



SHADOWING SCHEME 2020



**Teacher and Student
Information Packs**

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TEACHER INFORMATION PACK

A brief introduction from our Access and Funding Officer:

"Hi I'm Lily-Rose, and I'm the CUSU sabbatical officer who will be leading this year's Shadowing Scheme. When I was doing my GCSEs, Cambridge University wasn't even on my radar as I didn't know anyone who had been. It wasn't until later when I began learning more about the lives of genuine students here that I realised that Cambridge could be for me.

The Shadowing Scheme is a fantastic student-led opportunity for talented students, who have little or no experience of Cambridge, to get both an immersive university experience, ask questions, and a chance to challenge any existing preconceptions that they might have. If you have any questions about the Shadowing Scheme, please do get in touch"



Lily-Rose Sharry

CUSU Access and Funding Officer 2019/2020

WHAT IS THE CUSU SHADOWING SCHEME?

The Shadowing Scheme, now in its twentieth year, is run by Cambridge University Students' Union (CUSU). It is aimed towards talented, state-educated Year 12 students (S5 in Scotland, Year 13 in Northern Ireland) who are on track to achieve A*AA in their A Levels (or equivalent) and have little family or community experience of university, or great reservations about applying to Cambridge. The Scheme itself is not primarily about raising attainment, but instead about demystifying some of the myths and misconceptions surrounding Cambridge, and giving those who are already high achievers an opportunity to experience how they would fit in should they choose to study here. The scheme is also open to mature students – those who will be 21 or over at the time they start their course at university.

During their three day visit (Thursday afternoon – Saturday morning), students 'shadow' a current undergraduate studying a subject in which they are interested. They accompany them to lectures, classes and supervisions (small group teaching) whilst staying in one of the Colleges that make up the University. Students are also encouraged to take part in social activities which make up a big part of life at Cambridge. Such activities in the past



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have include quiz nights, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) 'meet-the-students' events, sports practices, movie nights, and more.

The Scheme also includes an admissions talk about applying to Cambridge, delivered by an Admissions Tutor so that students can leave feeling confident and equipped with accurate information about applying to Cambridge.

Prior to arriving at Cambridge, shadow students are also able to communicate with their undergraduate mentors using a secure e-mentoring system. For the students' safety, only their first names are passed onto their mentors and all mentors undergo DBS checks and training.

The Scheme is extremely popular, having been running for 20 years. It has always received positive feedback from students, with participants regularly commenting that the Scheme gave them the chance to really experience university life, and changed their perceptions of and attitude towards Cambridge and higher education.

WHEN IS IT?

The 2020 Shadowing Scheme will run on three sets of dates:

- **Thursday 23rd - Saturday 25th January**
- **Thursday 30th January - Saturday 1st February**
- **Thursday 6th - Saturday 8th February**

For Mature Students, the Shadowing Scheme will run on **Thursday 6th - Saturday 8th February 2020**.

The three day long trip is funded by CUSU, the University, and the Colleges. All accommodation and food is **free**, and travel costs may be reimbursed by CUSU on a needs basis. See 'costs' below* for more information on support available.

WHEN CAN STUDENTS APPLY?

The [online application form](#) for the Shadowing Scheme opened on GCSE Results Day - **Thursday 22nd August 2019** and must be completed by **Friday 15th November 2019**. Parents/guardians and nominated teachers must fill in their respective forms by the following week - **Friday 22nd November 2019**.

The application form for the Mature Students' strand of the Shadowing Scheme must also be completed by **Friday 15th November 2019**.

IS THERE A SELECTION CRITERIA?

Given the aims of the Scheme, it is targeted at students from schools and backgrounds where progression onto higher education is not the norm. These are the students who

we think might benefit most from the Scheme, as they may be least likely to have immediate access to resources about university life.

To help you advise your students on whether to apply for the Scheme, some details of the selection criteria are set out briefly below. If you would like further information on these criteria please do not hesitate to contact us!

