Welcome to University College’s Alternative Prospectus, the place where current students will give you the insider info about the College and what it is like to live and study here! I hope this guide will explain how University College (a.k.a ‘Univ’) is different and unique from some of the other colleges at Oxford and fill you in on some details you might not hear elsewhere. It is important to state that Univ very much is a place for everyone. Behind the image of a 775-year-old college, the traditional architecture and the unusual lingo - Univ is a welcoming and open environment with an incredibly diverse community.

I am the JCR President – which basically is the representative for all undergrads at the College - and it is my job to speak and work with the College to make it an even better place for students. The JCR (or Junior Common Room) refers to both a physical common room in the college but also the whole undergraduate student body. There is a JCR committee made up of students elected to represent the whole JCR in certain areas, they are also involved in putting on events and activities including Welcome Week. Being involved in the JCR is one way of getting busy in college life! I hope this Alternative Prospectus proves useful in helping you get to know all there is to know about Univ!

Ardeel, PPE, JCR President 2023-24

Hi everyone! It is my pleasure to introduce Univ’s new-and-improved alternative prospectus. My name is Savannah, and I am the School Liaison and Access Officer here at University College. My job is about widening participation at Univ and increasing the representation at the college of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. As a college we are very proud of our diverse student body - in recent years, nearly one in five students at Univ have come from some of the most deprived postcodes in the UK and approximately three quarters of students come from state schools. Finally, about 22% of our UK students come from ethnic minority backgrounds, slightly above the average of all Oxford colleges.

If you come to study at Univ, you may choose to work with me on access initiatives, but there are also many other activities and opportunities at Oxford that I hope this prospectus will give you a small flavour of. This guide is meant to be an honest insight into Univ written by students for other students. Enjoy reading and perhaps I will see you soon at one of our Open Days or as a student at Oxford University!

Savannah, School Liaison and Access Officer
"Uni is located right in the centre of the city, a stones throw from the iconic Radcliffe Camera, and down the road from all the shops you could need. Being so near to the centre of the city it makes it so easy to travel from college in my lectures and tutorials held in the science departments", Jankiran, Medicine.

"I think the fact that Uni is so central is really comforting as you feel as though you are in the centre of a busy, bustling city but also it is nice to be able to have a retreat within the college walls". Barbie, Biochemistry.

Key
1. Porters’ lodge
The first people to greet you when you step through Bras’s front door are the college’s friendly porters. They have a key into the security of the college and collect and deliver the post. They are friendly and generally a great point of call if you need a bike pump or the spare key if you ever lock yourself out of your room!

2. Dining hall
Dine big dining hall is a great place to catch up with friends over a bite to eat.

3. JCR
The JCR is a lovely space to mix with cafes, table football, an x-box and a TV. One half has drinks so it’s a more informal space to relax too. It’s the site of JCR committee meetings when the student body vote on issues it cares about and is one of the ways that the collective student voice is heard.

4. Bar
A place for socialising, parties and pub quizzes.

5. Old Library
One of two Uni libraries which are open 24/7 and provide key books and workspaces.

6. New Library
Therewen of two large libraries. Stocked with social sciences books.

7. Master’s lodgings
Home of the Master of the College (like a headteacher).

8. Percy in the Master’s garden
When he’s not in hibernation, you may also find our College’s porpoise, Percy chilling in our outdoor space too!

9. Chapel
Most of Oxford’s older colleges have a chapel inside. Ours is home to some stunning stained glass and a weekly choir service.

10. Tower room
Like many rooms around this quad, the room at the top of the tower is a student bedroom!

11. Shelley Memorial
Shelley’s quite a lot of space to hang out with friends throughout the college, both indoors and outwards. The Fellows’ garden is a beautiful and peaceful outdoor space, which is also great for working and eating in the summer when the college puts out tables and chairs.

12. Fellows’ gardens
The newest building with 37 en suite rooms and large kitchens.

13. Goodhart
Student accommodation is dotted around college. This is one of newest buildings, with 37 en suite rooms and large kitchens.

