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Teachers

Sign up to our monthly e-newsletter for up-to-date information on Oxford admissions and our various outreach events. Read and sign up at www.ox.ac.uk/enews.

Photography: John Cairns & Martin Handley



Welcome



Hi, I'm Elle! I'm from East London, and I've just started a graduate Law degree at Oxford, having finished my undergraduate Law degree here. I also attended UNIQ way back in the summer of 2012, and Oxford has had a soft spot in my heart ever since...

I applied to UNIQ during my first year at sixth-form because I wanted to be sure that a law degree was for me. Since I was about 13, I'd had the idea in my head but as UCAS rolled around I suddenly realised that I didn't really know much about what studying law might involve.

The perk of a free experience at an amazing university was just a bonus! UNIQ asks you to complete an application and tell them why you want to be on the programmes; I thought that even if I was unsuccessful I'd have the start of a proper UCAS personal statement. So, there were lots of reasons why I thought UNIQ might be a good idea and, nearly 5 years later, I can still tell you that it wasn't just a good idea, but one of my best!

When I finished UNIQ, I honestly thought it was one of the best times of my life. I'd had so many fantastic lectures and met some amazing friends. One of my closest friends at Oxford was someone I met on UNIQ.

“ IF YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT APPLYING FOR UNIQ, MY ONE PIECE OF ADVICE WOULD BE TO JUST DO IT! BE CONFIDENT IN YOUR ABILITY AND TAKE A CHANCE. IT'S SO WORTH IT! ”

ELLE, LAW

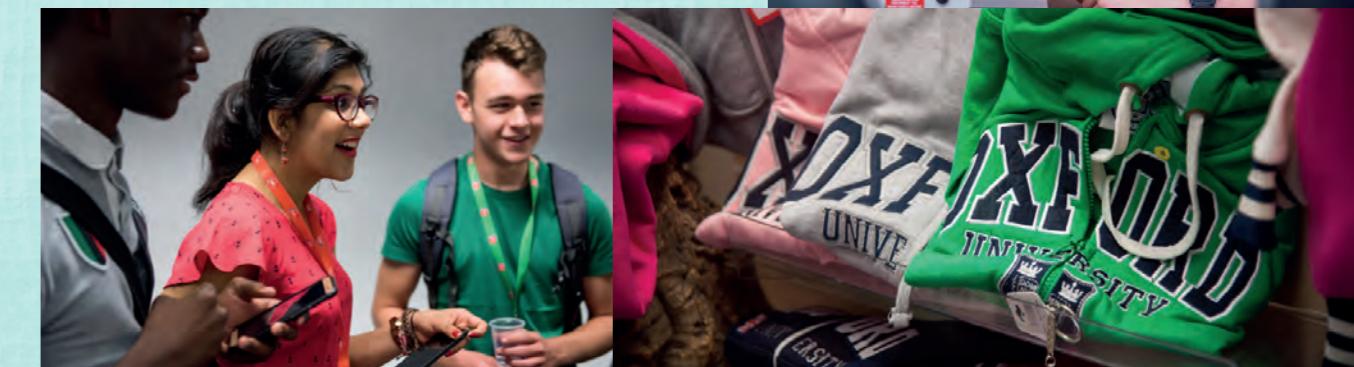
Aside from just being fun, UNIQ really helped me when UCAS application season came around. Like I said, my UNIQ application provided a really good starting point for my UCAS one, and I'd heard from ambassadors and tutors at Oxford about what sort of things my personal statement should contain and so I was able to get on with it pretty easily.

UNIQ itself is a really great thing to be able to put in your statement – it shows a real commitment to your academic interests and to university study. Interviews can also be a nerve-wracking process, but having been to Oxford before and spoken to real life tutors I knew that it was something I could do.

Although I was nervous about getting in, I wasn't intimidated and that felt amazing. Mostly, though, doing UNIQ convinced me that law and Oxford were for me, and having that confidence is so valuable.