Please note: we apply this selection method in preparation for a much higher volume of applications to the Scheme than we generally have places for; this has been the case in every year of the Scheme's operation. We are unfortunately unable to give places to every student who applies, even if they match all criteria listed below.

CANDIDATE FILTERS

These filters, generally speaking, would rule a student out of the Scheme altogether, although this is monitored and can be subject to exception:

- The three-part application is incomplete;
- The student would be younger than 16 at the start of the Shadowing Scheme;

*The nominated teacher and parent/guardian **must** give consent in their forms or it will be assumed that consent is not given and the application will be **considered incomplete**. All students participating in the Shadowing Scheme must be **at least 16** at the beginning of the Scheme.*

- The student attended a private secondary school and/or sixth form college;
- A close family member has studied at Oxford or Cambridge;
- Both parents/guardians hold higher education qualifications;

Students in these situations are likely to already have access to information regarding higher education, or may have received advantageous encouragement to proceed with HE applications. They are therefore less in need of the Shadowing Scheme experience.

- Fewer than 8 GCSEs/equivalent
- Studying for fewer than 3 A Levels (/equivalent)

Scheme participants must have a demonstrable likelihood of being offered a place at Cambridge. Whilst the University makes holistic undergraduate offers based on a broad range of criteria (i.e. 3 A levels or equivalent, school data, performance at interview etc), fewer than 8 GCSEs/equivalent will not give a broad enough picture for the scheme to assess the applicant's current academic capability.

- AS/A Level (or equivalent) subjects bar students from being able to apply for their two Shadowing Scheme subject choices.

Some undergraduate courses at Cambridge have prerequisite qualifications. The requirements for all Cambridge University undergraduate courses can be found on the Undergraduate Admissions website: <http://www.study.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/>

SCORING AND RANKING

After the filters have been applied to the applications we receive, we score and rank the remaining applications using a set of criteria to assess their relative merit (as far as reasonably practicable). We refer to official national demographic data, such as POLAR2 data, to be able to score particular factors. Applicants all start with 0 points, and accumulate points when they fulfil the criteria. The factors below are not weighted evenly (as some factors may be more important than others), and as above are intended only as an indication of the selection process:

- Potential to achieve A*AA at A level (or equivalent) according to teacher
- No family or friends have attended university
- Each A*, A and B-graded GCSE/equivalent scores points for the applicant
- Student eligible for free school meals
- Parent/Guardian 1 has low level of education
- Parent/Guardian 2 (if applicable) has low level of education
- Secondary school has high proportion of students on free school meals
- Secondary school has low GCSE average points score
- Sixth form has low level of students applying to university
- Sixth form has very low level of students applying to the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford
- Neighbourhood in which few young people progress to higher education
- Neighbourhood in which few adults are university-educated

This system is designed to rank applications according to both academic and widening participation criteria.

All applications are anonymised - every application is distinguishable by a randomised "Application ID" only - so that no inappropriate information about the candidate, for example name, gender, or religion, is able to form any part of the selection process. It should be emphasised that applying to the CUSU Shadowing Scheme will have absolutely *no impact* at all on a student's potential future application to the University of Cambridge.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

COSTS

The Shadowing Scheme is funded by CUSU, the University of Cambridge, and the Colleges. Accommodation and food are **both free**, as are any activities arranged by CUSU (although some other optional activities around town, such as watching student theatre, may require students to bring some money with them).

Transport must be arranged and paid for by participants, but travel costs may be reimbursed on a needs basis. CUSU would like to reimburse all travel costs, but due to limited funding we currently prioritise those for whom the expense of travelling to Cambridge could be a barrier to participation on the Scheme on a needs basis. Details

of reimbursement opportunities will be distributed to selected applicants when they are notified of their acceptance to one of the Scheme weekends.