"Percy having lunch"
University College is one of the 35 possible colleges at Oxford you could be allocated as an undergraduate. You can either specify a college as your preference, or make an open application. No matter which college you are at, you are still an Oxford University student and will still attend the same lectures as everyone else.

I applied to Univ because I liked that there was no tiered accommodation - the idea everyone paid the exact same was really attractive to me! I worried in my mind that tiered accommodation might create a class divide (I know this is silly now, but I didn’t know anyone who had been to university, let alone Oxford) so liked that everyone would be mixed up. And it’s been a really nice way to meet different people and make friends, even in my third year! I think Univ has some of the nicest accommodation in Oxford in the best places, and I adore the people I’ve befriended here. In addition I feel like Univ has less boundaries between year groups - I have friends from first years to graduate students. There are definitely cons of Univ, such as the price of meals and formals here, but there’s also cons of every college.

Emma, History

I didn’t do too much research when I was choosing colleges, but I applied to Univ because a quick google search told me it was friendly and had a high proportion of historians! Univ is definitely very friendly with an active JCR and lots of events everyone’s invited to, so if you’re concerned about moving to a new place and making new friends I’d definitely recommend it!

Kira, History

Univ is a medium sized college at Oxford - we have around 700 students total and take about 120 new students each year.

Laura, Chinese

I like the college system as it feels like having a home and a community within the city and the university. I had never visited before moving in for first year, so looking round on the first day was exciting! I’d heard that Univ is a comfortable and friendly college so applied here, and it was definitely true. Sometimes I feel like Univ can be too small as a social circle, but there are people to meet in your department, at societies and activities, on nights out, and through mutual friends, so college doesn’t actually limit your options to meet new people.
University College aims to house students for all years of their degree, and we have a mix of accommodation from older, classically ‘Oxford’ bedrooms to brand new rooms with double beds and ensuites. All students are randomly allocated a room on the college’s main site in their first year. All Univ rooms have access to a kitchen, but some rooms on main site might be a little further away from the kitchen. Students can also grab breakfast, lunch or dinner from the college dining hall.

Accommodation at Univ is varied - some rooms can be quite small but most are generally bigger than I’ve seen friends from other unis have. In first year, I had a shared set, which is where my roommate and I shared a study room and each had our own bedrooms. Separating work from sleep meant I got a lot more work done, but most rooms aren’t shared! It’s lots of fun decorating your room, and I’d recommend some (battery-operated) fairy lights and pictures of your friends and family to make it feel like home.

Emma, History

My room in first year was in Goodhart (the big modern building on Logic Lane), so I got a double bed and an ensuite, as well as access to a modern kitchen and a view of the pretty older buildings on logic lane. The only annoying part is moving out in between terms, especially as an international student, however one of the reasons I applied to Univ in the first place was the free on-site storage for international students.

Eve, History

You can’t choose your room, unless a medical condition means you have specific access needs, however this just makes the whole process fair and ensures there is no disparity in room allocation since everybody pays the same amount. Moving out between terms can be difficult, however there are options to help alleviate some of the difficulty, such as storage!

Lila, English

My room is in a newer building, allocated to me because I requested the closest/best kitchen access to help cater for my dietary requirements. College has always been helpful about that. I feel like you can make your room feel like home, but most terms you do have to pack it all up again, so I still try not to bring as much stuff to make it easier at the end of each term.

Laura, Chinese
From second year onwards, you’ll get to pick your room and live with friends on the college’s site on Staverton Road (a.k.a ‘Stavs’). Stavs is about a 35 minute walk or 9 minute cycle from the main college site. Most students choose to live back on the main site in their final year, and get first pick of the rooms! The college also has accommodation near the hospital - useful for medicine students!

Living in Stavs for the second year in a row has been better than I expected -- while it can be difficult to share a kitchen and a flat, and have to commute into college, at least it gets me out into the fresh air every day. My first year room was very small, but I was lucky to have a clean and pest-free room with access to a kitchen and clean water. While accommodation at Univ can be variable in quality, some of the rooms are very nice and I’m hoping to have a nice one next year!

