



Opportunity Oxford 2024 Information for Offer-Holders

Congratulations on securing the offer of an undergraduate place at the University of Oxford!

We are delighted that you applied to the University and we are very pleased to have made you an offer. We recognise that you have worked extremely hard to achieve your offer and we hope very much that you will accept your offer and take up your place at Oxford.

Your offer has been made under the University's Opportunity Oxford programme. The Opportunity Oxford programme is designed to support very talented students such as yourself in the transition from school or college to university. The only difference between your offer with a place on Opportunity Oxford and the standard Oxford offer is that, as well as meeting your offer, you will take part in an academic bridging programme in the summer before you begin your course to help you make a strong start to your university degree. The selection process for your offer was as rigorous as that for standard Oxford offers, and we believe you have outstanding potential for success on your course. Around 20% of offer-holders have school or other circumstances which mean they are eligible to take part in the bridging course (the specific criteria for eligibility are below in the FAQs). We offer this programme to around 250 students each year who we think would get the most out of it.

The Opportunity Oxford programme will help develop core academic skills relevant to your future degree, and allow you to explore strategies for effective independent learning at university, so you'll be able to 'hit the ground running' as you embark on your degree. It will also give you a chance to get to know new students from lots of different subjects and colleges, become familiar with Oxford, and settle into student life. We hope that the programme will be enjoyable, challenging and rewarding and will give you a great start to your university career. You can find out more about the programme and watch a series of short videos in which some participants from previous years talk about their experiences at: www.ox.ac.uk/opportunityoxford

Below are the key dates for Opportunity Oxford, so please make a note of them. There are also a number of FAQs at the end of this document. We look forward to helping you make the most of Oxford.

Online Welcome Event: Saturday 3rd February 2024

We will hold an online welcome event for all Opportunity Oxford offer-holders, together with your parent(s), families, guardian(s) or other supporters you'd like to invite, on Saturday 3rd February.

This event will give you a chance to find out about the Opportunity Oxford programme, hear from previous participants, meet academic staff who teach on the programme, speak with representatives from your offer college, and learn more about Opportunity Oxford. The day will also include sessions on finance, welfare, and lots of opportunities to ask questions.

There will be a short evening session on Wednesday 7th February to give those who cannot attend the main welcome event the chance to take part in a condensed programme and student ambassador Q&A.

We warmly encourage you and your parents, families or guardians to attend. You will receive an invitation together with a timetable for the day and full joining instructions soon; please look out for this email.

Online Academic Course: open from Monday 1st July to Friday 9th August 2024

The online course provides structured academic tasks, together with supporting materials, which will assist you in adapting the skills you have already acquired at school or college to university.

You will follow one of four online courses, depending on your future degree: Humanities / Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS) / Medical Sciences / or Social Sciences.

As well as developing study skills you will have the chance to focus on tasks and materials which are directly linked to your future degree. Your work will be supported by university tutors who will also provide some personalised individual feedback. The online work that you do will provide preparation for the residential course.

We expect the course to take about two working weeks to complete, and you will be free to construct a flexible timetable of work which suits you whilst the course is open. The timetable for the online work is flexible, so that you are able to fit this academic work around a job, holiday or other commitments.

Residential: Saturday 7th September – Saturday 21st September 2024

The residential will take place in Oxford, and you will stay in one of Oxford's colleges. During the residential you will build upon the work you completed on the online course, following the course you began online: Humanities, MPLS, Medical Sciences or Social Sciences. You will have classroom and independent work, lectures and tutorials and, where appropriate, practical or lab work. You will study alongside students in related subjects at different Oxford colleges.

Alongside academic work, you will have time to settle into university life and get to know each other through social activities and downtime. You should think of the residential course as being two weeks of full-time study, but you will also have free time. You will work closely with supportive academic staff, and our student ambassadors will be on hand to offer advice, show you the city, help you to make the most out of student life at Oxford, and be a friendly face when you need it. We expect that meeting other students, making friends, and learning from each other's experiences will be a very valuable part of the bridging programme.

There is no cost for accommodation or food, and we will cover reasonable travel costs to and from Oxford. You will also receive a grant of £350 to offset any additional expenses or possible loss of earnings on your part.

You will receive more details in due course from the Opportunity Oxford Team. In the meantime, please add the dates to your diary.

Opportunity Oxford – FAQs

The following notes tell you a bit more about Opportunity Oxford. Please read them carefully. We hope you find them useful. If you have any questions which relate specifically to Opportunity Oxford, please email opportunityoxford@admin.ox.ac.uk; the team would be very happy to hear from you. For all other questions relating to your future studies, please contact the admissions team at the Oxford College which issued you with this offer.

