



CHURCHILL COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE

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Student Access

Churchill's long tradition of welcoming students from non-traditional Oxbridge schools and regions is underpinned by a desire to help combat entrenched social and economic disadvantage by improving equality of access and equality of opportunity.

Many Churchill alumni enjoyed their undergraduate education at Cambridge for free. However, those matriculating today pay tuition fees of £9,250 per annum and the average debt after an undergraduate degree for a UK student at Cambridge is now an estimated £55,380. Students can borrow the money they need, but this can act as a deterrent to considering a university education. Bursaries and hardship grants make a significant difference in encouraging students to apply to Churchill who otherwise might fear getting into debt, and to their educational outcomes once here.

Those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds may face the need to secure paid work during vacations. Opportunities available to their more privileged peers – such as unpaid or expenses only internships, overseas travel or further study – are constrained. On top of the Cambridge Bursary, students in the greatest need at Churchill receive grants of up to £2,000 to enable them to fully benefit from everything that Cambridge can offer, through our Winston Churchill Top-Up Bursary scheme.

The Cambridge Bursary Scheme is being extended to give an extra amount to students who have indicators of deprivation, such as free school meals. Those in middle-income households will get smaller amounts of additional support. This extension is being underwritten by a central fund for one year, but thereafter colleges will need to pay for the extra provision from their own resources. Churchill has a larger number of eligible students and will need to find an extra £50,000 per year to fund the extension. We need your help to ensure the College can continue to reach, support and fund as many of the best students as possible from all backgrounds to transform young lives.



Key facts & figures

115

115 undergraduates received a means-tested Cambridge Bursary in the 20/21 academic year

70%

A record 70% received the maximum annual Cambridge Bursary of £3,500, awarded to those with family incomes lower than £25,000

>80%

Over 80% of offers to UK students in the 2021 UCAS round have been made to maintained sector pupils – significantly above the Office for Students (OfS) target of 65%

£482,000

The total expenditure for undergraduates on bursaries, travel grants & awards in 2019/20 was £482k

The Black Students' Support Fund

There currently exists a historic under-representation of Black British students at the University of Cambridge and Churchill College. Widening participation work in this area is being carried out at both a University and College level but more needs to be done.

Data on ethnicity is now collected as part of the admissions process and at present at Churchill only 2% of the current student population identify themselves as being Black British (7 out of 344 home undergraduate students and two out of 102 home postgraduate students). Even taking into consideration the small number of students who chose not to supply information on their ethnicity, this falls below the UK sixth-form population and Cambridge UK undergraduate admissions figure as a whole:

- 3.6% Cambridge UK undergraduate admissions 2019
- 1.8% Cambridge UK postgraduate admissions 2019
- 4.8% UK sixth-form population 2019

Our Black students have formed an integral part of our student community, and have been great successes at Cambridge and beyond. Increasing the diversity of student intake will help ensure the contribution of insights from the widest range of backgrounds, heritages and standpoints.

In order to optimise applications to Churchill from this under-represented group of students, the College needs to raise enough funds to set up an endowed fund of at least £100,000. This endowed fund will support UK students of Black African and African-Caribbean heritage by providing means-tested bursaries for undergraduates, as part of the Cambridge Bursary scheme, or an MPhil studentship. Support may be awarded to both categories i.e. undergraduate bursaries and an MPhil studentship, dependent on the level of income generated by the fund.



For me, the fund speaks to the College's dedication to encouraging Black and ethnic minority students to apply to study at a university where they are currently under-represented and where the diversity of thought that their diversity of background brings is so needed. By coming to Churchill they will spend their Cambridge years at a College where they will be most warmly welcomed.

Imani Jeffers (U15 MML)



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Support in Unprecedented Times

Churchill College's provision for student welfare is second to none, but in recent years new challenges have emerged in respect of student mental health to which the College is having to respond. Even before coronavirus struck, the College was already seeing a significant rise in student demand for counselling.

Across the last five years, student access to professional mental-health support in Churchill has increased by well over 60%, an increase echoed in the wider University.

In general we believe our students are as resilient as they were five, ten or twenty years ago, but with changing public attitudes they are more aware of their mental health and more willing to seek assistance when they need it. We are also dealing with the impact of the COVID-19 crisis, which has set the mental health of some students back. The College's Tutors and wider welfare team are doing their best to mitigate this. The College now employs two (part-time) counsellors and a College Nurse with counselling expertise. Students also have access to the University Counselling Service and to additional online support, both of which the College supports with funding.

