



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE  
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

# A student's perspective

Welcome



# Contents



4-5

A thriving community in the heart of Cambridge

10-13

Student profiles



20-23

Leisure at St John's

6-9

Learning at St John's



14-17

Living at St John's

30-33

Next steps



34-35

Applying to St John's



26-27

Finance and support



18-19,  
24-25  
&  
28-29

Student profiles

# A thriving community in the heart of Cambridge

If you're reading this, you might be thinking about becoming a student at the University of Cambridge and applying to one of its 31 Colleges. Picking the place where you will live, study and socialise for the next few years, however, is no easy task. So, how do you make that choice, and where do you start?

The good news is that whichever College you go for, you will still end up on the same course as everyone else. No Colleges are "better" for certain subjects, and the trick is really to choose the one that suits you. In fact, if you ask students at St John's about what inspired them to apply here, many will tell you that, more than anything, it just felt right.

In spite of this, no two Colleges are exactly the same and each has its own distinctive identity. What's more, because you live, sleep, eat, make friends and do a lot of your studying in College, the choice you make will define your Cambridge experience. So before you apply, it's important to know what you're getting.

The pages that follow tell you a little more about what it is like to be at St John's. With more than 300 new students joining us every year from all sorts of schools and backgrounds, we are one of the biggest Colleges in Cambridge, with a lively and wide-ranging mix of people from all over Britain and across the world. During term-time, there is a buzz and energy about St John's as they help to bring its spectacular, centuries-old courts and buildings to life.

That diversity means that no matter who you are or where you come from, you will find like-minded people here with whom you will develop new ideas and forge lifelong friendships. You will also be living alongside resident postgraduate students and senior academics, many of whom are undertaking world-changing research in their field. However small your subject, there is someone here working in your discipline, who will help you to develop new ideas, challenge your assumptions, and support you on your chosen path.

Partly because all our students are guaranteed accommodation throughout their time here, there is also a strong sense of community. You will rarely be able to get from your room to the buttery, laundry, the gym or the bar without running into someone you know, while the remarkable range of student-run clubs and societies means that there is always lots going on. Terms here are energetic, challenging and exhausting – often they pass in a flash – but that's because Cambridge offers one of the most complete learning experiences anywhere in the world.

One glance at St John's will tell you that this is also a place steeped in a history stretching back more than 500 years, but it's our students, and the ideas and personalities they bring, who keep that tradition warm, exciting and alive. Whatever your circumstances, if you think that you have what it takes to be part of that, then we want to hear from you. Over the past few centuries we have taught Nobel prizewinners, medics, engineers, artists, novelists, actors, statisticians, astronomers, entrepreneurs, Prime Ministers and more. If you fancy joining that family, then read on, and meet some of the people who already have.

## Get in touch

The College's admissions team can help arrange visits and welcomes drop-in visitors. Contact them at:

**Email:** [admissions@joh.cam.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@joh.cam.ac.uk)

**Tel:** 01223 338703

**Fax:** 01223 766419

**Address:** Admissions Office, The Old Divinity School  
St John's College, Cambridge CB2 1TP

## Find out more

**Web:** [www.joh.cam.ac.uk](http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/stjohnscambridge](http://www.facebook.com/stjohnscambridge)

**Twitter:** @stjohnscam

# Learning at St John's

Whatever your subject, studying at Cambridge is a big ask and our students come here because they relish the prospect of taking that challenge on. Although you'll always find plenty to do outside the library or lab, you should be ready to spend a lot of your time studying, learning, and exploring ideas, with support from the very best.

Students at St John's are expected to stretch themselves, look beyond the traditional boundaries of their subject and achieve high intellectual standards, and their accomplishments are a matter of huge pride for the College. Sometimes, that means that studying here can be tough, but the beauty of the College system is that you never have to go it alone. We'll help you get there, with world-class teaching, superb resources, and lots of personal attention and support.

Our students are here because we believe in their ability to make the most of the experience. We're determined to do everything possible to help you fulfil your potential, and it's likely that in the end, you'll exceed your own expectations. More than just a student, you will become a valued member of the College community, where there will be Fellows and staff who know you personally and are keen to help you develop.



## How it all works

A Cambridge course is called a "Tripos" and breaks down into parts, each lasting one or two years. Most students take successive parts in the same subject, although there are opportunities to change. The courses start broad, but later on there is a chance to specialise and explore your interests in depth.

Teaching is organised by both the University and Colleges. The University arranges lectures, seminars and classes – many of which provide opportunities to hear from leading researchers – plus your end-of-year exams.

The College's job is to enable you to make the most of the course through personal attention and support. We will help you to devise a programme of study that suits your interests and needs, and arrange regular, small-group tuition, usually with one other student, called "supervisions". In a given year, St John's will provide more than 12,000 supervisions, and each undergraduate will, on average, get about 50 hours of extra academic support.

Supervisions are a special part of the Cambridge experience that few other universities can match. Your supervisor will be an expert in a particular topic that you have decided to pursue. Because of the size of our Fellowship and research body, they can often be at St John's themselves, and you may well bump into each other between supervisions. This can be very handy if you've got a burning question, or can't find that all-important book!

Typically, you will meet your supervisor once a week (although this varies from course to course) to discuss a particular assignment, such as an essay or problem. It's a unique opportunity for you to deepen your knowledge and understanding, ask questions, pursue new theories, get feedback, and really think for yourself.



## Personal support

The people directly responsible for your academic welfare are your Director of Studies and your Tutor. At St John's, both will be based in College, so the likelihood is that you will see them around pretty often.

A specialist in your subject, your Director of Studies will usually be a College Fellow who will help you organise your subject options and guide you through your student career. Normally, they will see you at the start of each term, but they are also available for consultation throughout.

Your Tutor will often teach a completely different subject, but their job is to help with both your academic and personal development, and to provide you with any form of practical support that you need. You will have a meeting with your Tutor at both the beginning and end of each term. In addition, however, each Tutor has weekly "Tutorial times" when you can drop in to discuss any problems.

The College is also home to a friendly Student Services office, which is your first port of call for information on a wide range of matters, including exams, references, bills, tutorials, accommodation, grants and prizes, and more.

Combined with your supervisors, this set-up means that you will rarely be far from someone who can offer you assistance, encouragement, or just a confidential chat about your progress, throughout your time here.

