



**Hertford College**  
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



# Admissions Handbook 2018

Your guide to interviews at Hertford College

*Thank you for your application to Oxford. It is my job, as Director of Admissions at Hertford College to coordinate our admissions exercise and to ensure that the process runs efficiently and fairly.*

*This handbook aims to answer your questions and provide information about the whole application process. Please read it carefully and keep it to refer to later. It includes details of what to expect and when, how to get to Hertford and whom to contact if you have further queries.*

*Please note that this is not an invitation to interview. You will hear from us, by email no later than seven days before interviews begin in the subject for which you have applied, whether you have been shortlisted for interview.*

*I wish you well with your application and will work with our admissions team, student helpers and academics to ensure that the admissions process allows you to perform at your very best.*

*Good luck!*

*Best wishes  
Lynn Featherstone  
Director of Admissions*

### **Preliminary information**

This handbook provides information about the application process as a whole and, more particularly, about the interview arrangements for applicants for entry in October 2019, or for deferred entry in October 2020.

You will only be expected to come to Oxford for interview if you are asked to do so by us. We'll also notify you if you are not selected for interview.

Invitations to interview are sent out subject by subject. If, as the time for interviews in your subject approaches, you learn that other applicants have been informed that they have or have not been selected for interview at Hertford for a *different* subject, please be patient as you will hear from us in due course.

Applicants selected for certain subjects may be asked to arrive at Hertford before the date given in the university timetable for interviews. Some subjects hold a general meeting for all candidates before the individual interviews and these may be held the evening before the interviews begin. If this is the case in your subject, it will be explained clearly in the email you receive if you are selected for interview.

If you are selected for interview, there's no need to contact us **unless** you know that you will not (or may not) be able to come to Oxford for interview, or you wish to make us aware of special arrangements you may require. In such cases please contact Caitlin Kennedy, our Admissions Officer, immediately at: [undergraduate.admissions@hertford.ox.ac.uk](mailto:undergraduate.admissions@hertford.ox.ac.uk).

## **Getting to Oxford**

If you are selected for interview, please allow plenty of time to get to Oxford and for any delays. This is particularly important if you will have to make a long journey to attend interview.

If you plan to come to Oxford by car, please be aware that there is no on-site parking available and that parking in the centre of Oxford is very, very difficult. You can be dropped off at Hertford, in Catte Street, but there is no waiting.

If the cost of travelling to and from Oxford is a problem, then we may be able to pay the cost of travel to and from Oxford, by public transport, for UK residents who attend or have attended a UK state school or college. Further information about getting help with the cost of travelling to Oxford can be found on the university website:

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/guide/interviews>

For information on travelling to Oxford please see the university website:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/visitors/visiting-oxford/how-get-oxford?>

## **Practical arrangements**

If you are selected for interview, you will be sent an email which will contain a link to our 'Interview Reply Form'. Please complete this form as soon as possible.

When you arrive in Oxford for interview, please report to the Old Lodge (to the right as you enter Hertford) to check in with our student helpers. They will book you in, log your contact details and take you to the Porters' Lodge to collect your room key. They will then accompany you to your room and can answer any questions you may have.

Accommodation and all meals will be provided, free of charge, for the whole period that you are required to be in Oxford. Applicants are often permitted to arrive the day prior to their invitation date however, if you wish to arrive on the day prior to your invitation date, it is essential that you inform the college both by completing the Interview Reply Form and by emailing [undergraduate.admissions@hertford.ox.ac.uk](mailto:undergraduate.admissions@hertford.ox.ac.uk). Please also note that we cannot offer accommodation, meals or access to other college facilities to anyone who accompanies you to Oxford.

Student helpers are on duty in the Old Lodge from 8.00am–11.00pm to deal with any queries and make sure that interviewees are in the right place at the right time. They also arrange evening entertainment that includes film nights, quizzes and other ways for candidates to relax. Part of their role is to support candidates during their stay with us.

The Porters' Lodge is staffed 24 hours a day and the college welfare team are also on hand so that any emergency can be dealt with quickly and effectively. You will be given a college map on arrival at college.

## Food at Hertford

Hertford provides three meals a day at the main site in Catte Street and breakfast each weekday at Warnock House (one of our accommodation annexes located south of the city centre, 10 minutes' walk from the main college site). The times of meals are as follows:

Dining Hall, in college		Warnock House (weekdays only)	
Breakfast	8.00am–9.00am	Breakfast	8.00am–9.00am
Lunch	12.00pm–1.30pm	(for those staying at Warnock House and Abingdon House)	
Dinner	6.00pm–7.00pm		

Applicants will be provided with all meals free of charge, and supplementary snacks and drinks are also on sale in Hall during meal times.

**Applicants resident in the Graduate Centre** may have breakfast at Warnock House on Monday December 3<sup>rd</sup>, Monday December 10<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday December 11<sup>th</sup>, and Wednesday December 12<sup>th</sup>. On all other days they should have breakfast in the Dining Hall in college.

**Applicants who are staying with us on Saturday December 8<sup>th</sup>** should know that our Admissions Helpers will arrange a meal on Saturday evening. Please ask them about arrangements and let them know if you have any special dietary requirements.

## Your interviews: what you should expect

When you arrive you will be informed about any meetings or interviews that have already been scheduled.

All candidates who attend interview in person will have two interviews. In addition, candidates for certain subjects will be required to attend one or more additional interviews at one or more other colleges.

Candidates for certain subjects are interviewed at more than one college to ensure that the best candidates are admitted, irrespective of the college to which they applied. If you are required to attend interviews at one or more other colleges, you should not assume that this is because you have not been successful at Hertford. Treat it as another opportunity to shine!