What is Opportunity Oxford?

Opportunity Oxford is designed to promote the success of students of great potential who come from schools, colleges, or neighbourhoods which do not traditionally send many candidates to Oxford. This programme underlines our long-standing commitment to ensuring that the very best students from all backgrounds have the opportunity to study successfully with us. Offers with a place on Opportunity Oxford are made to offer holders in all subjects and at every college.



Students on the OppOx residential head to their academic sessions



OppOx students during a social activity in the university parks

Are there any differences between my offer with an Opportunity Oxford place and all other offers?

You have been made the standard conditional offer for your course, and admitted on the same rigorous basis as all other students. Once admitted, you will follow the same degree programme, receive the same tuition, be assessed according to the same criteria, and be awarded a degree on the same basis as other students. In other words, once you complete the Opportunity Oxford programme and start your course at the beginning of your first term, your undergraduate experience will not be any different to the rest of your cohort. The distinctive feature of the Opportunity Oxford programme is that you'll participate in an academic programme in the summer before the start of your degree. Previous participants have found the programme very helpful, and they tell us that it has given them a huge boost in their studies. We are confident that it is a really worthwhile and enjoyable experience.



OppOx students exploring the city

What is the Opportunity Oxford programme for?

The bridging programme helps you to develop strategies for success at high-level, research-driven, academic study. From our experience of working with first-year undergraduates we know that adapting to the fast-paced nature of undergraduate study at Oxford can be demanding for any new student. Even though you have already secured excellent school and college results, and demonstrated a very good grasp of the fundamentals of your subject, there are new academic expectations to adjust to and new academic tasks to take on. In particular, academic work at university tends to be more open-ended and less structured than work at sixth form. Even students who are used to finding things easy are very likely to be stretched and challenged at university. The programme will help you to acclimatize to this new academic environment and to experiment with new working methods before beginning your degree in earnest. You could think of it as a chance to learn how to be an undergraduate student at Oxford.

Why have I been given an offer with a place on the Opportunity Oxford programme?

The University is looking for students with the highest academic potential, from different backgrounds. We use a range of contextual information such as postcode and school data to help us better understand your achievements in the context of your individual background.

In common with many other universities, we define higher education progression rates and socio-economic factors according to standard national data, and a student's eligibility for Opportunity Oxford under one or other of these considerations is determined simply by their residential postcode.

All students are automatically considered for Opportunity Oxford if living in a neighbourhood which either has a low progression rate to higher education or is defined as being an area of relative socio-economic disadvantage.

Under the programme, we prioritise students who have more than one indicator of under-representation at Oxford, and we also take account of such other factors such as eligibility for free school meals, the average academic performance of their current and previous school or college, and care experience. About 20% of Oxford offers are made to students eligible for the Opportunity Oxford programme.



OppOx Medical Sciences students taking part in lab practical experiments

We don't assume that the postcode or school data describe you as an individual. We recognise and respect that your experiences are your own. Nonetheless, we know that many students who come from backgrounds which are under-represented at Oxford have not been given the level of academic support that some other students have received. This programme is intended to go some way towards addressing that disparity and to contribute positively to your future success at Oxford.

What do students think of Opportunity Oxford?

“I’d describe it as definitely one of the most valuable university experiences you’ll have.” “It showed me that I had earned my offer and I am really glad that I took part in the residential.” “The programme is designed to challenge you academically, but also facilitates the experience of the reality behind university, giving you an insight to the balance between social and academic lifestyles, whilst placing an emphasis on academic skills.” “It’s also a great way to make friends. I can’t stress enough how one of the things that also meant that the residential was incredible was that literally everyone was of a similar background, so we could actually see ourselves as Oxford students and accept that we deserved to be here.” “At times Opportunity Oxford can be challenging, however I am confident this is good preparation for the busy and demanding life once term starts.” “Even though I was quite nervous beforehand, I can’t imagine going to university without the course now.” **OppOx Humanities students studying Fine Art, CAAH, Modern Languages and English**



OppOx Humanities students visit the Ashmolean museum as part of an object exploration academic session

