



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD



St Edmund
Hall

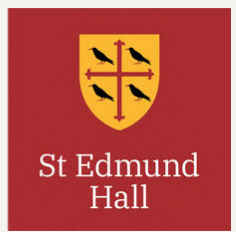
Outreach Impact Report

2022-2023



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Introduction



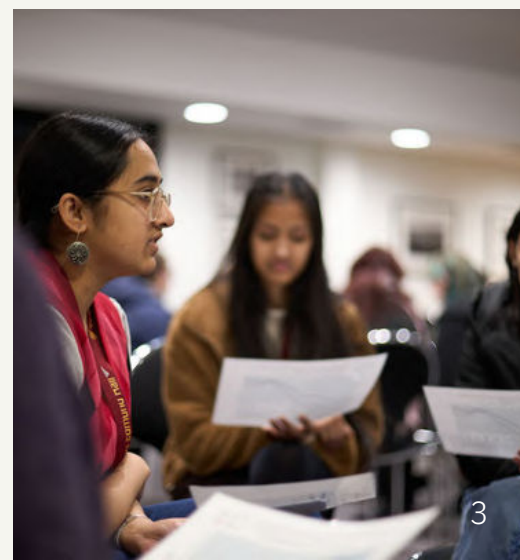
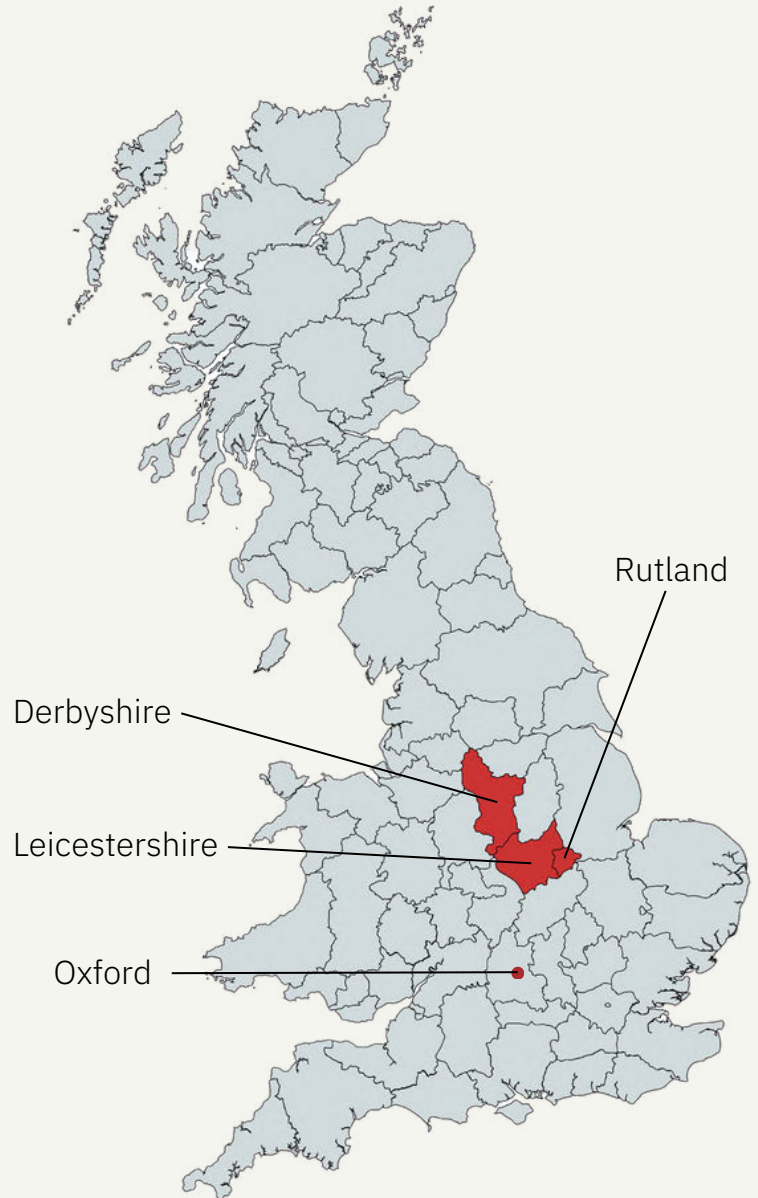
As part of the University's Regionalisation Programme, the College works primarily with state schools in Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland.