As you might be able to tell, I loved law so much that I decided to do another year! This year is just a little more advanced than the undergraduate degree and I've had total choice over what I'm studying. When I finish I'm hoping to go on to become a barrister. Which, coincidentally, is what I thought I might do at the age of 13 too!

Elle, UNIQ Student 2012 and Oxford Graduate writing in 2016



What is UNIQ?

“ YOU ARE EXPOSED TO ACADEMICS, NEW LEARNING STYLES AND LIKE-MINDED STUDENTS, WHICH IS EVERYTHING YOU WANT WHEN TRYING TO PUSH YOURSELF INTELLECTUALLY

LILY, ENGLISH

- UNIQ is a range of free access programmes run by the University of Oxford for students in their first year of further education at a UK state school or college. An application to us could see you selected to take part in UNIQ Summer, UNIQ Spring or UNIQ Digital.

UNIQ began in 2010 with the aim of raising the aspirations of students studying at UK state schools and colleges regarding their higher education choices. Now UNIQ, through its range of summer schools, residential conference and digital learning platform, helps over 1,900 students each year to make informed decisions about higher education and competitive applications to Oxford. Since 2010, thousands of students have taken part in our programmes with the majority of those going on to make successful applications to Oxford or other leading universities. All of our programmes are completely free for students.



	UNIQ Summer	UNIQ Spring	UNIQ Digital
Where?	Oxford	Oxford	Home
When? *	July-August	April	March-October
How long?	1 week	3 days	Throughout
Places	875	100	1,000

* Dates and places are subject to variation year on year.
Check course information and dates before you apply.

Our Aims

We believe that each UNIQ participant is an exceptional young person with the potential to make an excellent application to a top university. We aim...

- To provide information, support and advice to enable young people to make informed decisions about higher education.

- To increase applications to the University of Oxford from students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and areas with a low rate of participation in higher education. For more information about the University's OFFA (Office for Fair Access) targets visit www.offa.org.uk.

UNIQ Summer

> The summer schools are UNIQ's flagship programme. Students come to Oxford for a week and stay in a college, attending an academic programme during the day and social activities in the evenings.

You will get first-hand experience of life at university, meet like-minded people and gain a deeper understanding of a subject that interests you. The UNIQ team are always on hand for help and advice, and you will receive 24/7 support throughout the week with live-in staff at your college.

The programme is completely free and even your travel to and from the summer school is covered.



“ BEFORE ATTENDING UNIQ I WAS UNCERTAIN ABOUT APPLYING. HOWEVER, AFTER EXPERIENCING LIFE AT OXFORD FOR A WEEK, I'M MUCH MORE CONFIDENT IT IS WHERE I WOULD LOVE TO GO.

HYWEL, POLITICS, PHILOSOPHY AND ECONOMICS

Academic Programme

UNIQ Summer lets you follow a full programme of academic sessions, including lectures and labs, throughout the week. You will be taught by Oxford academics and get to use departmental facilities – just like a real undergraduate!

In addition to lectures you might be asked to prepare some independent work for the end of the week where you will go through the topic in detail, either individually with a tutor or in a small group.

The academic programmes on UNIQ Summer are demanding but they are also fun and you'll get to look at your favourite subject in new and engaging ways.

Admissions Advice

We understand that aiming high and applying to top universities like Oxford can seem a little daunting. Throughout your time with us ambassadors and staff will be around to give guidance and answer any questions you might have. There will also be a range of dedicated sessions throughout the week providing information on all aspects of the application process.

Available Courses

We run summer courses in over 30 subjects, so there's plenty to choose from and almost certainly something to suit your interests.

Your UNIQ summer course will give you an insight into what studying at degree level, and at Oxford, is really like.

Have a look at page 12 for more information about courses.

UNIQ Spring



> UNIQ Spring is a 3-day residential event held in the Easter holidays.

