

# Oxbridge Preparation Programme







MPW has been helping students get into Oxford and Cambridge since 1973. In fact, our college was founded with the explicit aim of doing just that.

Since then, we have grown into one of the UK's leading groups of independent sixth-form colleges. Now we prepare over 600 students aged 14-19 for exam success in a broad range of subjects at GCSE and A level. Our relaxed, collegiate atmosphere and small class sizes provide excellent preparation for life at university. Every year we prepare between twenty and thirty students for application to Oxford and Cambridge. Over the past 20 years we have helped close to 700 applicants, many of whom have been successful in winning a place.

**Aspiring Oxbridge students at MPW are automatically enrolled onto our preparation programme, free of charge. As part of the preparation programme, you will automatically become a member of the Oxbridge society.**



The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge have a lot in common, including their collegiate structure, more personalised teaching methods and a wealth of resources available to students. Depending on the course, conditional A level offers range between A\*A\*A – AAA.

### What makes our Oxbridge Preparation Programme special?

We understand that everyone's journey is unique and, dependent on the course you wish to apply for at Oxbridge, you will require bespoke guidance and support. As a member of our Oxbridge programme, you will get additional lessons dedicated specifically to developing and strengthening your Oxbridge application:

- Working in a small group of bright and enthusiastic students you will participate in our regular seminar-style lessons, Oxbridge talks and special Oxbridge events.
- In addition, you will receive individual guidance and support on your application, assessments and interview. You will also be guided with subject-specific preparation for your Oxbridge assessment. For example, if applying for Engineering, you will receive some additional sessions in Physics. You can then continue with your preparation via our 1:1 support route.



*“Entry into the English education system (which is very different from that in my home country) was a very unexpected turn in my life and I believe MPW was a great place for that. The college provided a gentle transition to the new environment, both in terms of academia and the country, and guided me carefully through the stressful period of one-year A level, as well as helped me to make good use of this time.”*

Anna achieved A\*A\*A\*A. Now reading Natural Sciences at the University of Cambridge



*“MPW is a challenging and competitive educational environment and represents to me a ‘second chance’. A place where I was able to go and reset and switch my mentality, presenting the chance to achieve things that seemed implausible in the place I was in when I first joined. I felt throughout the year I was always given the transparency and consideration I was given on day one and I am forever thankful to MPW for facilitating a complete turnaround in my academic journey.”*

Alfie achieved an A\* (improved from a grade B during his 1-year retake at MPW). Now reading Biological and Behavioural Sciences at the University of Cambridge.



*Below we have selected the key milestones of a successful Oxbridge application and explain how we will support you during your programme with us:*

## Personal Statement

**This is required from all Oxbridge candidates. A competitive Personal Statement allows you to stand out and demonstrate your suitability for your chosen course at Oxbridge.**

How do you compete with the best?

Discussion of academic enrichment will usually take up the majority of a competitive Personal Statement. Your Personal Statement is your unique opportunity to demonstrate your subject-specific academic exploration that both builds on and goes beyond your A levels.

You will be encouraged to explore your subject in greater depth in your own time, and will deliver class presentations on your exploration. There are ample suitable resources available.

We will guide you with constructing an effective Personal Statement which reflects on your wider reading, critical thinking, work experience and leadership skills.

## Oxbridge tests and assessments

**This is a crucial aspect of your preparation and, dependent on the course you choose to apply for, you will be required to take specific Oxbridge tests and assessments (in addition to your A levels).**

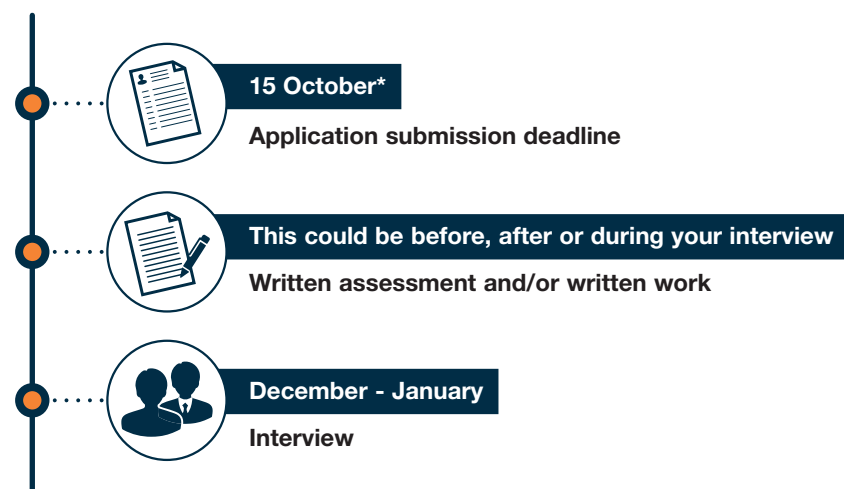
How do you excel in your Oxbridge tests and assessments? How do universities use these results when selecting successful applicants?

Both universities require some applicants to take special tests and assessments and submit samples of written work as part of their application.

At Cambridge, most applicants are required to take a written assessment. This could be before, after or during your interview. These provide an assessment of relevant skills (writing and language ability) and your level of knowledge and understanding for the course you applied for. Oxford requires applicants to take written tests before interview for most courses.

During your programme, you will not only learn more about the specific test you need to take, but will also get a chance to prepare, practise and learn from the feedback that you receive. All this will give you a chance to showcase your ability on the big day.

## Oxbridge Application Timeline



*\*Except when the 15<sup>th</sup> lands on a weekend.*



**“** *The overall criteria for selection are: candidates should be able to listen effectively and present reasoned arguments orally; candidates should be able to understand and analyse written work and show they can present reasoned arguments on paper; and candidates should show motivation, interest, and creativity in the areas they have studied.* **”**

**Admissions Department, Keble College, Oxford**

## Oxbridge interview

**Your interview with academic staff from Cambridge or Oxford will determine if you are best-suited for studies at Oxbridge. No one is offered a place to study at Oxbridge without an interview, therefore preparation is key.**

What should you expect from your Oxbridge interview and what are admission tutors looking for? How should you present and prepare yourself?

Oxbridge interviews are unique and very different, partly because all applicants are brilliant and promise equally outstanding results.

Our subject experts have a lot of advice to give you. During your programme, you will get more insight into Oxbridge interviews in general as well as subject-specific guidance.

You will also have Oxbridge mock interview practice. This will give you a chance to act on specific feedback relating to your performance before your big day.

## Critical thinking, excellent problem solving and intellectual flexibility

**A successful Oxbridge candidate is expected to demonstrate outstanding factual knowledge, motivation and suitability to small group teaching. Furthermore, successful candidates need to display critical thinking and problem-solving skills as well as intellectual flexibility.**

During your interview, admissions tutors will ask you challenging, academic questions to determine whether you can problem-solve and build on the knowledge you already have.

A good example of an assessment which aims to assess your critical thinking and problem-solving skills is TSA (Thinking Skills Assessment).

During your programme you will have additional lessons aimed specifically at developing your critical thinking, problem solving and mathematical skills which you will need for a successful progression to Oxbridge.



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