

2025/2026

APPLICATION GUIDE



BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY
MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE
ASSOCIATION (CUMSA)



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Foreword

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PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Dear prospective applicants,

Thinking of applying to Cambridge? You have come to the right place!

University applications are always daunting. They mark the next step towards adulthood as you chart your future career and life plans. Applying to Cambridge can be especially tough to navigate – what differs between the colleges and the university? How does UCAS work with Cambridge? How do I know if a course is for me? Through this application guide, we aim to provide a comprehensive view of what it is like to study in Cambridge. Compiled by the Access and Outreach team of the Cambridge University Malaysia and Singapore Association (CUMSA), this guide features testimonials from our society's very own members to help you make an informed decision when applying to this university.

It is a common belief that you must already be an established student with a stellar record to stand a chance of entering Cambridge. Not necessarily true! This university is looking for teachable students – students who can fit into their system of education, are passionate about learning and think critically. If you can demonstrate these characteristics in your application, your prospects can be as good as any other applicant.

Beyond this application guide, CUMSA also offers a variety of programmes to help you with your application process. These include Personal Statement workshops, Admissions Test workshops and 1-to-1 mentoring programmes that pair you with a senior currently pursuing your intended course of study. We in CUMSA believe that applications to Cambridge should be accessible and approachable. Our wish is to provide you with as much support as possible throughout your application process.

Good luck, and we look forward to seeing you here!

- Albert Chieng, President 2025/26



ABOUT CAMBRIDGE

The University of Cambridge was founded in 1209 and is the third oldest university in the world. It currently has over 12,000 undergraduates and more than 24,000 students and 12,000 staff in total. Among the alumni and affiliates there are 125 Nobel Prize Laureates, 47 Heads of State, and 217 Olympic medallists.

The university is made up of 31 independent self-governing colleges, 29 of which admit undergraduates. 3 of these colleges are for mature students (above the age of 21 at matriculation) and 2 are for women only. Students typically receive lectures & labs at a university/department level, while supervisions (small group teaching sessions) are often received at their own college.

Colleges typically offer accommodation for all undergraduate students and are the hub of social life and pastoral care for these students. Each student is assigned a **Director of Studies (DoS)** who looks after their academic careers and a **Tutor** who takes care of their pastoral needs, both of whom are typically Fellows of their college. Each college also has its own dining hall and JCR (or MCR or combined CR for the mature colleges) where formals and other social events are held respectively.



There are over **700** student societies at the university catering to interests in culture, arts, academia, drama, specific careers and sports. Colleges as well as the university as a whole have their own sports teams, with different tiers of teams, to allow for everyone to take part in a sport if they wish, whether it is their first time or they are a past Olympian (the university has had several).

Famous alumni from Singapore include two of Singapore's four Prime Ministers (the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew & SM Lee Hsien Loong), three current cabinet ministers, and several Supreme Court justices.



ABOUT CUMSA

CUMSA was founded in the Michaelmas term of 1948. Then known as the Cambridge University Malayan Association, it brought together a small community, worlds away from home.

CUMSA's founding committee included former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew (as President), and former Chief Justice Yong Pung How (as Secretary). Over 70 years since, many Malaysians and Singaporeans have contributed to the organisation. Currently, we have over 350 current students and countless more alumni.



CUMSA holds a number of events throughout the year with the intention of creating a social environment with a familiar South-east Asian air. Amongst others, there is the annual orientation, CUMSA Formal, Garden Party, Singapore Food Festival, LNY celebrations, and Oxbridge Games (a sports competition involving the Oxford University Malaysian and Singaporean Students Association).

CUMSA has numerous links with partner societies within Cambridge, fellow SingSocs in the UK and local organisations in Cambridge and Singapore. Besides social events, we hold admissions talks with schools to encourage more students to apply to Cambridge and support them in their respective applications and charity and outreach events where we give back to the local communities in Cambridge and Singapore.

HOW WE CAN HELP

This year, we have a series of events, workshops and services to assist you in your application. These are our current plans. More information can be found on our Instagram page (@cumsa_), which will also have updates on dates and signup links.



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OVERVIEW

In general, the admissions process is much simpler than you may think. Through this guide, we too hope to guide you along this seemingly daunting process.

First, choosing your course of study is arguably the most important decision you have to make. Think about what you enjoy, where your strengths lie, and what opportunities may present themselves because of your course. Other factors like the reputability of a faculty internationally, their staff and even smaller factors like cohort size may also be a consideration for you.

Due to Cambridge's unique collegiate system, your choice of college is also really important. You will live in your college's accommodation and experience many of the social aspects of your University experience there, be it matriculation, formal halls, balls and more. Factors to consider include location (relative to the city center and also to your faculty department), aesthetics (traditional or modern), accommodation types and prices, and several other factors discussed in greater detail in our college section of this guide.

As for the actual admissions process, besides your teacher's recommendation and examinations results, admission tutors rely on your personal statement, written assessments (for some subjects) and interviews.

For assistance on the technical aspects of the application and UCAS system, consult your school, the Cambridge or UCAS websites or the resources in the last section of this guide. For questions on the application process, course or college, do contact the Cambridge admissions office or college directly, they would usually be happy to answer if you identify yourself as a prospective student.

Do note that the advice shared here is based on current students' personal experiences and hence may not be representative of the admission office's opinions. We hope this guide will offer insights and help you make an informed decision!

ADMISSIONS TIMELINE



Colleges

CHRIST'S COLLEGE



LOCATION

Very central. Located right in the heart of Cambridge. It is, however, slightly further away from certain faculties (Sidgwick Site/West Hub), but not more than a 15-20 minute walk (or 10-15 minute cycle) away.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Mains range between £3-£6, and sides are free and unlimited. Quality of food varies but is generally decent. Traditional English Breakfast is served every weekday for breakfast and every weekend for brunch. Formals happen 5 times a week, with prices ranging between £12-£19. Kitchens tend to be on the smaller side, with a limited range of appliances. Most of the time, there are only hobs, a kettle, a fridge, and a microwave. Many students therefore bring their own rice cookers and air fryers.

PROS

All students are able to claim £400 every year through a Flexible Grant Scheme. Christ's also has a reputation for academic excellence, and this can truly be felt in daily interactions with peers and fellows. Most are ambitious but friendly, which makes for a great studying experience.

ACCOMMODATION

Guaranteed accommodation for all 3 years, with 1st and 3rd years staying on site. 2nd years have the option of balloting for off-site accommodation. 1st year rooms are determined randomly, though it's possible to request for specific types of rooms (for valid reasons). The 2nd year ballot is random, and the 3rd year ballot is reversed.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Christ's is the only college which retains a Scholar's Ballot. Students who obtain a First-Class Honours in the preceding year will have preferential access to a select range of better rooms in their following year.

CONS

Christ's takes in so many Singaporeans every year that it may be harder for Singaporean students in Christ's to leave their comfort zone and make non-Singaporean friends, though this is definitely still very possible and to be encouraged.

CHURCHILL COLLEGE

ACCOMMODATION

Undergrads are guaranteed on-site accommodation for the duration of their course. Undergrad rooms are modern, spacious, light, and warm. All have at least an individual basin, with over 40% being fully en suite.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Around 70% of the student body study STEM subjects, reflecting Sir Winston Churchill's founding vision of a 'British version' of MIT. Even so, the college remains an excellent choice for humanities applicants. Notably, it is home to the world-renowned Churchill Archive Centre, which houses a wide range of documents and personal papers from British and international luminaries.

PROS

Churchill is one of the few in Cambridge which has its accommodation, sporting facilities, and administrative buildings integrated into a single site. This makes life much more convenient for students, especially if you would like to partake in sporting activities! The college is also home to Cambridge's largest formal hall, and many student societies (including CUMSA) host their annual formals there.



LOCATION

Hill College. The closest college to the West Cambridge site, where many STEM departments are located.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Churchill offers excellent food in its dining hall, featuring a diverse range of options daily. A typical two-course self-service dinner (main meal and dessert) from the Dining Hall will cost between £5.60-£6.20 (as at August 2024). The buttery bar also serves light snacks and refreshments throughout the day.

CONS

Compared to more central colleges, Churchill is definitely a bit further out from the city centre and from good restaurants/amenities. Even so, the market square is only an eight-minute cycle away. For those who prefer public transport, there is a University Bus stop right outside the college, offering easy access to the rest of the city.

CLARE COLLEGE

LOCATION

Relatively central college. Tucked away from tourists, behind King's and Trinity and beside Trinity Hall. Grounds extend to the backs.



ACCESS TO FOOD

Buttery food is quite affordable: £3+ for meat main, £2+ for veg main, 80p for sides and desert. Vegan options available daily. Food is generally decent, sometimes really good, but can be quite bad. They usually do deserts quite well. Formal food is usually decent, but sometimes they just serve buttery food. Kitchens usually have a kettle, microwave, toaster and fridge which is alright but not the best.

PROS

Very pretty with beautiful gardens, nice bridge and views of River Cam. Memorial Court is also very close to the University Library. The college library is literally seconds away from 1st year accoms. The theater is always open so you can game or stream movies there.

ACCOMMODATION

1st year accommodation (Memorial Court) is very good and value for money (£145-230/wk) especially considering the size of the rooms. But you need to move out after each term. 2nd and 3rd year accommodation (Castle Court) is off-site and is also slightly further from town (10-15 min walk), with the option for a 9-month license. Generally affordable rooms and most are decent but some are very small.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Musical college – very good chapel choir, weekly lunchtime concerts + evening concerts, many talented music students.

