This is the alternative prospectus for Sidney Sussex College! It has been written by current students in order to give you an accurate student perspective of what Sidney is like.

For any information on admissions of specific courses, you can contact the Admissions Office directly (admissions@sid.cam.ac.uk), or pick up a College and University prospectus.

By reading this hopefully you will see why we think Sidney is so great and why we think you should apply here!

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What is a College?

The University of Cambridge has a Collegiate system, and is split into 31 Colleges (29 undergraduate Colleges). Sidney is one of these Colleges. The College is responsible for organising a student’s accommodation and supervisions (one way you are taught), as well as taking care of student welfare. The College has numerous facilities that are available for all students to use, these include a ‘hall’ where students can buy tasty food, a gym, lovely gardens, a squash court, a bar and a 24h library.

Why Sidney?

Sidney is primarily known for being a friendly College and prides itself on its strong sense of community. This means that everyone in Sidney is supported no matter what background they come from, and this is essential in making sure that the transition from home to university is as stress free as possible. This community atmosphere also helps you to cope with the workload!

Sidney is also mainly known for its close proximity to Sainsbury’s!! This is exceedingly handy for picking up groceries whenever you need them! It is also extremely central, meaning that usually, you will only be a short walk away from lectures, departmental libraries, and the main Cambridge nightclubs.

Sidney also has...
- Cambridge’s 2nd Cheapest College Bar
- 24h Library
- Gym (With Women’s hours)
- Squash Court
- Good quality accommodation
- New canteen coming in 2020
The College provides you with a room for the whole time that you’re here. This is very handy as it means that you never have to worry about privately renting a place. This means that you will always live by your friends and that the rent is fairly cheap when compared to other universities. This is also the case because when here you only pay for 30 weeks rent and do not have separate utility bills. All of this means that accommodation at Sidney is very affordable.

In your first year, rooms are all assigned randomly and in second and third year, rooms are assigned by random ballot. You can enter this ballot along with your friends to make sure that you all live together. To get a closer look at our accommodation we would really recommend that you come to an Open Day! For further information on how to attend an Open Day, you can visit the University and College website.

**Accommodation**

Garden Court

Sidney House

Cromwell Court
Accommodation Cont.

Blundell Court

Sussex House

Cloister Court

Chapel Court
Despite what many may claim, being a student doesn’t mean that you have to survive on only pasta and beans on toast! Sidney is directly opposite Sainsbury’s and this is excellent for picking up any food that you need. However, the food options in Cambridge go far beyond the bright orange lights of Sainsbury’s and here are some of the ways that we enjoy eating in Cambridge...

HALL

This is the main student canteen and many students choose to buy food here. They provide Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner Monday – Friday and on Saturday offer Brunch which is highly popular! The food is great, and a variety of options are available, including at least one vegetarian option, but other dietary requirements are catered for too, Hall also participates in meat-free Monday’s. A main meal is about £3-5 which makes it great value, it’s also a great chance to socialise.

FORMAL HALL

This is a completely optional but fantastic experience, especially as a way to show off the College when parents or friends visit! It’s not taken as seriously as you expect, and there’s no minefield of etiquette to negotiate, just a fantastic three-course meal for a very cheap price (around £10)!

COOKING FOR YOURSELF

Many students choose to cook for themselves, and there is a minimum of a microwave, fridge, kettle, toaster and electric grill near all student accommodation. Most rooms also have access to kitchens with hobs and ovens. Alongside Sainsbury’s, there’s a nearby Aldi and Tesco, as well as the market only two minutes away which sells fruit and veg.
Obviously, a lot of your time at Cambridge will be spent on your studies. The work is definitely more challenging than that you will have experienced at school or college but there is a whole team of people in place in order to make sure that this transition is as smooth as possible. There is a great deal of academic support available, so the workload is not something to worry about.

Alongside studying, there is always time to socialise and join sports teams and societies. Cambridge is unique in the fact that there are so many world-leading researchers responsible for teaching you, meaning that learning is exciting and stimulating. These are the main ways in which you will be taught...

**LECTURES**
These are where everybody from across the University, from all Colleges, come together to be taught the basics of the subject - most likely by a world-leading researcher. Different subjects organise their lectures differently, so have a look on your subject’s website for more info.

**SUPERVISIONS**
These are what makes learning at Cambridge different from other universities. They are one or two-to-one meetings with a Fellow (ie a teacher) or sometimes a PhD student, where you get to go into the depths of your subject. The type of work you need to do for supervisions varies by subject, and they provide a warm and inclusive space to discuss your subject. It is actually really fun and enjoyable talking through your ideas with experts in your subject, and it is a great way of learning.

**CLASSES/SEMINARS**
These are organised discussion groups that are meant to extend your understanding or practise a particular topic or skill. For example, language students have classes to practise speaking their chosen language.

**LABS**
These are usually afternoon sessions for scientists and medics, where they can put into practice things they have learnt in lectures. There will be demonstrators available to show you how to use any specialist equipment and help you complete your lab reports.

