

A photograph of a pond with lily pads and a reflection of a building. The lily pads are in various shades of green and purple. The building's reflection is clear in the water, showing architectural details like arches and a tower. The sky is a deep blue.

*Christ Church*

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# Welcome to Christ Church

Christ Church is one of the 30 undergraduate colleges of the University of Oxford. It is situated in the heart of the city of Oxford, close to the main University facilities and adjacent to Christ Church Meadow and the Isis and Cherwell Rivers.

Christ Church was founded in 1525 by Cardinal Wolsey as Cardinal College. Wolsey fell from power before his ambitious grand plan was completed, and Henry VIII refounded the college as Christ Church in 1546. The Cardinal's red hat, which is preserved in the Christ Church Library, is still used in the college crest, while a full-length portrait of Henry VIII now hangs in the Hall.

Over the years Christ Church has had many distinguished students, tutors, and visiting academics. These include the philosopher John Locke, the physicists Robert Hooke and Albert Einstein, the poets Philip Sidney and W.H. Auden, the broadcaster David Dimbleby, the screenwriter and founder of *Comic Relief* Richard Curtis, and thirteen British prime ministers. Charles Dodgson, who under the pen name Lewis Carroll wrote *Alice in Wonderland*, was a maths tutor at Christ Church and Alice was the real-life daughter of the then Dean of the College. Christ Church's most famous landmark, Tom Tower, was designed by Christopher Wren, who was also the architect of St Paul's Cathedral in London.

But Christ Church is not only famous for its illustrious history. Today, the College continues to attract talented students from many different backgrounds and with a wide range of interests, both academic and extra-curricular. By combining a friendly and inclusive environment with an ongoing tradition of academic excellence, Christ Church's future looks just as bright as its past.

Front cover: Hall reflected in Tom Quad fountain.

Inside cover: Fountain with statue of Mercury in Tom Quad, Christ Church.

# Academic life – studying at Christ Church



Christ Church offers an intensive academic experience within a supportive, collegial environment. The College brings together people from a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures, all of whom share a common enthusiasm for the study of their subject.

At Oxford, students are taught in university-wide lectures, small-group classes, and labs or practicals. These forms of teaching are underpinned by regular, college-based meetings known as tutorials. Tutorials are held once or twice a week with your tutor and at most one or two other students. These meetings are the focal point for teaching and learning at Oxford, and provide an opportunity for you to engage critically with your week's study through debate and discussion with your tutor.

Thanks to the tutorial system, students receive individual and highly personalised attention from a tutor who is actively involved in research and who is often a leading expert in his or her field. Tutorials are not a passive form of learning, but instead depend on active participation from both sides. You are expected

to be prepared to discuss your thoughts and ideas with your tutor, who in turn offers suggestions, encouragement, and constructive criticism to help you extend and deepen your understanding of the topic. Through regular tutorials, you will learn to think independently and critically, will never be content with a merely superficial understanding of a subject, and will discover how to form, express and, when necessary, revise or defend your own views.

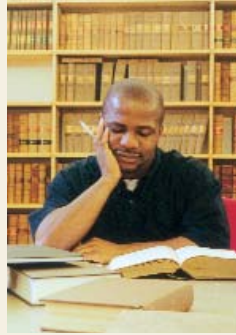
A significant proportion of your working week is spent preparing for tutorials. The form this preparation takes depends on the subject. You may be asked to write an essay, answer a group of focused questions, or complete a set of problem sheets. All tutorial teaching is integrated with lectures, classes, and practicals. Typically, scientists spend a significant amount of time



in the lab, whilst students in the humanities and social sciences tend to spend more time working independently in college or faculty libraries.

Though you are given individual feedback on the work you produce for your tutorials, this work does not count towards your final degree classification. Instead, tutorials are designed to promote learning free from the pressures of formal marking. Formal assessment is primarily done through exams, most of which are taken at the end of the final year of study. There are often opportunities for research projects and extended essays, which are then marked as part of the final degree classification.

Overseeing your studies at Christ Church is a personal tutor, normally a tutor in your subject. It is your personal tutor who checks that academic arrangements are in place and working well, guides you in the choice of optional subjects, and arranges tutorial teaching. Your personal tutor is also the person you can turn to for help with everything from navigating library and lab resources at Oxford to where to obtain advice about possible future careers.



*“I have always felt safe in the knowledge that if I had a problem, my tutors would help me.”*

A wide range of courses is available at Oxford, the vast majority of which are offered at Christ Church. All our courses initially provide a broad foundation in the subject before allowing scope for specialisation in the later years of study. The course content and structure do not vary from college to college, nor do the exams.