Maeve, Classics

I have been quite lucky all of the years I’ve been at univ with accomodation. I had a large room on the high street in my first year which was noisy but that didn’t bother me - it didn’t have a kitchen nearby but that made me go to eat in hall where I really found some friendships. I adored living in stavs in second year - having a kitchen and choosing your flat was such a fun way to live and I enjoyed the commute between college and where I lived as it provided some separation of work and home life. I’ve also been very lucky in my third year to get a double bed and a kitchen, as well as 2 bathrooms between 6 (all of us girls). I was given my third year room on the basis of disability - I have anxiety which means I need to have structure and control, especially in things like food. The accommodation manager was incredibly understanding and offered the perfect room to me, which I’m very greatful for! It’s been perfect, except for an incident with a bird coming down the chimney.

Kira, History
EXAMPLES OF UNIV ROOMS

When I was applying to university, I really wanted to see all the different types of accommodation available, so I've included lots of photos in case you feel the same! Here are some rooms you'll find on the main site, specifically these are in the early 20th Century buildings you can see from Oxford’s High Street. We refer to each building by its proper name, e.g. ‘90 High Street’, ‘83 High Street’ etc.

Savannah, School Liaison and Access Officer

My final year room is in the oldest part of college, looking out over the Fellows’ Garden, complete with beams and sash windows. It also has a double bed, and an ensuite, so combines modern comforts with lots of history. By this year, moving out during terms isn’t as daunting as it seems in first year. The ability to sign different accommodation contracts from your second year onwards also means that moving out isn’t always necessary - I haven’t had to move out completely in between terms since my first year.

Elspeth, History
A traditional ‘shared set’ room in the main quad. Each door in the photo branches off to a private bedroom with a sink - you share this huge living space with one other student and share bathrooms. These rooms are popular with final year students who share with a friend!
Some students live in the master’s lodgings. These are single rooms on the main site. Most of them have shared bathrooms. Don’t worry, you don’t actually live with the master – she occupies a completely separate portion of the building.
Rooms in Stavs are a bit more modern - some are ensuite and some share bathrooms. Some rooms have double beds! All the rooms have big shared kitchens. Rooms in Stavs are either in purpose-built accommodation blocks or share large houses with gardens. It’s great to buddy up with some mates and all live in a big house together.
Kira – Master’s Lodgings

Eve – Stavs

Emma – Redcliffe

Maud (Stavs)

Lila – Goodhart
**FOOD AT UNIV**

The buttery offers a good range of foods and caters well for vegetarian and vegan diets (in my opinion anyway). The food here is more expensive than other colleges however, so this is definitely something to be mindful of! Formal hall happens twice a week and the food is great, however if you don’t eat meat then get ready for many stuffed vegetables. I prefer to do a mixture of cooking for myself and eating in hall and enjoy the flexibility of this!

*Lila, English*

Food at Univ is of very high quality with a wide range available including quite a few hot and cold options plus snacks. There tends not to be a specific halal option available everyday but I usually will go for the veggie or fish option. For formal hall meals (fancy dinners twice a week) you can request a halal meat option in advance and the chefs will accommodate. During Ramadan, the buttery makes arrangements to have ‘grab and go’ options available for when people want to open their fasts.

*Ardeel, PPE*

I mostly self-cater because I have a few dietary requirements. College allocated me a room with really good kitchen access, so I cook for myself all the time. Occasionally I go to a formal, like Oxmas, Wholeway Hall or once we had an Iftar - college provides gluten-free food for me then. Besides that I usually go to brunch at the weekend as it’s a good way to see lots of people.

*Laura, Chinese*

One of the great things about Univ is that it also offers the chance to self-cater as well as eat in the Buttery - where college serve food. There are lots of kitchens around site - although your room might not be near one - so there’s plenty of room for everyone to cook. Living in main site in first year I cooked quite a bit, particularly pesto pasta: a uni classic! Formal hall at Univ is also really fun, and although we are one of the pricier colleges for formal hall, it’s a great opportunity to dress up and eat fancy food with friends!