## Resources

As well as being a short distance from the University Library and most departments, St John's has one of the largest College libraries in Cambridge – or two, to be precise.

Spread over six floors, the Working Library is open 24 hours a day to members, and houses more than 105,000 borrowable books, as well as periodicals, computer and work facilities, a vending machine and even a full-size skeleton and model brain! Next door, the Old Library, built in 1624, is one of the most beautiful spaces in Cambridge and home to outstanding collections, manuscripts and rare books.

Modern study often means that you need to stay connected, so there are wifi hotspots throughout St John's, as well as high-speed network connections in all on-site rooms – plus computer rooms for general use.

We also believe that the very best education involves having the opportunity to explore new ideas, questions and places. Book grants and travel grants, designed to support individual projects that may only be loosely related to your course, are also on offer to give you the chance to discover new interests and make the most of your College experience.

Find out more

**Studying at St John's:**

[www.joh.cam.ac.uk/studying-st-johns](http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/studying-st-johns)

**Student welfare and academic support:**

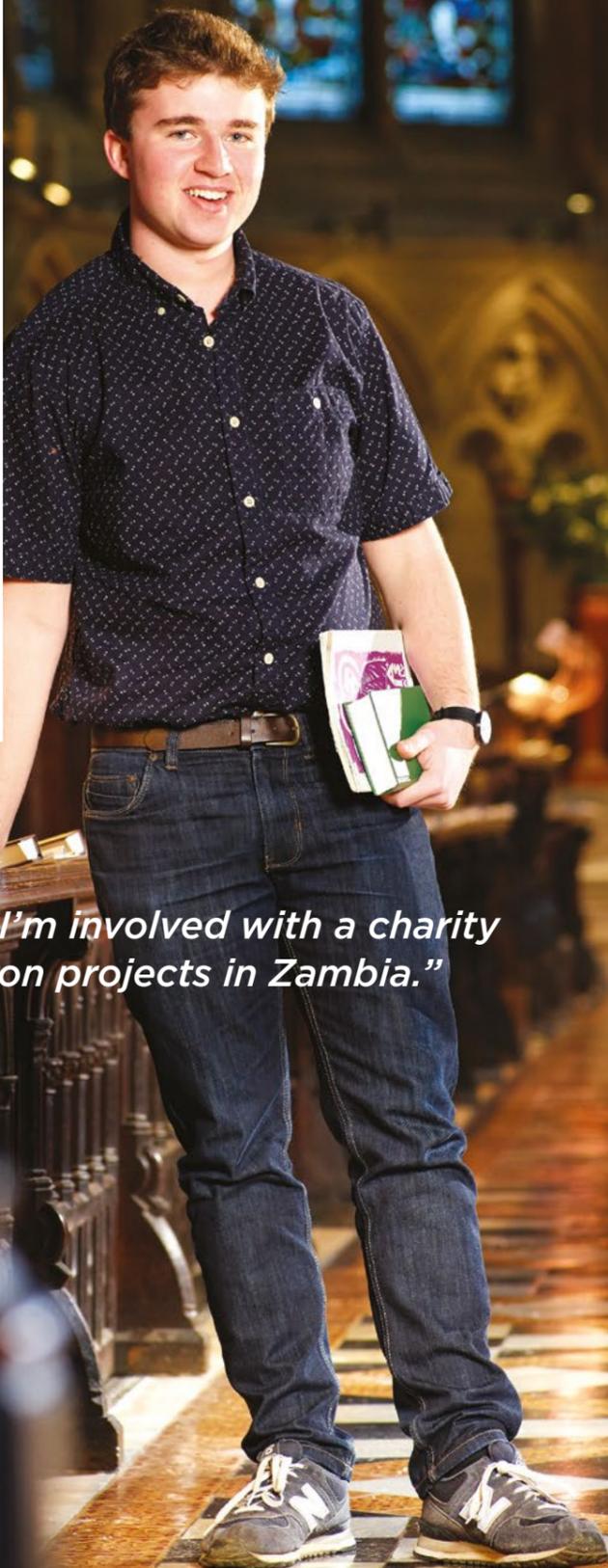
[www.joh.cam.ac.uk/welfare](http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/welfare)

**Alex Woolf, 19, Cambridge.**  
Music. Pianist, violinist, composer.

I was learning violin and piano by the age of six, but instead of practising my scales I was always more interested in creating my own music. When I was 16 I won the BBC Young Composer competition and since then I've just been writing as much as possible.

I chose St John's purely because I was told to go with my gut instinct at the open day, and it seemed friendly. The course allows you to analyse the work of other composers, and there are lots of opportunities to be proactive and put on concerts and events. I've written for an orchestra, but also made my own piano album, which I crowdfunded online.

Through the University I'm involved with a charity that runs music education projects in Zambia. Last summer we went out there to help at a music school, and also went out to remote places where people had never seen a violin before. It was a really nice thing to be part of.



*“Through the University I’m involved with a charity that runs music education projects in Zambia.”*

**Sophie Gill, 20, Sleaford, Lincoln**  
Geology. Traveller, student ambassador.

At first I was unsure if I should apply to Cambridge as I had doubts about whether I was good enough or the right “type of person”. Going to an open day at St John's convinced me that it was the right choice as everyone I met was so friendly and I felt completely comfortable at the College.

As a student here, those experiences inspired me to get involved with access work and last year I was Access Officer on the JCR Committee. I still take part in as many schools' events and open days as I can because I enjoy helping to open people's eyes to the opportunities that are on offer here, while making sure they aren't put off by any of the myths about Cambridge.

I got into Geology simply because I love rocks and being in the great outdoors. Over the summer I did a mapping project for my dissertation and spent six weeks in Prades in Catalonia, Spain. There were so many different types of rock formations and it was immensely satisfying to see all the things I'd been learning about in lectures materialise in my own independent research. Thinking about how to fund a six-week trip can be daunting, but the College was really supportive and provided financial help as well as advice on how to raise money from other sources. At Cambridge if you work hard and go after what you want; there are no barriers to what you can do.

*“At Cambridge if you work hard and go after what you want; there are no barriers to what you can do.”*



Michael Ha, 21, Hackney, London  
Clinical Medicine. Ballroom dancer.