The courses on offer at Oxford are academic and theoretical, and do not ‘train’ you for a particular job. Our degrees nevertheless prepare you for many different kinds of careers. Learning through the tutorial system is a process that broadens your outlook, nurtures your independence of thought, and develops tolerance and understanding of other points of view, all skills highly valued by employers.

### **Graduate Studies**

Graduate students play an important role in the life of Christ Church. At any one time, we have around 260 students studying for higher degrees and diplomas, about half of whom are from overseas. Details of graduate programmes can be found in the University of Oxford Graduate Studies Prospectus, which is available online at: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/postgraduate](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/postgraduate)

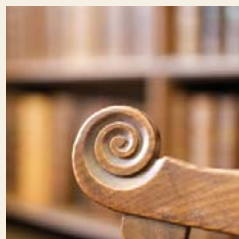


Further information about graduate studies at Christ Church is available from our Tutor for Graduates at: [tutor.graduates@chch.ox.ac.uk](mailto:tutor.graduates@chch.ox.ac.uk)

### Scholarships, Awards and Financial Assistance

As is the case at all Oxford colleges, no awards are offered on entry to Christ Church, apart from Organ and Choral Scholarships. All undergraduates are considered for a variety of scholarships and other awards on academic grounds for their second and subsequent years. Organ Scholarships and Academical Clerkships (Choral Scholarships) are awarded in most years. Organ Scholars are expected to study music; Academical Clerks may study any subject. In addition, Instrumental Awards are offered to undergraduates in recognition of their contribution to the musical life of the College.

We are aware that the issue of student finance is a growing concern and possible barrier to access. We offer generous financial support to students who need it, in the form of bursaries, grants (for books, travel, and vacation residence), and interest-free loans, meaning that no student with the ability and



*“Oak panelling and dreaming spires aside, Christ Church has a really friendly atmosphere which makes studying here not only rewarding, but lots of fun too!”*

potential to study at Oxford should be deterred from making an application to us based on financial grounds. Further details can be found in the course supplement at the back of this publication.

### Library

The College boasts some excellent resources to help its students with their academic work. The spacious Christ Church Library houses a collection of well over 160,000 books, including many of the core texts required for taught courses, in addition to numerous early printed books and manuscripts used by researchers. It is generally regarded as the largest and best-resourced library in Oxford outside the world-famous University library, the Bodleian. There is also a separate Law Library with a valuable collection of legal works, which is open 24 hours a day.

### Computer Facilities

The College's two well-equipped computer rooms are available for use by all students. The terminals are fully networked, giving students access to email and the internet, as well as offering a full software package, including word processing, presentation



tools, and teaching software such as that used for logic tuition. All student accommodation at Christ Church is also fitted with an internet connection point, which allows students who have their own computer or laptop the opportunity to use the internet from their own rooms free of charge.

### Picture Gallery

Christ Church is fortunate in having an important collection of Old Master paintings and drawings housed in our own Picture Gallery. It includes works by Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, Rubens, Van Dyck, and the Carracci. There are also frequent special exhibitions of both historical and contemporary art, including undergraduates' work. The Picture Gallery is a convenient and invaluable resource to students of Fine Art, History of Art, and related disciplines, as well as those who simply enjoy the visual arts in general.

### Art Room

We are fortunate in having an Art Room and Art Tutor available to all students, whatever subject they may be studying. The Art Room is very popular and enjoyed



by a wide cross-section of the College's members. It is equipped with basic artists' needs (materials are for sale) and lots of space in which to work. The Art Tutor (who also looks after our Fine Art students) offers afternoon and evening classes such as life drawing and printmaking, as well as friendly, informal advice, and organises visits, discussions, and video displays. Resident artists are also invited, and the Art Room is used for displays of work and exhibitions.



## College life – living at Christ Church

Students from many different backgrounds and with a very wide range of interests come to study at Christ Church. With over 400 undergraduates, 260 graduate students, and 100 teaching and research staff, we are one of the larger Oxford colleges and offer places for the majority of undergraduate courses available at the University. As such, our students form part of a diverse, vibrant, and very active academic and social community.

### Accommodation

All students can live in college rooms throughout their time at Christ Church. Although our buildings have been built over many centuries, rooms have been modernised and offer spacious, comfortable accommodation. First-year rooms are allocated; in subsequent years, rooms are chosen by ballot.