Participants come to stay in Oxford, attending a programme of academic and university admissions sessions followed by social activities in the evenings. Students get to experience life at the University of Oxford, comprehensive admissions advice and a taste of the degree programmes offered here that are related to their interests.

Academic Programme

You'll attend academic sessions based on an area of your choice and get to experience a range of different subjects within that discipline. There are so many different degree programmes on offer at undergraduate level, some of them you may never even have heard of before, so UNIQ Spring is a great opportunity to try something new.

Admissions Support

UNIQ Spring offers participants a full day of intensive lectures and workshops with Oxford University admissions staff and student ambassadors who've been through the process themselves. We cover personal statements, admissions tests, written work and interviews. As well as participating in structured sessions you'll have plenty of opportunities to ask questions and discuss things throughout the day.

During your stay you will receive academic support from current students and staff which will continue online after you leave.



You'll have the opportunity to see different colleges and parts of the University as well as explore the city.



"I HAD AN AMAZING TIME AT UNIQ SPRING. I CAME AWAY FEELING A LOT MORE CONFIDENT ABOUT APPLYING AND EVEN MORE EXCITED TO GET THERE ONE DAY - I DIDN'T KNOW THAT WAS POSSIBLE.

ELEANOR, HUMANITIES

UNIQ Digital

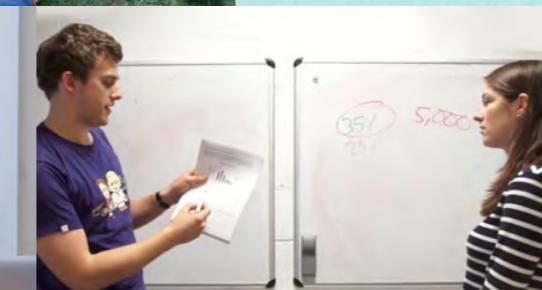
UNIQ Digital is an online learning platform which runs from March to October offering courses and content about studying at the University of Oxford.

Participants will get to explore courses available at the University, develop essential critical thinking skills and grow in confidence as they prepare for the university admissions process.

All successful UNIQ Spring and Summer participants will have access to the UNIQ Digital platform, as well as a large additional number of eligible students who apply but can't be offered a place on a residential programme.

All content is developed exclusively for UNIQ Digital. You'll get to engage with video content featuring real undergraduates discussing a wide variety of Oxford-related topics, lectures from University academics, and talks on essential information such as student finance and interview preparation.

Starting with the City and university life, you'll progress through a series of modules split into three distinct stages. The final stage of the course involves an exploration of the admissions process at Oxford, including how to construct a personal statement that works, admissions test preparation and guidance on interviews.



You'll learn important skills on UNIQ Digital including critical thinking.



Modules are released weekly and are made up of different media and interactive tasks like quizzes, discussions, projects and Q&A sessions. All tasks have reasonable deadlines to ensure that you are able to participate at a pace that is comfortable for you.

Each task completed comes with meaningful marking and personal feedback.

UNIQ Digital provides students with an honest and accurate representation of the University. You will get real advice and guidance from real people by communicating directly with current Oxford students and staff.

Just like our other programmes, it's all completely free!

"AFTER HEARING FROM CURRENT STUDENTS AND STAFF AT THE UNIVERSITY THROUGH THE VIDEOS AND CHATTING TO OTHER USERS, I REALISED THE PEOPLE WERE VERY REAL. COUPLED WITH THE USEFUL ADVICE I FOUND THE IDEA OF APPLYING MUCH MORE ACHIEVABLE.

HALIMA, ENGLISH

Our Courses

- On this page you'll learn more about the different kinds of course on offer and how to decide which one will suit you.

Course Choice

UNIQ courses cover a wide range of subjects and are an excellent opportunity to deepen your knowledge and understanding about a subject you love, or try something completely new!