*“Coming here was a financial worry for me, but the College can help if you need it.”*

I started thinking about Medicine when I was at school. My Grandma, who grew up in Vietnam, became very ill and I was often her translator whenever she went into hospital. On several occasions, I got to see how much doctors try to be there for everyone. That affected me a lot.

Some people told me not to apply to St John's - they said it would be dominated by private school kids. I was stubborn however, so I visited on an open day and realised it wasn't true. More importantly, I learned about the welfare support. Coming here was a financial worry for me, but the college will do their best to help if you need it.

I used to be into Hip-hop and Salsa dancing, but never thought about Ballroom and Latin dancing until I came here. I reckon the point of university is to try new things - now I'm on the university's first team and compete nationally for Cambridge.

Katie Spimpolo, 19, Northamptonshire  
Engineering. Yogi, student mentor.

Maths and science were my best subjects at school and I chose to study Engineering because it gives you the opportunity to use those skills to change the world for the better. I never thought I would end up studying at Cambridge, I had always assumed you needed to be super-humanly intelligent to get in. I decided to give it a go and applied to St John's because it's such a vibrant, diverse place. Now I get to study with people from all over the world and the College isn't bad to look at either!

I would like to change the stigma around Engineering and make sure that girls are not put off by the misconception that it's an exclusively male profession. That's why I am a mentor in the shadowing scheme where a prospective student comes and stays with you for a few days to get an insight into which subject is right for them and what it's really like at Cambridge.

I have been doing yoga since I was 16 as it helps me to relax and sleep well. There are so many different sports and activities on offer here - I did rowing in my first term and I'm about to start Karate.

*“I would like to change the stigma around Engineering and make sure that girls are not put off by the misconception that it's an exclusively male profession.”*

# Living at St John's

It's no exaggeration to say that St John's is one of the most stunning places for students to live and learn anywhere in the world. Spanning seven courts and set on the banks of the River Cam, it's home to breath-taking buildings and beautiful gardens and lawns, making it an amazingly tranquil setting in which to spend your university years.

In fact, it's often easy to forget that St John's is also right in the middle of Cambridge. Most University facilities are virtually on the doorstep, as are the comforts and convenience of city life.

Because we are, in geographical terms, the biggest College, we also provide guaranteed accommodation throughout your time here. Our rooms and food are reckoned to be among the best in Cambridge, while comprehensive on-site facilities mean that every major aspect of your day-to-day life is catered for.

## The best of both worlds

Once you step through the Great Gate, the College is a self-contained community, made up of enclosed squares of buildings known as Courts, the oldest of which date back to the 16th century. From here, the College stretches down to and over the River Cam, via its famous Bridge of Sighs, and across the riverside lawns known, along with those of the other Colleges, as "The Backs". It's nearly half a mile to the back gate, beyond which lie a further 28 acres of playing fields and sports facilities!

This beautiful setting makes for one of the most serene environments in Cambridge. Yet St John's is also in the heart of the city, so you'll never be more than a short walk or cycle from numerous pubs, clubs, restaurants, cafes, theatres, cinemas, bars and shops. With students accounting for about a fifth of the local population there is always plenty going on.

## Your room

The College provides students with accommodation throughout their time at Cambridge, and your room is at your disposal from October until June. Even if you don't fancy living in St John's during the vacations, this has its advantages - it means that you can leave your stuff here, rather than transporting it to and from home each term!

There are more than 500 rooms on the main site, and many are the envy of other Cambridge students. If you're really lucky you might even find yourself living somewhere previously occupied by one of our famous alumni, such as the poet William Wordsworth, writer Douglas Adams, or the Nobel Prize-winning physicist Paul Dirac.

As a first year (or Fresher) you will probably start off in Cripps Court, where most Freshers are housed. This means that you will get to know other people in your year, and settle in quickly. The rooms were refurbished during 2014, and typically you will find yourself in a single room, sharing a bathroom and a small kitchen with three other people.

In the years that follow, you'll be able to opt for a single room, share a set of rooms with a friend, or live with a group of students in one of the College-owned Victorian houses nearby. All rooms have high-speed internet connections, telephone points, and access to a kitchen.

The College is also committed to supporting disabled students, so if you have a disability or medical condition we will do everything we can to provide accommodation that suits your needs.



## Food and drink

If you don't fancy cooking for yourself, the Buttery is a self-service restaurant that provides three meals a day at subsidised prices, and caters for most dietary needs, including vegetarian, Halal and Kosher. We pride ourselves on our selection of free-range, Fair Trade, organic and locally-sourced products. It's one of the most popular spaces in College, where you can meet friends, enjoy good food, and in sunny weather settle down in the adjacent courtyard or take your meal on to the Backs.

For something really special, students can enjoy dinner in Hall with friends or guests. This is one of the great Cambridge traditions, and involves a fantastic, three-course, silver-service meal for which gowns are worn. There are 160 tickets available every evening during term, and students are encouraged to come along.

The College Bar provides a space in which students can relax and socialise over a range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks as well as light meals and snacks. There are snug booths, long tables with power points for laptops, and regular events during term – including quiz nights, music events, food and beer tastings, and games evenings.

## Day-to-day living

Pretty much everything you need is somewhere on site. There are laundry facilities in College and all St John's properties, and rooms are cleaned by College staff known as "Bedders".

Every student has their own "pigeonhole" in the College's mail room, next to the Great Gate Porters' Lodge, where you can pick up parcels and personal messages. You will also be given a University email account when you arrive.

If you are into keeping fit, there's an on-site fitness centre with a range of cardiovascular and individual resistance equipment, as well as a free weights area. There are also music rooms, an art room, punts to take on the river and exceptional sports facilities.

