



Undergraduate Prospectus



St Catharine's College
Cambridge

Welcome to St Catharine's

St Catharine's College is a close-knit and friendly community of students, academics and staff situated in the heart of Cambridge. Our aim is to attract students with strong academic potential from the broadest possible range of backgrounds, and to support them fully throughout their years at one of the best universities in the world.

When you choose your Cambridge College, you are choosing a community which will provide you with what you need to thrive academically, and it will be the social hub of your life for at least three years. St Catharine's is a place where students can succeed in their work, and enjoy themselves, too.



The aim of this leaflet is to show you what studying, living and socialising at St Catharine's is like. More detailed information is available on our website, www.caths.cam.ac.uk.

Even if you worry that Cambridge might not be for you – read on, maybe visit the College, and most of all, apply!

A Brief History of St Catharine's

St Catharine's was founded in 1473 by Robert Woodlark, and admitted its first students in the sixteenth century.

Initially one of the smaller Colleges, St Catharine's has gradually developed its buildings and facilities. The College is unusual in that the Main Court has buildings on only three sides, and opens onto the street, giving the College an open and airy feel.

The student population increased dramatically in the second half of the twentieth century. Several new buildings were constructed to meet the needs of this growing community: a second library, a new dining hall, and St Chad's on Grange Road, where all second-year undergraduates live. Most recently, the College built the McGrath Centre for talks, events and performances, with a large new student coffee bar.

Notable Alumni

- John Ray, naturalist, originator of the concept of 'species'.
- John Addenbrooke, founder of Addenbrooke's Hospital.
- Nevil Maskelyne, Astronomer Royal.
- Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, President of India.
- Peter Boizot, founder of Pizza Express.
- Peter Hall, founder of the Royal Shakespeare Company and former director of the National Theatre.
- Ian McKellen, actor.
- Peter Lawrence, developmental biologist.
- Sarah Springman, international triathlete and professor of engineering.
- Jeremy Paxman, broadcaster and author.
- Rona Fairhead, Former Chair of the BBC Trust.
- Roger Harrabin, BBC Environment Analyst.
- Joanne Harris, author.
- Jenny Fray, first female captain with British Airways.
- Richard Ayoade, actor, director, presenter.

Learning at St Catharine's

At St Catharine's you'll be encouraged to work hard and thrive in a highly stimulating intellectual environment, and to attain your full academic and personal potential.

Teaching in St Catharine's, as in all Cambridge Colleges, is shared between the University and the College. Lectures and practical classes are organised by the University, but it's the Colleges which organise supervisions – the intense and rewarding small-group teaching sessions that are a distinctive feature of the Cambridge system.

Supervisions are your opportunity to take risks with your own ideas. You can explore new approaches and advanced topics, and you will also prepare and submit work in advance which your supervisors will then discuss with you.

All this may seem very different to your school education, and possibly a bit daunting. However, you will receive a great deal of guidance, and will be allocated a Director of Studies, an expert in your chosen subject who will monitor your academic progress and offer specialist advice.

There are also opportunities for students to study abroad. The College has exchange schemes with Caltech and the Universities of Heidelberg and Doshisha (Kyoto). The University also runs exchanges with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



Subjects

St Catharine's offers most of the courses available in the University. At the time of printing, these are:

Anglo-Saxon, Norse &
Celtic
Archaeology
Asian & Middle Eastern
Studies
Chemical Engineering
Classics
Computer Science
Economics
Engineering
English

Geography
History
History & Modern
Languages
History & Politics
Human, Social & Political
Sciences
Land Economy
Law
Mathematics
Medicine

Modern & Medieval
Languages
Music
Natural Sciences
Philosophy
Psychological &
Behavioural Sciences
Theology & Religious
Studies
Veterinary Medicine

Accommodation

Living in and feeling part of your College is an essential and enjoyable element of student life. It's not only a place to study – it's also your home, where you'll make many new friends.

We provide accommodation for all our first, second and third year undergraduates, and often fourth years, too. Our main site in the middle of Cambridge is home to all first and third year students, and rooms vary from combined study-living-rooms with separate bedrooms to bedrooms with en suite bathrooms. The variety of accommodation within the main College reflects the differing ages of the buildings, and includes both

traditional old college rooms and modern rooms.

Contrary to what you might expect of Cambridge, living expenses and room rents are lower than at most universities. Cambridge terms are short and you will only be charged for your accommodation for thirty weeks each year. Termly rents vary according to room size and type. Recent rates are available on the website.



A photograph of three students sitting on a wooden bench in a lush garden. The students are seen from the side, looking towards the left. The garden is filled with green grass, various shrubs, and large trees in the background. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. A dark semi-transparent box is overlaid on the bottom left of the image, containing text.

St Chad's

In the second year, all students move together to St Chad's on Grange Road, a five-minute cycle ride from the main College. This accommodation complex consists of attractive, well-equipped, four- and five-bedroom flats, situated in the beautiful gardens seen here.

College Life

St Catharine's is a community which provides a wide range of support and facilities for all students at every stage of their studies.