*Emma, History*
FOOD AT UNIV

I usually choose to cook my own food as vegetarian food in the buttery isn’t always the best. While formals can be a bit repetitive, as the kitchen only makes two vegetarian formal meals, I’ve only been given fruit for dessert once! The good news is, most second year rooms and some first year rooms will have kitchen access -- I didn’t even have to walk to a different building in first year.

Kira, History

Maeve, Classics

I’m vegetarian and hall always has plenty of options, with the quality of veggie food increasing during my time at Univ. Buttery prices are cheaper than eating out, but of course cost more than if you cook everything yourself. However, large portions, convenience, and the social aspect of eating in Hall makes it a very reasonable option. Food from the Buttery is all pay-as-you-go, which means you can pick and choose what you want to eat, and when, rather than pre-paying as in many other colleges. This flexibility is ideal and fits well around busy student schedules. Univ brunch, served on Saturday and Sunday, is also a staple of many Univ students’ weeks, and it has a reputation across Oxford for being excellent.

Elspeth, History

The food is okay at Univ. I’m vegetarian so there’s often one option, although I would rarely chose to eat in hall simply because I like control over what I eat, portions, and I think it’s cheaper. If you have a kitchen nearby on main site you’re very lucky- because there are so few kitchens they can occasionally be quite messy, but it depends where they are. Formals as a vegetarian are also interesting as the main is often quite interesting (often a stuffed vegetable or something in pastry) but it doesn’t put me off going altogether.

Kira, History
SPORTS AND SOCIETIES AT UNIV

At Oxford, there are university-wide societies but also college-based societies. Both are open to you as a student, and you can usually even join other colleges’ societies too. For sport, the University wide society tends to be made up of the high intensity, competitive teams, whereas the college level sport is a lot more casual and flexible.

I’m part of the college rowing club! While it has been stressful at times it’s really pushed my boundaries and helped me grow as a person. It’s given me a lot of unique opportunities and also helped me form some really solid friendships. Rowing is fun and there are also termly dinners and socials most weeks. Many people learn to row in the club so no prior experience is needed - it’s one of the most accessible sports in the university.

Maeve, Classics

I auditioned for the college choir in Freshers’ Week and actually didn’t get in, so I joined Trinity College Choir. This year, I auditioned again and joined Univ’s. Univ choir is really fun and has a great social scene, and even if you don’t end up at Univ I’d recommend auditioning. We do some great songs and it’s fun to meet people with the same interests. But equally, if you haven’t done much music before and fancy starting, or don’t get in first time like me, non-auditioned choirs like Trinity are lots of fun! Your college societies don’t need to decide your interests for you and you are definitely allowed in other colleges!

Emma, History

I climb both with the college and the university club. Univ as a college has a lot of climbers so there’s almost always someone looking to climb. There’s a huge variety of experience levels so anyone can get stuck in pretty much instantly.

Isaac, Engineering
Students at Oxford benefit from both University-wide and college-based welfare support. At Univ, we have a welfare fellow, a welfare and disability advisor, an advisor for international students, a college nurse, a college counsellor and Univ peer supporters trained by the University Counselling Service.

The first person to talk to at Univ if you’re having welfare problems is Andrew Gregory. While he won’t be able to help with concrete issues like harassment or feeling unsafe at night, he’s always around for a cup of tea and a chat! College really help supplement the welfare officers by providing student Peer Supporters who you can go to with any welfare or disability related issues.

**Maeve, Classics**

I was diagnosed with dyslexia while at college after my school had dismissed me for years, which was very straightforward at university - I requested an assessment, explained my reasons why, had an online meeting and was diagnosed. Since then I’ve been given multiple things to support me - grammarly, some extensions for my laptop, a dyslexia tutor to offer tips and support, extra time and typed exams etc. I was also diagnosed with Anxiety which the college/university handled so well and gave me a support plan to make life easier for me, from library assistant support to notes to my professors so they understand things like my quietness isn’t from ignorance! I was scared about approaching the university for all of these things but all of the people I spoke to made me feel incredibly safe.