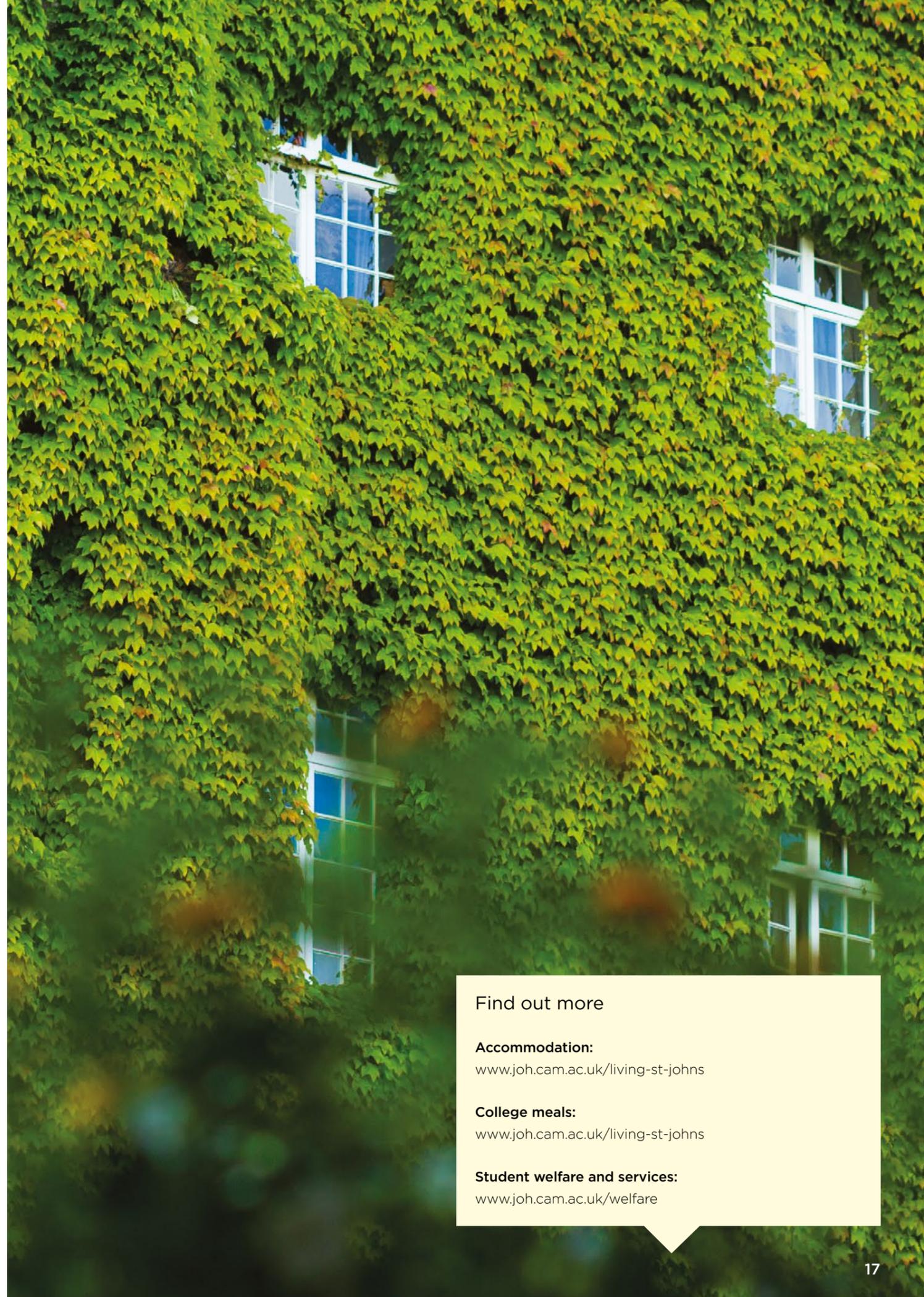
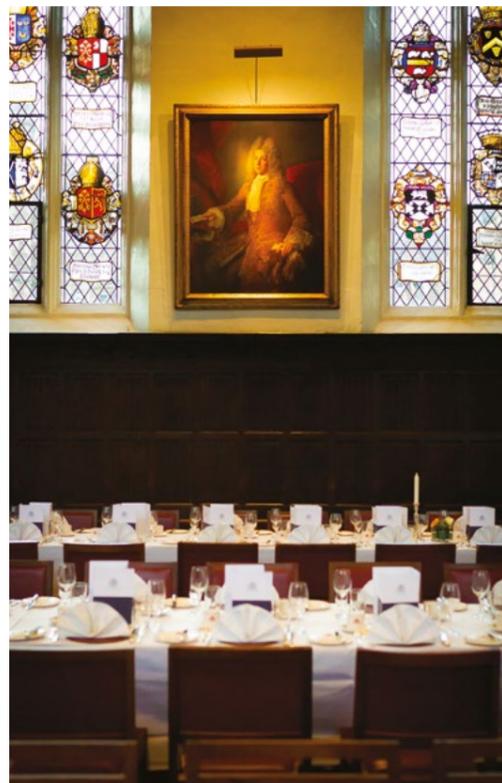
## Looking after our students

For many students, College is their first experience of living away from home for an extended period, so we're committed to ensuring that you remain well looked-after. As well as your Tutor, a wealth of other people are available to give you full support.

During term-time, the College Health Centre is open on a walk-in basis. Our friendly College Nurse can help with a wide variety of health and welfare problems, which are dealt with in the strictest confidence.

Although originally a Christian foundation, St John's has for generations welcomed people of all religions, and none. Nowadays our Chaplain offers everyone confidential support, and is on hand to listen to your concerns, and to offer advice and practical help, regardless of your beliefs.

All members of College are also members of the Junior Combination Room (JCR), which is also the name for the physical common room itself in Second Court. This group of undergraduates represents the student community and plays a key role in looking after all members of the student body. The JCR has its own Welfare and Equal Opportunities officer, and organises the entertainments in Freshers' week – a fun-packed week of ice-breaking activities that help new members to settle into life at St John's.



**Find out more**

**Accommodation:**  
[www.joh.cam.ac.uk/living-st-johns](http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/living-st-johns)

**College meals:**  
[www.joh.cam.ac.uk/living-st-johns](http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/living-st-johns)

**Student welfare and services:**  
[www.joh.cam.ac.uk/welfare](http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/welfare)

**Julia Hwang, 19, Bristol and South Korea**  
Music. Violinist, humanitarian.

I don't think there was ever a point where I switched and said "playing the violin isn't just a hobby anymore". I started aged seven, when my family and I moved to the UK from South Korea, and from day one I was just lucky to have some very inspirational teaching. Music became my priority because I admire the way the violin can bring out strong emotions in people; it has a very mellow and compassionate sound that seems very organic to me.

