

# Oxbridge and the Association



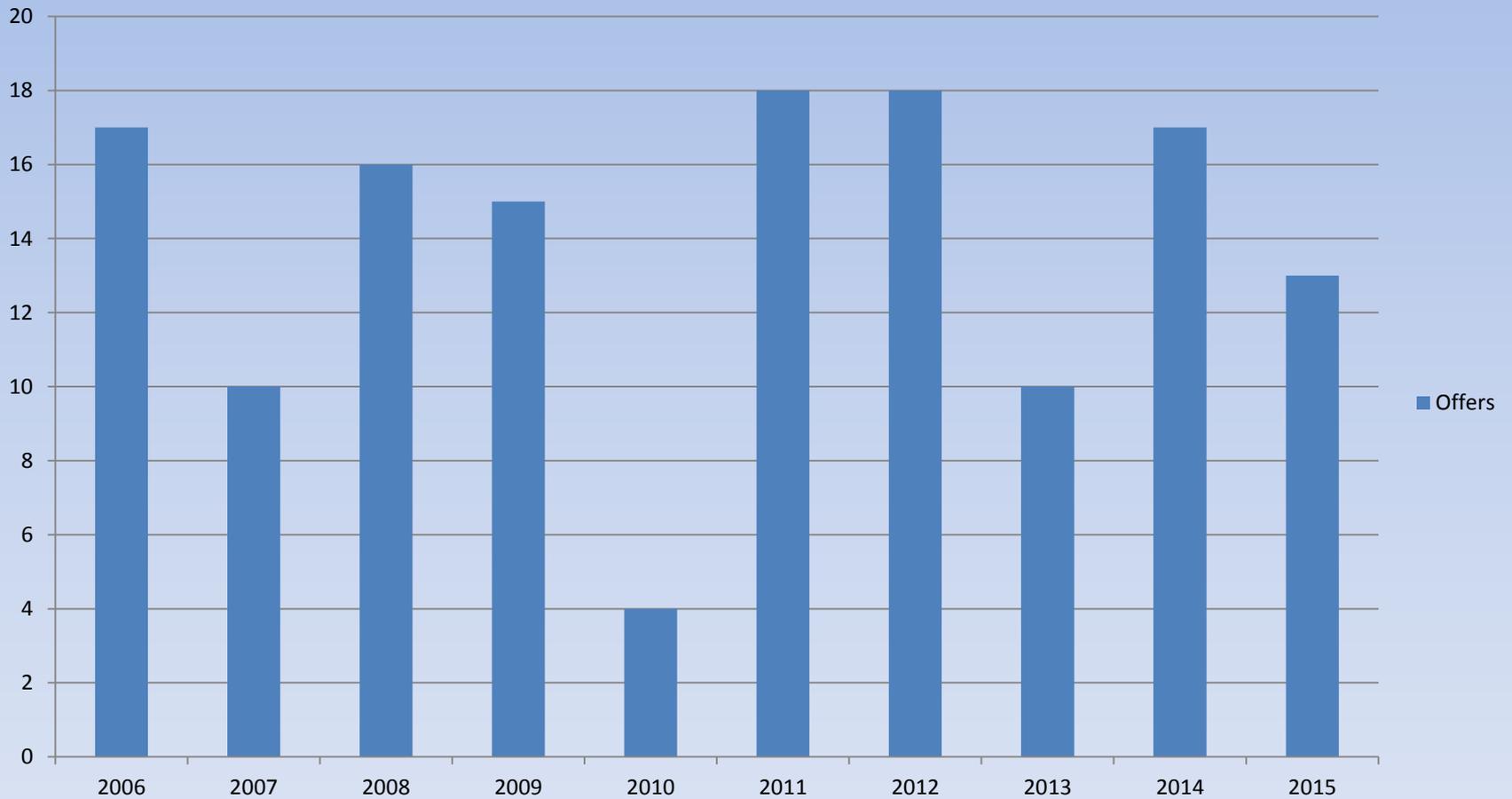
# My Role

- Co-ordinate Oxbridge process at St Aidan's
- Disseminate information / opportunities
- Invite speakers
- Support writing of personal statements
- Lead open day trips
- Write references
- Arrange mock interviews
- In effect a senior tutor for Oxbridge

