



Making a Competitive Application



This session will cover:

- What we look for in applications
- The key information used in selection
- Developing subject interest
- Key aspects of the admissions process for Oxford and Cambridge

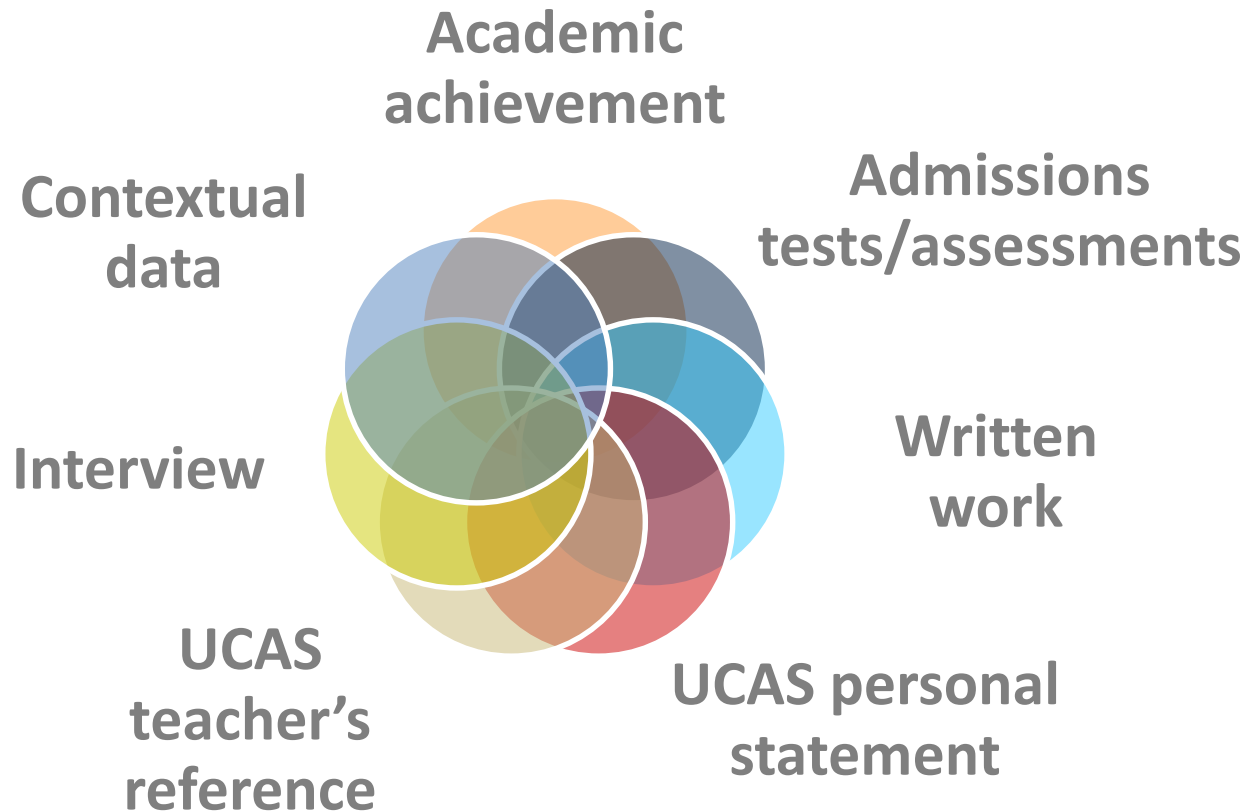


What do we look for?

- Genuine subject interest
- Good 'fit' between applicant and course
- Potential
 - Core knowledge and technical fluency
 - Focus and determination
 - Ability to learn independently
- Vocational commitment (where appropriate)



Key information used in selection



What is super-curricular and why is it important?

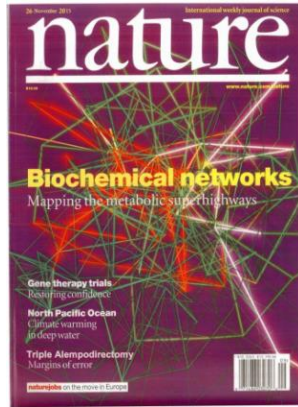
Super-curricular activities include anything you've done that enhances your subject interest beyond your compulsory studies at school.