I dedicate a lot of my time to organising and performing in charity concerts as they are a way for me to contribute to society using the skills that got me where I am today. I am only here with the help of other people, so I believe it should be a circular process. I recently put on a concert in the Old Divinity School to raise money for BRACE Alzheimer's Research. The performance spaces and practice facilities here are some of the best.

Before my interview, I had only been to St John's once - for a performance - and when I was here I had a sense of being at home. I was told to go with my natural instinct when I applied, so that's what I did, and I think I've had the best year and a half of my life here so far. The people and the environment are what make John's so special - it's a big College, but it has a close community.

*"I dedicate a lot of my time to organising and performing in charity concerts as they are a way for me to contribute to society using the skills that got me where I am today."*



**Lydia Clark, 20, East Riding, Yorkshire**  
Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic. Carpenter, set designer.

I got really into languages and history in my early teens when I taught myself Latin from scratch using books lying around at home. I came across ASNaC by chance while I was searching on UCAS - it's the only course of its kind in the country and I love everything about it as it covers all of my academic interests. Learning languages like Old Irish and Norse means I get to read original texts and with my subject there are always unexplored areas of research to sink your teeth into.

I chose St John's because I knew I would be in a small department and so wanted to be part of a big College with plenty of opportunities to be social and feel part of a community. Cambridge is a hub for theatre, and when I'm not studying, I'm at the University's ADC Theatre where I'm a set designer and back-stage carpenter. I really enjoy the contrast with my studies of doing something physical and I've been involved in some brilliant projects like creating Shakespeare's Globe in miniature for the stage and designing the set for a Robin Hood pantomime.



*"It is the only course of its kind in the country and I love everything about it as it covers all of my academic interests."*

# Leisure at St John's

Although studying is a big part of life at Cambridge, it should only ever be one aspect of your educational experience – what you do in your spare time is just as important. At St John's you'll be right in the heart of a multicultural community where there's always plenty going on.

Our famous alumni include poets, photographers, writers, actors, musicians, journalists, sportspeople and social rights campaigners – and many of them started to pursue those interests while they were here. Today, the College has more than 40 clubs and societies, all run by students, and if you can't find something that suits you, we'll help you to set another one up. It's a great way to meet amazing people and make lifelong friends.



## Sport

As a College that has produced gold medal-winning Olympians, English cricket captains and international rugby players, we've got a big sporting history. Our sports teams regularly compete in the top rank of inter-collegiate contests, and are the pride of the College.

If you're not exactly an Olympic athlete, however, don't worry. There are enough people here for everyone to get involved, and we strongly believe that you should try new things out and play for fun. Many of our rowers in the Lady Margaret Boat Club had, for example, never touched an oar before they arrived at Cambridge.

The College is unusual for having its extensive sports grounds just across the road, where you'll find space for football, rugby, cricket, hockey and lacrosse. There are also tennis, badminton and squash courts. If you fancy trying your hand at something else, we have teams playing ultimate Frisbee, mixed volleyball, basketball, netball, hockey, athletics and more.

## Music

St John's has a reputation for being a big musical College, and there are opportunities to get involved in music whatever your taste. Our Choir is one of the best collegiate choirs in the world, with an audience of millions following its concerts, tours and broadcasts.

There are plenty of less formal opportunities to make music and stretch your vocal chords too, though. We have a mixed voice choir, practice rooms for student bands and a thriving jazz club (Jazz@John's). Classical musicians may want to get involved with the Music Society, which runs the College orchestra, and arranges recitals and concerts. St John's Music Festival features several world premieres of new music.

## Clubs and societies

Put simply, there are far more clubs and societies than we have room to mention here. Thanks to the fantastic venue space provided by our recently refurbished Old Divinity School (across the road from the main gate), we've become a major hub in Cambridge for theatre, drama, music and the arts - this year we're hosting Watersprite, the Cambridge international student film festival, among others.

Elsewhere, you'll find societies on subjects as diverse as art, chess, photography, philanthropy and mountaineering. If you want to delve further into your own academic specialism, or find out more about a different one, we also have a wide range of academic societies which run events and bring in top speakers.

## St John's May Ball - the seventh best party in the world

May Balls are a great Cambridge tradition of spectacular all-night parties that mark the end of exams and the academic year. Even by Cambridge standards, however, the St John's Ball is pretty special. Time Magazine once called it the seventh best party in the world - not bad when you consider all those Oscars aftershows...

For one night only the Ball sees College transformed into a massive party venue. Recent acts were Katy B and Nina Conti. Previous Balls have hosted the likes of Rudimental, AlunaGeorge, Bombay Bicycle Club, Big Boi, Ellie Goulding and plenty of others. Envied by the other Colleges, it's always the hottest ticket in town, and our students and members get priority.



Sara Troyas-Martinez, 18, Pamplona, Spain  
Engineering. Pianist.

I chose Cambridge because I really wanted to take what I was studying to the limit. Engineering gives you a lot to learn, but it also opens up opportunities to make a difference in society.

St John's has really good facilities, and it's also very beautiful, which makes a difference when you're studying all day. It really cheers you up just walking around; after lectures you can come back and enclose yourself in this magical environment. It feels like you're part of the history and heart of Cambridge.

Piano is an important part of my life. Sometimes after lectures I come back here and just play for an hour or so. The College has lots of music facilities so you can always book a spot to do that. It's a good break before I go to the library or a supervision.

*"After lectures you can come back and enclose yourself in this magical environment."*

Minaam Abbas, 20, Karachi, Pakistan.  
Clinical Medicine. Debater, JCR President.

*"When you hear that Newton went there, or Rutherford split the atom here, you realise what it means."*

Contrary to popular belief, my life in Karachi was pretty normal, but in Pakistan Cambridge is considered this otherworldly place and in some ways it feels like that. When you hear that Newton went there, or Rutherford split the atom here, you realise what it means.

I picked St John's because Abdus Salam, the Pakistani scientist who won the Nobel Prize, came here. The interview was supposed to be in Cambridge, but I didn't get a visa in time, so we had to do it by Skype. It was simultaneously high-pressure and strangely relaxed!

I got into debating in 10th or 11th grade and am still involved here. It helps you to consider multiple perspectives and informs your opinions. Last year I was Equal Opportunities Officer on the JCR committee and partly because of that I decided to contest the Presidential elections. It's a way to help make John's an even better place for the students who come here.

