

Undergraduate pre-applicant information



2023 / 24

Welcome

We're delighted you're considering applying to Churchill College.

We understand that prospective university applicants use online resources in a range of ways to research their potential applications. This pre-applicant pack is for those of you who'd like a comprehensive overview of the admissions process to Churchill College, from choosing a course, through putting in an application, up to thinking about accommodation and finances. We've structured it a bit like a series of FAQs but it works as a straight read.



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I'm thinking of applying to Churchill College. What should I do first?

Choose your degree course, if you haven't done so already. After all, this is going to be the equivalent of your full-time job for at least the next few years.

It's important to research this choice thoroughly, to find the best fit course for you and because your area(s) of interest may have more course options than you realise.

When deciding what to study, think about your likes and motivations in the broadest terms, rather than simply choosing a subject you're taking at school or college.

What do you enjoy most? Why do you enjoy it? How do you like to learn about it?



After researching, you might still end up choosing a course that you're taking now at school or college. Equally though, you might arrive at something completely new.

You probably won't have studied subjects like Engineering or Anglo-Saxon before, for example, but they could be ideally suited to your interests and aptitudes.

Having found a course you're interested in, ensure your qualifications meet its entry requirements. It's pointless applying to something for which you are not suitably qualified, no matter how good you are at what you're currently studying.

TIP: Don't make assumptions about what qualifications you'll need. Make sure to check, for each course you're interested in.

While some university courses have essential subject requirements, others might only have 'useful' or 'recommended' subjects, if any. Generally, there's greater requirement flexibility for arts, humanities, and social science courses than there is for sciences, technology, and mathematics. Again though, you should check and not assume.

Also, carefully investigate your target universities. Cambridge courses may have the same name as degrees at other universities, for instance, but their content and methods of teaching and assessment could differ dramatically.

Consider whether our course maps on to what you're interested in, and how you like to learn and be assessed.

It's okay if you ultimately find that Cambridge is not for you. With careful research, you'll no doubt find a great course that you'll enjoy and excel in at a brilliant university.

If you're thinking ahead, familiarise yourself with the plethora of career paths open to graduates, and the diverse ways you could enter a particular career. You don't need an undergraduate degree in Law to become a lawyer, for example.

Finally, whether you know what course you want to study or not, The Russell Group has an excellent platform for preliminarily researching degrees pathways and requirements: [Informed Choices](#).



Useful links

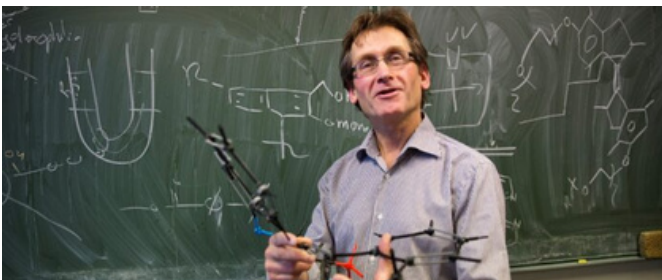
- [Informed Choices](#)
- [University of Cambridge Careers services](#)

What are Churchill's entry requirements and conditional offers?

To find Churchill's entry requirements and conditional offers, choose your target course from Cambridge University's [Course List](#), look at the [Entry Requirements](#) tab, then check out Churchill's row in the [by-College pdf of entry requirements](#).

At Churchill, we want to admit students who will thrive during their time at Cambridge, so we tend to set conditional offers in line with what Cambridge entrants attain, by course - our grade conditions are usually a little higher than the University's typical offer.

Accordingly, if you get into Churchill, you can be confident that you'll arrive at Cambridge at or above parity with your peers across the University, with the additional reassurance that research shows that post-16 examination performance correlates strongly with good degree outcomes.



Our approach to conditional offers means that, if you want to apply to Churchill, you should have relevant attainment or predictions that are at the very least in line with [the University's typical offer](#) for your chosen course, noting any [international entry requirements](#) that may be applicable to you. If you don't, it is unlikely that we'll be able to progress your application.

Competitive Churchill applicants normally have attainment or predictions that are at least in line with those of typical Cambridge entrants, by course. The most outstanding tend to present exceptional performance in other areas too, like admissions assessments (where relevant) and/or interviews.

As with all aspects of the Cambridge admissions process, we set conditional offers individually. Accordingly, should you receive an offer from us, it may differ from offers received by other people because our Admissions Tutors haven't taken your individual circumstances into account.

Our offer may require you to attain certain grades across a range of subjects taken in a single exam sitting. This is because excelling in exams sat concurrently is a good indicator that you will do well at Cambridge, where courses are mainly exam assessed.

Very occasionally, we may set an offer that exceeds your UCAS predictions in one or more subjects. We do this where we identify that exceeding your predictions would likely enable you to thrive more on your chosen course.

In short, by working towards and achieving a very strong portfolio of suitable high school qualifications, taken in a single sitting, Churchill entrants undertake the best possible preparation to excel.