TRAVEL & SAFEGUARDING

It must be stressed that this is an **unaccompanied** trip. Although shadow students can expect to spend the vast majority of their time with their undergraduate mentor, or participating in group activities, there may be times when they are unaccompanied in the city, and they will be travelling on their own. CUSU trains and DBS check **all** of the mentors, and while CUSU does everything possible to ensure the safety of the participants, it is not legally responsible for their welfare. Should you have any concerns about any participant's safety, please review the '*Sample Programme*' of events included in the student section below prior to recommending students, and/or please contact us directly.

NB. It should also be noted that, due to the timing of the Scheme, participants will have to miss some days of school. By returning their forms in the application process, nominated teachers and parents/guardians give their consent to this.



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STUDENT INFORMATION PACK

A quick hello from our CUSU Access and Funding Officer:

"Hi, my name is Lily-Rose, and I will be leading this years' Shadowing Scheme. When I was doing my GCSEs, Cambridge University wasn't even on my radar yet as I didn't know anybody that had been. But, after I began learning more about the actual lives of students here at Cambridge, I realised that it could be for me.

If you think that it might be for you too, please try it out! The scheme is an exciting and student-run opportunity for you to ask some questions, get a taste of *real* university life, and to challenge any existing preconceptions you may have about Cambridge. We can't wait to meet you!"

Lily-Rose Sharry

CUSU Access and Funding Officer 2019/2020



What is the Shadowing Scheme?

The CUSU Shadowing Scheme brings UK students from schools without a tradition of top university entry to Cambridge for three days in January or February. The whole trip is funded by CUSU, the University, and the Colleges – all accommodation and food is **free**, and whilst participants typically pay for their own travel costs to and from Cambridge, they may be reimbursed on a needs basis. If you foresee any other barriers, please get in touch and we will try to work something out.

Prospective students come to Cambridge on the Thursday afternoon and stay until Saturday lunchtime (see 'When is it?'). During the Shadowing scheme, you will spend time with a current undergraduate student who is studying a subject that you are interested in, and you will get to 'shadow' them (see 'What will I be doing?').

The idea is to give people with little or no experience of university a taste of student life at Cambridge, in real time, with real people.

Who is it for?

The Shadowing scheme is open to:

- Mature students (those who will be 21 or over at the time they start their course)
- Year 12 (England and Wales) / S5 (Scotland) / Year 13 (NI) students

We are looking for students with:

- Little or no history of university in their family
- Those who perhaps have reservations or worries about applying to Cambridge
- Students whose school rarely sends students to University.

The Scheme is really competitive; we receive more applications than places. As such, we ask that standard-age applicants are currently on track to achieve As and A*s in your A-Levels (or equivalent). If you meet these, but still have concerns, see, '*Will I fit in?*' below.

When is it?

The 2020 Shadowing Scheme will run on three sets of dates:

- **Thursday 23rd - Saturday 25th January 2020**
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For Mature Students, the Shadowing Scheme will run **Thursday 6th - Saturday 8th February 2020**.

What could I do on the Scheme?

As a 'shadow', you'll see everything students who are doing a course you're interested in can get up to here on a day-to-day basis including:

- Attending course lectures, labs, or seminar classes
- Trying out something called '[Supervisions](#)' (aka small, usually 1-on-1, sessions with an expert who gives you feedback, support, and advice on your work)
- Getting involved with student societies, clubs, and sports teams
- Social activities with the other members of the shadowing scheme
- Socialising with your mentor and so on!



You will also be given a *lot* of useful information about the application and admissions process by both [Admissions Tutors](#) and [Current Students](#) themselves. So, there will be a lot of people who can answer all of your questions and help with the [mythbusting](#) process surrounding applying to Cambridge. See our '[Sample programme](#)' for more information.

How do I apply?

Applications are submitted through a three-part online form, which opened on **Thursday 22nd August 2019**. The student form must be completed by you (the student) by **Friday 15th November 2019** at the latest. Your parent(s)/guardian(s) and nominated teacher must fill in their forms by the following **Friday 22nd November 2019**.

The application form for the Mature Students' strand of the Shadowing Scheme must also be completed by **Friday 15th November 2019**.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How will I get there?