# Finance and support

Going to University isn't cheap, but that doesn't mean that the cost should be a barrier. Both the University and its Colleges are absolutely committed to ensuring that higher education is accessible to all.

All sorts of initiatives exist – nationally, within the University, and at individual Colleges – to ensure that if you need financial support, it's available. Our philosophy is that it doesn't matter where you went to school, or what your circumstances are; if you've got what it takes to make the most of life at St John's, then we want to hear from you.



## Support from the University

The University offers extensive financial support to all Cambridge students. In particular, the Cambridge Bursary scheme enables any student to meet the cost of his or her education, regardless of circumstances.

Bursaries are available to UK and EU students studying for their first undergraduate degree. The bursaries are worth up to £3,500 per year and are assessed based on household income. There is no limit, so every eligible student can receive one.

## Support from the College

In addition to University-wide support St John's also offers lots of extra financial assistance for students.

### **Studentships: Extra help for low-income families**

Since October 2016, St John's has had a major financial support initiative called Studentships in place to help students from lower-income families.

If you are a home or EU undergraduate of St John's and your household income is less than £25,000, you will be considered for support directly from the College. Combined with the Cambridge Bursary, this will entitle you to a non-repayable sum of £10,310 per year to cover your day-to-day living expenses.

### **Pre-admissions prizes**

Every year the College also awards pre-admissions prizes which are worth £5,000 each and help successful applicants to kick-start their future with the College.

Every student who is offered a place is automatically eligible. The College's decision about who receives the prizes is also based on more than track record – we take into account your progress and potential, and look out for people who would benefit from some extra money as they start their College career.

### **Summer bursaries**

The Cambridge summer vacation is a long one – but it's hard to make the most of all that time if you also need to get a summer job to help to pay for your education. At St John's undergraduates can apply for summer bursaries to help them to undertake educational activities and pursue career opportunities during the long vacation.

The scheme is open to all home or EU undergraduates of St John's with a household income of less than £66,154, and you could receive a bursary of up to £2,070.

### **Book grants and more**

Every student at St John's can access a grant to help them with the must-haves for their course, such as books, periodicals and computer software. In addition, travel and research grants are awarded every year, designed to help you broaden your horizons and experiences.

## Hardship funds and other support

Not all financial problems can be anticipated – sometimes students unexpectedly run into trouble with their tuition and living expenses. If this happens your Tutor is here to help, both by offering advice and, if necessary, pointing you in the direction of College and University hardship funds.

Crucially, any such funding is designed to help you to do more than "get by"; the aim is to ensure that you can get the most out of your Cambridge experience free from financial worries.

## Prizes and awards

The College is immensely proud of its students, and every year we make a number of prizes and scholarships available to people who have reached the very highest standards both academically and in their wider contributions to College life and society as a whole.

There are also all sorts of College prizes and competitions throughout the year. These are great opportunities to expand your interests and educational experience, and there is usually some sort of cash reward if you win. There are prizes for research projects, academic work, photography, music, art, and even writing comedy.

## Find out more

### **University-wide support:**

[www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/finance](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/finance)

### **Extra support at St John's:**

[www.joh.cam.ac.uk/finance-and-support](http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/finance-and-support)

**Kweku Abraham, 21, Orpington, London**  
Maths. Gamer, problem-solver, student mentor.



Maths was the subject I was always best at. It's a great feeling when you crack a problem and get that "Eureka" moment. I first visited John's on an open day. The food seemed good, the rooms looked nice, and it felt friendly. I really enjoyed the course so I decided to stay for an extra year and do a Master's.

Every year I've mentored student "shadows". It's a university scheme - people who are thinking about applying come for a weekend to see what life here is like. I think it's really important that they know that Cambridge is for all sorts of people; you don't have to conform to a type here to fit in.

Board games are a really sociable way to pass your spare time. The house I live in has a big kitchen, so we run games nights there and invite people round.

*"It's a great feeling when you crack a problem and get that "Eureka" moment."*

**Sophie Lawrence, 19, Wincanton, Somerset.**  
Business lawyer, human rights activist.

*"I'm going to Panama soon on a Human Rights Brigade trip; we're going to be doing free work for people in communities where help is needed."*



Cambridge was never really on my radar until I was doing my A-levels. I didn't know anyone who had been to Cambridge and no-one from my family had been to university in general, so I was more focused on going to university full stop.

I had a teacher who persuaded me to consider it. The application process is really different so once I had done it, I was, like: "OK, now I'm committed and I'm going to try as hard as I can". I came to St John's for a summer school event and the whole idea was to encourage people who wouldn't normally apply; I met a lot of nice people and it got me excited about university.

I was torn between English and Law, but Commercial Law has interested me since my GCSE in business studies. I decided that I would rather regulate businesses than start my own!

I'm going to Panama soon on a Human Rights Brigade trip; we're going to be doing free work for people in communities where help is needed. Although I'm interested in business, as a person I don't want to squander my career earning money for myself. Human rights really interests me and when I join a law firm I hope that I'll be able to make the most of their corporate social responsibility programmes.

# Next steps

Graduation may seem a long way off right now, but your student years are really just the next step on a much bigger journey. Life at St John's is intense, exciting and inspiring, and when you look back in years to come, it may well feel like the time flew by. Our job is to make sure that you get the most from it, by bringing out the best in you.

When you are ready to move on, you'll find that the University and College are here to help. Whatever you end up doing, being at St John's makes you part of a centuries-old tradition and a global community of distinguished alumni. We're always keen to hear about how our graduates are getting on, and you will always be very welcome at College.



## What do graduates do next?

Cambridge graduates are some of the most employable in the world and – however competitive the jobs market – always in demand. The University frequently ranks towards the top of league tables that order institutions by graduate employability. Six months after graduation, 54.9% of Cambridge students are in employment, 36% in further study or training, and of the remainder more than half are travelling or taking a year off.

One of the reasons for this success rate is that we don't just train you to work hard, we also teach you to think hard. Add to that the benefits of being part of our clubs and societies, as well as a diverse, stimulating wider College life, and it's no surprise that our students have such good prospects. You'll emerge from St John's able to innovate, analyse, solve problems, learn quickly, organise yourself, create, communicate and express your ideas with confidence. These are skills high on most employers' wish-lists.