In addition, St Edmund Hall is a member of Oxford for East Midlands, a consortium in partnership with Magdalen and Lincoln colleges that affords us the opportunity to work in the wider East Midlands region.

Over the past academic year we have prioritised a number of outreach programmes and strategies:

- The launch of our flagship Unlock Oxford programme;
- The continued delivery of the Oxford NextGen programme as part of Oxford for East Midlands with Magdalen and Lincoln colleges;
- The growth of the Big Think Competition;
- Continued ad hoc support for schools across the College's link regions;
- Celebrating the work of our volunteer student ambassadors.

This report covers the period 1 September 2022 to 31 July 2023.



Unlock Oxford

Unlock Oxford is a targeted, sustained-contact outreach programme for students in Years 10 to 13 across our link regions. The programme is divided into two main strands: Urban, for schools in Derby and Leicester, and Rural, for schools in wider Derbyshire and Leicestershire.

We aim to work with bright students who may otherwise not have the expectation or tools to progress to higher education. It is important for us to consider pupils who may not be achieving the highest grades but possess the potential to excel in their academic future. As well as academic performance, participating pupils must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Live in an area of low progression to higher education (POLAR 1 & 2)
- Live in areas of relative socioeconomic deprivation (Acorn 4 & 5)
- First generation in their family to go to university
- From a BAME background
- Eligible for Free School Meals/Pupil Premium
- Have been in Local Authority Care
- Young carer

We work closely with schools to help select the best students from the programme.

Urban

The urban strand of the programme is geared towards inner-city schools in Derby and Leicester, focusing on areas with higher rates of socio-economic disadvantage and diverse ethnic communities.

In March 2023, we held three residentials for 137 students. Year 10 participants experienced an introduction to university, a student finance masterclass, interactive academic taster sessions and an informed post-16 choices workshop.

Year 12 students on the programme were introduced to Oxbridge and several aspects of the application process, as well as having the opportunity to tour the city and meet St Edmund Hall tutors.



Unlock Oxford

Urban

Analysis of attendees' pre- and post-intervention survey responses showed a significant positive impact on almost all aspects measured, including participants' understanding of university and their motivation and desire to apply to Oxford.

Rural

The rural strand of the Unlock Oxford programme has been tailored towards rural areas across Derbyshire and Leicestershire with historically lower rates of social mobility and progression to higher education.

The programme consists of a remote launch event and in-school visit in Year 10, followed by a trip to Oxford in Year 11, where participants will meet current students, experience university life, and learn about making informed A-level choices. In Year 12, we offer participants an applications workshop in-school, guiding students through the admissions process and empowering them to make a competitive application to Oxford.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, we worked with eight schools on the rural strand of the Unlock Oxford programme, reaching 176 students. In 2023-2024, we hope to expand provision to invite more schools to take part in this opportunity, establishing long-lasting links and support in some of the more disadvantaged schools in our link regions.

143

targeted students across three residential

8

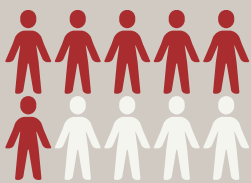
schools across inner-city Derby and Leicester

99%

of attendees met at least one measure of disadvantage

74%

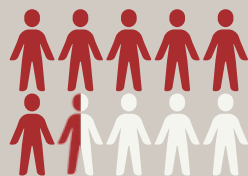
of attendees said they were likely to apply to Oxford in future



61% of attendees live in areas of socioeconomic deprivation (Acorn 4 & 5)

65%

of attendees identified as Black, Asian or another ethnic minority group



Year 10 attendees:

