billions of dollars, with more than half the loss from indirect costs outside the blackout zone.

Credit: NASA Goddard Space Flight Center

Find out more about the research taking place at Cambridge by visiting our website -

www.cam.ac.uk/research/spotlight-on



Using AI to avert 'environmental catastrophe'



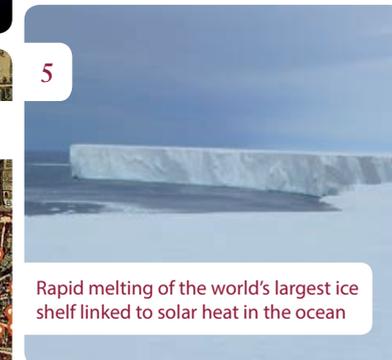
'Murder map' reveals medieval London's meanest streets



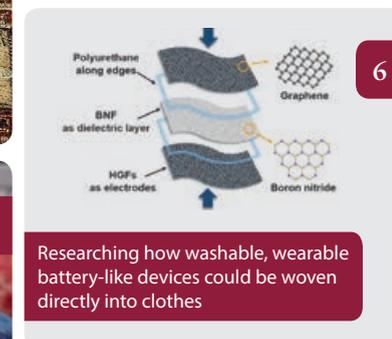
Developing technique to 'listen' to a patient's brain during tumour surgery



Exploring viral charity campaigns and their psychological 'recipe' and all-too-brief lifespan



Rapid melting of the world's largest ice shelf linked to solar heat in the ocean



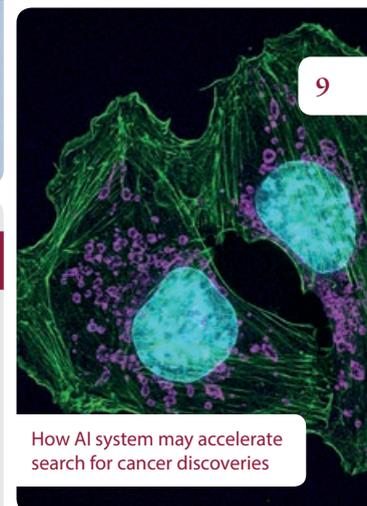
Researching how washable, wearable battery-like devices could be woven directly into clothes



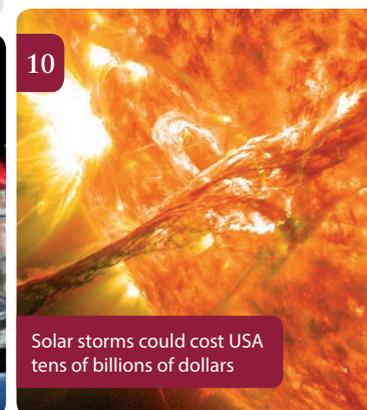
Pioneering a new way to turn sunlight into fuel



Discovering how multilingualism could benefit India's poorest schoolchildren



How AI system may accelerate search for cancer discoveries



Solar storms could cost USA tens of billions of dollars

Courses



With over 300 postgraduate courses on offer at Cambridge, including taught and research opportunities across an incredibly broad range of academic disciplines, you can choose a course that suits your subject and research interests.

Masters at Cambridge: The MPhil Explained

At Cambridge, the majority of our Master's degrees lead to a Master of Philosophy (MPhil). There are two types of MPhil on offer at Cambridge:

- **The MPhil by Advanced Study**
(includes a taught element)
- **The MPhil by Research**

Both types of MPhil provide excellent preparation for full-scale PhD research. MPhil students are introduced to specialist knowledge and research skills by gaining valuable experience in preparing and producing a research dissertation.



'What I enjoy the most here is the access to a large amount of training. Also, the visiting scholars that this university attracts make the discussion much more interesting.'

Simon

PhD in Theoretical Chemistry



PhD Research

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is the principal research degree at Cambridge and is available in all faculties and departments. As a doctoral student, you will be focussed on research which represents a significant contribution to learning, and you'll work on this research in a department which is internationally renowned for the originality and global significance of its advances in theories and knowledge.

Teaching

At Cambridge, you will be taught by academics who are prominent experts and leaders in their field. Your department or faculty will assign you a personal supervisor whose role is to guide your programme of study or research. It is this blend of academic challenge and supportive encouragement which makes postgraduate study at Cambridge an intellectually rewarding experience.

For more answers to Frequently Asked Questions, please visit our website:

www.cam.ac.uk/pgfaq

Research Facilities and Support

More than 100 libraries across the collegiate University

Libraries

The collegiate University has more than 100 libraries across the Colleges, faculties and departments. The main University Library is a legal deposit library holding more than eight million books, journals and other documents ranging in age from 3,000 year-old manuscripts to the latest articles available online. Postgraduate students also have access to the University Library's 32 affiliated libraries, covering a broad range of subjects.

www.lib.cam.ac.uk

Skills training

All postgraduate students receive training in research skills via their department or faculty's postgraduate training programme. Students also have access to optional skill-based courses provided by departments, the Centre for Professional and Personal Development, and the Careers Service.

www.ppd.admin.cam.ac.uk

Museums

The University has nine specialist museums and collections, as well as the University Botanic Garden. Encompassing a wide range of resources from local archaeological finds and internationally renowned paintings to specimens collected by Charles Darwin, postgraduate students are able to use these collections for study, research, and also for personal interest.

www.museums.cam.ac.uk

Language tuition

Whether you wish to learn a new language or improve your language skills to complement your studies and enhance your employability, the Language Centre offers taught and self-study courses at various levels in a number of languages. An academic English language support programme is also available for overseas students who require additional help to refine their language ability.

www.langcen.cam.ac.uk

'No matter what resource you need access to, Cambridge can connect you to it. Be it journal articles, archived material, or collaborators around the world, Cambridge is a nexus for it all.'

Samuel

PhD in Plant Sciences



'Being in Cambridge gives you access to virtually any resource that you might need to consult in your research: not only the existing stock in all the libraries, but also additional books, articles, etc. that they can quickly acquire for you.'

Yui

PhD in English

Computing and IT

All Colleges, as well as many departments and libraries, have computer suites offering a range of general and specialist software. Wi-Fi is available throughout the Colleges and departments, and most College rooms are connected to the University network and internet. An IT service desk and free computer programme training courses are available to all students.

www.uis.cam.ac.uk

Over 8 million volumes in the University Library ↓



Student Support

Graduate Union

Our Graduate Union (GU) represents the interests of all postgraduate students and provides a range of central services and support to help ensure you have a fulfilling student experience. We are proud that our Graduate Union is one of the only students' unions in the UK exclusively for postgraduate students. Membership of the Graduate Union is automatic and free, and spouses and partners are able to become associate members in order to attend events and use GU services.

The GU is run by a board of elected officers and an Executive Committee of voluntary student officers, who focus on four key areas:

- Representation
- Welfare and support
- Student services and facilities
- Events

The GU, along with the Undergraduate Students' Union (CUSU), also run the Students' Unions' Advice Service in order to provide free, confidential and independent support to all students of the University of Cambridge.

www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk



Disability Resource Centre

The Disability Resource Centre (DRC) offers guidance, information and support, and is an essential contact for disabled applicants including those with a specific learning difficulty or long-term health condition. Disclosing this information won't form part of the decision process and your application will be processed in exactly the same way as any other application.

You are strongly encouraged to disclose any disability including any specific learning difficulty (SplD), long-term health condition or mental health condition, and provide any relevant information in your application. If you have disclosed a disability and receive a conditional offer of admission to the University, the DRC will get in contact to put a support plan in place to make any reasonable adjustments during your time at Cambridge.

www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk

Faith

The University of Cambridge and its Colleges are a multi-faith community and provide facilities and opportunities for individuals to explore their faith and beliefs. The University provides a range of faith societies and communities which are open to all individuals, with multi-faith facilities available to Cambridge students. Around Cambridge there are also a range of religion-specific places of worship. Some Colleges also have a Chaplain or Dean who have a pastoral role among members of the College community and are available to all students of all faiths.

Childcare Office

The Childcare Office operates an Information Service, which aims to support families of the University community. The service offers information on family related issues including childcare, schooling, health care, financial support and local community resources. The University has three day nurseries at Edwinstowe Close, West Cambridge and Eddington for children from three months to school age, as well as a Holiday Playscheme which operates during the state school holiday periods (excluding Christmas and Bank Holidays) for school-age children.

www.childcare.admin.cam.ac.uk

Other Sources of Support

Accommodation Service
www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk

International Student Office
www.iso.admin.cam.ac.uk



'Support from academic supervisors has been exceptional - I have a great relationship with my supervisor and other staff in the department. I have engaged with the Counselling service at the University who provide excellent support and welfare services and are an integral part of the support/welfare at the University.'

Rebecca
PhD in Medical Science

Careers

Career destinations

Cambridge graduates are highly employable and our students go on to careers across many industries and sectors. But it is not just employment that our postgraduate courses prepare you for – many Master's students go into further research study, and many of our PhD students pursue careers in research and academia.

The University of Cambridge Careers Service can work with you from day one to explore options, connect with employers and navigate the complex job market – saving you time and maximising your employability prospects. Whether you have no idea what to do next, a few ideas or a definite plan, the Careers Service offer plenty to help you take the next step, such as:

- One-to-one guidance consultations;
- 14 major careers events each year;
- An extensive programme of briefings and skill sessions;
- Upcoming employer presentations;
- Free resources to help create CVs and cover letters;
- Free access to online practice psychometric tests
- A database of over 4,000 job vacancies.

www.careers.cam.ac.uk



No. 1 in the UK for employer reputation

(QS World University Rankings 2019)

Advice tailored to you

The Careers Service offers a wide range of services, including advice and support specific to postgraduate students. You can make an appointment with the Careers Service for personally tailored advice and to consider your options, and our careers advisers can help you make informed career choices and work out what to do next, whether that is:

- Matching your interests and skills to possible careers
- Providing guidance on working as a postgraduate student
- Offering job application support

Student life

In and around Cambridge



'One thing I do love about Cambridge is the variety of niche-interest clubs available - the only difficulty is not doing too many things!'

Lee

PhD in Anglo-Saxon,
Norse and Celtic



Entertainment, music and festivals

However you like to spend your time, there's always something to keep you entertained. Cambridge has four theatres, three cinemas, and two major entertainment venues offering varied programmes that include comedy, drama, dance, concerts and club nights. Throughout the year, the city hosts a growing number of music festivals as well as lots of other events, fairs and festivals, including:

- Folk, Jazz and Rock Festivals
- Buskers and Street Performers Festival
- Watersprite International Student Film Festival
- History Festival
- Literary Festival
- Eat Cambridge Festival
- Beer Festival
- Strawberry Fair
- Midsummer Fair
- Shakespeare Festival
- Film Festival
- Dragonboat Festival
- Mill Road Winter Fair

Pubs, clubs and restaurants

Cambridge has a great range of pubs and coffee shops – there are more than 100 before you start to count the dozens of College and University bars and cafés! There's a great selection of places to eat for any mood, taste, occasion, and budget. Better still, various cafés and restaurants offer special discounts for students.

Shopping

Cambridge's three shopping centres, the market and the city's central streets house most high street names alongside independent shops and boutiques. Just outside the centre, you can find an eclectic mix of international food shops, cafés and restaurants.



Outside the city

If you want to explore further afield, London is just 50 minutes away by train and there's also plenty to discover in the region.

- Walking and cycling routes
- Punting up river to Grantchester
- Ely and its cathedral
- Historical buildings, gardens and museums
- Nature reserves, wildlife parks and zoos
- Karting, a real snow slope, and indoor skydiving

Student societies

All students at Cambridge are able to take full advantage of the clubs and societies on offer at the University, and our postgraduate students can get involved in all aspects of student life here beyond their academic studies.

At Cambridge, there are hundreds of student groups, clubs and societies relating to:

- Academic subjects
- Community, charity and volunteering projects
- Particular cultures and nationalities
- The environment
- Faiths and religions
- Food and drink

- Games, hobbies and outdoor pursuits
- Media (eg. journalism, TV, radio, film-making, photography)
- Performing arts (eg. comedy, dance, drama, music)
- Politics and debating
- Science and technology

See the full range on the Societies Directory: www.societies.cam.ac.uk.

Sport

The sports scene at Cambridge is huge. More than 80 sports are offered here, including team games, water sports, martial arts, racket sports and extreme sports.

One of the advantages of being collegiate is how easy it is for students to get involved with sports at any level. There are College teams for novices and experts, as well as the University teams that represent Cambridge against other universities and club teams. Most sports teams at the University include a mix of undergraduates and postgraduates so everyone is welcome to take part.

Many clubs and groups offer taster sessions at the beginning of each year so you can try them out and find out more.

www.sport.cam.ac.uk

Cambridge emerged victorious in the lesser known Oxford and Cambridge Goat Race of 2017.



'Cambridge for me is just the right size. Big enough so that there is lots going on and you don't get bored, but small enough that you feel part of a community'

Sarah

PhD in Pharmacology

Applying to Cambridge

To apply to the University of Cambridge, you must submit an online application through the Applicant Portal on our Graduate Admissions website. Applications to our postgraduate courses open in early September each year with various deadlines throughout the year that you need to consider. This section guides you through the postgraduate application process, from finding your ideal course, to receiving an offer.

1

Course

Before applying, you should thoroughly research your prospective course, including its requirements, deadlines and course costs. If you are applying for a PhD, you are advised to get in touch with a potential supervisor in the relevant Department/Faculty. For advice on how to find a suitable supervisor, you can check the Department's PhD webpages or contact the Department/Faculty directly.

www.cam.ac.uk/pgcourses

2

Deadlines

There are two deadlines that you need to consider: the application and funding deadlines.

If you wish to be considered in our Graduate Funding Competition (see p18-19) you need to apply by the funding deadline. Course and funding applications are made via the same online form, so you must apply by whichever deadline comes first.

Please note, applications may close before the course deadline if all places have been filled, so we recommend applying as early as possible.

3

Applicant Portal

The Applicant Portal is where you write and submit your application, as well as pay the application fee. Visit our website to see if you are eligible for a fee waiver. Once you have selected your course in the Course Directory, click the 'Apply Online' button to be directed to the Applicant Portal.

Any supporting documentation requested on the course page (e.g. transcripts) must also be uploaded in a pdf format via the Applicant Portal by the deadline.

4

Academic references

You are required to submit two academic references, which you can request and submit via the Applicant Portal. You should ensure you have your referees' consent before you apply.

Your referees must submit their references before your application is considered, so you should request your references as early as possible.

5

Colleges

All postgraduates are a member of a College (see p20-21). In your application to Cambridge, you can indicate two College preferences or choose to make an open application to have a College allocated to you. While over 65 per cent of applicants get one of their College preferences, this cannot be guaranteed. Please note that departments/faculties make admissions decisions for postgraduate courses at Cambridge.

6

Submit your application

Once you have finished writing your application, uploaded all required supporting documents and received references, your application is ready to be submitted and you will be asked to pay the application fee. You will not be able to download a copy of your application after submission so please save your application before you submit if you would like your own copy.