There is, however, no such thing as a "typical" Johnian, and our graduates go on to pursue all manner of careers, at home and abroad. Some will fulfil a childhood dream by working in medicine, technology or the media. Others won't be sure about what they want to do next, and may spend the years straight after their degree travelling, working abroad, or building up experience for a future career.

Many undergraduates also find that their first degree whets their appetite for further study. Every year about a third of our students go on to take a higher degree, or some form of professional or vocational qualification.

## Helping you with your next move

Regardless of whether you know what you want to do or not, being at Cambridge means that you'll have access to a fantastic University Careers Service. The Service advertises thousands of vacancies each term, and will help you to prepare a Curriculum Vitae, hone your presentation and interview skills, and identify possible careers. There are also opportunities to meet prospective employers.

Within College, you'll have personal support from your Tutor, Director of Studies and Supervisors, all of whom will advise you, discuss options and provide you with those all-important references as you embark on the next stage of your career.

## The Johnian family

Becoming a student at St John's means that you also become a lifelong member of the College and take your place as part of a tradition that stretches back more than 500 years. We'll keep in touch with digital and print newsletters, as well as the College's annual record, The Eagle, but we are also always keen to hear about your achievements and what you are up to.

Johnians are welcome to visit the College free of charge, book rooms, dine in College, use the library, borrow a punt and attend services in Chapel. There are plenty of other benefits, too, which you can find on our alumni website.



# What do Johnnians do next?

Over the centuries, St John's has produced Nobel Laureates, Prime Ministers, authors, actors, code-breakers, entrepreneurs, lawyers, astronomers, statisticians, medics and more.

There are far too many success stories to list here. Some of the most famous include Sir John Cockroft, the Nobel Prize-winning Physicist who split the atom; Sir Fred Hoyle, the pioneering cosmologist who coined the term "Big Bang"; the photographer Sir Cecil Beaton; Thomas Fairfax, Parliamentarian commander during the Civil War; the poet William Wordsworth; and Douglas Adams, author of The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy.

Today, St John's still prides itself on enabling students to exceed their expectations, and our graduates still go on to achieve remarkable things that touch and transform lives all over the world. Here are a few recent examples:

**Kate Palmer**



(MPhil 2014, Political Thought and History)  
**Journalist**

Kate edited the student newspaper of Trinity College Dublin, before studying as a History graduate at St John's. She has worked for the Daily Mail, the Irish Daily Star and Forbes. Kate is currently a reporter at The Daily Telegraph, where she covers business, money and consumer affairs.

**Suzanne Szczetnikowicz**



(BA 2005, Land Economy and Modern Languages)  
**Senior Associate at Shearman and Sterling (London) LLP and co-founder of Women In Law London**

After graduating, Suzanne spent a year supervising a third year Land Economy paper at the University and then completed her law studies before building a successful career as a project finance lawyer in London. Having spent time working in Abu Dhabi and on secondment, she has also worked on several first of their kind, complex and award-winning project finance transactions including in Egypt, the Middle East and Asia.

She is one of five co-founders of Women in Law London (WILL), which is an independent network for qualified female solicitors launched in October 2014. WILL aims to promote and engage the next generation of women leaders in law, through a programme of large and small scale events for their members and the more experienced female legal professionals or 'Champions', the development of mentoring relationships, training sessions and engagement with firms. It has already gained more than 1500 members and Champions from around 350 firms and businesses in London.

**Nadine McCarthy Kahane**



(BA 2005, Natural Sciences)  
**Founder and CEO of Stone and Strand**

After graduating, Nadine worked as a strategy consultant at the Monitor Group in London, focused on corporate and marketing strategy. She then completed an MBA at Wharton Business School in the US before setting up her own company, Stone & Strand. Stone & Strand is today one of the leading fine jewellery e-commerce retailers globally and has been featured in the Financial Times and the Wall Street Journal.

**Ian Pong**



(PhD 2009, Materials Science)  
**Scientist**

Originally from Hong Kong, Ian came to St. John's to study for a PhD in Materials Science, specialising in applied superconductivity. He then won post-doctoral fellowships to work at CERN and ITER. He is currently a project scientist at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory in California, studying superconducting wire and cable properties. Ian has won several high-profile scientific awards, including "Best Materials Student", "Best Work by a Young Scientist", and "Best PhD Thesis in Condensed Matter and Materials Physics".

**Susannah Hardyman**



(BA 2007, Theology)  
**Founder and Director of Action Tutoring**

Susannah is the founder and director of Action Tutoring, an educational charity that works in partnership with inner-city schools across England. Susannah set up Action Tutoring in 2011 to provide volunteer tutors to work with pupils preparing for their GCSEs, especially in English and Maths. The organisation now operates in 8 cities across England, supporting nearly 2000 pupils a year.

**Tom Mustill**



(BA 2005 Natural Sciences)  
**Wildlife filmmaker**

After graduating, Tom became one of the UK's most prolific wildlife film-makers, producing and directing documentaries including the BBC's Natural World special, Kangaroo Dundee and Channel 4's Inside Nature's Giants. Tom has worked with Sir David Attenborough and has won multiple awards.

# Applying to St John's

The best way to make a decision about applying is to come and see St John's for yourself. Every year we run Open Days, as well as subject "taster days", where you can meet Directors of Studies and current undergraduates. Details about forthcoming events can be found on the College website. You can also visit or contact the College's admissions team at any time.

Applying can seem like a daunting experience, but the process is actually more straightforward than you might think. It is outlined below, but there is much more information on our website.

## Requirements

When assessing applicants, we look at both the individual subjects that they are studying and the combination of these. Some courses require qualifications in certain subjects, so check the course requirements before you apply.

Typically, our minimum conditional offer is A\*AA at A2 (excluding General Studies and Critical Thinking) for arts subjects, and A\*A\*A at A2 for sciences. There are, however, no set rules, and we will take individual circumstances into account. If you feel that you have what it takes and are uncertain about your subject choices or predicted grades, contact the admissions team for advice.

If you are doing something other than A-Levels, don't worry. We regularly make offers based on other qualifications, such as Scottish Advanced Highers, or the International Baccalaureate.