It's important to carefully consider your interests and skills, and to research which courses would best suit you before making a university application. When you apply for UNIQ you'll tell us about the specific course, or courses, you'd like to do as well as a general subject area you're interested in.

Which course will suit me?

If you aren't sure what to apply for a good starting point is to think about what interests you and what you enjoy.

I'm interested in...

Languages & literature	Classics Beginners' Languages Theology Linguistics
Medical research	Oncology Biomedical Sciences Experimental Psychology
History	History of Art Classical Archaeology
Code breaking	Computer Science
Maths and science	Materials Science Earth Sciences Biochemistry Maths and Statistics
Current affairs	Geography History: Race and Protest

Learning out and about in Oxford

Because the University of Oxford buildings and facilities are spread all around the city you'll get to see a lot just by going from session to session. At university most of your learning will happen outside of a lecture theatre and so many UNIQ Summer courses include trips both in and around Oxford. In the city centre there are lots of different libraries and museums, and a diverse botanic garden. Some of the trips are a bit further afield, and in the past students have been taken to places including the woods, local hospitals, a quarry, a car factory and even a synchrotron.



UNIQ Summer

Academic sessions are a core part of our summer schools. Students explore one subject in depth for the week and get to know what it's like to study at undergraduate level. Alongside experiencing university-style teaching you may also get to exercise your independent study skills and produce an essay or project to discuss with a tutor at the end of the week in a tutorial.



Alongside more well-known courses like Law, Maths or English UNIQ gives you the chance to learn about things you might not necessarily have considered or even heard of before. Subjects like Human Sciences, Egyptology and Earth Sciences are a few examples of the courses we've offered in the past, opening up a wider world of academic interests to students. You get the benefit of trying a subject out for a week to find out if it's something you'd like to pursue.

UNIQ Spring

UNIQ Spring gives you the chance to explore an academic area for a day, giving you a broader understanding of the options available to you at degree level and the way in which ideas are approached by different subjects.

On your application you'll choose a subject strand* which will include sessions delivered by academics on a range of related topics in that area. Subject strands are generally grouped along the lines of the major academic disciplines at Oxford, for example: physical and life sciences, social sciences, humanities and languages.

*Courses & subject strands offered on UNIQ can vary each year. Check the website for further details.

" I LEARNT ABOUT THE COURSES I WAS INTERESTED IN AND ABOUT COURSES I HADN'T HEARD OF, WHICH HAS MADE ME MORE AWARE OF THE DIFFERENT OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO ME WHEN APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY.

NILOUFAR, POLITICS, PHILOSOPHY AND ECONOMICS

Your time in Oxford

➤ On this page you can find out what staying in Oxford will be like outside of study time.

If you are invited to come to Oxford for our UNIQ Spring or Summer programmes you'll get to experience first-hand what life as an undergraduate here is like and spend time with current students.



A UNIQ residential will not only develop your academic skills but your social skills and independence too.

Exploring the city

Whilst you are here you might explore the Bodleian libraries (the second largest library in the UK with over 12 million items), go punting on the River Cherwell or explore one of Oxford's many museums. The University's colleges can be found all over the city centre and, as well as getting to know your own UNIQ college, you'll also get to visit other colleges too.

But life doesn't stop at the University's doors! Oxford is a fascinating, vibrant city with plenty to discover. There are loads of shops, cafés, parks, historical sites and much more to see, so even in your free time you'll never be short of things to do. If you aren't sure a member of the UNIQ team will be happy to help!

Accommodation

At the University of Oxford all undergraduates are members of a college where they sleep, eat, study and have fun. Colleges provide students with pastoral and academic support and are a home away from home during their degree. Each UNIQ student is allocated to a University of Oxford college so you can experience life in one for yourself.

You'll have your own private study bedroom and eat most of your meals in the college with other UNIQ students. UNIQ staff will be on duty 24 hours a day to make sure you are safe and comfortable.