# Oxbridge Offers 2015



# Number of offers, 2006-15



# The Oxbridge Year

<b>Jan – Jun</b>	<b>Research into universities, colleges and courses</b>
<b>Jun – Sep</b>	<b>Draft Personal Statement; wider reading; enrichment activities; Oxford and Cambridge Open Days (late June / early July).</b>
<b>Sep</b>	<b>Complete UCAS Form; prepare for tests (e.g. BMAT, ELAT, LNAT, HAT).</b>
<b>Nov</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Summoning (or de-summoning).</b></li><li>• <b>Mock interviews for those summoned.</b></li><li>• <b>Send off written work (if required).</b></li><li>• <b>Oxford Tests.</b></li></ul>
<b>Dec</b>	<b>Interviews.</b>
<b>Jan</b>	<b>Response from universities; Cambridge ‘pools’ some students for further interviews in January.</b>

# **Five key messages for parents**

# Message 1

## **Oxbridge make offers solely on academic ability / potential**

- So students need to develop *academic* qualities:
  - Wider reading
  - Discussion
  - Debating
  - Extended Projects
  - Study groups
  - Radio 4 (!)
- *Extra-curricular is relevant for most universities, but Oxbridge focus on 'super-curricular'*

# Message 2

## **Y12 is about information; Y13 is about application**

- Already emailed information about:
  - Masterclasses
  - Taster days
  - Summer schools
  - Study days
  - Essay competitions
- Area Information Evening
  - 23 March: Constance Green Hall, 6pm-8pm
- Open Day trips in the summer
- *Message = get applying for these*

# Message 3

## **Oxford or Cambridge? Consider where your strengths lie**

- Oxford = GCSE + tests + written work
- Cambridge = Focus on AS Levels
- *NB Both consider a range of factors plus they both interview, so there are no shortcuts*

# Message 4

## **The similarities between colleges are greater than their differences**

- Many students put in open applications
- Some students are re-assigned before interview
- 25% go to colleges they did not apply to
- We would advise two things:
  - (i) To consider colleges where we have had previous success (a list will be provided)
  - (ii) To avoid two students applying to the same college for the same course
- *Ask: would I accept an offer from Oxbridge?*

# Message 5

## **Go for it, but be philosophical**

- Fact finding is vital!
- While a student might decide against going, it is usually too late to decide to go in August
- Remember that a final decision on making an application is only needed in September
- *Being well informed is a huge advantage*

# **Note on the Personal Statement**

DRIFT 2

Jenny

History is a subject I have always found truly fascinating, whether it is work done in lessons, watching documentaries, reading books or visiting historical sites using my English Heritage membership. So, naturally taking Ancient History and Modern History A-Level was inevitable, a natural choice.

broader

Since the summer holidays of last year I have been partaking in online courses such as Richard III and World War 1: Trauma and Memory, to broaden my knowledge of History from universities such as Leicester, Newcastle and the Open University. I even did a course in Psychology and Mental Health from the University of Liverpool. I started by taking a course in Richard III after reading Philippa Gregory's book "The White Queen" where my curiosity about Richard III and the "boys in the tower" began. I was thoroughly engrossed in her feminine perspective in a male dominated society, such as from the view of Elizabeth Woodville's who was not from a royal bloodline.

Relevance?

YIP

Any other good links??

how by who?

From doing Ancient History A Level, I became really interested in the Roman Empire, so have enrolled myself in a course called "Hadrian's Wall: Life on the Roman frontier" to give me a greater foundation of knowledge.

Furthermore, I intend to undertake an EPQ mostly likely on the subject of the "boys in the tower" which I will very much enjoy researching.

As an enthusiastic History student, I sought an opportunity to volunteer in a year 7 History class to not only help them, but also to pass on my love for the subject.

Recently I have started listening to podcasts on the "In Our Time" programme on Radio 4, such as one on Hadrian's Wall.

So I feel that an opportunity like this, to go and experience a course on History at Oxford would be tremendous fun and amazingly beneficial as it would give me an insight into what it would be like to be a student at Oxford and more importantly, whether to pursue Ancient or Modern History at university.

1,897 characters

Lot of good things - just need rewording!

① Why History? When did your interest begin? Why? Tudors!

② A Level: History = Britain 1106-55 (Normi 1116-21)  
A. Hist = Greece + Roman

③ broader interest - To develop interest of middle ages, medieval  
Learn about history

More here. Per month: Hadrian's Wall.  
+ more.  
etc etc

DRIFT 2

To write my intent is history, I have called...