**Ardeel, PPE**

Univ has a few options for welfare support, and during some health problems, the support I received has been really great. It’s coordinated college, my department, and academic and personal welfare, so I’ve felt like college is really doing all they can to help me do well and feel well.

**Laura, Chinese**

There are a large number of people to go to for welfare support in College and Oxford generally. In College we have peer supporters, these are students who have undergone training to best help and support other students through conversation and signposting to professionals. The wider university counselling service is also useful, with a relatively easy process to get access to counselling sessions.
**FINANCE**

Affording the financial cost of university can seem a bit daunting. There is lots of financial support from Univ as well as the wider university for UK students from low-middle income families, plus extra support for care experienced students or those estranged from their families. Read more about University-wide support at ox.ac.uk/funding.

I receive the Oxford bursary, as well as 2 Old Members’ Trust bursaries which are immensely helpful and reduce some of the anxiety surrounding cost in Oxford. My room is £5000 a year (not included any extra days I stay for) which is quite reasonable when compared to some other colleges.

**Kira, History**

Alongside the government maintenance loan that helps fund the day-to-day spending of uni life, the university and the college offer additional financial support. The university 'Crankstart scholarship' offers a non-repayable bursary for those below a certain household income threshold. In addition the college had 'Old Member's Trust' bursaries which exist to ensure all students have enough funds to live as a student at Oxford. A new programme at Univ is the 'Beacon Programme', which offers a bursary targeted at students from less represented backgrounds to help ensure they can thrive at Univ during their time here.

**Maeve, Classics**

Univ’s cost of living has gone up significantly in the last few years, but college has helped by providing bursaries and scholarships. For instance, I was given a travel grant to go to Italy and see Pompeii!

**Ardeel, PPE**

Univ I think is about an average college monetary w ise. Accommodation costs are average, but the food is quite expensive (in my opinion). Oxford can be quite expensive to live in, and it takes a while to figure out where to shop for the bargains (the Aldi in Botley and the Sainsbury’s in Westgate), but it’s doable. I have applied and received a travel grant to go to Venice (I study Venice and Florence in the renaissance) which is incredible - it was quite a straightforward process and it’s a trip I’m really looking forward to!

**Lila, English**

Some students prefer not to take out the UK Gov’s university loan due to their interpretation of Sharia Law. However, the way that interest is charged on UK government loans for students in England is changing from 2023-4. For new borrowers, loans will be increased by the rate of RPI inflation only, so there will be no interest added. This will apply to both tuition fee loans and maintenance loans. The UK Fatwa Council has also advised that student loans are permissible.

If you still prefer to not take out the loan, there are banks and charities such as the National Zakat Foundation that can help. Oxford also offers an Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies Scholarship to fund your studies.
I do feel like I ‘fit in’ in at Oxford which is a lovely feeling! There really is a place for everyone and most people are really understanding of your different experiences.

Lila, English

As an international student, I’ve felt really supported by Univ! The international student advisor was able to send me to the UK government website, rather than giving me any advice that could have been confused or incorrect, so I appreciated her pushing me to do my own research, and I was able to find the answer to my question.

Maeve, Classics

I come from a working class background with no family having been to university but as a generally nervous and shy person I haven’t done too much in wider societies, although I’ve been to a few class act events which I think can be nice if you’re more outgoing than me! I’ve been Univ’s representative for class act, and they hold helpful workshops for CV’s etc, as well as just drinks. I used to be the colleges working class rep, and also access officer, and there’s nice college events - pimms, pizza, dinners, movie nights etc that are very relaxed and help you find similar people. I found settling into college difficult because it was all incredibly foreign to me and if I’m honest it took about a year until I felt fully at home here, but I’ve found a really solid friendship group from similar backgrounds and experiences. Oxford may not immediately feel like it’s made for people from different backgrounds, but we have to make space for ourselves and we can find other people like us, it may just take a little more effort.