“I came to realise that everyone here is so different and yet all of us would commonly benefit, for various reasons, from spending time at the University in advance of our degrees.” “I really enjoyed the variety of content we covered on the course. It’s been useful to learn about the kind of work we will be doing, and what/where the departments are like. The fact we got to do an essay (and got feedback) was really useful.” “It’s a great opportunity to get used to unique elements of Oxford’s academic life that are otherwise pretty daunting, and it’s really nice to get to make friends ahead of starting term.” “I feel positive that there are lots of people like me in Oxford.” **OppOx Social Sciences students studying Law, Geography and PPE**



Students on the residential chat over dinner in college

“Being in Oxford for two weeks has made me realise that I am fully able and excited to integrate myself into Oxford as a city and the academic life there.” “I found the tutorials an amazing way to reflect on work we had done and ask questions on certain topics that I was unsure about.” “It’s an opportunity to meet new people and experience what studying at Oxford is going to be like, so you feel more prepared when you start term.” **OppOx MPLS students studying Physics, Engineering and Chemistry**



OppOx Law students take part in a tutorial

“It is a really helpful experience to help open your eyes to what life at Oxford really is. Be open to doing the programme as it is socially and academically rewarding and enriching.” “I found the academic sessions on the residential excellent. The lectures were really interesting and helped me practice study skills such as note taking, whilst getting more confident at asking/answering questions. The lab sessions initially were very challenging but as I got more proficient became easier.” “It was a great experience which made me feel more excited and comfortable to go to Oxford in October.” **OppOx Medical Sciences students studying Biochemistry, Biology and Experimental Psychology**



Student ambassadors give a college tour to OppOx students

A final word

Congratulations again on securing the offer of an undergraduate place at Oxford. This is a very significant achievement on your part, and we hope very much that you will take up your place at the University.

Please make a note of the key dates of the Opportunity Oxford programme:

- Online Welcome Event: Saturday 3rd February 2024
- Online Academic Course: Monday 1st July – Friday 9th August 2024
- Residential in Oxford: Saturday 7th – Saturday 21st September 2024

Please also look out for emails from us at the email address you provided on your UCAS application.

You can find out more about Opportunity Oxford, and watch interviews with students who've been on the programme, on our webpage www.ox.ac.uk/opportunityoxford. You are also very welcome to contact us on opportunityoxford@admin.ox.ac.uk or call us on 01865 270554.

Best wishes,

Lucinda, Rachael and Amiee,

The Opportunity Oxford Team



Photography credit: Thomas Hughes, Patricia Kryszewska, Edmund Blok, Matthew Greetham

Opportunity Oxford Offer Holders: Preparing for Oxford

At Oxford, you will be part of an inclusive, supportive and welcoming university community which values your wellbeing.

Below we outline a few key areas of support which will help you thrive during your time here. These include scholarship and financial support packages, welfare and disability support services, and university transition support.

Funding, Bursaries and Scholarships

Oxford offers one of the most generous financial support packages available for UK students. Around 1 in 4 of our UK students currently receives an annual, non-repayable bursary from Oxford. Our ambition is to ensure that no one with outstanding academic potential is deterred from studying here because of their background, personal circumstances, or finances.

- Crankstart Scholarship & Oxford Bursaries
www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/fees-and-funding/oxford-support
- Other Oxford scholarships
Please note that the **deadline to apply** for many of these is **12 noon on 7 February 2024**
www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/fees-and-funding/oxford-support
- Funding for UK undergraduates who are care-experienced or estranged from their family
www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding/assistance/targeted-support
- Search for undergraduate fees, funding & scholarships
www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding/search/undergraduate

Welfare and Disability Support Services

If you have a disability, specific learning difficulty (SpLD) such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or ADHD, sensory or mobility impairment, long-term health condition, autistic spectrum condition or mental health difficulty we would encourage you please to let us know.

Letting us know will mean that:

- The University can understand the difficulties you face and offer appropriate help.
- Reasonable adjustments and individually tailored support can be arranged in time for your participation in the Opportunity Oxford programme and your undergraduate studies.

Who do I need to speak to?

- Please complete the Disability Advisory Service Registration Form in order that we can explore and put in place appropriate support: www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability/needs

I'm not sure

- **If you are not sure about the process, don't know what you might need or don't have a formal diagnosis, or you have questions** the team would be very happy to hear from you! OppOx has a friendly team of University Disability Advisors supporting students on the programme – Pauline, Evette, Veronica and Andy. You can contact them at: disability@admin.ox.ac.uk

More information: www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare

Student Insights

- Watch the University's video for an insight into what life as a student here is really like: www.bit.ly/youtube_student_life
- Oxford Transition Support provides a range of resources to help you make the most of Oxford: www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/oxford-transition-support