



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE



Introducing the Cambridge Foundation Year

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26 April 2021



24 leading universities
working together with
schools and colleges




What will we cover today?

- What is a foundation year?
- What is the Cambridge Foundation Year?
- Key course elements
- Eligibility and entry requirements
- Admissions process

If you have questions after the session, visit our website or email us at foundation.year@admin.cam.ac.uk



A large, historic brick building with a prominent central tower, likely a library or administrative building at the University of Cambridge. The building features a series of tall, narrow windows and a tiled roof. In the foreground, there is a green lawn and a few trees. A blue circular graphic is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text "What is a foundation year?".

What is a
foundation year?



What is a foundation year?

Visit [menti.com](https://www.menti.com) & input code
37 36 14 4



Who is a foundation year for?

Visit [menti.com](https://www.menti.com) & input code
37 36 14 4

Foundation years – an alternative route



“A foundation year can be seen as a stepping stone into the world of higher education, particularly if you don't have the right qualifications to go straight onto a degree programme...”



A foundation year is not the same as a foundation degree



Why have a Foundation Year for access?

Based on various studies of data related to attainment, we know that...

- Students with certain experiences are less likely **to reach the level of attainment** required for entry to highly selective universities.
- These same students often have **unsuitable subject preparation for higher study or less suitable home learning environments**.
- Many disadvantages intersect and the impact of multiple disadvantages is cumulative.



Why have a Foundation Year for access?

These are **promising, high-potential students** who at the point of finishing their school/college education aren't at the level to succeed entering a highly selective university.

Some of these students still aspire to attend highly selective universities and, **with preparation, evidence shows they can thrive.**



“If progress continues at the current rate, **it will take 120 years** before disadvantaged young people become as likely as their better-off peers to achieve A levels or equivalent qualifications. In higher education, it will take **more than 80 years before the participation gap [...] closes.**”

Social Mobility Commission, 2017



"Foundation years [...] can help to widen access, and [...] **bridge a wider attainment gap for those admitted contextually.**"

Sutton Trust, 2017



University of Cambridge Foundation Year



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www.cam.ac.uk/foundation-year



Cambridge in brief

- Top ranking university in the UK – and the world.
- 31 Colleges (29 accepting Undergraduates)
- High quality teaching (often small groups) and learning facilities.
- Very high student retention rates and graduate outcomes.
- Typical offer A*AA or above. 20,000+ applications per year for around 3,500 places.
- In 2019/2020 University of Cambridge intake, 1 in 4 students were from a "disadvantaged background"



Overview

The Cambridge Foundation Year will offer students who have experienced educational disadvantage the opportunity to study Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Cambridge

- First Cohort in September/October 2022
- 50 students per year
- CertHE certificate
- Full University of Cambridge experience



Eligibility

To be considered for this course, applicants must have experienced educational disadvantage or disruption and would not meet the usual Cambridge academic requirements and normally reside within the UK

Examples of educational disadvantage or disruption include (but are not limited to):

- Coming from a Secondary School/College with low progression to HE
- Being a young carer while in education
- Experiencing health issues that have resulted in long or extended periods of absence
- Being eligible for Free School Meals now or at any point in the previous 6 years

Care-experienced applicants are automatically eligible for the Foundation Year.