CONS

Limited paid storage for international students. Small international community with few Singaporeans; can initially feel slightly unwelcoming to internationals due to the mostly local and not very diverse community. Heating in some rooms can be quite poor.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE

LOCATION

Very central. A 3-minute walk to Market Square and an 8-minute walk to Mainsbury's. Is also directly opposite Jack's Gelato, for those who love good ice cream.



ACCOMMODATION

3 years guaranteed accommodation, 1st years will either be on site at New Court, Old Court, Library Court or (slightly) off-site at Benet Street Hostel. Size of 1st year accomm. vary greatly. 2nd and 3rd years get their rooms through a common ballot. The 2nd year ballot is random, and the 3rd year ballot is reversed. 2nd and 3rd year accommodations similarly vary quite a bit in terms of overall quality, with location and convenience often being traded off for noise levels or other perks like a kitchen.

PROS

Beautiful with a dreamy chapel that rivals most in Cambridge. Its tiny size also provides a cosy, homely atmosphere, most people here are generally warm and welcoming. Corpus also has a strong support system and is historically very good academically (especially for Law).

ACCESS TO FOOD

Corpus food is quite affordable, with meals ranging from between £3 (1 main) and £7 (2 mains + 2 sides). Corpus formals rank among the cheapest (£18 for students, £20 for guests), and formal challengers will tell you that a Corpus formal is a top 5 Cambridge formal. Few hobs in Corpus, so you'll usually find yourself eating hall, microwaved food, or takeaway.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Corpus is one of the tiniest colleges in Cambridge in terms of both size and population! It takes in about ~80 undergrads a year, with between 0-3 Singaporeans. Please come to Corpus.

CONS

Tourists are constantly swarming Jack's Gelato and the Corpus Clock, making it annoying to get out of college. Benet Hostel is one of the noisiest accommodations in Cambridge. There is a lack of kitchen facilities.

DOWNING COLLEGE



LOCATION

Very central. Located right next to Downing Site (where most STEM lectures are held) and incredibly close to the Chemistry and Engineering departments. Regent St has the highest concentration of shops and restaurants, and Downing is a 5-minute walk to the high street.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Relatively affordable £4.90 meal deal for 1 main dish and 2 sides. Known by other colleges to have one of the best formal and hall food, but hit-or-miss to Downing students. The hall also has a leftover food system, where students can take the leftover food for free after 2:30pm, subject to availability. Kitchen facilities are excellent, with kettles, toasters, hobs, freezers, and ovens available in all accommodations. Quite a small hall with average interior.

PROS

Very central, convenient to walk to most places + high accessibility to amenities. Lovely paddock to picnic; Downing Bar is also a great hangout spot. The minimum quality of accommodation across all 3 years is one of the best. Strong college culture, college formals are treated as dinner dates. Friendly porters.

ACCOMMODATION

Undergrads are guaranteed 3 years of on-site accommodation. 1st year students have to move out at the end of each term. For 2nd and 3rd year students, a longer lease can be signed so you don't have to move out every term. The 2nd year ballot is random, and the 3rd year ballot is reversed. There are both shared bathroom and en-suite options, and laundry is free. Chance to room with friends in a house after 1st year.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Free doughnuts and hot chocolate every Wednesday by the chapel! Long-standing reputation as a law college.

CONS

The international student population is very small with poor ethnic diversity; known to be very conservative. Very few Singaporeans. Culture is a bit insular. Downing is in a 500m proximity to virtually all the clubs, making walking back to college a little unsafe at night. (No noise issues)

EMMANUEL COLLEGE

LOCATION

Very central. A 10-minute walk from Mainsbury's, Marks and Spencer, and Market Square. A 15-minute walk from Sidgwick Site, and a 10-minute walk from Downing Site.



ACCESS TO FOOD

£4-5 for 1 main + 1 side. Portion size is limited and quality is highly variable. Formal hall is £11 for Emma students and £17 onwards for guests, desserts being highly recommended. Fortunately, there are many other options available.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Ducks are commonly mentioned as Emma's specialty, but moorhens, coots, and the occasional goose or swan also frequently grace our Paddock pond.

PROS

Free laundry service (your laundry is done for you!). Few tourists inside the college compounds itself. College bar is cheap (£2.10 for pint of beer).

ACCOMMODATION

Majority of accommodation is guaranteed onsite throughout all 3 years, with only 2 blocks offsite for 2nd years (although they're only 5 minutes away from Emma). Rooms are divided into 8 grades, 1 being the lowest and 8 being the highest. Weekly room rents for students beginning courses in 2026-27 range from £163.90 to £256.10 (about £13-14 difference per room grade). Most rooms are between grades 3-6, and you are guaranteed one in this range in 1st year. Rent is all-inclusive, and you will not need to pay extra for heating, laundry service and machines.

CONS

Horrible laundry booking system outside term time when laundry service closes. Few Singaporean students (1-3 per cohort).

FITZWILLIAM COLLEGE

LOCATION

Hill college. Relatively near West Cambridge, where many STEM departments are found. Is also a 15-minute cycle to Downing site.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Buttery food can be a hit or miss. Generally, the dishes are like pork/turkey cuts with mashed potatoes. Brunch is usually good, and is the standard English breakfast and is served on weekends. The desserts (especially cakes) are usually good but could be pricey. Overall, the price is not too bad compared to other colleges.

PROS

Gardens are pretty, and there are lots of flowers and plants around the college campus. The cafeteria is a great place to socialise with friends. Free storage every term break reserved for international students.



ACCOMMODATION

On-site accommodation guaranteed for first-year students. All rooms were semi-ensuite with individual showers and shared toilets. Rent is £180-200/week, but could differ based on the year. From 2nd year onward, balloting is split into those living onsite and offsite. There are houses near the college for students to live in. Accommodation varies depending on the house, such as semi-ensuite vs fully ensuite, etc.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Lee Kuan Yew studied at Fitzwilliam (then known as Fitzwilliam House).

CONS

Location is not ideal for those who don't or can't ride bikes. There are only a few Singaporeans (2-3) in every undergrad cohort, although there are a number of Singaporean postgrads to befriend.

GIRTON COLLEGE

ACCOMMODATION

Girton has 450 undergrad rooms (160 are ensuite) and 220 postgrad rooms (all ensuite). A ballot system determines the room allocation and all non-ensuite rooms are priced at £204/week and ensuite rooms are priced at £213/week. 1st years stay at Main College site. From 2nd year onwards, you can apply to stay in Swirles Court with a group size from 3-8.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Hall food is usually great and priced reasonably at £4.75 for a meat meal and £4.30 for a vegetarian/vegan meal. These come with free flow sides which always include fries (cheese fries available on lucky days), and a free flow salad bar. Alternatively, you can get a plate of just sides + salad bar for £1.50.

PROS

Girton is the only college with a heated indoor swimming pool. Kitchens are very well equipped, with air fryers, freezers, ovens, and induction hobs. Girton spans 50 acres, and is known to be one of the prettiest colleges.



LOCATION

Hill college. 15-minute cycle from the city center. Also close to West Cambridge. 10-minute ride from city center by University Bus 5 or 6.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Girton has 450 undergrad rooms (160 are ensuite) and 220 postgrad rooms (all ensuite). A ballot system determines the room allocation and all non-ensuite rooms are priced at £204/week and ensuite rooms are priced at £213/week. 1st years stay at Main College site. From 2nd year onwards, you can apply to stay in Swirles Court with a group size from 3-8.

CONS

The biggest downside is the distance from the city center – traveling into the city becomes a chore when it's rainy or very cold. The library is only open from 9am-11pm during term time and is packed during exam season.

HOMERTON COLLEGE

LOCATION

Very far from city center. 30-minute walk or 10-minute cycle to city center. It's the closest college to the train station and the Education faculty. There are also plenty of supermarkets and a leisure park nearby.

ACCESS TO FOOD

1 fish main + 1 side costs £4.55, while 1 meat main + 2 sides costs about £5.20. Desserts are £1.87. The quality of the food greatly varies – sometimes it's good, but sometimes meat can be overcooked and dry. Portions also greatly vary, but are usually filling enough.

PROS

College grounds are very big and beautiful – there are many green spaces, and students are allowed to walk and sit on the lawns. International students get priority access to storage rooms over term breaks. Overall a diverse and very friendly community!



ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is guaranteed to undergrads for 3 years, and most are onsite. Freshers stay in an accommodation block called West House, where all rooms are en-suite. 2nd and 3rd years ballot for a range of rooms, including bigger and cheaper non-en-suite rooms. Rooms are generally smaller than other colleges, and contain the bare minimum – wardrobe, desk, some shelves. Leases are 8 weeks and paid termly, at the start academic term.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Sometimes ducks can be found on our lawns, and we have a beehive within the college!

CONS

The location makes commuting to and from classes a hassle. Shared kitchens are quite small – there are no ovens, freezers, and dining tables to eat at.

HUGHES HALL



LOCATION

Relatively central. Located just below Parker's Piece, and a 5-minute cycle and 15-minute walk from the city center. Near the Chemistry and Engineering departments, and a short cycle away from Downing Site. Unfortunately, a 15-20-minute cycle from Sidgwick Site.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Dining hall food costs about £5 for a main. The portions are average-sized and quality varies a lot depending on the cuisine. Pasta is quite nice but rice/Asian dishes are not as good. Fortunately, Hughes is near Mill Road, home to a number of Asian restaurants.

PROS

Second-nearest college to the train station while still being relatively near the city center.

ACCOMMODATION

Onsite accommodation is guaranteed for 1st year, with 4 bands to choose from. The most expensive band (A) costs £270/week, and only has the option of a 9 or 12-month lease. Heating is good and kitchens are decent, but housekeeping only cleans the bathroom and not the room itself. Laundry is pay-per-use.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Free coffee/tea in the dining hall.

CONS

Not much funding/grants for students. Administrative support is rather lacking.

JESUS COLLEGE

LOCATION

Further from city center. Nice balance between distance to city center and quietness. 5-minute walk to Mainsbury's, but tucked away enough that there aren't many tourists.



ACCESS TO FOOD

Dining hall food is quite affordable, typically £5-6 for 1 main + 2 sides. Quality is variable but Friday fish and chips is usually decent. Jesus has one of the best college brunches (weekends) which are very affordable (£3-4). Formals are £12.60 for students and the food in the past year has been good. Proximity to city centre means there is a wide variety of restaurants within walking distance.

PROS

Large grounds with an abundance of wide, open green spaces. Right beside Jesus Green and Midsummer Common, which make nice picnic spots or river walks. Features one of the best May Balls in Cambridge.

ACCOMMODATION

All undergrads live in college-owned accommodation. Onsite accommodation is termly but guaranteed for 1st years, and the majority of rooms are en-suite. Room prices range from £6k-7k/year. 2nd and 3rd years ballot for rooms. Offsite accommodation is yearly, opposite the college, and has ovens, but shared bathrooms. All accommodations have shared kitchens and free laundry.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

The college's full name is The College of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint John the Evangelist and the glorious Virgin Saint Radegund, near Cambridge. Its common name comes from its chapel, Jesus Chapel – the oldest chapel in Cambridge!

CONS

Not a big international/Singaporean community (0-3 Singaporeans a year), but Jesus is known as a friendly college and you'd have no problems finding close friends!

KING'S COLLEGE

ACCOMMODATION

Guaranteed accommodation, most are onsite, and offsite accommodation is nearby. Rooms are available on short or long contract, but for short contract free storage is available and guaranteed. Rooms are well heated, and of a comfortable size. Rooms are cleaned on a weekly basis. Laundry is free. 1st year accommodation is by choice, but for subsequent years, it is done by a random ballot.



NOTEWORTHY THINGS

King's is a very liberal college and has many avenues of support if required. The current provost of King's is also very well-connected, so she often invites international figures to come to give talks.

PROS

Lots of funding and financial aid available, as well as many prizes which are open for application. Beautiful chapel and the evensong is amazing.

LOCATION

Very central. Within walking distance to every other place except West Hub.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Servery food costs around £3 for a main and £1.20 for a side. Portions can be small especially for fish, but food is pretty yummy for college food standards. King's is quite big on sustainability, so unsold food would be sold the next day for a significantly cheaper price, so do look out for the zero-waste meal deals! King's is located pretty near other popular food locations like Honest Burgers, Pho, Bread and Meat, and the Market Square, so it is easy to find alternatives if servery food does not appeal to you.

CONS

Too many tourists – King's is home to a famous chapel and the Xu Zhimo memorial stone, so there are many visitors coming in and out of the gates during the day, making it obstructive and noisy.

LUCY CAVENDISH COLLEGE

LOCATION

The least hilly of the hill colleges. Within walking distance to every other place except West Hub.



ACCESS TO FOOD

The dining hall here serves decent food. It's bad some days but is mostly edible, and the price is reasonable, especially if you get the 2 mains + 2 side deal. However, no breakfast is served, and dinner is not served on Thursday or Friday, so cooking is recommended. There is a kebab van and limited food options in the immediate surroundings, though you could always walk to the city center for more options.

ACCOMMODATION

1st years are guaranteed on-site accommodation, and subsequent years stay in off-site accommodation. Lucy has a mandatory 9-month lease, so you pay for the room over the winter and Easter break. Prices range from £180 to £210 per week for first-year accommodations. The accommodations are generally great, at least for the first year. Oldham Hall has a huge room and kitchen, and the new building has really nice kitchens.

PROS

1st year accommodation is great. Rooms are big and kitchens are well-equipped. Castle Mound is a fantastic spot to destress and hang out with friends. The college is smaller, making it easy to get around and meet new friends.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Lucy Cav was founded in 1965, the same year Singapore gained independence. It has become co-ed since 2021.

CONS

Not very central, further away from most faculties and departments (except West Hub). Buildings are all very modern and lack the Harry Potter vibe that older colleges like King's and St John's have (which may be a good thing for you). Rental is slightly higher than other colleges.

MAGDALENE COLLEGE



LOCATION

Relatively central. Right on the edge of what would be acceptable walking distance to the city center. It's beside the river with a lovely riverside walk. Roughly 7-minute and 15-minute walk to Mainsbury's and Wasabi respectively.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Ramsay Hall meals cost around £4 including sides – mains are alright, desserts are better. Chinese Canteen is just 3 minutes away for a quick and tasty (and pricey) alternative.

PROS

Strong academic community. Amazing facilities – especially the library. Friendly people and a sizeable international community.

ACCOMMODATION

All rooms are on-site. Prices are comparatively reasonable, but some upper-band rooms can reach £30+/day. En-suites tend to run out by the middle of the room ballot. Rooms are clean and spacious, but gyp space is often limited.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Pronounced "Mawdlin"! The JCR punt is also free to book, which is great for a sunny day out on the River Cam.

CONS

Not many spare rooms to host events or hangouts. College is reasonably wealthy, but doesn't offer generous subsidies that some other colleges do.

NEWNHAM COLLEGE

LOCATION

Grange Road college. Directly opposite Sidgwick Site and is a 15-20-minute walk to Downing Site and the city center.

ACCESS TO FOOD

The buttery food is pretty good. They don't serve breakfast, but lunch (brunch on Sat) and dinner are served every day except for Sun. There are 3 mains, 3 sides, a salad bar, dessert, sandwiches and drinks to choose from. It's slightly pricey; each main is £3.95 and a side is £1. Formals (£19.75) are every Wed. The Iris Cafe is on the pricier side but offers loads of drinks, sweet treats, and sandwiches. Restaurants nearby are Sala Thong and Millworks.

PROS

Amazing location for humanities students. Gardens are beautiful, and you can walk on the grass too. Friendly staff and porters who make the environment inclusive and welcoming. Accommodating to access needs or those who need financial support.



ACCOMMODATION

On-site accommodation is guaranteed for all 3 years. Rooms are randomly allocated in 1st year, and balloted in 2nd and 3rd year. Your ballot position is reversed from 2nd to 3rd year (although 3rd years get first pick). Most rooms are not en-suite, and furniture provision varies. Newnham is known for having very good kitchen facilities. Laundry is free!

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Newnham is a women's college. We don't have bedders so you're expected to clean your room yourself. On-site sports facilities include the rooftop gym, sports fields, netball and tennis courts. There's a vending machine and a Brita water dispenser!

CONS

All-female college environment may not suit everyone. Lack of an exclusively 1st year accommodation, but it facilitates meeting people from other years. Gym is small but free to use. Further from the main supermarkets.

PEMBROKE COLLEGE



LOCATION

Very central. Right next to Downing Site and New Museums Site, and is one of the closest colleges to the Chemistry Department. Also a 7-minute cycle of 15-minute walk from Sidgwick Site. A 5-minute walk from Sainsbury's Local, M&S Food, Boots, Tesco Express, and Market Square.

ACCESS TO FOOD

The servery serves affordable food three times a day, seven days a week, even outside of term time. Students get a 40% discount, so a main meal costs around £2.80. Food is of decent quality. Formals are held three times a week (Sunday to Tuesday) and cost £12 for members. Most food is allergen-free, and there are always vegan and vegetarian options, though there is no halal food yet.

PROS

One of the most beautiful grounds and gardens in Cambridge – especially stunning in spring. 80% of students are from the UK, making it a very British student experience. Great rowing club: easy to join, very inclusive, and lots of Singaporeans.

ACCOMMODATION

Pembroke guarantees onsite accommodation for first-years, who must vacate rooms during winter and Easter breaks. Second- and third-years are allocated rooms through a reversed ballot system and can leave belongings over holidays. Most offsite housing is within 10 minutes, with plans to improve distance issues. Leases are termly, and Pembroke aims to keep rent among the lowest across colleges.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Ray Dolby graduated from Pembroke and funded a really cool cinema room with surround sound. The College café is newly opened and a genuinely lovely space to study, with loads of sweet treats.

CONS

Not a river college, but there is a Pembroke punt at Darwin that can be rented for £10/hour. Not much en-suite accommodation (around 30% of rooms are en-suite).

PETERHOUSE

LOCATION

Very central. Right along Trumpington. An 8-minute walk from Mainsbury's, and a 15-minute walk from Sidgwick Site.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Food is decently priced, and very accessible – three meals a day, barring Saturday and Sunday (brunch/dinner on Saturday, and only dinner on Sunday). There are formals everyday, but they're mediocre. No cooking facilities in 1st year at all, but air fryers are allowed (and if you're willing enough, an illegal portable hob).

PROS

Deer park in bloom is one of the most gorgeous sites you'll see. Good social scene too. Accommodation is relatively cheap. Quite traditional – you will get an authentic Cambridge experience.



ACCOMMODATION

1st year accommodation is largely terrible. If you care very much about having an en-suite/better facilities, WSB is quite a good shout. It's much newer on the inside and the kitchens are bigger and shared between like 3/4 people. Avoid SPT 3, it's quite mucky and smells funny.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Dean's port twice a term where everyone goes to a fancy room to drink port.

CONS

Cabin fever is an issue, being in such a small year group and living near each other can mean it sometimes devolve into pandemonium. College can get very right-leaning. Drinking society is a big deal and 10% of the year group is in it. Library is quite strict and not 24/7.

QUEENS' COLLEGE

LOCATION

Very central. Queens' offers the best of both worlds: central convenience with a touch of privacy. It's just a short walk to Sidgwick Site, the Engineering Department, and Main Street. Market Square is nearby for quick bites and grocery runs, with Mainsbury's within walking distance.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Queens' is legendary for its buttery food—famous for both taste and value. A hearty meal with a main and two sides typically costs just £3. Guests from other colleges are charged a 30% surcharge (still cheaper than their own buttery), but if they're accompanied by a Queens' student, the surcharge is waived.

PROS

Good academic community with a vibrant social life. Queens' is large in cohort size, so there are plenty of opportunities to meet people across subjects. The people here are also so kind, and caring, it's really fun to live in. Close-knit Singaporean community.



ACCOMMODATION

1st year students are guaranteed on-site accommodation, typically in Cripps Court (all en-suite or private bathrooms). 2nd and 3rd year students are spread across a mix of on and offsite locations. Accommodation tends to be on the pricier side, but you get to keep your room over the holidays. Laundry is free and kitchens are shared between 6 people – conducive for light cooking but that's it.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Queens' Boat Club is a rather enjoyable sport, and a must try while you're here. Queens' also hosts popular May Week events and has a reputation for throwing good formals and bops.

CONS

Queens' grounds are smaller and more compact than some of the grander colleges. The famous Mathematical Bridge draws heavy tourist traffic, which can interrupt the peaceful atmosphere and reduce privacy.

ROBINSON COLLEGE

LOCATION

Grange Road College. 20-minute walk or 10-minute cycle from city center. 10-minute walk from West Hub, Sidgwick Site, and University Sports Centre. Directly opposite the University Library.



ACCESS TO FOOD

Has both a buttery and a cafe by day/bar by night. Food is pretty good, at least one vegan and one halal option per meal, and large portions. £5.45 for 1 main + 2 sides. Weekend brunch is excellent (check out the Robinson Garden Restaurant menu for more details).

ACCOMMODATION

Onsite accommodation is guaranteed and rent stays fixed for all three years. First-years get mostly en-suite staircase rooms, while second- and third-years can group-ballot for houses or sets. Many facilities are recently renovated, all bathrooms have bathtubs, and laundry costs £3.60 per wash and dry.

PROS

College staff are extremely kind and supportive of international students. Lots of effort put into student welfare and integration, with many societies you can get involved in. Possesses a social student body with a warm and homely vibe. Generous with internship grants.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Robinson is very famous for its weekly bops - our bop room has smoke machines, strobe lights, high-quality DJ booth and speakers, a dedicated photographer, and its own bar! Also known for beautiful gardens (lots of wildlife, we have birds and small deer) and you can go on the grass. The JCR is equipped with board games, pool tables, a Wii, and even a mahjong table.

CONS

Not the most aesthetic or traditional college. Internet reception is fairly poor. Food/rent is on the expensive side, as Robinson isn't very well-off.

SELWYN COLLEGE



LOCATION

Grange Road College. 15-minute walk to city center through King's College. Right next to Sidgwick Site and very close to the University Library.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Meals cost around £5 with vegan options always and halal options most days. Menus are online and weekend brunch is a highlight. Formals are £17.25 with mixed reviews. The bar is a café by day and affordable bar by night. Kitchens are shared by eight and include basic appliances.

PROS

Selwyn is gorgeous, and the Selwyn Gardens are a nice place to picnic. The college offers peace and calm away from tourists and the business of life in the city center. The perfect college for humanities students, being only 5 minutes away from any of the departments at Sidgwick Site.

ACCOMMODATION

3 years of guaranteed on-site accommodation. All 1st years stay in Cripps Court which are all en-suite rooms. Most 2nd and 3rd years stay in Old Court or Anns Court which have a mix of en-suite and non-en-suite rooms. 2nd year ballot is random, though you can choose to ballot in groups, and the order is reversed for 3rd year. You have to move out at the end of each term, but there is sufficient complimentary storage space in college for international students, in addition to some storage space in your room. You can also choose to pay £12/day to keep your things in your room. Laundry is not free.

CONS

Your first year room may be on the pricier side as you don't get to pick the room type and they're all en-suite. Small Singaporean community, with only 0-3 Singaporeans in each year.

SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE

LOCATION

Very central. Directly opposite Mainsbury's. Within walking distance to almost every university building/facility (except West Hub), and 2 minutes away from other common shopping spots like M&S, Tesco, and Market Square.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Dining hall food is decent and affordable, with mains around £2.60-£3.10, sides £0.95, and dessert £1.40. Formals cost about £12 for a three-course meal. The college is also close to popular restaurants like Chinese Canteen, Hong Kong Fusion, and Jack's Gelato.

PROS

Sidney is one of the most convenient colleges for minimising travel time and has a top-rated bar with free non-alcoholic drinks and very cheap alcoholic options. It also runs a 'prep week' for freshers to socialise and settle in before term starts.



ACCOMMODATION

Half of first-years live onsite and half in Cromwell Court, a 5-minute walk away—assigned randomly. Second- and third-years ballot for rooms, with the order reversed between years. Both onsite and offsite options are available, but en-suites are only in Blundell Court and a few onsite staircases. Laundry is paid.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Oliver Cromwell's head is reportedly buried under the college. Sidney has had four Nobel laureates in Physics and Chemistry. If you're of age you can legally work for SidBar and get paid too!

CONS

It is a small college – an optimist would call it cozy. It can get a bit noisy at night due to proximity to nightclubs; it gets especially rowdy on Fridays and Saturdays. The library is quite basic and a little bit cramped.

ST CATHARINE'S COLLEGE

LOCATION

Very central. Within walking distance to almost every university building/facility (except West Hub). 7-minute walk from Market Square and Mainsbury's.



ACCESS TO FOOD

Food served in the dining hall is modestly priced (£6-7 for a meal including dessert), although there is a good variety, and the food is good on the whole. Very near restaurants like Aromi, Smokeworks, Kineya, and Jack's Gelato.

ACCOMMODATION

Onsite accommodation guaranteed for 1st and 3rd years. 2nd year accommodation is at St Chad's near Sidgwick, and is said to be one of the best in Cambridge – big, modern rooms in flats of 4 or 5 with proper kitchens. Costs of accommodation vary based on size and whether it's en-suite. Laundry is not free.

PROS

2 libraries and a good academic community with fantastic support. Small intake so the college population is relatively close-knit. The college bar has good vibes – there's a pool and foosball table. Excellent sports facilities.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Sir Ian McKellan was from St Catharine's. There is also a periodic table featuring the shapes of each atomic orbital within the college.

CONS

Too small space-wise. Small Singaporean community (0-3 Singaporeans each year), but a large Asian community.

ST EDMUND'S COLLEGE

LOCATION

Hill College. Near Aldi (for cheap groceries) and J&M (the best Asian supermarket in Cambridge). Getting a bike is highly recommended. An 8-minute cycle from the city center.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Dining hall food is on the slightly pricier side with one main and 2 sides costing £4.99 and portion sizes being criminally small. Food can be decent on some days but generally is not spectacular. Would not recommend going for Saturday brunches. Formals are £25 for college members with the food sadly not reflecting the price tag. Thankfully cooking facilities in Eddies are substantial and suited for developing your culinary prowess.

PROS

You can walk on the grass anywhere in college (a rarity in Cambridge). Very cosmopolitan and international community, allowing you to meet people from all corners of the world.



ACCOMMODATION

Onsite accommodation is guaranteed and rent stays fixed for all three years. First-years get mostly en-suite staircase rooms, while second- and third-years can group-ballot for houses or sets. Many facilities are recently renovated, all bathrooms have bathtubs, and laundry costs £3.60 per wash and dry.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Sizeable Singaporean community meaning that it will be very easy to see familiar faces around which could help you ease into university better.

CONS

College lacks glamour that the richer colleges may have. Funding is limited for students, with not many awards or bursaries being available. Traveling to and from college can be tedious and tiresome, especially during winter.

ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

LOCATION

Very central. A 5-10-minute walk from most city center amenities. Mainsbury's is only a 5-minute walk away from the Forecourt or Great Gate porter's lodge. A 17-minute walk to Sidgwick Site and the Engineering faculty.

ACCESS TO FOOD

The Buttery serves very good meals for about £5.50 per meal for John's members. They try to vary their cuisine each day so the only thing you'll really get sick of is Fish & Chips Fridays. Because the sides and salads are free-flow, the portions are usually sufficient. There is also a college cafe with an amazing seating space where you can get decent pastries and drinks.

PROS

St John's is one of the largest colleges, and its historic architecture is unparalleled (New Court Gardens, Bridge of Sighs, and Chapel). St John's May Ball is arguably one of the best in Cambridge. College sports teams are well-funded and prestigious. There are subsidized screenings at the college cinema with the latest movies.



ACCOMMODATION

First-years are guaranteed onsite accommodation with a continuous license, only requiring move-out in summer. You can choose between Cripps, North Court, or Chapel Court. Cripps offers large shared kitchens and bathrooms for up to 8 people – great for frequent cooking – while North and Chapel Courts have smaller kitchens shared between two.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

The college bar has a great ambience! St John's also gives out a partial scholarship to one Singaporean fresher each year (the Singapore Scholarship).

CONS

Large college, which means it takes time to walk to places. Smaller Singaporean community than some colleges.

TRINITY COLLEGE



LOCATION

Very central. A 3-minute walk from Mainsbury's and 5-minute walk from Market Square. A 17-minute walk to Sidgwick Site or the Engineering faculty.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Students at Trinity are fortunate to have a largely consistent and reliable quality and diversity of food. Generally, breakfast would cost around £4, lunch would cost around £6 and dinner would cost around £6-£8. The daily menus are posted on an student-run Instagram page or you can always drop by our Hall to check on the pasted notices.