Churchill's overarching approach to entry requirements and conditional offers is informed by the fact that Cambridge applicants are frequently predicted, and achieve, maximal grades in the highest-level academic qualifications they undertake. Therefore, Cambridge entrants usually exceed the University's typical offers, often by quite some margin. You can see this in the case of A Level, for example, in the University's annually-published "Undergraduate Admissions Statistics" summaries on the [Application Statistics](#) webpage. If we have a degree course that's right for you, you're one of the very ablest and highest-achieving students in your cohort, and your teachers or lecturers support you strongly, you are likely to be a serious candidate.

Useful links

- [University of Cambridge course list](#)
- [University of Cambridge typical offers](#)
- [University of Cambridge international entry requirements](#)
- [University of Cambridge application statistics](#)

How do I apply?

Cambridge colleges, including Churchill, have a common application process, which is explained on the University's [Applying to Cambridge](#) website and the pages linked from it. You should read these carefully and make sure you fully understand all elements of the process that are relevant to you.

You should especially review the [application dates and deadlines](#), noting that some components of your application may require contributions from other people that need to be completed within strict timeframes. It is your responsibility to make sure that all parts of your application are completed in full and on time. Regrettably, we cannot continue with applications that include late or missing components.



Useful links

- [University of Cambridge 'Applying to Cambridge'](#)
- [University of Cambridge application dates and deadlines](#)

How does Churchill make decisions about who to admit?

We're often asked how we reach our admissions decisions and what characterises the most competitive applications we receive. We assess applications holistically, with application profiles being moderated at both College and University levels.

Our assessment considers:

- Recent academic achievement, as evidenced by GCSEs, A Levels, other school-leaving qualifications, and high school transcripts;
- Quality of UCAS references and predicted grades, noting our comments above about conditional offers;
- Evidence of interest in the target course and of engagement with it outside the classroom;
- Contextual factors, such as signalled in the UCAS application, My Cambridge Application, Extenuating Circumstances Form (where relevant), etc.;
- Geo-demographic data and school-level indicators;

- Where relevant, performance in admissions assessments and/or supporting materials, such as written work, portfolios, etc.;
- Where relevant, performance in standardised tests of English language proficiency, like IELTS and/or TOEFL;
- Performance at interview, if invited.

Will I be interviewed?

At Churchill, we usually interview between 2/3 and 3/4 of our applicants each year.

When compared with the University's applicant fields, by subject, the students we invite to interview have normally done very well in one or more of:

- Public examinations and assessments;
- Grade predictions, underpinned by convincing supporting evidence;
- Admissions assessments and/or submitted written work.

Most interviewees are also supported by UCAS references which assert that they are very high performing in context.

After we have carefully and holistically considered all the applications we receive, we make conditional offers to those that are most competitive within our gathered field. These applicants often combine the highest grade achievements and/or predictions with UCAS references which indicate, with evidence, that they have been consistently and unequivocally performing at the absolute top of their cohort(s).



Useful links

- [Churchill College interviews](#)
- [University of Cambridge admissions assessments](#)
- [University of Cambridge Extenuating Circumstances form](#)
- [University of Cambridge Contextual data](#)

Why should I apply to Churchill?

Since Churchill College admitted our first students in the 1960s, our mission has been to address the challenges facing Britain and the world. Today this vision is more relevant than ever.

Across arts, sciences, humanities, and technologies, our students are the future's thinkers, urgently responding – dynamically, logically, and creatively – to great international issues, like sustainability, social justice, climate change, and global health.

Our community is diverse with a relaxed feel, and achieves outstanding academic results. Students benefit from excellent and affordable accommodation (over 40 per cent en suite), first-rate facilities (especially for sports, art, and music), and a great location. All undergraduates and many postgraduates (including families) live on our main site, set in a 42-acre park a short walk from Cambridge city centre. We're up the road from the University Library and the Sidgwick Site (arts and humanities), and effectively next door to the West Cambridge Site where many science courses are based.

Our students tell us that Churchill is their home: they rate our accommodation highly and they love our food!

Churchill admits around 140 new undergraduates each year, making us one of the larger Cambridge colleges in terms of cohort size. We have a large campus-based site, so – unusually within Cambridge – we have the space to offer pretty much everything you need in one place. Our libraries, gym, Music Centre, gardens, Dining Hall, theatre, and more are all on your doorstep.

“
If I had to describe Churchill in a word I would probably say it's unpretentious. And since when you're at Cambridge your College is kind of your home, having that level of comfort with it is just really important.”

Thea, Undergraduate

TIP: Hear from students sharing why they applied to Churchill, plus a virtual tour, [on our YouTube channel](#).

Living in College means you can easily access all these facilities, as well as our support services, leaving you free to concentrate on your studies and enjoy the benefits of being a Churchill and Cambridge student.

Churchill students are high-achieving, modest, and kind. They look out for one another, academically and socially, reflecting the fact that widening participation and inclusion are in our DNA. Undergraduates live and study alongside our many postgraduate students, working under the guidance of our large Fellowship of teachers, lecturers, professors, and researchers.