**READING** will also form a large part of your study here, and Sidney's well-stocked library should have you covered and it’s a great workspace. You can get any book that you need from the University Library meaning that you will never have to buy any books!
Social life

Studying is an important part of student life at Cambridge, but there is plenty of time to join clubs or societies. Maintaining a healthy study/social life balance is essential and here are some of the ways in which students find ways to relax and unwind...

NIGHTLIFE
The nightlife in Cambridge offers up mainly chart music remixes and 90s anthems, but there are also venues offering techno and house music. A night out in Cambridge is always a great way to have fun and the post-club food is always a highlight! ‘The Junction’ is a popular venue for gigs, and the Corn Exchange (three minutes from Sidney) is a regular stop for touring comedians. There are also many options for those who don’t enjoy clubbing which range from a chilled night in the bar to a movie night in the newly refurbished JCR. There are three cinemas in Cambridge!

SOCIETIES
These are very popular at Cambridge and includes: the famous Cambridge Union, which holds frequent debates with lots of important public figures; Sidney’s undergraduate run subject societies (including Confrat - the oldest university history society in Europe!); and a University society for every sport, political party, country, subject and niche interest you can think of. Check out www.societies.cam.ac.uk to find out about all of the registered societies at the University. There is also the option to set up your own society if it does not currently exist.

SPORTS
Participation in sports is encouraged at all levels in Sidney. Rowing is very popular with much support available for novices. There are also well-established teams for rugby, football, mixed lacrosse, and netball. There is a team and club for just about every sport, even tiddly-winks! The Sidney women’s football team made it to the Cambridge Colleges’ final in 2018!! We compete with other Universities in sport competitions each year, such as the famous boat race and BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport).

CHARITY WORK
Charity work is popular and easy to get involved with at Cambridge. There is a dedicated Green and Ethical Officer position in Sidney’s Student Union, and the University’s student union has its own RAG (Raising and Giving) Charity too, but many other charities and campaigns have a big presence here as well.

COMEDY AND THEATRE
The comedy and theatre scenes in Cambridge are also thriving, with the ADC Student Theatre (virtually on our doorstep) and famous Footlights comedy group (past members include David Mitchell, Sue Perkins, Richard Ayoade and Hugh Laurie). Both are easy to get involved with once you are here and are also a great choice for a night out.
Sometimes Cambridge can be quite hectic due to the sheer number of things to do! There is an excellent welfare network at Sidney to help students in any way in which they need, and this comes in several forms. One of these is the SSCSU (Sidney Sussex College Student’s Union) Welfare representatives who are responsible for looking after the welfare needs of all Sidney students. The Pastoral Advisor is also responsible for student welfare and runs both Art Therapy and guided meditation sessions.

**SSCSU WELFARE**

SSCSU’s committed and enthusiastic welfare team are excellent in ensuring that Sidney is somewhere where every student feels safe and supported. The Welfare team often organises acoustic nights, ‘Welfun’ socials and text-a-doughnut, all of which help students to take some time out of their work and consider their personal well-being.

SSCSU as a whole represents the needs of all students within College. All students have Representational Officers so there is always someone within the student body to talk to and advise you about any issues you have. The University also has a Counselling Service, provides sexual health supplies, and has a student-run advice service.

**COLLEGE FAMILIES**

As soon as you are accepted into Sidney you become part of a College family, consisting of parents in 2nd year (one of whom will do your subject) and a sibling in the same year as you. Your College parents are there for you to ask as many questions as you want before you arrive, and it means there is always someone around to talk to about any social and academic issues you may have.

**COLLEGE STAFF**

There is an equally dedicated team of Tutors and Tutorial staff (including the College Nurse) who will always be willing to help with any issues you have: whether you are struggling with work or want to change a module, or you become ill during the exam period, help is only an email away! There is also a Pastoral Advisor at Sidney Sussex who is directly responsible for the welfare of Sidney Students.
Sidney endeavours to make everyone welcome, regardless of background, and promotes the rights of minority groups to create a genuinely enlightened and inclusive place of learning. Sidney’s student union (SSCSU) has a welfare representative for all minority groups and our student body is involved with many campaigns. These are some comments from current student liberation officers...

LGBTQ+
In Cambridge there are plenty of social events and groups aimed specifically at people who identify themselves within the community (many of which are open to allies), including club nights, talks and discussions, movie nights, campaigns and welfare events to name a few. In the past year alone, there have been numerous University-wide mega-formals, cake and coffee events, brunches, summer garden parties, drag shows, and even a ‘Ball’ for LGBT+ students. Whoever you are and whatever your interests, there’s always a chance to get involved and enjoy yourself.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
Sidney's International Student Representative looks after the welfare of international students, including culture shock etc., and organises social events throughout term. Most of these events are in collaboration with other Colleges. The College also provides free storage over the vacations.

DISABLED STUDENTS
The Sidney community aims to make sure that the welfare and accessibility of all disabled people in Sidney is one of College’s key concerns. The role of Disability Officer is to advance the accessibility of disabled students’ experiences in their study period, identify and investigate issues relating to student support, equality of opportunity and any disadvantage pertaining to disabled students in the Sidney community. Sidney will ensure that no one is disadvantaged due to their disability during their time at Sidney, or during their application.