Site Managers and Ambassadors

Site managers are responsible for looking after everyone in college. They organise activities like tours or information sessions and make sure everyone knows what they're doing! If you're feeling worried, homesick or just have a question your site manager will be there to help. All Site Managers are fully first aid and safeguarding trained.

Ambassadors are students studying a similar course to the one you've chosen and will be with you in all your academic sessions. They make sure you get to where you need to go and are there to look out for you all day. They're great people to chat to and can answer all your questions about Oxford, life at university and applying. Our ambassadors will work with you throughout the week and give you an honest, candid view of what it is like to live and study in Oxford.

Social Activities

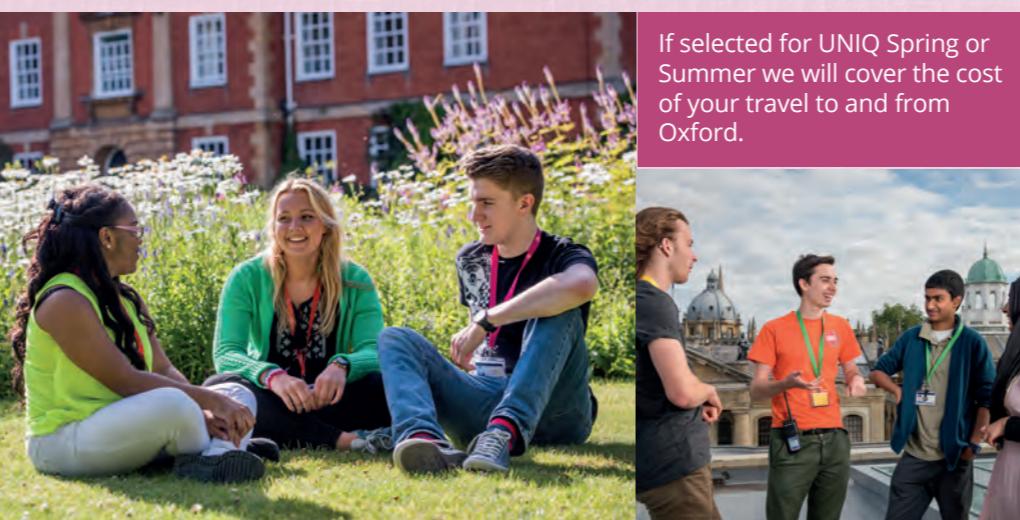
An exciting part of university life is the number of new things you can try and the people that you meet. In the evenings there will be a full programme of social activities where you'll get to meet people from different UNIQ courses and college groups. Each evening you're with us there will be something different to do. Activities we've run in the past include sports in the park, a scavenger hunt, a quiz, ghost trails, mini-lectures and comedy shows.

FAQs

> Got a question? See answers to our frequently asked questions below.

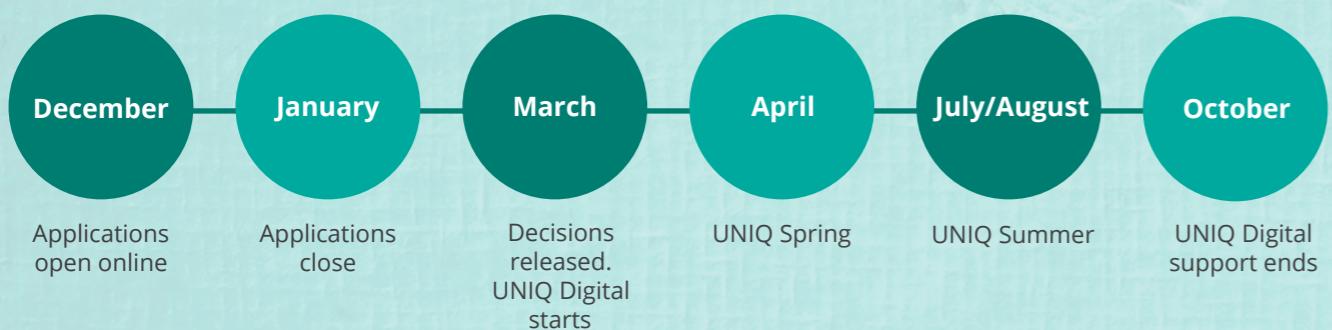
I live close enough to commute, do I have to stay in Oxford?