Kira, History

Univ is proud to have a great record in admitting students from a wide range of backgrounds. We were the first college to hire an Access Officer to work full time on achieving our widening participation targets in 2008.

Laura, Chinese
LEARNING AT OXFORD

I spent my first year just figuring out the work-life balance, instead of actually learning too much. It can feel very overwhelming at times, but ultimately work fills the time you give it. If you do nothing, you will only work. If you do lots of societies, the work normally still gets done. Sometimes it just means you have to hand in some work you'd maybe wish you could have done better and put your mental health first. Having routine and set boundaries has really helped me figure out how to balance it all out, although it is a big learning curve with a subject like history where you have very few contact hours and your time is entirely yours to manage. It also varies – some terms you have 4 days to read and write for an essay for multiple weeks, sometimes you have more time and can breathe. But everyone is going through the same thing, so everyone understands. Exams vary for each subject but for history you sit exams at the beginning of every term on what you learned last term, and the only exams that apply to your actual graduate grade are done at the end of your degree, and then you also have 3 pieces of work that are like coursework, so not everything rides on 2 weeks!

Kira, History

The libraries at Oxford are beautiful (much prettier than Cambridge…) and I really like to study in there! My favourites are the Radcam, which is the history faculty library, and our college library which looks a bit like a church and has some massive statues in. I tend to work in the days and do hobbies in the evening, which allows me to get involved with the social scene of Univ!

Emma, History

Oxford can feel very intense at times, but it feels a lot better when you remember everyone else is in the same boat. Using group library visits or the walk to lectures can also be a good way to make friends with people on your course. Exams are just as scary as they would be anywhere, but having collections at the start of each term definitely helps with the nerves by the time you get to “big exams” (even if spending the holiday revising is a chore at times)

Eve, History

I spend a lot of time at my department as it has quite a few study spaces and my favourite library in Oxford. When I’m not at my department, I choose somewhere like Radcam or the Bodleian for a longer study session, or if I have less work to do I head to a Univ library or my room. I usually try to fill my day with work so that after that’s done I can relax without anything at the back of my mind! I had really bad habits in first year and switching that has really helped me have more time to socialise and feel less panicked about work… I also try to take weekends off to have a reset, go for a walk, and do something fun with my friends. It helps compartmentalise work, means the weeks don’t blur into each other, and you have time you know you can commit to hobbies.

Laura, Chinese

Each week I eat two problem sheets (very tasty), and no essays (sorry humanities + biochem). I personally like to get my work done late at night (24h libraries ❤️), with the possibility of an audience with Lyra, the elusive but very friendly college cat. Collections (silly Oxford word for exams) are pretty relaxed especially with the comfort gown. Contrary to popular myth, the tutors don’t bite and are actually great teachers.

Isaac, Engineering
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ARTS STUDENT

I have around 12 hours of classes a week, which is mostly 3-8 students but sometimes up to 12. I go up to my department each morning, use the library and common room to study or have a snack, and attend a mixture of classes, language tuition, one lecture a week, and around 4 tutorials a term. Each day is a different mixture but there’s always some contact hours, and I do around 2-6 hours of work in a library depending on how much self-study time I have and what is due that week.

Laura, Chinese

Depending on the classes I have that day I wake up anywhere between 7 and 9. I’ll attend lectures and classes and work where I can, and usually end up in Old Library at the end of the day to finish off anything I didn’t manage to do during the hour. Usually I’ll have around 10-12 contact hours a week.

Lila, English

I normally wake up at about 8/8.30 (unless there’s rowing, where I’ll wake up at 6am), eat, shower and start work at 10. I did my research in libraries but I often write in my room, so I normally work on that until lunch. I sometimes have meetings in the afternoon – Tutorials, supervisor meetings, dyslexia mentoring etc etc, but if I don’t I still work on my dissertation. I also often try to fit in 30-60mins of exercise in the college gym in the afternoon. I normally make dinner at 6pm, and then I always take the evening off unless something is very pressing work wise – I hang out with friends, scroll on my phone, go to socials, watch films, or read a book.