WOMEN
Sidney regularly hosts speaker events and group sessions, and students can get involved with student-focused campaigns, welfare support, shaping University policy and practice and being the democratic voice of women students to eliminate all forms of gender disadvantage at the University www.womens.cusu.cam.ac.uk.

BME STUDENTS
SSCSU’s BME rep voices the concerns of Ethnic Minority students, and Sidney’s student body aims to empower us to be proud of our background and enable us to overcome adversity and any apprehension we may hold, so that that we make our views heard. There are many campaigns within the University which Sidney is involved with, such as FLY - primarily a safe space for self-identifying BME women, with weekly meetings and a closed Facebook page where together we discuss our experiences, build solidarity among BME women at Cambridge, and show that some of the issues that may make BME women hesitant in applying are being addressed.
Cambridge is a very affordable university because students only pay for 30 weeks accommodation, and any books that you need will be available from the many libraries. There is also a great deal of financial support available at Cambridge, especially through the Cambridge Bursary Scheme which offers non-repayable money based on household income.

**TUITION FEES** are the same for all courses at all Colleges for Home/EU students. Overseas students pay a higher Tuition Fee rate (see www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/international-students/international-fees-and-costs), and a College Fee. Home/EU students can obtain a student loan from the Government to cover the cost of Tuition Fees and this is paid directly to the College. Please refer to www.gov.uk/student-finance for details.

**LIVING COSTS** cover things such as rent, food, travel, and books. Your rent and food that you buy at Hall goes on a termly College Bill. The Government can provide a means-tested maintenance loan for Home students. Please refer to www.gov.uk/student-finance for details.

There are also additional sources of funding:

**THE CAMBRIDGE BURSARY SCHEME** offers means-tested grants additional to any other loan or grant and never needs to be paid back! You are automatically considered for this when you are accepted, you don’t need to apply for it!

A range of **COLLEGE BURSARIES** are provided by Sidney and awarded automatically when you get here to those who would benefit the most. For up-to-date information on financial support have a look at www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/finance/financial-support and www.sid.cam.ac.uk/current/undergrads/finance.

**PART-TIME JOBS** can earn you some money during the holidays (which tend to be longer than at other Universities) but are not permitted during term-time. There are limited opportunities to earn some extra cash while you’re at Sidney by helping out the Admissions Office at certain times of the year or working in the College Bar.
History and Politics 1st Year Student

8:30 - Wake up and have a quick breakfast before I head off to my lecture.

9:00 - History lecture starts, it’s on ‘Race in the 18th and 19th Century’. After the lecture I grab a coffee with some of the other people on my course.

10:00 - I then go to the library to hand back some books and at the same time I pick up some more up for the essay that I’m writing this week (it’s on Italian and German Unification).

10:30 - Then I head back to my room and on the way pick up some lunch from Sainsburys.

11:00 - I do some reading for my essay and have some lunch in my room, I then re-read the essay for my supervision later.

1:00 – It’s now time for my Politics supervision, this is on an essay that I wrote last week about the adaptability of Democracy and Alexander de Tocqueville. This is a topic I find very interesting and my supervisor gives me some helpful feedback on how to improve my essays!

2:00 - After the supervision I go to the College library, where I pick up some more books and do some more reading for my History essay.

6:00 - Time for dinner! I meet up with some friends and have dinner in Hall, I have fish, chips and peas which is really tasty.

7:15 - This evening I have swimming, so I hop on my bike and cycle there in about 10 mins.

9:00 - I get back from swimming and then watch some TV with my friends.

11:00 - I then have a shower and go to bed as I have another early lecture tomorrow!
“The only way to guarantee you don’t get in is to not apply!”

We would really recommend applying for the CUSU Shadowing Scheme. The scheme takes place in January and February and gives potential applicants the opportunity to accompany a current student for a few days to lectures and supervisions etc. It is great (and free!) opportunity to see what Cambridge is really like. See www.applytocambridge.com/shadowing/ for more info.

Come to an Open Day! We would love to say hi so come to an Open Day to further experience what Cambridge is like! The way in which to get the most out of an Open Day is by planning beforehand, you can do this by planning what Colleges and Departments you would like to go to before the day. There is also the option to visit the College on a separate date and get a tour - you can arrange this through the Sidney Admissions Office (admissions@sid.cam.ac.uk).
The Sidney Admissions Office will be happy to answer any questions that you have and can be contacted via this email address.

admissions@sid.cam.ac.uk

The Access Officer at Sidney would also be happy to answer any questions that you have about Cambridge and provides more of a student perspective.

access@sscsu.org.uk

The University website has a great deal of information on the admissions process as well as specifics about different Colleges and courses.

www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk

To see further information about Student finance (Tuition fees and Maintenance loans) visit

www.gov.uk/student-finance

The Sidney website also has lots of information on admissions as well as information about the College itself

www.sid.cam.ac.uk/admiss/ugrad/

**Really Excellent Website** This is a website run by the Cambridge University Students Union and provides information on all Colleges and courses written by current students.

https://www.applytocambridge.com