## How it works

Your UCAS form should be submitted by 15 October for entry in October of the next year, or for deferred entry the following year.

You'll then be asked to supply extra information through a Supplementary Application Questionnaire (SAQ), which ensures that we have complete and consistent information about applicants.

Everyone with a realistic chance of being offered a place is invited to interview in December. There is lots of information about interviews on our website so that you know what to expect.

Our final decision will be based on the interview, your academic record, the reference provided by your school and your performance in any admissions tests. We'll tell you our decision before the end of January. There are three possible outcomes:

- 1.) Your application is successful and you receive a conditional offer to study at St John's.
- 2.) Your application is "pooled". This means that we feel that you are suitable for a place at Cambridge, but cannot offer you a place at St John's. If this happens, you might be asked to interview at another College, or receive a place there without being interviewed at all.
- 3.) Your offer is unsuccessful.

Don't let the fear of being unsuccessful put you off - we can't offer you a place if you don't apply!



## Applicants living outside the EU

As well as a UCAS application, applicants living outside the EU will need to submit a Cambridge Online Preliminary Application (COPA).

Once you have submitted your application, you will be contacted via email with a request to complete the SAQ as well, and you will need your COPA reference number to do this.

## Getting in touch with the admissions team

St John's has its own dedicated Admissions Office, which exists to help those applicants most capable of benefiting from a College education regardless of their circumstances or background.

Prospective students are welcome to drop in during office hours, Monday to Friday. We will do our best to answer any questions that you may have.

### Alternatively, just get in touch:

**Email:** [admissions@joh.cam.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@joh.cam.ac.uk)

**Tel:** 01223 338703

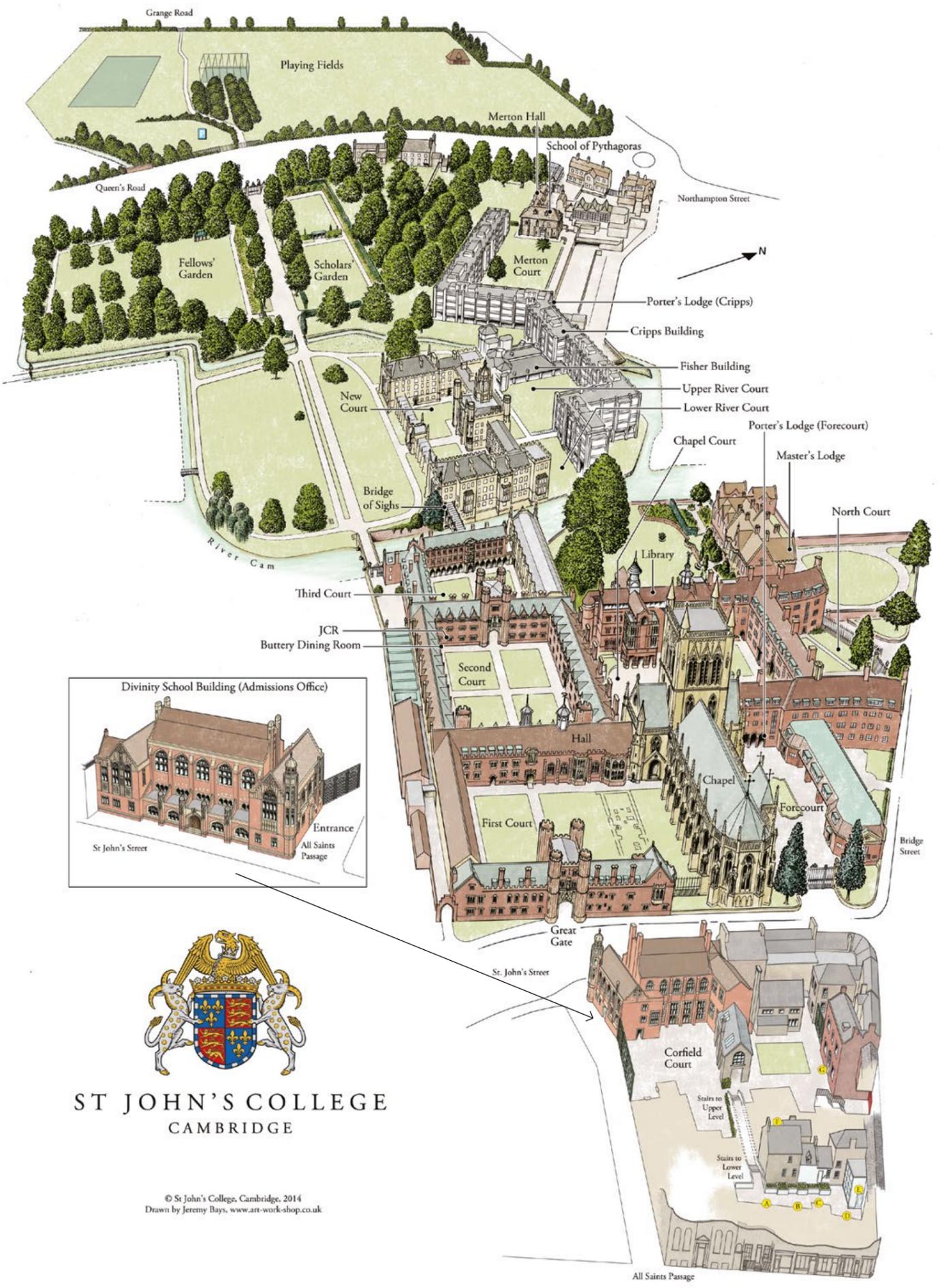
**Fax:** 01223 766419

### Address:

Admissions Office, Old Divinity School  
St John's College  
Cambridge  
CB2 1TP

## Find out more

Complete information about applying to St John's, with full details about the application process, what to expect at interview, and more, can be found at: [www.joh.cam.ac.uk/applying](http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/applying)



**ST JOHN'S COLLEGE**  
CAMBRIDGE

© St John's College, Cambridge, 2014  
Drawn by Jeremy Bays, www.art-work-shop.co.uk

St John's College  
Cambridge  
CB2 1TP

Tel: 01223 338703  
Email: [admissions@joh.cam.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@joh.cam.ac.uk)

[www.joh.cam.ac.uk](http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk)