Welcome to your College Library

Your College Library is a place, a collection, and a service. Our job is to get you what you need to read, and provide you with a place to work in peace and comfort. The library is staffed by a team of four dedicated librarians and archivists, and we aim to run the best library in Cambridge. Let us know what you need, and we’ll try to provide it.

The Shakeshaft Library is open 22 hours a day, 7 days a week, accessed with your University card. Library & Archive staff are based there, and can be found in the office between 9 and 5, Monday to Friday.

From 2020 to 2022, our other Library, the Sherlock, will be closed because of a nearby construction project. We’ve moved many of its books to the Shakeshaft for the duration of the closure; the rest can be fetched for you.

We work closely with our academic colleagues on the Fellowship, and with Faculty and Departmental Librarians, to make sure the books you need are on the shelves and, where possible, also accessible as ebooks. We aim, with a few exceptions, to stock everything on Part 1 reading lists, often in multiple copies for larger subjects. We stock, in a more limited way, books for Parts 2 and 3, and taught MPhils.

The Library is open to everyone in our community – undergraduates, postgraduates, academics, administrative and operational staff. Cambridge is rich in libraries, but we hope you’ll think of the College Library as your home Library, and the first place you’ll want to go to for your reading and research needs.

Dr Colin Higgins (librarian@caths.cam.ac.uk)

www.caths.cam.ac.uk/library | library@caths.cam.ac.uk
Finding what you need

The working Library contains almost forty-five thousand books, most of which are on the open shelves. Nearly everything can be borrowed.

All our books are listed on iDiscover (idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk), the University's search interface for library resources, which will give you information on the book’s location, availability and classmark – a numeric code, telling you exactly where to find the book. iDiscover also lists books in Department and Faculty Libraries, and the University Library. It can be a little confusing, so if you’re unsure whether we have something, just ask.

Ebooks are also accessed through iDiscover, as are journal articles.

The library has a dedicated catalogue machine, but iDiscover can be searched through your laptop or phone from any location.

Limitations on space mean that some of our books are in storage. These display the note 'Request from Librarian' in iDiscover. We can get these for you, usually on the day you ask for them.

If you need a book, and we don’t have it, please speak to us, email us, or fill in our book request form online. It’s not always possible, but we aim to get most requests into your hands in 24-48 hours.
Borrowing, renewing, and returning

You can borrow up to ten books at a time. They’ll automatically renew each week, and you’ll receive regular emails to show you what you have on loan. Please don’t hold on to books for longer than you need them.

Library staff adhere to a strict book-handling protocol, drawn up by the University Library and the University Health & Safety Office, to minimize the risk of contamination of surfaces with SARS-CoV-2. Further details on the measures we use to keep you safe can found on page 6 of this guide.

To borrow books

- Place your University card on the self-service borrowing computer, barcode facing up, under the scanner light
- Place the books you want to borrow on the black rectangle
- You can issue more than one book at a time
- You don’t need to touch the screen – the system will automatically log you out
- If you set off the door alarm, come back and try again

To return books

- Leave them in the returns box in the Library lobby. We empty this twice a day, Monday to Friday

To renew books

- From Michaelmas Term 2020, this will happen automatically

If you are quarantining or shielding

Library staff are able to deliver books to students quarantining or shielding on the Island Site. Send us an email with details of what you need, and we’ll bring the books to you the next working day. If you’re in Chads, or any other off-site accommodation, email us, and we’ll see what we can do.
Studying in the Library

The Library is open all day, every day, for quiet study, except between 7 am and 9 am, when we close for enhanced cleaning. The library is accessed using your University card.

All current undergraduates and postgraduates may work in the library, but we kindly ask you not to bring in friends from other Colleges.

If you're working in the library, but need to leave for a supervision, lecture, lunch, etc., you can leave your things on your desk. Please fill in one of the orange 'desk-in-use' slips. If you're go to be away for a longer period of time – more than two hours – please take your things with you.

You can, however, leave books on a desk overnight if you need them the next day. Fill in one of our small 'book-in-use' slips, and tidy the books you're using into a single neat pile on the side of the desk.

Desks are cleared by library staff each morning, but please help us by making this job unnecessary. If you're reading books in the library, and finished with them, please return them to the shelves – in the right place please – or the trolley next to the library office.
Keeping you safe

To keep library users safe, many of the ways we work have changed for the 2020-21 academic year. College, University, and Government policies on maintaining COVID-secure environments are subject to revision, but at the time of printing (September 2020), the following measures are in place to ensure the safety of students and staff.

- We’ve reduced the number of study spaces to ensure social distancing. Please do not move desks or chairs, and take care to maintain your distance when moving around in the library
- Please wash your hands, or use the sanitizer provided, before you enter the library
- The Library will close each morning, between 7 am and 9 am, for enhanced cleaning
- Please clean down your desk before and after use with the wipes provided
- If you use the computers, or printer / photocopier, please wipe them down too
- Face coverings must be worn when entering and exiting the library, and when moving around. If you forget to bring one, disposable masks are available in the library lobby. At the time of writing, face coverings are not mandatory when seated, once social distancing is maintained
- Take care of one another
Other services

Finding what you need to read can be difficult. If you're struggling with iDiscover, let us know how we can help.

If you can't figure out how to access ebooks, ejournals, databases, or other digital sources of information, we're here to guide you.

Printed dictionaries of several major languages can be found in the bay near the library office. This is also where you can find printed copies of the College magazine, and our collection of DVDs and Blu-ray Discs. These can be borrowed the same way you borrow books. We can also lend you a disc drive, or a stand-alone DVD player, if you haven't got one.

Those big metal boxes near our display cases are full of classical music CDs. We have a printed catalogue of their contents, but let us know if you'd like to browse. We can soft-bind your thesis, for free! Speak to a member of staff for more details about this service.

We have a printer / copier / scanner. Tap your University card on the reader to log in. Full instructions on how to use the machine can be found on the nearby noticeboard. You can print directly from your laptop – if you need help setting this up, let us know.
Librarian: Colin Higgins (librarian@caths.cam.ac.uk)
Deputy Librarian: Sarah Fletcher (deputy.librarian@caths.cam.ac.uk)
Library Assistant: Pauline Kiesow (library.assistant@caths.cam.ac.uk)
Archivist: Matilda Watson (archivist@caths.cam.ac.uk)