7

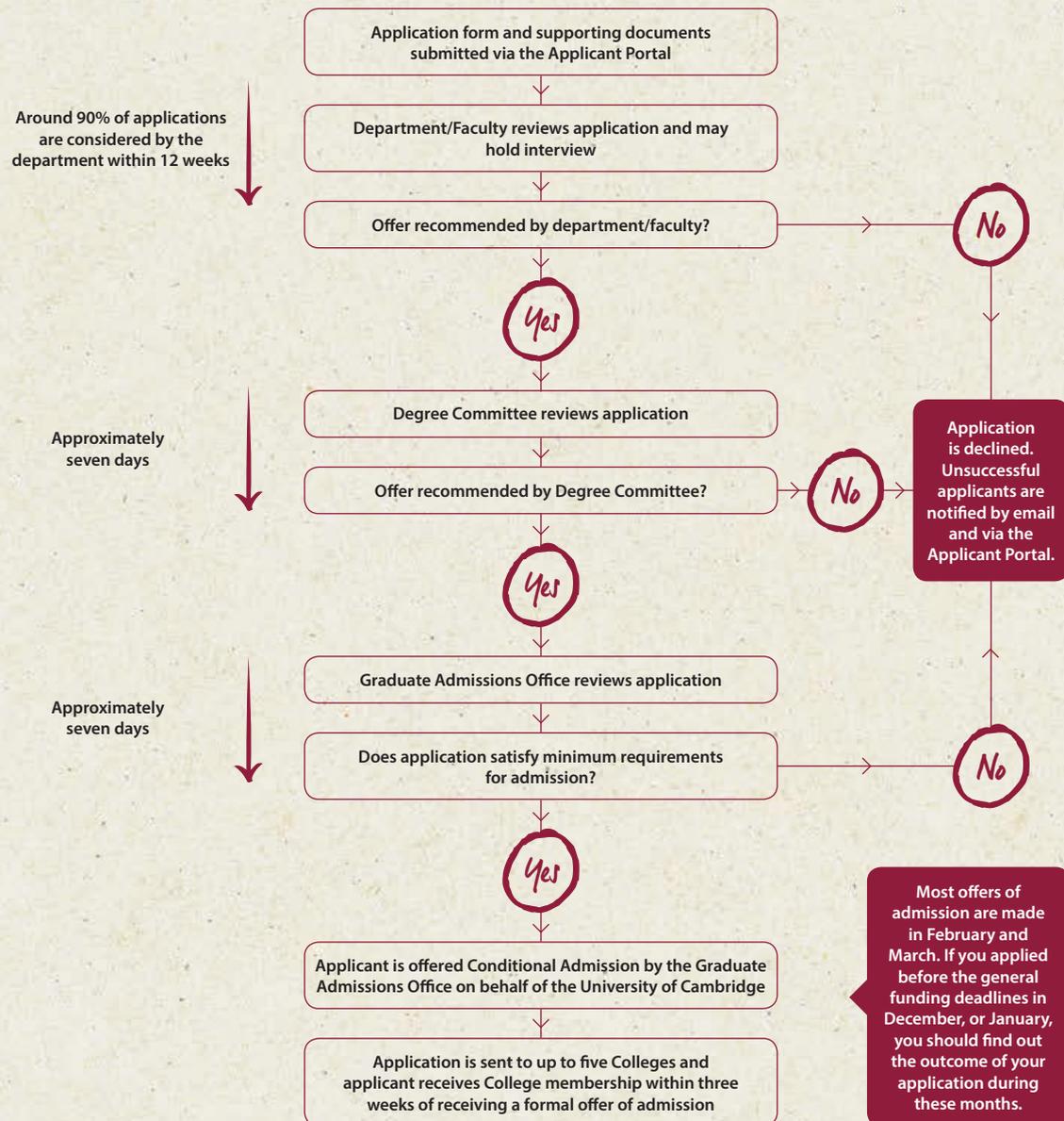
Interview

Most departments/faculties will want to interview you if your application is progressed to the next stage in the admissions process. Some scholarships and studentships will also invite shortlisted candidates for interviews. Most interviews will be conducted via video conferencing or telephone.



After Applying

What happens next?



Offers

What are we looking for?

Decisions on admission to the University for postgraduate study are made on academic merit and your suitability for the course. The availability of an appropriate supervisor and space on the course are also taken into consideration in our admissions process. We consider all applications holistically and on an individual basis.

Offers

If your application has been recommended by the Department/Faculty and approved by the Graduate Admissions Office, you will receive a formal offer of admission by email. If you have made more than one application, you may receive more than one conditional offer, but you will only be able to accept one.

Meeting offer conditions

Once you have received an official offer of admission from the Graduate Admissions Office, you will receive access to your Self-Service Account which tells you everything you need to know about your offer conditions.

Your Self-Service Account allows you to:

- View your offer conditions
- Print a certificate of your offer
- Accept or decline your offer
- Request a deferral of admission, if the course permits
- Provide documents to meet your conditions

Offer holders will need to provide an official transcript. Your official transcript may be sent to us electronically if your institution has a recognised secure electronic transcript system, namely Digitary, HEAR or GradIntel. You will need to contact your institution to enquire whether they offer this facility. If you're not able to send an electronic transcript, you will need to send us your certified original transcript via post.



The deadline to meet the conditions of your offer is the 31 July for courses starting in Autumn.

Finance and Funding

The cost of studying at the University of Cambridge is broken down into two areas:

1. University Composition Fee (UCF)

The UCF is paid to your College to cover the cost of your education and College membership and its value is dependent on your fee status (Home/EU/Overseas) and course of study.

2. Maintenance

The absolute minimum estimated living costs during your time at the University.

When considering postgraduate study at the University, you may find it helpful to look at the estimated annual financial commitment for your course, which you can calculate on our website.

www.cam.ac.uk/pgfinance



'I had a terrific experience with my scholars/friends from the funding body and they were one of the main reasons why Cambridge has been such a welcoming place for me from the very beginning. They not only provided me with essential financial support, but also with many other social and academic opportunities during the whole duration of the course.'

Filip Baskovic

MPhil in Physics (by Research)

Graduate Funding Competition

There is a wide range of funding opportunities at Cambridge. To make the process of applying for funding easier for our applicants, we operate an annual Graduate Funding Competition.