Churchill College's attitude is forward-looking, outward-reaching, and can-do. Our focus is on excellence and ensuring that all our students feel welcomed and supported as they realise their potential.



Useful links

- [Churchill College YouTube channel](#)

Where will I live at Churchill?

A significant additional advantage of Churchill is that we guarantee accommodation for the full duration of your three or four-year undergraduate course, on our main campus.

This helps build our strong sense of community. You'll live in a communal court, arranged around mixed staircases and shared by students from different subject and year groups, so you'll meet a diverse range of people from the moment you arrive.

Undergraduate rooms are modern, spacious, light, and warm. All have at least an individual basin, with over 40% being fully en suite. All have access to excellent shared bathrooms and laundry facilities, as well as free wireless internet. Simple meals can be prepared in snack kitchens, which contain fridges and combination microwaves.

Room rents vary with size and facilities, but all are affordable. Rent is payable for just 30 weeks per year and includes heating and internet.

You'll be able to choose the type of room you would like in an annual room ballot and while we can't always guarantee you your first choice of room, you will be allocated a room to suit your needs and budget.



We have five rooms that have been adapted for wheelchair users or those with restricted mobility. Details about Cambridge's provisions for students with disabilities is available from the [University's Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre \(ADRC\)](#).

Don't hesitate to get in touch with us or the ADRC if you have any questions or needs that you'd like to discuss. Churchill is a catered College with subsidised meal options for a great variety of dietary requirements. Eating in our Dining Hall is encouraged and an important part of College life.



Useful links

- [University of Cambridge Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre \(ADRC\)](#)
- [Churchill College living costs information](#)

How much does it cost to study at Churchill and what financial help is available?

If you want to study at Cambridge, there are two main costs you need to think about – tuition fees and living costs (including College charges).

Cambridge tuition fees are the same as most other universities in England. Living costs are often cheaper because undergraduates are usually only in residence – and only pay rent – during our University terms; a total of 30 weeks per year.

You can find out more on the [University's tuition fees and living costs webpage](#). Please note that international students and home students undertaking a second undergraduate degree are required to pay an extra College Fee. This is not to be confused with College charges, which are paid by everyone. For details about College Fees, if these are potentially relevant to you, see the “Undergraduate Tuition Fees” documents on the tuition fees webpage.

At Churchill, college charges (part of your living cost) are billed monthly, except for rent which is billed termly in advance. These cover your rent (if you live on-site) and any additional charges you incur, like meal purchases, printing, and electricity.

Rent

Your rent includes central heating, internet access in your room, wireless internet around College, and use of catering services and other facilities on-site (the gym, for example). Each room is banded and rents in the academic year 2023-24 range from £156.70 to £242.60 a week. Rents are determined annually, in agreement between College and student representatives.

Rent is normally payable for just 30 weeks, which covers the periods of residence dates set by the College. Rent is paid termly, in advance, at the beginning of each term. Termly rent is normally made for a minimum of 10 weeks. If you accept a room in College, you will be liable for rent for the whole academic year (i.e. for three terms a year).

This does not include vacation periods, which are outside the 30-week periods of residence. During vacation periods and subject to availability, it may be possible for you to remain at Churchill, though not necessarily in the same room you have during term-time.

Membership Bond

Every Churchill student is required to pay a Membership Bond of £250. This will be returned at the end of your studies, as a refund against your final bill.

Additional Charges

Other College charges include:

- Food purchased in the Dining Hall and Buttery
- Electricity (not heating) used in your room
- Competitive room contents insurance (about £15 per annum) against theft of belongings from your room
- Printing charges

Every two weeks during term, you will be sent an email with a breakdown of the food and drink you have purchased in College using your University card, so you can keep track of your spending.

If we make you an offer to study here, we'll ask you to evidence that you're able to fund your place.

For home fees students who're eligible for UK student finance and choose to apply to it for support with both tuition fees and maintenance, we'll ask you simply to send us your UK student finance breakdown when you get it. For everyone else, we'll ask you for evidence of readily available funds (liquid assets) to cover the full duration costs of your course, underwritten by one or more guarantors.



Cambridge and its colleges are committed to the principle that no suitably qualified home fees student should be deterred from applying to study here for financial reasons. There's more information on the University's [Financial Assistance](#) webpages, including particularly the [Cambridge Bursary Scheme](#) for home fees students from low income households.

If you're not a home fees student, or if you're not going to apply for UK student finance, then you must plan to fund the full duration costs of your course through evidenced private finance (liquid assets) and/or any bursaries or scholarships you are awarded. Churchill can only accept you as a student after you have evidenced you can fund the full cost of your course

Cambridge's financial support for international fees undergraduates is limited and highly competed for, and there are only a few full undergraduate scholarships available. You can read more on the University's [International Fees and Costs](#) page and the pages linked from it. Regrettably, Churchill does not offer College-based financial support for international fees undergraduates.



Useful links

- [Cambridge Bursary Scheme](#)
- [University of Cambridge financial assistance](#)
- [University of Cambridge tuition fees](#)
- [University of Cambridge living costs](#)
- [University of Cambridge international fees and costs](#)