PROS

Very central location. Bedders change sheets every other week. Very diverse student community.

ACCOMMODATION

On-site accommodation is guaranteed for all 3 years, and is spread out across the college site. 1st year accommodation is centralized within Angel Court, near the main street. Only Wolfson Building rooms are en-suite, but the toilet-to-student ratio is generally fine. Pricing for rooms at Trinity are mostly cheaper than most other colleges, given the size. There is ample storage for international students returning home during the breaks. Laundry is free.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Trinity May Ball is always a highlight, and college members have discounted tickets!

CONS

Many tourists throughout the year, which may disturb the peace slightly.

TRINITY HALL

LOCATION

Very central. Very near Market Square and right beside the public access bridge heading towards Sidgwick Site. The college enjoys the benefit of being central enough but also being tucked away on Trinity Lane, which means there are few tourists crowding outside.

ACCESS TO FOOD

Trinity Hall has really good food options and they tend to be relatively cheaper. An average meal is around £3-4. There is no kitchen in first year but the kitchen facilities at Wychfield and WYNG tend to be quite good.

PROS

Trinity Hall is very cozy and small, with each batch taking in around 100 students. The college is relatively well-funded, and every student can apply for a travel grant of around £600. The college is also known for Law, and was founded exclusively for the study of Law.



ACCOMMODATION

1st year students stay on-site in Central Site. 2nd and 3rd year students stay off-site in Wychfield site near Fitzwilliam, or at WYNG Gardens beside St John's. New Build and rooms at WYNG Gardens are ensuite, with the latter having double beds, though they're only available during term time. Students can request to stay over the holiday, but will be shifted to Central Site or Wychfield. WYNG is very new and very much like a hotel, with perfect location.

CONS

Not many Singaporeans in the college – if you desire a large Singaporean community, then Trinity Hall might not be for you.

WOLFSON COLLEGE

LOCATION

Grange Road college. 10-minute cycle from city center. A 10-minute walk or 2-minute cycle from Sidgwick Site, and a 10-minute cycle from the Engineering faculty. Not near any restaurants.

ACCESS TO FOOD

One of the most expensive dining halls in Cambridge, with 1 main + 2 sides costing about £7. Brunch is more affordable and is served on both Saturday and Sunday. Food is good by Cambridge standards. Most people cook to save money because kitchens are well-equipped. Formals are on the pricier side (£17 for members, £20 for guests) but the food is almost always fantastic.

PROS

Facilities are good – the library is 24/7 and has standing desks. Library staff will buy books for you on the spot that you need. Because Wolfson is a mature college, everyone is treated like an adult and complaints get taken seriously - there are fewer stupid rules and controls. Very international and cosmopolitan college with people from all sorts of diverse backgrounds.



ACCOMMODATION

Onsite accommodation is guaranteed for all three years, mostly in single rooms. En-suites cost £30-40 more per week and are smaller than average, while non-en-suites are slightly larger but shared between four. A continuous license is recommended to avoid moving out each term. Laundry is free and housekeeping is excellent.

NOTEWORTHY THINGS

Large Singaporean community. The Lee Library is named after Singaporean philanthropist Lee Seng Tee. President Tharman Shanmugaratnam did his Masters at Wolfson College.

CONS

Winter heating is not the best – it's only turned on for 2 hours in the morning and 2 hours in the evening. Difficult to get to know people from college if you don't eat at the dining hall, given the price.

courses

COMPUTER SCIENCE

LOCATION West Hub/New Museums

COHORT 130 students

NO. OF SGEANS 6-10

COURSE STRUCTURE

1st year subjects:

Foundations, Electronics (with hardware practicals), Graphics, Databases, OOP, Discrete math, Algorithms, Machine Learning, Interaction design, Software & Security Engineering, Probability.

2nd year we mainly dive deeper into the topics that we learn from year 1 along with a major group project. In the 3rd year, we have a dissertation (research paper) that counts as a full paper along with other exams.

CONTACT HOURS

A moderate amount of contact hours, with 12 hours of lectures split between New Museums Site and West Hub. There are 4-5 supervisions per week. Be prepared for one of the highest workloads across all subjects

UNIQUE TRAITS

Computer Science in Cambridge is highly theoretical, comprising relational algebra, formal proofs, automata theory, and algorithmic proofs. Whether or not this suits you well, it's an interesting learning experience.

COURSE APPEAL

One of the most respected degrees - many graduates end up at top research postings/firms
(Biased) Supervisors are amazing! They're all really qualified, and if you know your material the sessions can be very insightful and interesting

COURSE CAVEATS

Highest workload in Cambridge (around 40h/week)
Grades are extremely competitive
If you expect to do well in the industry, you must be prepared to do your own practical learning

ECONOMICS

LOCATION Sidgwick Site

COHORT 160 students

NO. OF SGEANS 15-20

COURSE STRUCTURE

Part I: 5 compulsory papers

Part IIA: 3 compulsory papers + choose 1 paper from 6 available (Labour, Mathematics and Statistics, International Trade and Development, POL1, POL2, SOC1)

Part IIB: 2 compulsory papers + choose 2 papers from 12 available (subject to availability) + dissertation of 7500 words

1st Year Subjects

Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Quantitative Methods in Economics, Political and Social Aspects of Economics, British Economic History

CONTACT HOURS

12h of lectures and 2-3h of supervisions/ week

COURSE APPEAL

The course has a good balance between both economic theory and the practical applications of economics

From 2nd year onwards, the optional papers give you more freedom to dictate how quantitative or qualitative you want your coursework to be (taking HSPS papers)

The high rigour and strong reputation of the course makes it an ideal foundation for those who want to go into academia in the future.

COURSE CAVEATS

1st year coursework at Cambridge is evenly split into mathematical and essay components as opposed to other UK universities (which are more mathematical)

If you're someone more inclined to the quantitative side of economics, you may dislike the compulsory essay papers

The coursework structure is great for training well-rounded economists by going through not just theory but also real-life cases in history, developing your ability to discern different author's arguments and data collection methods.

ENGLISH

LOCATION Sidgwick Site

COHORT 182 students

NO. OF SGEANS 3

COURSE STRUCTURE

IA: 2 compulsory papers (Shakespeare + Practical Criticism and Critical Practice (PCCP)) + 2 period papers

IB: 1 compulsory paper + choose 3 papers from 5 options, one of which can be replaced by a dissertation (which most people do)

II: 2 compulsory papers + 1 compulsory dissertation + 2 more 'options' (either another dissertation + 1 optional paper, OR 2 optional papers)

1st Year Subjects:

PCCP

Shakespeare portfolio

Period papers (which tend to be either Paper 6 and 7) - these are not examined in 1st year

CONTACT HOURS

2-3h of supervisions, 6h of lectures weekly (you can choose which lectures to attend). In Easter, there are Shakespeare seminars of 4 sessions x 1.5h.

UNIQUE TRAITS

Depending on your college, you'll be working through the literary periods chronologically backwards or forwards (i.e. starting with medieval paper and working forward, or starting with the modern paper and working backwards).

COURSE APPEAL

More historical than other universities, which gives you a solid foundation - though sometimes sacrifices modern and translated texts

Cambridge is also the 'birthplace' of practical criticism

You'll be able to delve deeper into areas of interest in dissertations, not so much the weekly essays.

COURSE CAVEATS

Can be very subjective - supervisors' advice can vastly differ and even contradict.

Workload exponentially increases from 1st to 3rd year

You should look into your DoS's specialties to get a feel for what they might focus on, or if you want to pursue something under their supervision

ENGINEERING

LOCATION Engineering Faculty/West Hub

COHORT 332 students

NO. OF SGEANS ~30

COURSE STRUCTURE

Part IA: 4 papers corresponding to each main subject

Part IB: 8 papers that expands more onto each engineering discipline

Part IIA: Students choose 10 papers from over 40 choices. The specific combination determines the specialization of the degree.

Part IIB: Optional Masters depending on previous year's grades. 8 papers from over 80 choices + masters project.

1st year subjects:

Paper 1: Mechanics (includes Thermofluid dynamics)

Paper 2: Structures/Materials (Civil)

Paper 3: Electronics/Information

Paper 4: Mathematics

CONTACT HOURS

2h of lectures daily, in the 9-11am or 11am-1pm slot. An average of 4h of labs every week (this can vary) and an average of 2h of supervisions every week (supervisor-dependent).

COURSE APPEAL

Cambridge offers a general engineering degree at the point of application so students can delay knowing what they want to specialize in. Students can make better informed choices about specialty with existing experience in each field. It also allows a greater awareness and understanding of other engineering disciplines in the workforce.

COURSE CAVEATS

Due to its broad nature, technical depth may be lacking at the 3rd year, and is usually recommended for students to do the Masters if there is an intention to work as a professional engineer.

GEOGRAPHY

LOCATION Downing Site

COHORT 101 students

NO. OF SGEANS 1-2

COURSE STRUCTURE

Part IA: 2 compulsory papers (human and physical geography) and 1 coursework section (~4 coursework assignments throughout Michaelmas and Lent)

First year subjects:

Human and Physical Geography (7 subtopics for human geography, 6 subtopics for physical geography)

Geography Skills and Methods (Coursework - Museum Fieldwork and Data Analysis using Excel, R Studio and GIS)

CONTACT HOURS

1-2h of supervisions, 6-8h of lectures, and 1.5h of practical classes a week

UNIQUE TRAITS

Fieldwork (vegetation analysis, drones, ethnography, etc.)