Jenny

Later

History is a subject I have always found truly fascinating, whether it is work done in lessons, watching documentaries, reading books or visiting historical sites. Year 7 was when History really started to interest me, from learning about William the Conqueror and the battle of Hastings which is where my love for medieval history began, as I felt learning about the history of your country and how certain things came about, for example the Church of England, is really important, and not to mention thought-provoking. From there it grew, when I learnt about JFK and the different conspiracy theories, and of course World War 1 and its causes. Since then I have enjoyed watching documentaries by Simon Schama, reading books based around historical events, and especially exploring historical sites where I find history really comes alive. Taking Ancient History and Modern History A-Level was a natural choice.

sparked

For context

I have been partaking in online courses from a website called Future Learn which allows me to read articles, watch videos and join in discussions on a particular topic, with others who are also taking the course. I have completed a course run by the University of Leicester on Future Learn, on the topic of Richard III after reading Philippa Gregory's book "The White Queen" where my curiosity about Richard III and the "boys in the tower" began. I was thoroughly engrossed in her feminine perspective in a male dominated society, such as from the view of Elizabeth Woodville's who was not from a royal bloodline. So I decided to join the course where I learnt about the medieval time of Richard III, the War of the Roses, the battle of Towton, the literacy and writing at that time, the food that would have been eaten, and of course the excavation of the remains of Richard III in a Leicester car park, all of which I found very interesting. After finding that course fascinating, I decided to do another run by the Open University on World War 1, Trauma and Memory, which really opened my eyes to the social and mental effect of World War 1. From starting Ancient History A-Level, I started to have a real interest in the Roman Empire and its influence in Britain, so I am currently completing another course from Future Learn run by the head of Archaeology at the University of Newcastle which I am finding coincides with my course, whilst also adding extra interesting bits, for example how to read a tombstone of a Roman soldier. I intend to keep enrolling in course like these from universities as I find it encourages me to look at things from an aspects I have never really considered, such as the psychological effects of World War 1 on the public and the different opinions people have of Richard III.

Leicester (!)

More book

the

excited

I started to learn

I intend to undertake an EPQ mostly likely on the subject of the "boys in the tower" which I will very much enjoy researching. To explore in more detail the evidence surrounding this mystery.

I am especially enjoying some about, such as

I enjoyed reading various topics in the Turnbull books, from WW1 to JFK.

\* I hope I learnt about

March letter Jenny. Reader (despite green ink). The details are great. Make the changes/corrections.

DRAFT 3

love I enjoyed it

Jonny

History is a subject I have always found fascinating. Year 7 was when History really started to interest me. Learning about William the Conqueror and the battle of Hastings sparked my love for medieval history. Taking Ancient History and Modern History A-Level was a natural choice.

After reading Philippa Gregory's book "The White Queen" my curiosity about Richard III and the "boys in the tower" began. I was thoroughly engrossed in her feminine perspective in a male dominated society, such as from the view of Elizabeth Woodville's who, interestingly, was not from a royal bloodline. Since then, to widen my interest in History, I have enrolled in online courses from a website called Future Learn which allows Universities to run courses on numerous topics which involve you reading articles, watching videos and joining in discussions on a particular question about the topic, with others who are also taking the course from around the world. I have completed a course run by the University of Leicester on Richard III. Here I learned about the War of the Roses, the Battle of Towton, the literacy and writing at that time, the food that would have been eaten, and of course the excavation of the remains of Richard III in a Leicester carpark. Then I also took a course by the Open University on World War I, entitled Trauma and Memory - where I read of war poets like Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen which really opened my eyes to the social and mental effects of WWI. Ancient History A-Level started a keen interest in the Roman Empire and its influence in Britain, so I am currently completing another course from Future Learn run by the University of Newcastle, and I am especially enjoying some details such as how to read a tombstone of a Roman soldier.

Other subject as

Discovered the work of

Course

↑  
(History)

I enjoyed studying various topics in the Twentieth Century from WWI to JFK.

I intend to undertake an EPQ mostly likely on the subject of the "boys in the tower" to explore in more detail the evidence surrounding this mystery.

1,999 characters

Almost done! ~~The~~ Reads much better. Just needs a few tweaks.

DEAR 4

Jenny

History is a subject I have always found fascinating. Year 7 was when History really started to interest me. Learning about William the Conqueror and the battle of Hastings sparked my love for medieval history. Later, I enjoyed studying various topics in the Twentieth Century from WW1 to JFK. Taking Ancient History and Modern History A-Level was a natural choice.

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I intend to undertake an EPQ mostly likely on the subject of the "boys in the tower" to explore in more detail the evidence surrounding this mystery.

1,806 characters

Much better! Do you need any more words?  
Maybe add in another book? But reads not slow.



ST. AIDAN'S  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL





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# Extended Project Qualification



# Introduction

- What is an Extended Project?
- What does an Extended Project involve?
- What value does the Extended Project have?
- How does the Extended Project operate at St Aidan's?
- What sort of questions have been completed in the past?
- What happens next?



# What is an Extended Project?



# What is an Extended Project?

- An Extended Project will develop and extend from one or more of the learner's study areas and/or from an area of personal interest or activity outside their main programme of study. No work that is submitted for the EPQ should be submitted for any other accredited qualifications.
- It will be based on a topic chosen by the learner(s) and agreed as appropriate by the centre.
- Most students write a 5,000 word essay, though they can produce almost anything they want as long as it entails research (eg some computer software, a fashion collection, a play, something which has been made).



# What is an Extended Project?

- Delivery of the EP will involve some teaching of the necessary skills, supervision and assessment of the learner's progress.
- It will involve extended autonomous work by the learner and require a total of 120 guided learning hours.
- Students will be assigned a supervisor who will monitor the progress of the student through their EP.



# What does an Extended Project involve?



# What does an Extended Project involve?

Learners are required, with appropriate supervision, to:

- choose an area of interest
- draft a title and aims of the project for formal approval by the centre
- plan, research and carry out the project
- deliver a presentation to a specified audience
- provide evidence of all stages of project development and production for assessment



# What does an Extended Project involve?

- Initiative
- Commitment
- Organisation
- Discipline
- Enthusiasm
- Determination



# What is the value of an Extended Project?





# What is the value of an Extended Project?

- There is limited evidence that EPQ's may make a difference to university offers.
- It does however offer evidence of skills especially academic independent research so can be very useful to have as an addition to A Levels.
- An Extended Project looks impressive on a personal statement and can be a useful discussion point in interviews.



# University of Sheffield

‘We encourage students to complete an EPQ, where possible, as we value the development of skills in independent study and research, which an EPQ can offer... An EPQ in the subject that is related to the course or discipline that you wish to progress into may be taken into account by admissions tutors when making decisions between applicants of equal academic standing.’



# University of Cambridge

‘We welcome the introduction of the Extended Project and would encourage you to undertake one as it will help you develop independent study and research skills and ease the transition from school/college to higher education.’



# The Extended Project process at St Aidan's

**February/March** – introductory study skills sessions will be taught Wednesday Period 4 in the weeks students don't have RSG.

**May/June** – a day during study leave for students when they will be taught about different aspects of an EPQ eg Log book, Structure, Marking, Presentations.

**June** – students identify project titles.

**June – September** – students undertake independent research.

**September** - students will be assigned a supervisor whom they will meet on a weekly basis.

**September – February** – students will complete their EPQ.

**February – Easter** – students will present the findings of their EPQ.



# The Extended Project process at St Aidan's

- Students will apply to undertake an EPQ.
- In considering the suitability of candidates staff will look at:
  - Projected grades in relation to target grades
  - Effort grades
  - Whether any concern has been expressed regarding student performance
- Students must complete one of the two EPQ training days in May/June.



What sort of  
questions have been  
completed  
in the past?



# Past Extended Project titles

1. 'The closing of the Tethys Sea towards the end of the Eocene epoch was the main factor in causing the glaciation of Antarctica.' Discuss.
2. The Design and Manufacture of a Prototype Gown Inspired by Marie Antoinette.
3. Do Parkinson's disease patients have a preference over administration of medication?
4. How do *The Times* and *The Saturday Review* portray the first woman MP, Lady Astor, 1919-20, and how does the portrayal differ?
5. The Wet Summer Weather of 2012 in the United Kingdom: how unusual was the weather, why was there so much rainfall, and will future summers be similar?
6. A World War II Prisoner of War Camp in a rural British market town; was there an impact on the town and is there a legacy 65 years on?
7. Assess the need for and ethics of developments in joint implants.
8. To what extent has the discovery of DNA enhanced medicine?
9. How far has Keynes' theory affected economic thinking?
10. Assess the impact of stress on the immune system



# What happens next?

- Start thinking of some ideas
- Write down a list of things you're interested in
- Try turning some of them into questions
- Go to the AQA website and find the Extended Project section
- Check your school email regularly for further information