Most accommodation is found on the main college site. Rooms vary from traditional Oxford 'sets' (one or two bedrooms and a sitting room or study) to modern single study-bedrooms. All have a bed, wardrobe, desk, armchairs, wash hand-basin, and shaver point. Some have an en-suite shower and toilet; for the rest, bathrooms, showers, and toilets are abundant and



*“Dance, sing, act, get into student politics, paint – and if a society doesn't already exist, create it.”*

conveniently located. A fridge is provided in each room, and students may bring a kettle and toaster.

About 60 undergraduates live in the modern Liddell Building, shared with another college and just a short walk or bike ride away. This building consists of three and four bedroom flats with their own kitchens. It is popular with final-year students wanting a more independent lifestyle as they approach their examinations.

One flat in the Liddell Building is equipped for up to three disabled residents, and single rooms for disabled students are available on the main site. It is important to recognise that the College was built on different





*“The College is always supportive and sympathetic to students’ needs...”*

levels over five centuries and so access to some areas might be a problem, though further accessibility measures are being introduced. Applicants with particular requirements are invited to visit the College to see for themselves any potential problems and to discuss with us how these might be overcome.

### **Meals**

Although there are no self-catering facilities on the main site where the majority of undergraduates live, most students enjoy eating together in Hall.

Self-service breakfast and lunch are available every weekday with brunch on Saturday and Sunday. There are two dinner sittings each evening in Hall – informal at 6.20pm and formal at 7.20pm when academic gowns are worn and tutors attend. Breakfast, lunch, and brunch are on a pay-as-you-eat basis; dinner is charged to termly accounts. Students are welcome to bring one or two guests.

There is a good selection of tasty food at reasonable prices, including a range of vegetarian options. Special diets can also be catered for.

### **Support and Welfare**

We recognise that there may be times when life at university becomes stressful, and so have in place a network of college welfare representatives, comprising fully-trained staff and students, who are available to listen and help with anxieties or problems.

The College Chaplain will also lend a sympathetic and confidential ear, whether you are a church-goer or not. The Chaplain makes it a priority to get to know as many members of Christ Church as possible, helping them to adapt to university life. The Chaplain is available daily in College and lives nearby in order to be accessible to students whenever they might need to have a chat.

The University also runs a counselling service which Christ Church members may take advantage of if they wish. OUSU (Oxford University Student Union) is among other organisations offering various kinds of support services to undergraduates.

We have a college nurse who holds a surgery on weekday mornings and can be contacted at other times. The college doctors provide medical care



under the National Health Service. There is also a college dentist who can offer emergency treatment.

### **Social Life**

Christ Church offers clubs, societies, and activities to satisfy and develop a wide range of interests. The college students' union, known as the 'Junior Common Room' or JCR, coordinates social events and generally looks after the well-being of undergraduates.

The common room is furnished with table tennis and pool tables, and next door there is a widescreen TV with satellite channels and a DVD player. A number of subject-specific societies arrange dinners, speakers, and discussions. Discos are held regularly, and other events include band nights (to which you can bring your own band!), quiz nights, trips out, and activities that raise money for charity. The centre for many of these events is the college bar, the Undercroft, which is open from 7pm to 11pm every night.

In addition to the extra-curricular opportunities available at Christ Church, all students are eligible to join any of the more than 300 University societies.

*“One of the best attractions of Christ Church as an undergraduate is the environment: you meet such a diverse range of people that any worries about stereotypes are soon dispelled.”*





### Sport

The Christ Church sports ground is among the best in the University with excellent pitches and a friendly bar. It is a short distance from the College on Iffley Road. Many different sports are catered for: badminton, basketball, cricket, cross-country, football, hockey, netball, pool, rowing, rugby, squash, table football, and tennis are only some of the options available to all students. Everyone is welcome to participate at a level that suits his or her abilities. There are various inter-collegiate competitions, but it is possible to get involved even if you are more enthusiastic and willing than highly skilled or experienced.

### Music

Music plays a large part in the life of the College and is enjoyed on many different levels. In addition to the Cathedral Choir, there is also a more relaxed College Choir, open to both women and men. Concerts are given regularly in the Cathedral by a wide variety of performers from within the College and beyond, ranging from small chamber groups to full orchestras. The Music Society organises an extremely successful annual Music Festival. Those with more contemporary

interests are invited to showcase their talents at the termly 'open mic' night. There is also a Music Room which all undergraduates are able to use. It is equipped with one of the College's fine Steinway grand pianos.

### Drama

Christ Church undergraduates have a long tradition of writing, acting, and producing, both within the College and in productions organised through University theatrical societies. First-time actors, directors, and playwrights, as well as more experienced theatre-hands will find many opportunities to become actively involved in drama during their time at Christ Church.