Data Analysis (R, GIS) Field Trips (second year, to places like Morocco and Norway)

COURSE APPEAL

If you're interested in critically analyzing a broad range of topical and issues from a geographical, conceptual perspective, the course is for you! The course weaves STEM and the humanities. In the first year, you have lectures/supervisions on volcanoes or atmospheric physics followed by geopolitics and culture. In the second and third year, there are a lot of niche, interesting papers to take, and there is a lot of room to customize based on your interest.

COURSE CAVEATS

A lot of self directed learning is required

There is no "end" to what you can study due to the breadth of topics covered by the discipline (anything under the sun essentially!) so the course demands good time and work management

LOCATION Sidgwick Site

COHORT 60-70 students

NO. OF SGEANS 1

HISTORY AND POLITICS

COURSE STRUCTURE

Part IA: 3 compulsory papers (1 History Outline and 2 mandatory Politics) and 1 interdisciplinary 4,000 word essay (Evidence and Argument) submitted in May

- Choose 1 outline paper from out of 12 for History
- POL1 (The Modern State and its Alternatives) and POL2 (International Conflict, Order, and Justice) for Politics

Part IB: 3 compulsory papers (1 History Outline and 2 mandatory Politics (Political Theory and IR)) and 1 interdisciplinary 5,000 word essay (either on History or Politics) submitted in May

- See above for History
- Political Theory: History of Political Thought to c. 1700 OR History of Political Thought from c.1700 to c.1890
- IR: Comparative Politics OR International Organization

Part II: Choose 3 papers from a wide range of possible combinations - you can choose to specialize in either History or Politics, or continue taking a mix of both. Alternatively, you're able to replace 1 of the 3 papers with a 10,000 word dissertation. There is also a compulsory paper called Theory and Practice in History and Politics

- Choose from 39 History papers
- Choose from 11 Politics papers

CONTACT HOURS

6h of lectures and 1-2h of supervisions/week.
9 essays/term

COURSE APPEAL

If you're someone who enjoys learning for learning's sake, you'll appreciate how many of the concepts you learn about in your politics papers can be applied to understanding historical phenomena better (especially for recent history). The workload is also relatively lighter compared to most other subjects, and you'll find that you have more free time to pursue your interests.

COURSE CAVEATS

A lot of self directed learning is required. The final exams for all the non-coursework papers are 3 hour written exams - may not be for you if you prefer coursework.

How well you do for your exams is largely dependent on how familiar your supervisors are with the examiners' demands (not all supervisors are on the exam committee for the paper they teach).

While there's some degree of overlap between what you learn in History and in Politics, it usually feels like you're learning about what goes on in either History or Politics, rather than truly combining the two.

HUMAN, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL SCIENCES

LOCATION Sidgwick Site

COHORT 165 students

NO. OF SGEANS ~5

COURSE STRUCTURE

Part I: Select 4 papers, with the 4 either being the core papers (POL1, POL2, SOC1, SAN1), or taking 3 core papers and one optional paper (A1,A3, B1, PBS2)

Part IIA: Specialise into 3-single track options or 5 joint-track options, 4 papers chosen based on track

Part IIB: 4 papers, or 3 papers and 1 dissertation

1st Year Subjects:

POL1 (The Modern State and its Alternatives), POL2 (International Conflict, Order, and Justice), SAN1 (Social Anthropology: The Comparative Perspective), SOC1 (Introduction to Sociology: Modern Societies I)

CONTACT HOURS

8h of lectures and 2h of supervisions/ week. 12 essays/term, although this is dependent on your supervisors

COURSE APPEAL

Course is unique to Cambridge
Very strong departments, especially for POLIS and Social Anthropology
Many of the books on your reading list were published by your professors
Very passionate supervisors, and the depth of knowledge you glean is incredibly enriching, especially if you already have a passion for a particular subject.

COURSE CAVEATS

A lot of self directed learning is required
May be difficult to write your personal statement due to the breadth of the course, and is very essay-heavy
How well you do in the exams is highly variable and dependent on how well your supervisors know what examiners want
What topics you end up studying depends on your supervisor's expertise, and the quality of supervisors is very diverse.

LAND ECONOMY

LOCATION Sidgwick Site

COHORT 70 students

NO. OF SGEANS 1-2

COURSE STRUCTURE

Part IA: 4 compulsory papers

Part IB: Choose 5 papers from 7 available (Private Law and/or Property Law is compulsory)

Part II: Choose 4 papers from 6 available + Dissertation

1st year subjects:

Economics, Public Law, Statistics, Public Policy

(not the actual names of the papers, just making them not sound so cheem)

CONTACT HOURS

8-10h of lectures and 1-2h of supervisions/week.

COURSE APPEAL

Interesting degree

A unique course that no other universities offer, combining economics, law, and real estate

COURSE CAVEATS

Most of my supervisors are PhD candidates who don't know how to teach
When a professor is your supervisor, it's probably because they couldn't find PhD candidates, which means they don't have time to mark your work

In Year 2, we take courses with the law students, but because the department doesn't liaise with the Law faculty, I've heard that land economy and law lectures sometimes clash

LAW

LOCATION Sidgwick Site

COHORT 200-230 students

NO. OF SGEANS ~30

COURSE STRUCTURE

Part IA: 4 compulsory papers

Part IB: 2 compulsory papers + 3 elective papers

Part II: 2 compulsory papers + 3 elective papers, with the option to swap out an elective paper for either a 12,000 word dissertation or 2 half-papers

1st Year Subjects:

Civil Law in Context, Constitutional Law, Criminal Law, Law of Torts

CONTACT HOURS

9-10h of lectures/week and 4h of supervisions spread over 2 weeks.

COURSE APPEAL

The supervision system and course structure allows you to go really in depth with the various topics and engage with them more than you might be able to elsewhere

The Civil Law in Context course is quite unique (and compulsory). Your enjoyment of it may vary (I hated it) but there are some very interesting and foundational concepts to be picked up there.

COURSE CAVEATS

The degree offers less modality than some other unis (eg NUS), meaning you may have slightly less choice with respect to elective modules (but there are still other unis with even less modality, like Oxford)

There is not much extracurricular support for things like moots or negotiation competitions. Most learning is done by self-studying, and there are very few contact hours compared to Singaporean unis.

LINGUISTICS

LOCATION Sidgwick Site

COHORT 25-40 students

NO. OF SGEANS 0-2

COURSE STRUCTURE

Part I: 4 compulsory papers (see '1st Year Subjects')

Part IIA: Choose 4 papers from 16-23* available

Part IIB: Choose 2 papers from 16-23* available + Linguistic Theory + Dissertation

*16-23 = 9 (Linguistics Tripos) + 7-14 (borrowable papers from MML/Classics/AMES/ASNC)

1st Year Subjects:

Li1: Sounds and Words (Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology);

Li2: Structures and Meanings (Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics);

Li3: Language, Brains and Machines (Language Acquisition, Psycholinguistics and Computational Linguistics);

Li4: Change and Variation (Sociolinguistics, Historical Linguistics and Language Typology)

CONTACT HOURS

4-5h of lectures and 4h of supervisions (maximally)/week.

COURSE APPEAL

The course is one of the few that offers linguistics by itself (without another language or discipline), focusing on a theoretical approach that requires students to consider a wide variety of concepts

The faculty are some of the leading linguists in the world and the wealth and breadth of knowledge they possess will allow for great exploration for interested students

COURSE CAVEATS

Some 1st year papers have an Anglocentric bias - the syllabus might require the study of more foreign cultures
In later years, there is more theoretical focus that is non-culture-specific in most papers

In the 2nd and 3rd years, many borrowable papers are Eurocentric in nature, with some requiring prerequisite language competency, and/or knowledge pertaining to the language(s)

MATHEMATICS

LOCATION Cockcroft/Babbage LTs

COHORT 250 students

NO. OF SGEANS ~10

COURSE STRUCTURE

Part IA: 4 Compulsory Papers

Part IB: 4 Compulsory Papers + 1 Computational Project

Part II: 4 Compulsory Papers + 1 Computational Project

You get to choose applied/pure courses in your 2nd and 3rd years, depending on the grade boundary you're aiming for.

1st Year Subjects: Vector and Matrices, Differential Equations, Numbers and Sets, Groups, Analysis I, Probability, Vector Calculus, Dynamics and Relativity

CONTACT HOURS

2h of lectures/day, 6 days/week, and 2h of supervisions/week.

COURSE APPEAL

Cambridge Math is known to be one of the most toughest and rigorous courses to study in the world

For an aspiring quant, completing the Cambridge Math makes you an extremely competitive applicant

Supervisors and lecturers are known to be the most distinguished in their fields.

COURSE CAVEATS

Most learning is self-guided

Given that you will be in a cohort of other IMO contestants and extremely gifted individuals, be prepared to put in 42 hours of hard work/week if you want to achieve top grades

Due to the lack of course material(you can find notes online, but they might not be the most up to date), the only real feedback you get are supervisions for example sheets

It's generally advisable to refer to extra problems outside of lecture content and example sheets

MEDICINE

LOCATION Downing Site/
Addenbrooke's Hospital

COHORT 280-300 students

NO. OF SGEANS 2-4

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course is divided into pre-clinical and clinical years. The pre-clinical years (Years 1-3) include Part IA (Year 1) and Part IB (Year 2), and cover core subjects such as anatomy, physiology, and biochemistry. In Year 3, students intercalate by studying a different subject, and graduate with a BA. The clinical years (Years 4-6) then focus on hospital and GP placements, with more patient contact and clinical teaching.

First year subjects:

Functional Architecture of the Body (FAB), Homeostasis (HOM), Molecules in Medical Science (MIMS), Foundations of Evidence Based Practice (FEBP) and the Social and Ethical Context of Health and Illness (SECHI)

CONTACT HOURS

12h of lectures, 3h of supervisions, 1-2 practicals, and 22 dissections/week amounting to ~22 contact hours.

COURSE APPEAL

The lecturers and supervisors are genuinely passionate about their subjects, and the overall quality of teaching and materials—such as lecture handouts and slides—is generally high. Supervisions offer a more personalized learning experience and are great opportunities to clarify doubts and deepen understanding.

COURSE CAVEATS

There is relatively little clinical exposure in the early years compared to other UK medical schools. The course is also highly academic, with an emphasis on understanding concepts in scientific depth beyond what is typically required elsewhere.

NATURAL SCIENCES (BIOLOGICAL)

<u>LOCATION</u>	New Museums Site/Downing Site/ West Hub/Chemistry Faculty
<u>COHORT</u>	529 students
<u>NO. OF SGEANS</u>	~20

COURSE STRUCTURE

Part IA: 3 experimental subjects from 8 available + 1 math option (Math A, Math B, or Math Bio)

Part IB: 3 subjects from 18 available

Part II: 1 subject from 15 available

Part III: optional MSci, 1 subject from 9 available

1st Year Subjects:

Biodiversity, Evolution & Ecology, Biomedical Sciences, Biomolecules & Cells, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Introduction to Experimental Psychology

CONTACT HOURS

12h of lectures, 7-13h of practicals (depending on subjects taken), and 4h of supervisions/week.

COURSE APPEAL

Delivered by 14 departments, flexible framework for exploring biological and/or physical subjects before specializing in Part II

COURSE CAVEATS

Intense workload due to sheer number of contact hours

NATURAL SCIENCES (PHYSICAL)

<u>LOCATION</u>	Chemistry Department/New Museums Site/Downing Site/West Hub
<u>COHORT</u>	529
<u>NO. OF SGEANS</u>	~20

COURSE STRUCTURE

Part IA: 3 experimental subjects from 8 available + 1 maths option (Maths A/B)

Part IB: 3 subjects from 18 available

Part II: 1 subject from 15 available

Part III: optional MSci, 1 subject from 9 available

1st Year Subjects:

Physics, Chemistry, Materials Science, Earth Sciences, Maths A/B

CONTACT HOURS

12h of lectures, 4h of supervisions, and
~12h of labs/week.

COURSE APPEAL

Starts off as a general science course which means that you can explore more fields which gives you more time to decide before specializing and also allows you to gain a more interdisciplinary view of the various Sciences

I personally feel like this stretches us more and makes it a more thorough and rigorous course

COURSE CAVEATS

You will have to do subjects you may not enjoy or wish to do. For example, despite being a hardcore physicist you will have to still do two other courses, e.g. 1A Chemistry and Materials Science. While some may enjoy the breadth, others may find it to be an additional burden. Contact hours are one of the highest amongst all Cambridge undergraduate programmes.

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES

LOCATION Downing Site/West Hub
COHORT 70 students
NO. OF SGEANS 1-2

COURSE STRUCTURE

Year 1 - Three psychology papers (Neuroscience, Social Psych, Statistics), with One external paper of your choosing

Year 2 - Two psychology papers (Neuroscience, Developmental Psych), with Two external papers

Year 3 - Dissertation, One psychology paper of your choosing, with Two external papers

1st Year Subjects: Neuroscience, Social Psychology, Statistics

CONTACT HOURS

8-10h of lectures for PBS papers and 2h of lectures for external papers, and 2-3h of supervisions/week.

UNIQUE TRAITS

A unique course that no other universities offer, combining economics, law, and real estate.

COURSE APPEAL

Supervision system in small-group settings with essays and discussions. Widens your horizons in understanding the topic, its nuances and argument formulation

Cambridge psychology is rooted more in neuroscience and statistics than most universities, with access to world leaders in experimental and research psychology Ability to choose your papers allows you to prospectively specialize

COURSE CAVEATS

Intense pace, an entire topic is covered in 2-3 lectures, lasting about a week, therefore making it crucial to stay consistent

Heavy amount of essay writing, can get up to 3 x 1.5k word essays weekly for supervisions

Neuroscience has a relatively academic and theoretical approach, less applied Social psych requires broad reading and application of theories and examples Statistics requires learning R, which can be a struggle

Admissions
Tests

LAW: LNAT

FORMAT

Section A: 42 MCQs that count toward your final LNAT score. The questions are based on 12 argumentative passages, with 3-4 questions each. 95 minutes for this section.

Section B: Choose 1 out of 3 topics to write a 750 word essay. The topics cover a wide range of subjects, so it's useful to have good knowledge of current affairs. 40 minutes for this section.

*The LNAT does not test your legal knowledge, and you're not expected to have any.

TIPS

Section A is quite similar to ICAS English questions, requiring reading skills, comprehension, and logic. It's not hard, but tricky - don't just look for the right answer and move on, but choose the MOST right answer.

Section B exhibits similarities to GP essays in terms of argumentation and structure. Keep writing succinct, and make sure to demonstrate your argumentative skills and writing abilities!

THINGS TO NOTE

There are many websites with both guides and past papers.

Only section A is counted within your overall score, but section B answers are also available to universities to look through.

Scoring above 30 would put you in a good stead, and scoring over 32 would put you over the edge, but take note that scores differ from year to year. Only 2% of applicants score above 34.

MEDICINE: UCAT

FORMAT

A 2-hour MCQ exam consisting of 4 individually timed subtests:

1. Verbal Reasoning (VR) - 44 questions, 21 minutes
2. Decision Making (DM) - 35 questions, 37 minutes
3. Quantitative Reasoning (QR) - 36 questions, 26 minutes
4. Situational Judgment (SJT) - 69 questions, 26 minutes

You will receive a score of 900-2700, and a SJT band, which ranges from 1-4.

TIPS

VR: Skim the passage to look for key terms and numbers (which are usually easy to spot).

DM: Treat each sentence as a separate chunk, as they represent different logical steps or pieces of information. Don't make assumptions, especially for syllogisms.

QR: The only section where rote learning correlates with direct improvement

SJT: Most questions are based on common sense and require you to judge the appropriateness or importance of different actions.

THINGS TO NOTE

The official UCAT website has a useful guide: <https://www.ucat.ac.uk/prepare/preparation-resources/>

Make sure to routinely practice past year papers (which can be found online).

Look for websites such as Medentry or Medify for useful free resources.

STEM: ESAT

FORMAT

A 2-hour paper consisting of 3 40-minute modules, each containing 27 MCQs. Calculator is **NOT allowed**. Each module is graded on a scale of 1 to 9, with scores being reported to 1 decimal place.

There are 5 modules to choose from, from which 3 are chosen (depending on course/university):

1. Engineers do Math 1, Physics, and Math 2
2. Other STEM subjects do the compulsory Math 1, and choose 2 between Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Math 2

TIPS

- 1 question every 80 seconds - then 4 minutes to review questions you're unsure of.
- Don't spend too much time on a single challenging problem—move on and return later if needed.

Effective Study Plan:

Math: Focus on advanced-level topics like calculus, algebra, and differential equations. Review O-Level topics..

Physics: Revise mechanics, electromagnetism, thermodynamics, and waves, focusing on deeper conceptual understanding. Review A-Level/IB.

THINGS TO NOTE

- <https://esat-tmua.ac.uk/esat-preparation-materials/> - Past paper archives (all ENGAA—the relevant questions are marked)
- <https://esat-tmua.ac.uk/about-the-tests/esat-test/> - general overview
- <https://home.pearsonvue.com/uatuk> - practice questions specific to ESAT

STEM: TMUA

FORMAT

Paper 1: Applications of Mathematical Knowledge

- 75 minutes
- 20 questions, scaled to a score between 1.9
- Assesses your ability to apply mathematical knowledge in a variety of contexts

Paper 2: Mathematical Reasoning

- 75 minutes
- 20 questions, scaled to a score between 1.9
- Assesses your ability to apply conceptual knowledge to constructing and analyzing mathematical arguments

TIPS

Paper 1: The questions are roughly the difficulty of A-Level/IB Math questions. Topics include (non-exhaustively): Algebra, Exponents and Logarithms, Calculus, Coordinate Geometry, Trigonometry, among others. Refer to test specifications for the full syllabus.

Paper 2: Similar to paper 1, with added emphasis on logic and proof

- Logic and Argument
- Mathematical Proofs
- Identifying errors in proofs

THINGS TO NOTE

Warwick University has a useful and comprehensive TMUA guide that covers individual questions from past years: <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/mathematics/studywithus/ug/entrance-exams/tmua-support/>

Practice past year papers, which can be found online.

Practice the questions **without a calculator, and under timed conditions**.

Credits

This publication would not have been possible without the kind contributions from the following CUMSA members, who contributed sections of the guide relevant to their course, college, and admissions test.

Abdul Mateen Kamal	Isaac Chan	Tek Kai Zhen
Aeliana Kong	Isabel Huang	Whang Shih Ee
Albert Chieng	Janice Samuel	Zhang Chenxi
Alldon Garren Tan	Justine Kwek	
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Aneish Sawney	Khoo Kee Suen	
Bethany Lew	Lawrence Yuan	
Boyang Hou	Liang Jing Hao	
Cheyanne Owee	Matthew Ho	
Chloe Kusuma	Matthew Low	
Chloe Neo	Min Sittman	
Chloe Saw	Oh Chin Aik	
Chloe Young	Nathanael Chan	
Conrad Xheng	Nathanael Tung	
Daniel Choo	Sarah Saw	
Donny Feng	Shriya Peruri	
Firas Jabbar	Tan Guan Rong	
Henry Yap	Tay Kar Ray	
Ho Li Xuan	Tan Li En	

Thank
You

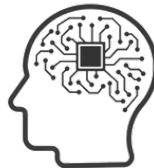
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Deliver with impact.

