Oxford Prospects Programmes | St Hilda's College UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

# Oxford Prospects Pathway

One-Year Visiting Student Programme
&
Online Tutorial Programme

## About the University

The University of Oxford is one of the most illustrious universities in the world, founded in 1250 with some colleges' histories stretching back even further. It is a member of the prestigious Russell Group in the United Kingdom (similar to the Ivy League in the United States). The University of Oxford holds a reputation for world-class teaching, research and facilities. Oxford students benefit from centrally organised lectures, seminars and lab time, and from the collegiate system of small-group teaching (called a tutorial) that takes place in its colleges. This approach provides individual support and guidance, enabling students to thrive academically, whilst offering countless opportunities to become involved with extra-curricular activities. The College is the focus of both the student's academic and social life.

Visiting Student Programme

## About the Programme

The Visiting Student Programme is open to select Chinese partner universities through OPGDI's established Oxford Prospects Programmes. The Visiting Student Programme offers suitably qualified students the opportunity to come to Oxford as Registered Visiting Students of the University of Oxford and as members of one of the Oxford colleges. Visiting Students study for one academic year, taking the same courses as full-time undergraduate students and studying alongside them in tutorials and lectures.

Our aim is to give Visiting Students the chance to experience the unique opportunities provided by study at Oxford while earning credit from their home institutions. Visiting Students have access to all of Oxford University's academic and social facilities, including the Bodleian Library, faculty (subject) libraries, the Oxford University Computing Services, and the wealth of lectures organised by the University throughout the academic year. Visiting Students automatically become lifetime members of their host Oxford College.



## Application Requirements

- **GPA:** 3.7 (minimum, based on a 4.0 GPA system).
  An up-to-date academic transcript must be provided in English translation.
- **Photocopy of IELTS/TOEFL certificate showing:** IELTS overall score of 7.5 (minimum 7.0 per component). For TOEFL, the minimum required score is 110, with component scores of at least: Listening 22, Reading 24, Speaking 25, and Writing 24.

  **The University will not accept TOEFL tests taken from 21 January 2026 to meet the English language condition.*
- **Personal Statement** (up to 500 words): You should provide a brief account of your studies to date and an explanation of how a year at Oxford University would fit into your educational plans. You should specify the main subjects you wish to study, with an explanation of how these relate to courses already completed at your home university. This will be assessed with respect to: your reasons for applying to this particular course of study; evidence of your motivation for and understanding of the proposed area of study; your ability to present a reasoned case in English; the academic attributes that you will bring to the programme; the knowledge and skills that you hope to gain; your commitment to the subject; and the relevance of this year of study to your future career/academic development plans.
- **Two samples of recently completed written work:** in English and marked if possible, and preferably in the subject/s for which you are applying.
- **Two academic references:** from people well placed to comment on your academic aptitude and achievement and on your learning style. References must be on official headed paper, signed by the referee and including their contact details.
- Application form
- A recent passport-format photograph
- Photocopy of passport

## Academic Subjects

Oxford colleges do not specialise in particular subject areas, as they all excel in all subjects that they teach. Most colleges offer most courses. Please specify your subject options in the application form.



## Deadlines and Procedures

Applicants are required to prepare for and take an English language test (IELTS or TOEFL) ahead of time, preferably between your first and second years of university.

- Mid-September 2026: Applications open.
- 12 January 2027: Application deadline.
- End of March to end of April 2027: Expect to hear back regarding the status of your application and receive any offers.
- April to July 2027: Confirm your acceptance of the offer, complete required procedures, and receive CAS information to apply for your visa.
- September/October 2027: Arrive in Oxford as a Registered Visiting Student at the University of Oxford.

## Indicative Fees

Fees vary between Colleges, and there are supplementary tuition fees for some course subjects. Colleges adjust fees each year. As a guide, below are example fees.