The Graduate Funding Competition co-ordinates funding from a wide variety of sources including the Cambridge Trust, Gates Cambridge, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), and some funding from Colleges and other awards.

To be eligible for consideration in the Graduate Funding Competition you must

- 1 submit your application and supporting documents via the Applicant Portal by the relevant funding deadline
- 2 tick that you wish to be considered in the Funding section*

Funding Source	Eligibility	Funding Deadline
Gates Cambridge	Citizens of any country outside the UK	October (USA citizens /residents)
		December/January (course specific)
Cambridge Trust	All students	December/January (course specific)
UK Research Councils	UK, EU and EEA students. Generally, eligibility for full or partial funding depends on meeting residency requirements	December/January (course specific)

*For further information on funding deadlines please see the Course Directory and funding section of the Graduate Admissions website: www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/finance/funding

If you have been successful in the Graduate Funding Competition, you will be notified sometime between the beginning of March and the end of July. The majority of awards tend to be made in March and April. Unfortunately, due to the number of applicants, only successful candidates will be notified. If you haven't heard anything by the end of July, you should assume that you haven't been successful in being awarded funding.

Other financial support and scholarships

There are still many other funding opportunities outside of our Graduate Funding Competition. You should make use of the comprehensive online search tool to find other awards you may be eligible for that are not part of the Graduate Funding Competition:

www.student-funding.cam.ac.uk

Student Loans

It may also be possible to take out a loan to help fund your studies. Home fee status students who live in England and Wales, are under 60, and are applying for a Master's course may be eligible for a UK Government Postgraduate Loan. You can find out more information about these and additional private loan opportunities online:

www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/student-loans

Where to start? *Useful advice for finance and funding*



Colleges

At Cambridge, as well as being a member of the University, you are also a member of one of our 31 Colleges.



'I've met fantastic friends at my College – working on a huge range of topics – and I am grateful for the support and friendship!'

Eleanor
PhD in History

Cambridge Colleges form one of the key communities for postgraduates during their studies, offering a range of academic and pastoral support, accommodation and facilities for study and leisure. No matter which College you join, you will be welcomed into an inclusive, interdisciplinary, supportive and social community for postgraduate students.

Unlike undergraduate degree applications, Colleges do not assess and admit postgraduate student applications. The decision on whether you will be made an offer is decided by the department/faculty you apply to.

College choice

As part of your application, you can indicate two College preferences or you can choose to make an open application. Opting for an open application simply means that the system will automatically allocate College choices for you.

Choosing College preferences or making an open application has no effect on the outcome of your application to the University as Colleges do not make admissions decisions for postgraduate courses at Cambridge. Your application will only be sent to a College after you have been made an offer of admission to the University.

Although around 65% of postgraduate students at Cambridge become a member of one of their preference choices, you may be considered by up to five Colleges.



The first two Colleges will be the preferences indicated in your application or the two Colleges assigned to you if you made an open application. If you are not accepted by either of your preference Colleges, the additional Colleges will be determined by the system based on the availability of spaces within a College.

If you have been made a formal offer of admission by the University, you are guaranteed to be accepted by a College.

What does a College offer?

- **Welfare and practical support** through a Graduate Tutor. They monitor your progress and provide information on academic and pastoral matters and organise an induction programme to help you settle in. Colleges also provide a College nurse, Chaplain and/or counsellor and provide advice on childcare provision in Cambridge.
- **Accommodation and catering** with College catering offered in formal and informal environments, at a reasonable price. College accommodation and catering is not guaranteed. Information on other accommodation is also offered.
- **Academic enrichment and support** with the provision of library and IT facilities, and opportunities to supervise undergraduates (where applicable).
- **A cross-intellectual community** with opportunities to exchange experiences across disciplines and generations in an informal setting through networks and seminars
- **Finance and funding:** Advice on identifying and obtaining financial assistance and help in cases of unforeseen and unforeseeable financial difficulties
- **A strong social focus** with a student association or graduate society run by students with College support.
- Social, cultural and recreational activities with suitable facilities to enhance your personal development
- Lifelong membership to the College.

Choosing a College

Here are some things to consider, which may help you make a decision about which College is right for you:

Your age – four Colleges only consider applications from mature students (aged 21 and over), and two Colleges are for postgraduate students only.*

Your gender – three Colleges only consider applications from female students. (Please note female applicants can apply to any College.)*

Part-time students – not all Colleges accept part-time students.*

College size – Colleges accept differing numbers of students and so some student populations are larger than others.