Details of interview times will be posted on notice boards and you should consult them regularly during your stay. This is particularly important at the stage when further interviews are being arranged with other colleges. You should also ensure that you leave your mobile number with the student helpers, so that they can contact you if necessary, and that you keep your mobile phone switched on at all times.

For your interviews, wear whatever you will make you feel comfortable and help you focus on the questions. There is no need to buy anything new or to dress formally. You will not be judged on your fashion sense! Please also bear in mind that Oxford can be very cold in December.

Please go to the Old Lodge 30 minutes before your interview so that you can be informed of any delays or changes to the timetable. For certain subjects you may also be required to read a short passage or do a short exercise immediately before the interview. The student helpers will take you (or direct you) to the interview room.

There may be two or three people waiting to meet you in the interview room. It may be that one is there to take notes of the interview, so do not feel disconcerted if they do not ask you any questions. In the course of the interview you will probably be asked if you have any questions: it is perfectly fine to say no.

### **Your interviews: making the most of the opportunity**

Interviewers are not looking for candidates who have been drilled in the 'right answers' or whose school or college has told them how to behave and what to say. We are looking for people who are genuinely interested in the subject they wish to study.

Read back over the paperwork you have sent to us – your UCAS form, your personal statement and any written work you have submitted – and think about what questions might arise from it. Also think over obvious questions such as 'why do you want to do this subject?'. Show that you have made an informed decision about the course.

Be prepared to think hard during your interviews. They are designed to distinguish between many well-qualified candidates and you should not expect a cosy chat; but interviewers are aware that you may be nervous and will take this into account. In addition, be prepared to rethink your opinions, but do not necessarily feel that you have to agree with the interviewer.

Further information and advice about interviews can be found on the university website:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/interviews>

### **Leaving Oxford**

If you are selected for interview, the email you receive may indicate that you are required to be in Oxford for a certain period and that you *may* be required to remain in Oxford until a later date. It is therefore vital that you do not leave Oxford until our admissions team, or one of our student helpers, has confirmed that you are free to go.

Since college accommodation is under pressure during the interview period, we would be grateful if you could pack your belongings by 9.00am on the day you leave Oxford so that your room can be cleaned in time for the next interviewee. Your belongings may be left in the Chapel until you are collected or are ready to depart.

When you leave, please sign out with the student helpers at the Old Lodge and return your room key to the Porters' Lodge.

### **Reallocation process**

The Oxford colleges work together to ensure the most able candidates are made an offer. This means that some candidates may be reallocated from the college initially handing their

application to another college, where the ratio of applicants to places is lower, to ensure the ratio is as constant as possible across the University. If you are reallocated to another college, your application will be considered in the same way there as it would have been by your original college.

### **Skype interviews for international candidates**

If you are an international applicant and unable to come to Oxford for interviews, then we will endeavor to offer an interview by telephone or video conference, or via Skype. Please read the information about interview arrangements on our international applicant interviews page:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/international-students/Interview-arrangements-for-international-students>

### **Our decision**

At the end of the interview period, our Tutors discuss the candidates they have met and decide on the offers they wish to make. Offers are checked and agreed with other colleges and final decisions will be available on UCAS Track on Wednesday 9 January.

### **Offers and feedback**

If you are successful at interview and have not yet taken A levels (or equivalent qualifications) you will receive a conditional offer. This will specify the grades that must be achieved in order to take up the offer of a place at Hertford. If you are successful at interview having already completed A levels (or equivalent qualifications), then you would ordinarily receive an offer conditional on production of your exam certificates.

Some candidates who have been successful at interview may receive a letter that indicates that they will receive an offer from another college, or one that states that they are being made an 'open offer'. In the latter case a place at Oxford is guaranteed, but the specific college will be decided in mid-August. If you are made a conditional offer by Hertford, we will review your exam results in August and write to confirm our offer of a place if you have been successful in meeting our academic conditions.

If you are unsuccessful at interview, you may wish to request feedback on your application. It is important to be aware that the volume of requests made in January means that we are not able to respond immediately. We therefore aim to acknowledge all requests on receipt and to provide feedback within twenty working days.

Specific feedback can only be released to (or with the consent of) candidates themselves. If your school, college or family wishes to request feedback on your behalf, we will need to have your consent in writing, or by email, before it can be released.

### **Students with disabilities**

Hertford College encourages applications from intellectually able and committed students regardless of any disability. If you have declared a disability on your application, we will be in touch shortly to ask what, if any, particular arrangements might need to be made if you are

shortlisted for interview. If you have a disability or long-standing health condition which you have not declared on your application, we encourage you to get in touch with us at the earliest opportunity, in complete confidence, to discuss any possible arrangements which might need to be made if you are shortlisted for interview.

Please see the university's website for further information:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/why-oxford/support-and-wellbeing/students-with-disabilities>

### **Religious observance**

Please let us know if there are specific arrangements that will be necessary so that you can maintain your religious observance. This may include requesting to attend your interview on a different day. We will do our best to make an alternative arrangement for you within the timescale laid down by the University.

### **Key contacts**

Admissions Officer

Caitlin Kennedy

email: [undergraduate.admissions@hertford.ox.ac.uk](mailto:undergraduate.admissions@hertford.ox.ac.uk)

+ 44 (0)1865 279404

Porters' Lodge

Hertford College, Catte Street, Oxford OX1 3BW

+ 44 (0)1865 279400

Oxford University Admissions and Outreach Office

University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD

email: [undergraduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:undergraduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk)

+ 44 (0) 1865 288000