Super-curricular activities help to:

- Demonstrate subject interest
- Develop research skills
- Show you can work independently and be self-motivated
- Broaden your subject knowledge



Super-curricular ideas



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Do I need work experience?



- Work experience isn't expected or required for any of our courses.
- However, for **some** vocational courses, having some relevant work experience is useful and recommended.
- It demonstrates commitment to the intended career and the opportunity to acquire greater understanding of the realities and pressures associated with that career.

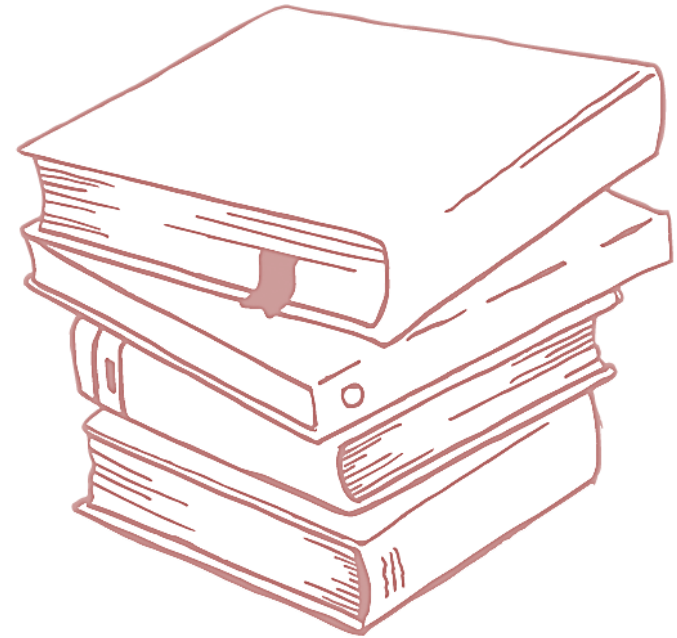
Personal statements

- Chiefly a starting point for interviews
- Be honest!
- Be selective, critical and analytical

Cover:

- Your interest in your course
- Relevant subjects you've studied
- Super-curricular engagement

Extra-curricular activities which aren't relevant to the course applied for will not be considered for Oxford or Cambridge



Admissions tests/assessments and submitted work



- Pre-interview
 - Check registration deadline
 - Revise content of relevant subjects where appropriate
 - Practice under timed conditions can be helpful for some courses
- At-interview
 - No registration required
 - Refer to preparation materials on the course pages of our websites
- Submitted work
 - One or two recent essays that you would be happy to discuss
 - Look over it again before interview



Interviews: format

- Typically 20-45 minutes
- Problem-solving scenarios and discussion relevant to the course applied to
- Interactive assessment of
 - Interest
 - Aptitude
 - Core knowledge and technical skills
 - Capacity to learn from mistakes and to listen in discussion



Interviews: what to expect

- Focused and challenging questions
- New approaches to existing knowledge
- Prompting from interviewers and questions from you
- Interviews usually cover
 - Academic work
 - Reading and other super-curricular exploration
 - Subject-related wider awareness
 - 'Prompt' material

No hidden agenda, no trick questions, not the final hurdle



Interviews: How to prepare



- Refresh your memory about super-curricular work you've done
- Practise discussing your academic work and ideas
- Have a look over your personal statement
- Watch the interviews films
- Don't worry about what to wear!



Summary and questions

- Right course
 - match of aptitude and interests
- Recent academic track record
 - must be excellent
- Read
 - outside the course
- Revise
 - the material you have studied

Right subject

Excellent
academic
record

Read and
think
critically and
analytically

Revise and
embed your
learning



Questions?

For the most up-to-date information and advice about anything covered in the presentation, please refer to our websites:

www.cam.ac.uk/apply

www.ox.ac.uk/apply