Yes! Staying away from home is a big part of the university experience – it gives you the opportunity to immerse yourself in your study and develop new friendships with people from all kinds of different backgrounds. Because we think it's so important, the residential element of these programmes is compulsory.



How to apply

> For a detailed list of dates and to start your application, please visit www.uniq.ox.ac.uk.



You will need to provide:

- At least six GCSEs (or equivalent) with a preference for A*/A grades
- At least 3 A level (or equivalent) courses which you are currently studying
- Written evidence of your academic interests and motivation to participate in UNIQ
- Teacher referee contact details (your teacher will only be contacted if you are successful in receiving a place on UNIQ Spring and Summer only)

Things to consider before applying:

Eligibility

- You must be studying at a UK state school or college.
- Only students in their first year of Further Education can apply.
- You must be available for the duration of the courses to which you are applying. Please check the website carefully for dates.
- Online applications must be submitted by the given deadline. We are unable to consider late applications for any reason.

Eligibility requirements are subject to change. Please check the website or contact us for more information.

Course Requirements

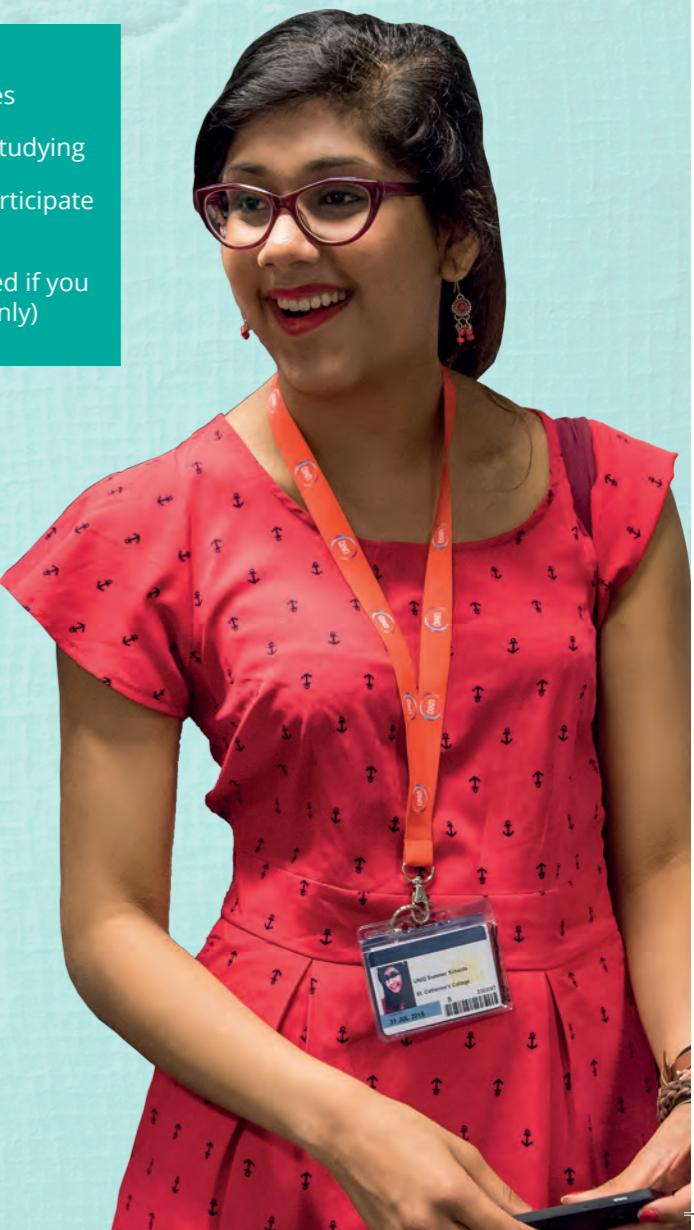
Applications for places are highly competitive and some courses may require you to have a particular number of GCSE A* grades, or be studying particular subjects at A level, to be considered. You can find out more about individual course requirements at www.uniq.ox.ac.uk