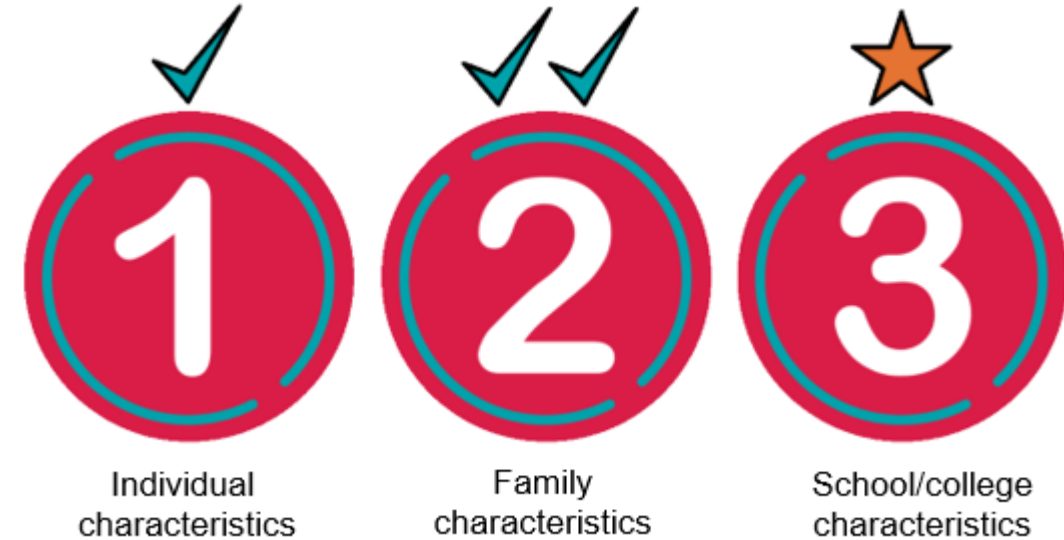


Eligibility

To be eligible, applicants must meet **one or more** criteria from **two or more categories**.

This is more robust than relying only on postcode-level indicators, allows for a more holistic view, and forefronts the intersections between disadvantages in individual cases.

More details on these categories can be found on our website



Eligibility

Eligibility criteria can be found under the eligibility tab on our website – if you need clarification – please ask!

You'll see the criteria split into three categories with examples as you scroll down.

Full details in PDF documents to download

The screenshot shows the University of Cambridge website's 'Undergraduate Study' section. The navigation bar includes links for Home, Why Cambridge, Courses, Colleges, Finance, Applying, International, Open Days and Events, and Find out more. The main heading is 'Undergraduate Study' with a sub-heading 'Foundation Year in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (pre-degree course)'. A sidebar on the left lists various options: Undergraduate Study, Courses, Why Cambridge, Colleges, Finance, Applying, International, Open Days and Events, and Find out more. The main content area features a video player for the 'Foundation Year Film' and a 'Fact File' section. The 'Fact File' includes the UCAS Code (FYC1), Course Duration (One year - CertHE), and a list of colleges where the course is available in 2022. The 'Eligibility' tab is selected, showing the 'Eligibility criteria' section. The criteria state that the Foundation Year is designed to address educational disadvantage and disruption, and that applicants must meet at least two of the categories detailed below. The categories are: Care-experienced applicants (those currently in local authority care or who have been in care previously for any length of time) are automatically eligible.

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Foundation Year in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (pre-degree course)

In view of the COVID-19 public health emergency, we may need to make changes to the course details outlined on these pages. Offers holders will be notified of changes. Please see [this page](#) for further information.

Undergraduate Study

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Find out more

Foundation Year Film

Fact File

UCAS Code
FYC1

Course Duration
One year - CertHE

Colleges
Available in 2022 at Downing, Fitzwilliam, Girton, Gonville & Caius, Homerton, Lucy Cavendish, Murray Edwards, Newnham, Sidney Sussex, St Edmund's and Wolfson.

Also available at Queens' and St John's from 2023.

Additional notes
This is a new programme for 2022 entry.

Department Open Days
See [Cambridge Open Days](#)

Course Email
foundation.year@admin.cam.ac.uk

Course Telephone

Overview Course Outline Entry Requirements

Eligibility

Eligibility criteria

The Foundation Year intends to address educational disadvantage and disruption. To be considered for the programme, you should meet **one or more criteria from at least two of the categories detailed below** (unless you are care-experienced) and will ordinarily be resident in the UK.

Care-experienced applicants (those currently in local authority care or who have been in care previously for any length of time) are automatically eligible.

Finance for the Foundation Year



There is no Foundation Year tuition fee.

Students will automatically receive a scholarship equivalent to the full maintenance loan from Student Finance + Cambridge Bursary Scheme top up (as applicable).



In receiving the Foundation Year scholarship during the programme, students will not need to apply to funding from other government sources.

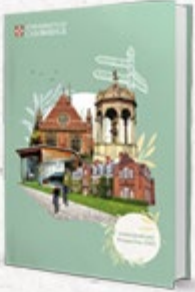
Students will be liable for tuition fees on continuation at Cambridge or studying at another university, but most will be eligible for Student Finance and Cambridge Bursary.