Facilities

St Catharine's has two excellent libraries – the beautiful old Sherlock Library, which holds an extensive collection of books for English and Modern and Medieval Languages, and the Shakeshaft Library, which houses a well-stocked selection of books for all other subjects.

The College also has well-equipped computer rooms, as well as fast internet access in every student room. We have expert computer officers on hand to assist you with your queries.

Welfare

Your welfare is important to us, and we encourage you to seek the advice and help which is freely available throughout the college.

You will be assigned a Tutor, who is concerned with your general wellbeing and to whom you can turn for advice or assistance on any matter. However, there are several other ways to get

advice – the College Nurse in our Sick Bay, the Chaplain (regardless of your religious convictions), and the University student helplines and Counselling Service.

College staff have many years' experience of helping students solving problems that can arise. You will find they are an approachable and friendly bunch and will do their very best to help you feel at home.





Food

Meeting fellow students at mealtimes is a central part of College life. Breakfast, lunch and evening meals are available at the cafeteria in the dining hall on the main site.

There are also several opportunities each week to dine at 'formal hall', an ever-popular social occasion to which you can also invite guests for a small

fee. In addition, societies and clubs often hold special dinners.


If you wish, you can also cook for yourself, in kitchenettes or shared kitchens on both sites.

If you have special dietary requirements, you can inform the catering department, who will make every effort to accommodate your needs.

Extra-Curricular Activities

We believe that non-work activities form an essential part of your university experience. Most students find that their College becomes the focal point for their social life, with much of their spare time taken up with an array of College activities.





Many social events are organised by the Junior Combination Room (JCR) to which all undergraduates belong, as well as by various clubs and societies of the College. The elected JCR committee also provides an important, friendly link between you and the decision-making bodies at St Catharine's.

The committee is responsible for organising Freshers' Week activities, the biennial May Ball, and the ever-popular 'Catz bops' three times a term. The College has a large coffee bar which is a lively hub for students.

In addition, St Catharine's abounds with active clubs and societies catering for almost every interest. These include the Shirley Society, the oldest literary society in the University, the Economics Society and the John Ray (science) Society, as well as numerous non-academic societies. There are also frequent seminars given by guest speakers.

Extensive College sports facilities cater for most sports (and all abilities!), including squash, badminton, tennis, athletics,

swimming, rugby, football and cricket. There is an all-weather hockey pitch and a modern cricket pavilion. Those keen to row will appreciate the College boathouse, and there is a well-equipped exercise room on the main site.

The College Music Society is active and ambitious, organising and promoting a wide variety of events, to which all are welcome, from organ recitals to jazz evenings, chamber music concerts to informal 'open mic' events. The Choir is an integral part of the musical life of the College, and is an important ambassador for St Catharine's, with national and international concerts and recordings. This lively, committed and sociable group welcomes talented new singers.

The College chapel was built in 1704 and has been a place of worship and meditation ever since. Open every day, it exists for all College members, providing a place of peace and stillness for those of all faiths, or none.

Photo by Marton Gorka

Student Finances

At St Catharine's, we believe no one should be deterred from coming to study with us because they worry they cannot afford it.

Your main financial costs as a Cambridge student will be:

- **tuition fees** (most UK/EU students take out a government loan for these)
- **college fees** (payable by non-EU students)
- **living costs** such as rent, books and food

UK students can apply for additional government funding for their living costs. UK and EU students from families with low incomes also receive annual bursaries, sometimes thousands of pounds, from Cambridge University.

In addition, St Catharine's provides its own Access Bursaries to all such students, as well as some entrance bursaries for non-EU students. Hardship bursaries are available to all students as and when necessary.

The College also maintains many funds dedicated to supporting student travel, sport, music, language courses, research, course costs and internships (more information is available on our website). We will do our best to ensure that you get the most out of your university years.

(All details correct at time of printing.)

How to Apply

Many people are daunted by the prospect of applying to Cambridge, but those who do apply usually find the process straightforward and even enjoyable.

You apply to Cambridge through UCAS, just as you would for any other university, but with an earlier deadline (usually mid-October). You will subsequently be asked to fill out an additional online application form. Most applicants are then asked to visit us for an interview on a single day in December, and we usually make our decisions by mid-January.

Our aim is to offer places to the applicants who we believe have the greatest academic potential, regardless of who they are and where they come from. We do this using a combination of

academic results, personal statements, and interviews. Some subjects require you to sit a pre-interview written assessment.

Most applicants receive two half-hour interviews, during which we assess your fluency in and enthusiasm for your chosen subject. We go out of our way to be as welcoming and friendly as possible.

More detailed advice, including what is required for each subject, and what offers we make, is available online.



Find Out More

This leaflet is intended as only a very general introduction to what we do at St Catharine's. Large printed prospectuses use up trees and rapidly go out of date, so we provide much more detailed and up-to-date information on our website. This includes details of each subject we teach, who teaches it, what we look for in applicants, and how we look for it. You should also consider attending one of our open days – full details are on the website.

Visit Us

If you are in Cambridge and would like to look around the College, just pop in and do so! If the 'College Closed to Visitors' sign is out, simply go to the Porters' Lodge at the front of the College, say that you are thinking of applying, and they will let you in.

Contact Us

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