These cover the period mid-October to mid-June, encompassing Michaelmas, Hilary and Trinity terms.

| | |
|---|---|
| Tuition fees for the whole academic year | Approximately £45,000–£60,000+ |
| Living costs | Approximately £13,000–£19,000 |

** Actual costs may vary depending on the college, subject, and annual fee updates.*

## The Academic Year

| Term | From | To |
|---|---|---|
| Michaelmas 2027 | Sunday, 10 October | Saturday, 4 December |
| Hilary 2028 | Sunday, 16 January | Saturday, 11 March |
| Trinity 2028 | Sunday, 23 April | Saturday, 17 June |

Each of the three terms in Oxford comprises eight teaching weeks. Terms are intense with an impressive number of academic, sporting, and other social activities packed in. This intensity means that it is not advisable to leave Oxford during term-time, although many Visiting Students take the opportunity to travel between terms.

Please consult with and send application materials through your home university. For enquiries, you may also contact OPGDI's Liaison Officer:
liaison.opp@st-hildas.ox.ac.uk





## The Tutorial System

Tutorial teaching and learning is unique to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, so it is important to understand what is involved in this educational method which you will experience as a Visiting Student. Tutorials foster a close relationship between the tutor and the student thanks to the individual attention that students receive. Tutorials are particularly beneficial for developing skills and capacities of critical analysis, requiring students to critique primary and secondary literature and challenge the boundaries and assumptions of their thinking.



> *The tutorial system is a really good way to deepen your understanding of the subjects. Whenever you need help, you can just ask the omniscient computer science wizard in your college and they will take the time to explain it to you.*
>
> ---- Robert Bastian
> Major in Computer Science

> *The tutorial system is one of the great things about studying at Oxford and it is extremely rewarding to sit down for an hour with a leading expert in your chosen field to discuss an essay you have written or to go over a difficult maths problem.*
>
> ---- Anna
> Major in Economics and Management

> *There's a whole range of people with different faiths, beliefs, worldviews. That's part of what makes it so exciting in tutorial - you don't want to just hear people saying the same as you!*
>
> ---- Chloe
> Major in Religion and Oriental Studies

## What is a tutorial?

Tutorials are at the heart of your learning experience at Oxford. They are weekly, sometimes fortnightly (every two weeks) meetings with an academic who specialises in your subject of study. Tutorials may be either one-on-one or shared with one or two other students, usually lasting for one or one-and-a-half hours.

The tutorials consist of discussion with the tutor and any fellow student "tutees" of your previously prepared work. Normally this work takes the form of essays of approximately 2,000 words, or solutions of set problems, or reports of lab work. These tutorial discussions provide for in-depth exploration of topics from different perspectives. Each student is expected to analyse critically their own work and any relevant scholarship. Students are expected to formulate their own ideas and express them eloquently in the discussion, supporting arguments and posing questions.

Visiting Student Programme

## What is a typical tutorial course load?

Each Oxford degree course is divided into papers – in another university these might be called modules or classes. An Oxford undergraduate usually studies 1.5 papers each term: one for 8 weeks and one for 4 weeks. These papers can be seen as the equivalent to the American university system of a course 'Major' (the 8- week paper) and 'Minor' (the 4-week paper). In fulfilling these papers, a Visiting Student carries the same course load as all full-time Oxford students.

This may not sound demanding compared to the timetable of classes, lectures and seminars of a full-time student schedule in non-tutorial universities. However, in the tutorial system, an average term's workload will consist of 12 x 2,000-word essays, involving students in 40 hours per week of independent study, research, writing and preparation.

As a Visiting Student, you will be studying full-time, so we strongly advise against working on



any academic projects from home universities, such as a dissertation, while you are at Oxford. Students who have attempted to do this in the past have put themselves under unnecessary amounts of pressure, and not been able to make the most of the precious opportunities Oxford offers.

University of Oxford regulations require students to be resident in Oxford from the start of 0th Week through to the conclusion of 8th Week every term. Absence of even a single day requires your tutor's advance approval.

## How is my work assessed?

Your tutor will read and provide feedback (usually written comments) on every piece of your work. Some tutors ask students to read out their essays in the tutorial; more typically, tutors ask students to submit their essays in advance, generally on the evening before the tutorial. Tutors do not usually provide numerical or letter grades for individual pieces of work. Instead they concentrate on formative assessment: commenting, critiquing, advising, asking follow-up questions.