Course Choice

In most cases, you can apply for a choice of up to three courses in order of your preference. However, for certain courses (e.g. Medicine) you will not be able to select any other course preferences.

“I LEARNT ABOUT THE DIFFERENT COURSES I WAS INTERESTED IN AND ABOUT COURSES I HADN'T HEARD OF, WHICH HAS MADE ME MORE AWARE OF THE DIFFERENT OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO ME WHEN APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY”

SHAKERA, MATHEMATICS



UNIQ People

Since 2010 UNIQ has brought together thousands of participants, most of whom have gone on to apply and gain a place at Oxford or another top university.

We asked UNIQ alumni who are now studying at Oxford to share some personal reflections on their time at the summer school and what they are doing now:

Sarah, UNIQ Spanish Studying: English and French at Magdalen College
When did you first develop an interest in the course you are currently studying at Oxford?

'Towards the end of Year 12 I started to realise how well my subjects linked and researched different courses. I really appreciate the variety my course offers - I can go from a discussion on the history of English, to a class on Old English poetry to a discussion on French literature.'

How are you finding your first year and the transition from sixth form/college - did any aspect of UNIQ help you prepare for this?

'It's really amazing - I can't believe how much of the first year has gone already! It's so intense and so much is happening, but I really love it.'

The tutorials are such a fantastic way to extend my ideas. I still use the essay researching and writing techniques I learnt at UNIQ and have found them so helpful. The experience of the tutorial on the summer school also really helped prepare me for the type of work at Oxford.'

What advice would you give to someone thinking of applying for UNIQ?

'It will be such an incredible adventure and you'll find yourself learning more than you ever thought you could.'

Alex, UNIQ Physics Studying: Engineering at St Edmund Hall

What is it like being an undergraduate at Oxford?

'Whilst the workload can be heavy at times, once you learn how to manage it (which pretty much everyone does!) you can have so much fun. Whether it's music, drama, or just about anything you can think of that floats your boat, you'll be able to get involved either in college or uni societies.'

What was the best thing about going on UNIQ?

'I think the best thing about going on UNIQ was the general experience of spending a week in Oxford and making loads of like-minded new friends. For me, it made me really want to come to Oxford because I thought it seemed like a truly amazing environment to live and learn in. UNIQ also helped hugely in deciding what subject I wanted to study, even though it wasn't the one I studied on UNIQ.'

What kind of opportunities did applying to UNIQ open up to you?

'UNIQ opened up many opportunities and I think it helped in making my application to Oxford successful. The advice given on personal statements, interviews and admissions test was invaluable. It was really cool that I made friends who I've met again since coming to Oxford.'



Catherine, UNIQ Linguistics Studying: Spanish and Linguistics at Exeter College
When did you first become interested in the course that you are currently studying?

'I always enjoyed languages but don't think I fully considered studying them at university until I actually attended UNIQ. It was whilst on that course that I realised just how much you can go on to do with a languages degree.'

How did you find the transition from sixth form to university?

'Although the transition was quite challenging, UNIQ meant that by the time I arrived in Oxford, I had already been to some lectures and a tutorial, which definitely calmed my nerves.'

What kind of opportunities do you think UNIQ opened up to you?

'I honestly would not be where I am without UNIQ. I probably wouldn't be doing the course that I am, and I definitely wouldn't be an Oxford University student.'

Josh, UNIQ Biology Studying: Biology at Balliol College
Is Oxford what you expected?