### Working in the Community

Whilst enjoying all that is on offer at Christ Church and the University, many students also get involved in helping people in the wider community. They can be found caring for Oxford's homeless, visiting immigration detainees, and helping in local schools or drama projects. Most popular of all is our Home Learning Scheme, which links Christ Church students to local families with children whom they visit weekly to act as mentors and help with their learning.



# Making an application

The admissions process to the University of Oxford is uniform across all colleges, with college tutors in each subject making judgements and decisions based on a commonly agreed set of subject-specific criteria.

The tutors at Christ Church admit students solely on the basis of their academic abilities and potential, assessing achievement in the light of individual circumstances. We invest a great deal of time and effort into the selection of our students, and each applicant to Christ Church can expect his or her application to be considered very carefully.

We seek to admit the students who are best suited to the courses we offer and the way in which we teach them. Our tutors have to make very fine distinctions amongst many, very well-qualified applicants, which means they take into account all the information available to them. Your academic record and



personal statement are important to us, as is the reference written by your teachers. Alongside evidence of a high level of achievement in examinations, we expect our candidates to have read widely around their subjects of interest, outside their school or college curriculum. You may also be required to submit written work or sit a written test for some subjects.

Although many of our successful candidates pursue interests outside their academic studies, extra-curricular activities unrelated to your subject do not form part of our selection criteria or selection process.

Specific details and requirements relating to the admissions process may change from time to time, so you are encouraged to check the University's admissions web pages for the most up-to-date information: **[www.admissions.ox.ac.uk](http://www.admissions.ox.ac.uk)**.



# Interviews at Christ Church

A distinctive feature of the Oxford application process is the interview. Although it may seem to be a daunting experience, it is the best way for our tutors to assess your suitability for your chosen course. We assess performance at interview alongside all the other information available to us, and thus the interview is just one part of the overall admissions process.

Typically, when applying to Christ Church, you can expect at least two interviews, each with at least two interviewers. Most subjects will ask you to stay in Oxford for two or three days, during which time you may have interviews at other colleges as well; in some subjects, this is automatic. This is in order to ensure that the top applicants to Oxford are awarded places at the University in their chosen course, irrespective of the college to which they have applied.

Interviews are not intended to intimidate or catch you out, but to challenge you in order to bring out your potential. We are keen to find out not just what you already know, but whether you have or are likely to develop the intellectual qualities needed to study your subject at university level.

The format and content of interviews varies from subject to subject, although they are all academic in focus, designed to mimic a tutorial. You may be asked questions related to your school or college work, or to a particular academic interest mentioned in your personal statement or raised by written work

you may have submitted. You may be given something to read beforehand or something to examine in the interview, such as a poem, a newspaper article, a photograph, a legal statute, a tray of butterflies or shells, or a mathematical or technical problem. In all cases we are not looking for instant, 'right' answers, but rather for ideas that will provide the basis for a discussion. We are particularly interested in the way in which you approach our questions and formulate your responses. Each week at university you will be asked to grapple with new concepts, so seeing how you process and respond to unfamiliar ideas or materials gives us a good indication of how you will manage on the course.



An Oxford interview is definitely not a re-run of *University Challenge*. Do not expect quick-fire questions and points to be deducted for incorrect answers!





## Further information

Christ Church runs annual open days to give potential applicants a flavour of what it is like to live, study, and socialise at the College. Booking details can be found on our website at: [www.chch.ox.ac.uk](http://www.chch.ox.ac.uk). Outside these events, you can find out more by looking at our website. Tours can be arranged at other times for school and college groups or individuals by contacting the Admissions Office at:

[admissions@chch.ox.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@chch.ox.ac.uk).

### Admissions Information Centre

The University operates an Admissions Information Centre located on Little Clarendon Street in the centre of Oxford, which is usually open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, for potential applicants to drop in for further information and a chat with University admissions staff. General enquiries can be directed to:

[undergraduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:undergraduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk).

### Location

Christ Church is located in the heart of Oxford. The main entrance is on St Aldates, under Tom Tower. It is a 15-20 minute walk from the railway station and a 10-15 minute walk from the bus station. No parking is available in the College and driving is not recommended, but we are happy to make special arrangements for the physically disabled. Oxford has a Park and Ride scheme, which other motorists are encouraged to use.