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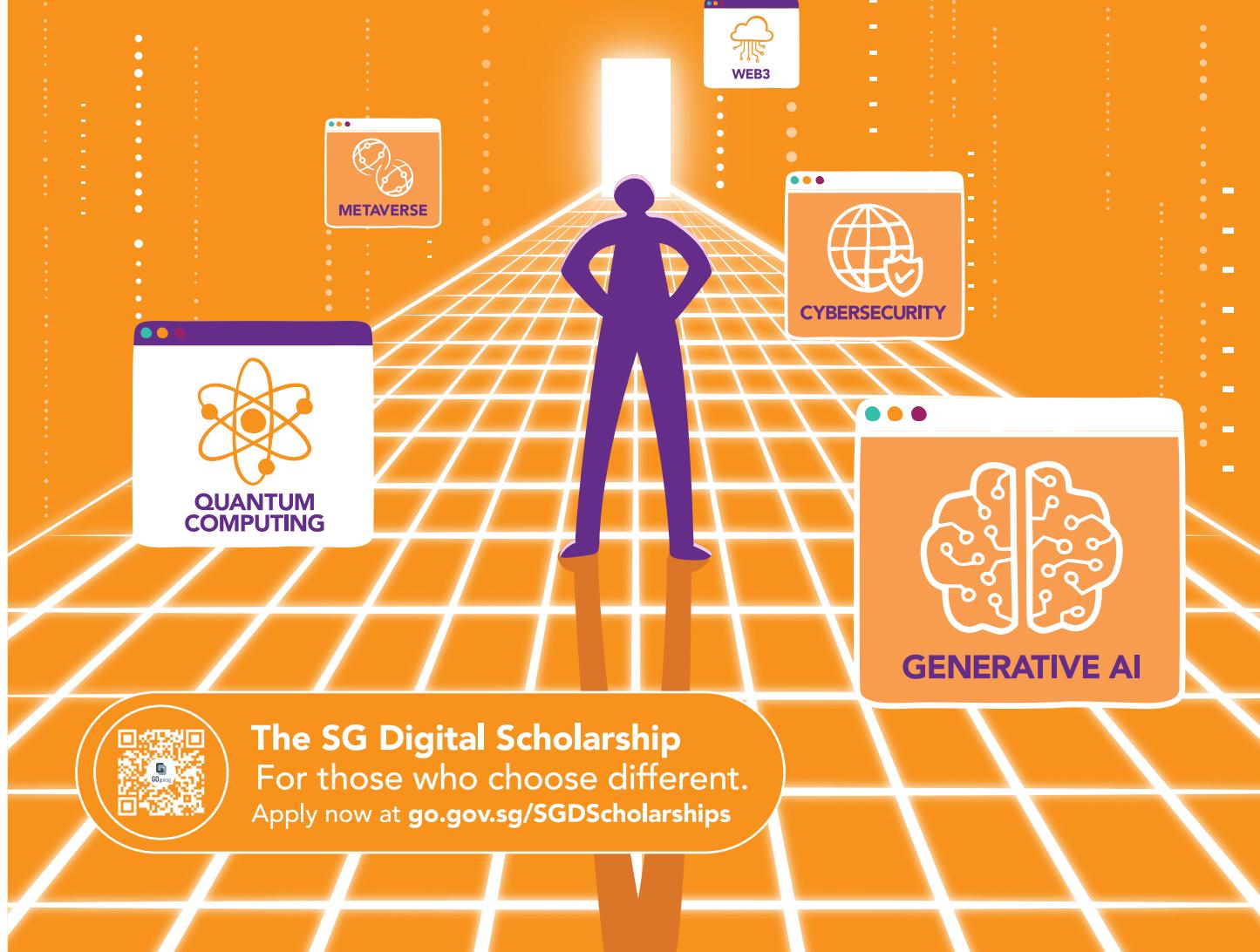


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Headquartered in Singapore, Mapletree Investments Pte Ltd ('Mapletree' or 'the Group') is a global real estate development, investment, capital and property management company committed to sustainability. The Group strategically invests in markets and real estate sectors with high growth potential to deliver consistently attractive returns.

As at 31 March 2025, Mapletree has S\$80.3 billion of assets under management (AUM). The Group manages three Singapore-listed real estate investment trusts (REITs) and nine private real estate funds, which hold a diverse portfolio of assets in Asia Pacific, Europe, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US).

Mapletree offers nearly 29,000 student beds located across 43 cities in the US, the UK, Canada and Germany. The 453-bed Westwood Student Mews in Coventry represents Mapletree's first student housing development in the UK, while the 513-bed The Chestnut at University City in Philadelphia marks Mapletree's first student housing development project in the US.

¹As at 31 March 2025.

These developments highlight Mapletree's capability to develop and manage high-quality, well-located student housing offerings.

In April 2024, Mapletree completed a ~S\$1.7 billion strategic acquisition of 31 student housing assets across the UK and Germany, along with the award-winning Student Castle operating platform. This deal catapulted Mapletree from the seventh to the fourth-largest student housing owner in the UK as at 31 March 2025, while establishing in-house operating capabilities essential for scaling the Group's student housing business. The Student Castle brand has successfully developed and refurbished 15 assets over 15 years, including two heritage-enhancing developments in Bath and Durham, and two award-winning projects in Oxford and York.

In the UK, Mapletree also owns offices such as 3 Hardman Street, iQ Building and One Glass Wharf, as well as mixed-use development Green Park, a leading business park. The Group recently entered the UK logistics sector by acquiring its first logistics facility in Derby Commercial Park in November 2024.



Mapletree's
LinkedIn

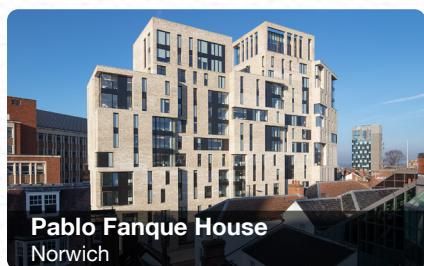


Mapletree's Student
Housing Portfolio

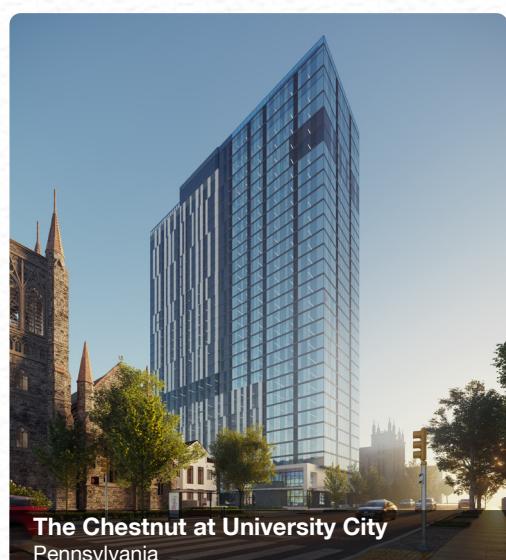
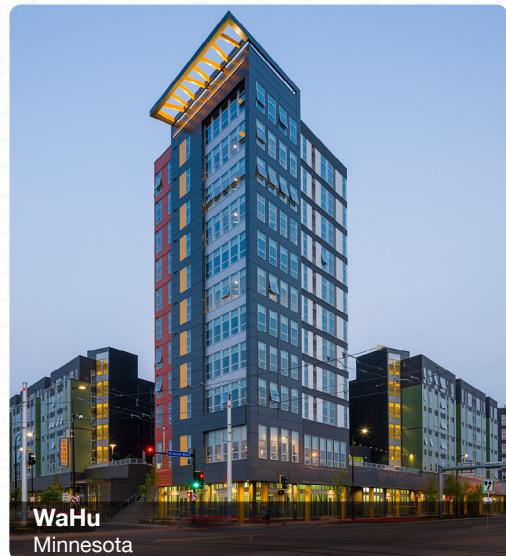


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| UK assets



| US assets



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capitol
students

StudentCastle

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Nomura is a global financial services group with an integrated network spanning approximately 30 countries. By *connecting markets East & West*, Nomura services the needs of individuals, institutions, corporates and governments through its three business divisions: Wealth Management, Wholesale (Global Markets and Investment Banking), and Investment Management. Learn more about Nomura's services by visiting our "[What We Do](#)" homepage.

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Nomura's divisions are primarily dedicated to servicing the needs of institutional clients. They comprise of:

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TECHNOLOGY, supports the Investment Banking and Global Markets divisions in servicing their clients.



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1925



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As of March 2024

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\$589 billion*
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A diverse workforce with **90** Nationalities

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Nomura has provided me with the opportunity to work on interesting problems, surrounded by smart, driven people. Nothing we do is easy, but it all seems manageable when you are part of a close-knit, high-performing team. Much like my time spent on the Cam!

Christopher Torrington
Executive Director, Global Head of eFX
Trading and Strategy

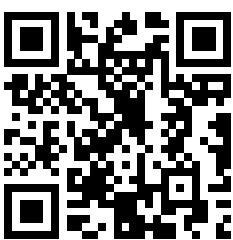


Christophe (middle)

Our Process



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and
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pre-study
allowance[^]

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*Where applicable.

[^]Not applicable to MHA Mid-Term Scholarships.

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