



## What is Oxbridge?

BGS students aim high, work hard and commit to achieving the best in all their endeavours. For many of our Upper Sixth, their ambitions extend beyond school life and they aspire to study at a world-class university after leaving BGS.

With entry to top universities fiercely competitive, the school supports students applying to the most elite of universities through the BGS Oxbridge Programme, led by Mrs Pearl - Oxbridge Coordinator.

The Edit sat down with Mrs Pearl to find out more about the Oxbridge process.

## What does the Oxbridge programme involve?

The programme comprises an 18-month long series of workshops and events designed to help students understand the Oxbridge application process and, ultimately, to submit a strong application. Students who wish to apply to Imperial will also benefit from the programme. In addition to personalised guidance and individualised advice from Mrs Pearl throughout Sixth Form, students benefit from events including super-curricular activities workshops, personal statement support, an Oxbridge Preparation Day, mock interviews, mock admissions tests and much more.

## Who is the BGS Oxbridge Programme for?

The Oxbridge Programme supports high-achieving students who intend to apply to the University of Cambridge, the University of Oxford or Imperial College London. These students will have already demonstrated strong academic success at GCSE and will be on track to achieve the highest possible outcomes at A-level or IB. Students are invited to join the programme early in the Lower Sixth.

### **What GCSE grades does a successful Oxbridge/Imperial applicant have?**

Previous BGS students who have obtained offers from Oxbridge or Imperial have usually obtained mostly grade 9s in their GCSEs.

### **What A-level or IB grades are required for Oxbridge/Imperial?**

A-level offers from Oxbridge are typically A\*AA to A\*A\*A. IB offers are 40-42 points with 776 or 777 in HL subjects.

Typical offers from Imperial are AAA to A\*A\*A. IB offers range from 38-42 points with 766 to 777 in HL subjects.

Offers vary subject to subject and, for Oxbridge, College to College.

### **What makes Oxford, Cambridge and Imperial different from other universities?**

All three universities are consistently ranked in the top 3 universities in the United Kingdom, and the top 10 globally. Entry to these universities is extremely competitive and there are additional admissions requirements for applicants. Students at these institutions benefit from high-quality teaching from researchers at the very forefront of their field, as well as stimulating course content designed to challenge student thinking. Oxbridge also offers a different style of teaching, with students accessing much of their course content through small groups known as 'supervisions' (Cambridge) or 'tutorials' (Oxford). Whilst studying at these universities does typically carry a greater workload than at other institutions, students will reap the rewards of being surrounded by inspiring and enthusiastic academics who are committed to their fields of study and keen to involve students in world-leading research.

### **How is the application process different?**

All university applications in the UK go through UCAS, but those which include Oxbridge are submitted by an earlier deadline (for 2024 entry this is 16th October 2023). In addition to the UCAS application personal statement, for most courses at Oxbridge and Imperial students are also required to complete a further academic admissions test and an interview. Some courses at Oxbridge also require students to submit samples of their academic work.

### **Can a student apply to Oxford, Cambridge and Imperial?**

A student can apply to just one of Oxford or Cambridge. You can apply to Imperial alongside either of these. Students must carefully consider the content of their chosen course, additional admissions requirements, the university campus and their chosen College (Oxbridge only) before making a decision. Unifrog (the online careers platform used at BGS) has an Oxbridge search tool, allowing students to research each College, including acceptance rate and additional academic entry requirements. Following up on the university's own website, as well as those of the Colleges, ensures students make informed decisions when choosing open days and visits.

**My daughter is in Year 11. What can she do to prepare?**

If your daughter is considering applying to Oxford, Cambridge or Imperial it is essential that she obtains the very highest GCSE grades possible - ideally all grade 9s. These universities look for students who are critically engaged with their subject and who have a natural curiosity for content beyond the curriculum. Therefore, your daughter is encouraged to read widely and explore her subjects beyond the GCSE specifications. She should also be proactive in seeking out opportunities to demonstrate her academic potential, such as through competitions or projects.