At the end of each term, tutors write reports on each student's learning and progress, and award an overall numerical grade based on criteria similar to those by which full-time students are assessed. This final grade reflects the standard of the student's written work, plus an assessment of their performance in tutorials. There is normally no requirement for Visiting Students to sit any examinations.

## What about lectures and classes?

Visiting Students are strongly encouraged to attend those departmental lectures coinciding with their field of study and research interests. For some subjects, such as English Literature, lectures are not compulsory, but in other subjects, such as Mathematics, they may be. Your tutor will offer guidance and advice about which lectures suit your own learning and research needs. Similarly, there may be classes or seminars within your College or in the University Department associated with your field of study which are advisable for your educational programme. Again, your tutor will be best placed to advise you on this.



# Oxford Prospects Online Tutorial Programme (9 Weeks)

**Academic Outcomes:**

- ✓ Engage in sustained academic dialogue with leading scholars
- ✓ Pursue subject interests in depth and cultivate intellectual curiosity
- ✓ Develop multiple perspectives and analytical frameworks
- ✓ Strengthen critical thinking and independent research skills
- ✓ Formulate, substantiate and defend academic arguments
- ✓ Receive a Programme Certificate and tutor evaluation
- ✓ Build a rigorous foundation for further study, research and careers

| Week | Programme Structure |
|---|---|
| Week 1 | • Academic Session 1: Programme Introduction & Preparation<br>• Academic Session 2: Introduction to the Oxford Tutorial System<br>• Academic Session 3: Research Methodology<br>• Academic Session 4: Critical Academic Reading<br>• Academic Session 5: Academic Writing, Independent Research & Presentation |
| Week 2-9 | • 7 weekly tutorials (1–1.5 hours each; 1 tutor with 2–3 students)<br>• 3 Academic Skills Workshops: Presentation Support; Essay Writing; Feedback & Reflection |

** The programme schedule may be adjusted according to tutor availability, subject area and academic requirements.*

**Programme Dates:** March–May and September–November

**Teaching Faculty:** Professors and other academics from departments and research groups across the University of Oxford.

**Assessment:** A weekly précis of the recommended readings and an evaluation of attendance and participation during tutorials, alongside two academic assessments consisting of a presentation and either a 2,000-word essay, a problem sheet, or a coding task.

**How to Apply:** Submit a Personal Statement of at least 500 words outlining your reasons for applying, academic interests, intended research area and academic objectives. Applicants will be selected through an interview conducted by the Academic Office.

**Programme Format:** 9 weeks of live online study, following the structure outlined above.

**Total Study Hours:** 15–20 contact hours, plus approximately 30 hours of independent preparation and in-depth study; 45–50 hours in total.

**For Enquiries and Applications:**
*WeChat: oppadmin*
*Email: liaison.opp@st-hildas.ox.ac.uk*

## Selected Previous Tutorial Topics

The topics below are examples from previous tutorials, and future topics will depend on students' interests, tutor expertise and availability.

- **Sociology:** What are the factors driving inequalities in society?
- **International Relations:** European Union in Practice and Its Global Appeal
- **Physiology:** What roles do cell function and biochemistry play in human health and disease?
- **Biochemistry:** DNA Molecules and DNA Origami
- **Physics:** Polymers and Biomaterials
- **Physics:** Quantum simulations and lattice artificial gauge
- **Mathematics:** Abstract Algebra-Group Theory
- **Computer Science:** Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning
- **Finance:** International Trade Theory and Its Application
- **Economics:** Managerial Economics-Economic Reasoning and Data Analysis
- **English Literature:** An Introduction to Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British and Irish Writing
- **Linguistics:** Language in the Brain
- **Pedagogy:** Applying Psychological Theories to Educational Practice
- **Philosophy:** Hegel and Marx: *Freedom, Self-determination, and Objectivity*
- **Philosophy:** Kant and Marx on Human Nature and Culture
- **Oncology:** Biomarkers of Tumour
- **Neuroscience:** Neuronal Cells and Ways to Study the Brain
- **Immunology:** Antimicrobial Resistance in the Community
- **Endocrinology:** Basic Principles of Endocrine Physiology
- **Oncology:** Cancer Research & Experiment Design
- **Gynaecology:** Women's Health
- **Gastroenterology:** Translational Research and Clinical Application
































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