Emma, History

Kira, History

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A SCIENCES STUDENT

My day usually starts with a quick breakfast in hall and a walk to the department for a couple of lectures. On Tuesdays we have labs (I personally really enjoy them) but except for that the rest of the day is up to you. Tutorials are amazing, and it feels like you learn in one hour what would take an entire week on a busier timetable of lectures.

Isaac, Engineering
Oxford is a really small city, so lectures will never be that far away. For me in first year, they were literally a 2 minute walk from my room! Being a small city is great - it means you see familiar faces all the time, and it makes making friends much easier at the beginning because you will keep seeing the same people around. It’s also not too far a walk or cycle if you just want to get out of Oxford for a bit, and the train station is only a 20 minute walk from Univ if you want to escape home for the weekend.

Kira, History

Living as a history student in univ is great because lectures are right next door! It takes me about a minute to get to lectures from my room. Botley is around a 15 minute cycle towards the train station from college and has things like Aldi and B&M so is great for a bargain. Cowley is just down the road from univ too and is where all the best restaurants are with the best variety of non chain international food. The university wide gym is also in that direction, around a 10 minute cycle on a busy day, so univ is very much in the centre of it all.

Emma, English

Oxford has good transport links to local places and those further away - a train to London is £13 and only 50 minutes which I’ve been making the most of, Univ is about a 20 minute walk away from the station. The English faculty is about a 5-10 minute walk from Univ which is really handy for 9am lectures! Jericho is a nice area, although pricey, and has some nice cafes to study in. Cowley road has particularly good charity shops and takeaways. Favourite coffee shop is definitely Jericho Coffee Traders (just a 2 minute walk from Univ)

Lila, English

Before I got to uni I thought that Oxford would be too small, but if you look there are a lot of really nice places. Some favourite cafes are Formosan, Tree Artisan, and Barefoot. I try a couple of new places to eat each term as I have an ever-growing list of places I want to try. One of the best places for food is Cowley, as it has amazing specialty shops and a variety of restaurants, is less than half an hour from Univ, and there’s also my favourite tea place, Incha! Jericho is also really nice for a weekend morning as it’s full of cafes and little shops. I love Christchurch meadows for a walk, but I walk half an hour to my department already (maybe Oxford’s longest commute), which is a nice way to start my day.

Laura, English
There's no downfalls of applying. You might as well! Just be passionate. My school had only ever had one other person go to Oxford and it was for chemistry, so I had no idea how to get in or what they were looking for, but I love history and it worked out! Sometimes I think people get too caught up in what they think Oxford are looking for or things they think they have to do but ultimately passion is the most important, because nothing else will get you through those all-nighters. But also if you don't get accepted, it's not the end of the world!

Kira, History

Go for it! Lots of people say that Oxford is really difficult to get into, but it's definitely worth it! When I applied, the admissions statistics didn’t look promising, but you need to look at it positively: x% will get in, and you have to be in it to win it! Be confident in what you can do and show the tutors that you are interested in your subject!

Emma, History

Being at Oxford is incredibly reliant on your passion for your subject. When push comes to shove, you’re going to be spending all day everyday thinking about it, so make sure you’re applying for something you’d gladly think (and talk) about all day.

Eve, History

Don’t apply to Oxford because of the name, apply to Oxford if you want to study your subject in-depth for three or four years. I didn’t actually study my subject before uni, but I did do some reading and some MOOCs related to it, so that was how I worked out if it was the subject for me. Finally, don’t be too nervous for an interview; you get to talk to some amazing professors and it’s your chance to impress them! If you back yourself to have a go and put your mind to the interview, then it can create a good impression of someone who is open and willing to learn.

Laura, Chinese

One thing I would stress is just going for it. I remember doubting myself and letting myths and stereotypes around Oxford almost hold me back from even applying. So I would say if you’re interested, give the application your best shot and don’t hold yourself back.

Ardeel, PPE