However, we need to build better initiatives to foster student wellbeing, as well as responding with maximum effectiveness to low points in student lives. This will require extended consultation, analysis, imagination and financial commitment. Students can face significant challenges around academic pressure, social burdens, financial worries and concerns about their families – as well as problems rooted in their earlier lives. We need to enable them to build strategies to make the most of their time in Churchill; and we need to be there for them with the very best and most expert professional support if crisis hits.



It would be extraordinary if the pandemic and its fallout did not produce major psychological effects on all of us and the effect is likely to be measured in years not months. It may remain hidden and only surface gradually. The most helpful thing at this stage would be to acknowledge the likely need and plan for it in a flexible way, such as seeking support for a general fund for student mental health support.

Tim Ellis, Churchill College counsellor



The Student Wellbeing and Mental Health Fund

In March 2021 Churchill College Council established a dedicated fund – the Student Wellbeing and Mental Health Fund – to give the College the flexibility to create an enhanced programme of care and activities directed at the wellbeing and mental health of our students.

This will be achieved by funding additional paid-for specialist advice and therapy as well as providing funding for Fellows, staff and students to increase awareness of mental health issues. Building this fund will also enable the College to provide access to activities and support likely to foster and sustain student wellbeing and mental health, both for individuals and for groups of students.

As we face the fall-out of the pandemic, it is vital that the College has the funds available to support the mental health and wellbeing of our students. If we can do this, we can help ensure that the best young minds can continue to thrive here.



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Future Academic Leaders

At Churchill, our aim has always been to seek out the most talented postgraduate students but competition for the best research students is fierce and international, and we need to act now if we wish to continue attracting the finest minds in the world.



In completing my undergraduate degree I exhausted my savings, and with the onset of the pandemic I was also limited in the amount of paid employment I could undertake to accumulate the funds I needed. Obtaining my studentship has ensured that I am in a position to afford to study alongside peers of an appropriate academic calibre, at the University of Cambridge.

Andrew Robbins (G20, current MPhil Politics & International Relations student)



Drastic cuts to Research Councils mean that there are fewer research studentships than before. In addition, the tripling of undergraduate tuition fees and the debt burden on UK students will inevitably deter many excellent prospective students from pursuing postgraduate studies.

The estimated annual cost for a home student studying for an MPhil ranges from £23,000 to £27,000, rising to as high as £43,000 for an overseas student for some science subjects. With only partial government funding available of £10,000 for a Master's Loan, postgraduates simply cannot study if they are unable to support themselves. We are now faced with the very real fact that postgraduate study is becoming unaffordable for all but the most privileged. Without a Master's, students won't be admitted to many PhD courses. A Master's degree can define a career trajectory, or enable a career in academia, diversifying the academic cohorts of the future. We need to support more postgraduate students to ensure that the brightest minds are provided with the freedom to concentrate on their studies, challenge the status quo and find ways to make the world work better, regardless of their financial background.

The College is committed to supporting a small number of postgraduate studentships, but funds are limited and we wish to do more to keep our doors open to the world's best minds and talents. We can only do this with your support.





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Financial Sustainability

The College's invested capital currently stands at approximately £100 million – income from these endowed funds is essential to providing education and covering operational costs. This income funds core activity such as teaching, pastoral costs and operational costs such as building maintenance. The College endowment generates around £3 million per year, depending on investment performance. However, in a usual year the expenditure on these costs is well over £12 million.

Last year, the College received just over £4 million in fees and academic charges. It spent over £5.7 million in the delivery of education including tutorial and teaching support and awards, leaving a funding gap of nearly £2 million. The shortfall in funding is usually made up of a mix of donations expendable in the year, endowment income, and conference revenue. Therefore, given the uncertain nature of the revenue from conferences in future, and other events that may affect fee income, the College aims to build up its endowment to generate at least £5 million per year. This would require its total endowment to grow to over £125 million. The Think Forward fund will be an unrestricted fund where surplus income is invested to add to the endowment of the College.

The more endowment funding the College can accrue, the more secure its future, and less subject to circumstances. As we have seen with Covid-19, events and crises can greatly affect our income streams in other areas. In this campaign we aim to raise at least another £3-6 million every year to add to the College's endowment – either for unrestricted purposes or undergraduate or postgraduate support.

Donation and endowed income is essential to the long-term future of Churchill College. Cambridge Colleges that have existed for many centuries have the security of a larger endowment to offer more financial security. With your help we can secure the funding of the College for the educational benefit of future generations and ultimately for society as a whole.



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