## Access Initiatives

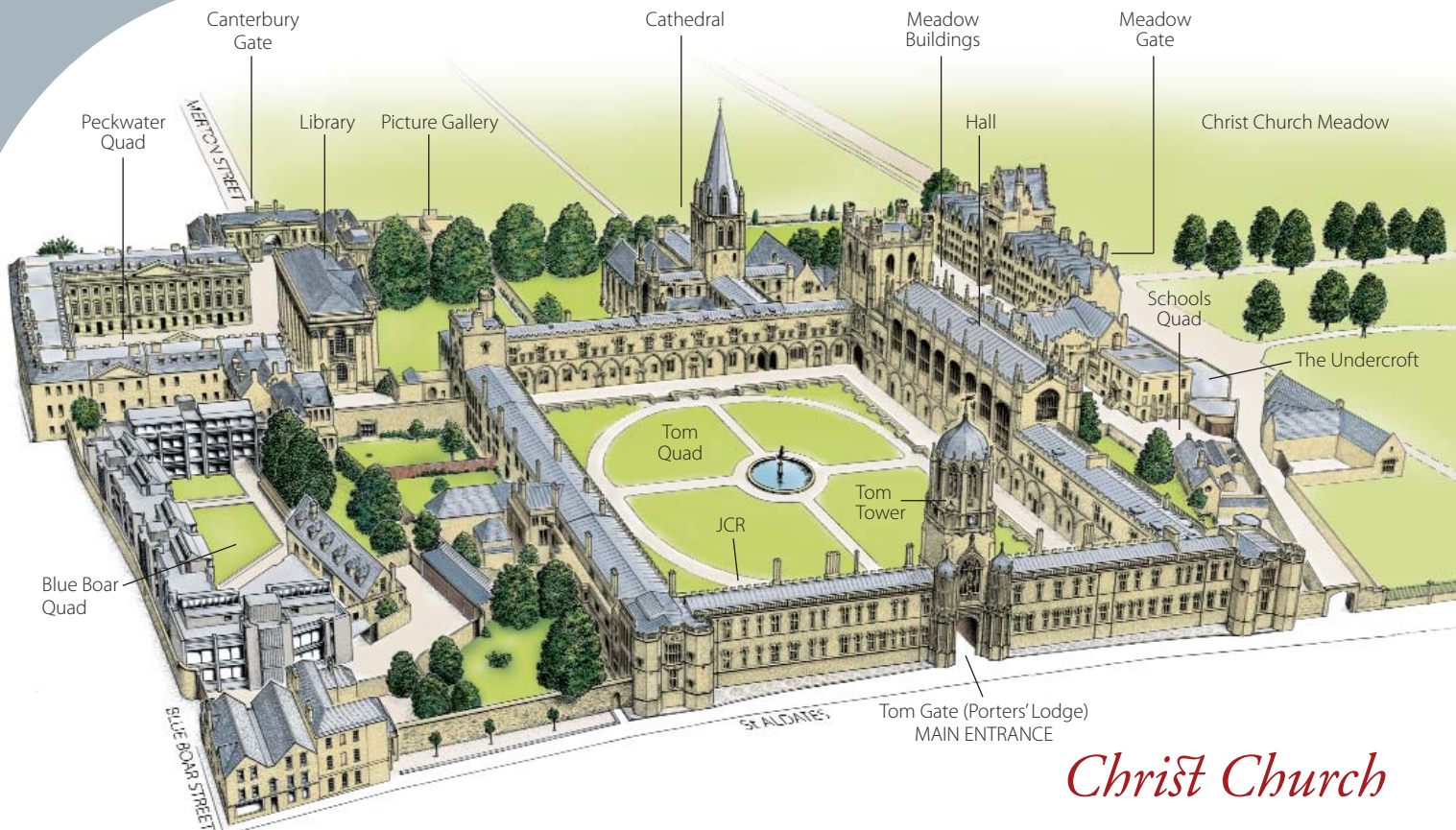
Christ Church is keen to work with under-represented schools and colleges from the maintained sector in order to raise academic aspirations, demystify life at Oxford, and encourage applications from bright students, whatever their school or background.

Our access programme is aimed at students from year 9 upwards, as well as their teachers, careers



advisors, parents, and carers. Events and activities include presentations in schools and colleges, informal visits to Christ Church, application workshops, e-mentoring, and teachers' conferences. We are particularly interested in making contact with schools and colleges with little or no history of sending students to Oxford. For further details about our access initiatives, please go to:

**[www.chch.ox.ac.uk](http://www.chch.ox.ac.uk)** or contact our Admissions Office at: **[admissions@chch.ox.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@chch.ox.ac.uk)**.





# *Christ Church*

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