'Oxford is nothing like what I expected before UNIQ, but in the best way possible. Hardly any of the stereotypes are really true and the people aren't the way the media can make them out to be - I've made a lot of friends from all sorts of backgrounds different to my own. Oxford is not a stuffy museum piece but a vibrant place to live and study.'

What would you say to someone who was thinking about applying to UNIQ?

'Just do it would be my best advice! I applied because I saw a flyer in my Sixth Form social centre, not even thinking about going to Oxford, and I haven't looked back since. Everyone at UNIQ is really friendly and the week is so inspiring.'

What was the best thing about going on UNIQ?

'Definitely the people! A lot of the time at school you aren't exposed to many people with similar ambitions to yourself, but at UNIQ you are thrown together with loads of them.'

"THE OPPORTUNITY IS THERE - YOU JUST NEED TO APPLY. YOU'LL LEARN THAT THERE'S NO HIDDEN FORMULA FOR OXFORD, YOU JUST NEED TO DEMONSTRATE YOUR ABILITY FOR YOUR SUBJECT."

HARRY, LAW WITH FRENCH LAW

Other opportunities

The University runs a number of outreach activities and supports the initiatives of partner organisations.



Location: Online
Open to: Up to Year 13

Could we live without laws? Is time travel possible? Is war ever a good thing?

Oxplore is a free online space to allow you to answer these and many more big questions. We're working with top thinkers from Oxford University and beyond to help you to consider these important issues. Whatever your subject interests, Oxplore has lots of fantastic content that will really get you thinking - good practice if you are considering applying to a great university like Oxford in the future. You'll be able to share your thoughts, and we'd love you to ask us your big questions too!

Find out more:
www.oxplore.org



Location: UK
Open to: Year 12

These conferences are designed to provide up-to-date information on the application and admissions procedures at both Oxford and Cambridge as well as offering an insight into student life. The conferences cover courses available at the universities, the application process and interviews, student life, student finance and careers. Admissions tutors, academic staff and current undergraduates from both universities are also on hand to answer students' questions.

Find out more:
www.studentconferences.org.uk



Location: UK
Open to: Years 11-13

Target Oxbridge is a free programme that aims to help black students and students of mixed race with black heritage increase their chances of getting into the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge (known collectively as Oxbridge). The various strands of the programme focus on intellectual, cultural and social development irrespective of personal or economic barriers. Since launching in 2012, Target Oxbridge has helped 30 students to secure Oxbridge offers.

Find out more:
www.targetoxbridge.co.uk



Location: IntoUniversity Centres across the UK

Open to: Primary and secondary school pupils and young people up to Year 13.

IntoUniversity provide local learning centres where young people are inspired to achieve and attain either a university place or another chosen aspiration. There are two main elements to the IntoUniversity programme: academic support and mentoring, which takes place for individual students within the centre, and FOCUS in which a whole class can participate.

Find out more:
www.intouniversity.org



Location: Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes, Swindon, West Berkshire

Open to: Year 12 and 13

The Pathways to Law programme gives support and encouragement to academically able students from non-privileged backgrounds who are interested in law, providing access to both top-tier universities and the legal profession. Each year we take on a new cohort of 35 Year 12 students from our local area and we support them through their A Levels. Pathways to Law delivers a full and varied programme which includes a range of sessions over the two years on a diverse range of topics, including choosing and applying to a university, CV and interview techniques, subject-specific revision sessions and workshops on different areas of the law.

Find out more:
www.law.ox.ac.uk/admissions/pathways-law



Location: Oxford
Open to: Schools and families

Oxford for Oxford is a new initiative operating in partnership with key state schools in the Oxford city area. The project works to support pupil attainment and promote connections between teachers, students, families and the University.

Find out more:
oxfordforoxford@admin.ox.ac.uk

Every school in the country is linked with an Oxford college specific to your Local Authority region.

To find out more visit the Oxford website: www.ox.ac.uk