You will have to make your own way to and from Cambridge (or get someone to drive you straight to the first venue!), but we can refund travel on a needs basis (see below). If you arrive by train or coach, we will meet you at the train station or provide you with directions from the coach drop off point (an easy five minute walk), and guide you to the first venue where the



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Welcome Session will take place. After this, you will be with your mentor – Cambridge is so small that you won't really need money for travel except perhaps a bus from the town centre to the station on the last day if you are travelling home by train.

Will it be expensive?

We don't want money to be a barrier to your participation in the Shadowing Scheme. All your food in college and accommodation will be **free** for the duration of the Scheme, and we will refund travel on a needs basis. Activities will either be free or cheap (with discounts available on several popular Cambridge activities).

But what happens if I don't fit that criteria, or miss out on a place?

Don't worry! If you already know that you want to apply to Cambridge or Oxford, or if you don't quite fit our selection criteria, please come to an Open Day or another Cambridge scheme for which you might be eligible instead. If in doubt, please get in touch!

I have special requirements, will this affect my application?

Not at all! As part of the Shadowing Scheme, we are here to do our best to make sure you get the **best** out of your Cambridge experience, regardless of who you are or any special requirements you may have. We routinely have participants on the scheme with all kinds of unique requirements and we aim to cater for your needs on an individual basis – this doesn't form part of our selection criteria! We value and respect lots of diverse lived experiences here, and we will try our best to meet your needs – just include it in your application, and we can go from there. If you have any other questions, please get in touch!

Will I fit in?

Yes! The Scheme aims to show you the *real* Cambridge. That means **challenging myths** i.e. that all students here are '**posh**' or '**super-geniuuses**'. By joining the Scheme, you get to **see for yourself** that this **isn't true!** All of the Cambridge students taking part as mentors in the Shadowing Scheme are eager to show you around, make the experience **enjoyable**, and help you to get an experience of **what studying at the University is really like**.

You'll be put in contact with your mentor in advance of the Scheme through a secure online e-mentoring programme, so you can get to know them and **ask any questions** you have before arriving. You'll also get to **stay in contact** with them afterwards – quite a few of the 2019 participants are **still in touch** with their mentors now, months after they came on the Scheme!

Shadow students come on the Scheme from **all over the UK**, but they've all been chosen because they're **academically capable** and from a background where they're unlikely to know much about what going to university is like. You **shouldn't feel intimidated** about who you'll meet – we know from feedback that shadows find the Shadowing Scheme **great fun**, and usually **don't want to leave at the end of it!**



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SAMPLE PROGRAMME

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Travel to Cambridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Breakfast in College ❖ Go to a subject lecture ❖ Library tour ❖ Go to a careers talk, or subject-related activity ❖ Have a look around the city of Cambridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Breakfast in college ❖ Say goodbyes to people you've met ❖ Attend exit session (includes an admissions talk from a College Admissions Tutor) ❖ Fill in feedback forms and hand in travel expenses forms
Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Welcome Session with Access officer and other Shadows ❖ Meet your undergraduate mentor ❖ Walk back to College, find room and collect meal vouchers ❖ Go on a tour of the College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Lunch in College ❖ Listen to a talk by students about their experiences ❖ Try your hand at journalism in a student-run newspaper workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Travel back home
Evening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Welcome meal with other shadows ❖ Discuss plans for the next day with mentor ❖ Meet with mentor's friends/other shadows ❖ Catch a late show (11pm start!) at the <i>student-run</i> ADC theatre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Attend a quiz with other shadows ❖ Go to a sports practice or society's social event ❖ Meal in college with mentor ❖ Go to a comedy night and hang out with your mentor 	

Want to find out more?

If you have any other questions about the Shadowing Scheme, please contact the CUSU Access Officer Lily-Rose, via shadowingscheme@cusu.cam.ac.uk.

Don't forget to check out the [CUSU Access Officer Twitter account](#) @CUSUAccess for updates, or follow our student life Twitter @CambTweetCusu for more Cambridge insight.