Application Process

1 Check eligibility online

120 UCAS points



2 Choose a College or open application



3 Check admission assessment arrangements



4 Standard UCAS application deadline

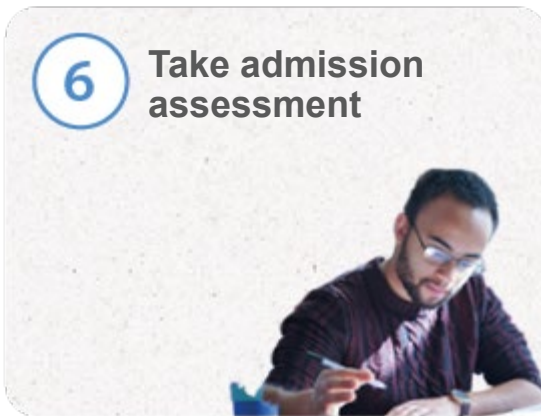
Application Deadline

15 Jan

5 Additional questionnaire



6 Take admission assessment



7 Interview (usually March)



8 Decision (April)



Curriculum and Progression

Full-time Certificate of Higher of Education (CertHE) explicitly designed to enable students to gain the skills and knowledge to proceed to a degree course in the Arts, Humanities or Social Sciences at Cambridge or elsewhere.

Students will take classes (lectures, seminars and small group supervision) across at least two of four streams, based on their likely degree course choice.

- Working with textual sources
- Working with material sources
- Working with languages
- Working with data



Curriculum and Progression

Wide range of courses from Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences are available for onward study.

- Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic
- Archaeology
- Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
- Classics
- Education
- English
- History
- History and Politics (Joint)
- History and Modern Languages (Joint) History of Art
- Human, Social and Political Sciences (HSPS)
- Land Economy
- Law
- Linguistics
- Modern and Medieval Languages Music
- Philosophy
- Theology, Religion and the Philosophy of Religion



Curriculum and Progression



Students will be supported through UCAS to apply for courses at other universities.

Students who have demonstrated an aptitude for their desired subject and achieved the appropriate level of attainment (65%) will be eligible to begin their degree course without applying to Cambridge again.

Any student who achieves the pass mark of 40% will leave with a CertHE.



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The Colleges and the Foundation Year

Colleges at Cambridge



The University of Cambridge is a collegiate university. Being a member of a College is an important part of their experience.

Colleges are responsible for admitting undergraduate students.

They are the base or home for students while they are at Cambridge.

This will be where students relax and socialise as well as receive wellbeing and academic support.

Range of facilities and opportunities for all.



The Foundation Year and additional support

Some students may need additional support during the transition to life at the University.

Colleges are responsible for the wellbeing of students. Smaller community means more personal support.

All have experience dealing with students from a variety of backgrounds with a variety of needs.

The University also provide central support including the Disability Resource Centre, Student Advice Service and Counselling Service.

Range of other initiatives, including student peer welfare support.



Colleges participating

Of the 29 Colleges that admit undergraduate students, 13 are taking on Foundation Year students. These are:

- Downing
- Fitzwilliam
- Girton
- Gonville & Caius
- Homerton
- Lucy Cavendish
- Murray Edwards
- Newnham
- Sidney Sussex
- St John's (2023 Entry)
- St Edmund's (Mature Student College)
- Wolfson (Mature Student College)

Each College will host around 5 Foundation Year students per year.

- Queens' (2023 Entry)



How you can support your students



As with any university choice, there are personal, academic and career factors for applicants to consider. The best support any teacher or advisor can offer to an applicant is:

To present the option alongside all others and help them to understand this alternative route;

To encourage them not to write opportunities off based on pre-conceived ideas;

To help them with ascertaining if they are eligible;

To ask them to reflect carefully on whether this would be a good route for them personally to achieve their ambitions.



Frequently Asked Questions

- Is there an age limit?
- Should the Foundation Year be mentioned on the personal statement?
- Will applicants be 'stronger' if they meet more than criteria than necessary? Will this give them a stronger chance?
- Will the scheme be extended to include more subjects in future?
- How competitive will this be? Is it worth applying?





Thank you for listening

cam.ac.uk/foundationyear

foundation.year@admin.cam.ac.uk