Particular facilities – whilst all Colleges offer fantastic facilities, there are differences in the exact nature of the facilities they offer. You should look at College websites to find out more about what each has to offer.

Accessibility – facilities and accommodation provision vary between Colleges. Therefore, if you have particular access requirements, we recommend you check which Colleges would best meet your needs. You may find it helpful to get in touch with the College directly to discuss your specific needs.

The Disability Resource Centre's Access Guide is a good source of additional information regarding facilities and accessibility.

www.cam.ac.uk/accessguide

To help you narrow down your College choices, you can use our College Key Facts and Figures:

www.cam.ac.uk/pgcollege-facts

Many full-time postgraduates live in College accommodation, but few Colleges are able to house all their student members and so accommodation tends to be offered on a first-come-first-served basis. The University's Accommodation Service can assist those who need to find accommodation outside the Colleges:

www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk

* Lucy Cavendish College will accept applications from all applicants, regardless of gender, aged 18 and over for admittance from October 2021.



International Students

We are proud of our diverse student community, with over 50% of postgraduate students coming from overseas, representing more than 140 countries around the globe.

Applying with Non-UK Qualifications

We accept a large number of qualifications from around the world. If you have not previously studied in the UK, you can check the equivalence qualifications guidelines for your country on the International Section of the Graduate Admissions website.

www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/international-qualifications

English language requirements

If English is not your first language, you may be required to take a language test. You can check whether you are likely to be asked to take a language test, which language tests your course accepts, and the minimum required score in the International section of the Graduate Admissions website.

<https://www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/international/competence-english>

For further information about applying as an international student, such as visas and immigration advice, please visit the International Students website:

www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk



'I have found the community at my College and Faculty to be welcoming, and this was an extremely helpful resource and I now consider Cambridge to be a second home.'

Tanya
Toronto, Canada



Frequently Asked Questions

Can I apply for more than one course?

Yes, you can apply for as many courses as you wish. You must complete a separate application form for each course and you must also pay the full application fee for each application you make.

Can I apply to both Cambridge and Oxford?

Yes, the restriction on applying to both universities only applies to undergraduate admissions.

I am still studying and do not have a final transcript. What do I do?

Please request an interim transcript of your courses/results so far from your university and upload this. If you receive a conditional offer, you will need to provide the original final transcript to meet the conditions of your offer.

Should I submit a CV?

Yes, all courses require you to upload a CV to the Applicant Portal as part of your application.

Can I defer my place?

Deferments are only possible if your course has another start date within the same academic year and the course permits deferral entry. Whether you can defer your place is at the discretion of the Department/Faculty.

For more answers to Frequently Asked Questions, please visit our website:

www.cam.ac.uk/pgfaq

Find Out More

If you'd like more information or details about anything mentioned in this guide, or have questions that have not been answered here, please visit the Graduate Admissions website or contact the Graduate Admissions Office directly.



Graduate Admissions Office

01223 760606

graduateadmissions@admin.cam.ac.uk

Graduate Union

01223 333313

enquiries@gradunion.cam.ac.uk

www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk

Disability Resource Centre (DRC)

01223 332301

disability@admin.cam.ac.uk

www.cam.ac.uk/disability

International Students

www.iso.admin.cam.ac.uk/contact

internationaladmissions@admin.cam.ac.uk

Postgraduate Alternative Prospectus

www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk/alt-prospectus

The Postgraduate Alternative Prospectus was written by Cambridge postgraduates to give insight into life at Cambridge. It provides you with an overview of living and studying in Cambridge, tips on where to look for funding, and guidance for the application process.

Visit Us

The University offers a Postgraduate Open Day, usually in November each year. The Postgraduate Open Day provides an excellent opportunity to speak to department academics, visit Colleges, and get further information and advice about applying.

The Postgraduate team also attend various roadshows and events across the UK and overseas, which provide additional opportunities to find out more information.

For details of these events and how to book a place, please visit the website:

www.cam.ac.uk/pgevents





**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

For more information contact one
of the College admissions offices or:

Graduate Admissions Office

Student Services Centre
New Museums Site
Cambridge CB2 3PT

01223 760606

www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk

graduateadmissions@admin.cam.ac.uk

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