Year 12 attendees:

97%

found the Introduction to University and A-level Choices sessions useful

91%

felt motivated to do well in their A-levels after the residential (74% before)



121

events for the year

4270

students and parents reached

986

students visited Oxford

853

students visited in-school

681

students reached on the Outreach Roadshow

Based on a 2022 prioritisation of schools

68%

of schools we interacted with were classed as high-priority

40%

of schools in our link regions reached

47

school visits to the College

33

visits to schools

14

remote events

57

schools in our link regions reached

1400

prospective students visited during Open Days

Oxford NextGen



St Edmund Hall works with Magdalen and Lincoln colleges as part of Oxford for East Midlands, supporting schools across the broader East Midlands. Our targeted and sustained-contact outreach programme, Oxford NextGen, works with students from Year 10 to 13 in eight schools across the East Midlands.



With the programme entering its fourth year of delivery, the Outreach Team collaborated with Magdalen and Lincoln Colleges to develop a critical thinking and study skills workshop for Year 12 students on the programme, culminating in a video essay competition. Entitled *the x behind the y*, the competition offered students the chance to explore their super-curricular interests, as well as build their personal statements, win a cash prize, and receive personalised feedback from Oxford student ambassadors. We were delighted by the number and the quality of entries, with topics ranging from ‘The Philosophy behind the Multiverse’ to ‘The Quantum Mechanics behind Einstein-Rosen Bridges’.

In addition, St Edmund Hall hosted five visits to Oxford and led six visits to our partner schools across the East Midlands, working primarily in Northampton, Derby and Leicester.

“Thank you again for looking after our students so well when we visited you. We have captured some wonderful feedback from the visit. Students really enjoyed the sessions, found them useful and interesting and also, most importantly, really made them think they could apply to Oxford.”
– State school teacher,
Derbyshire



The Big Think Competition



Launched in 2022, St Edmund Hall's Big Think Competition invites students across the UK to engage with Oxbridge-style study, explore their super-curricular interests, and develop their personal statements.

57%

increase in number of entries between 2022 and 2023

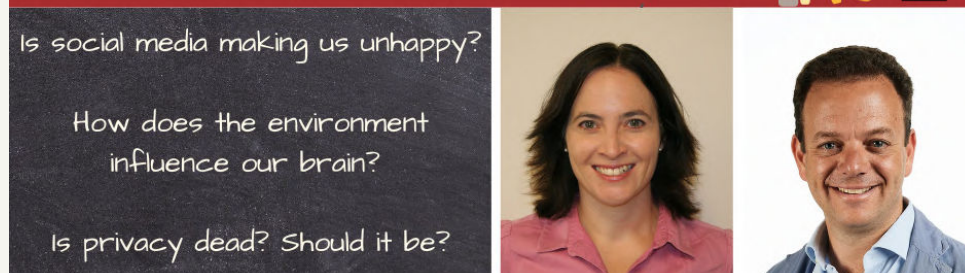
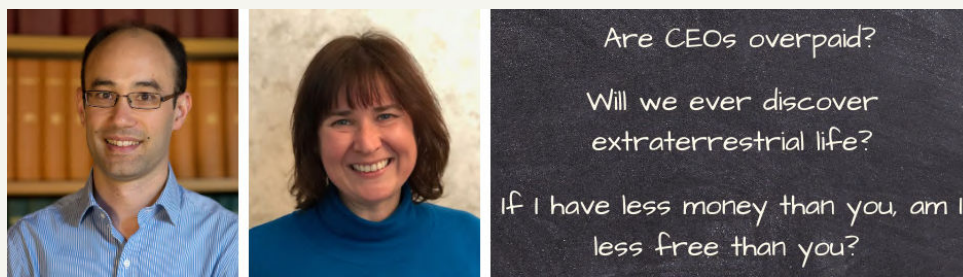
14

tutorial-style questions set by College tutors

20%

of entries were from our link regions

Open to state school students in Years 11 to 13, the competition invites students to answer one of our academics' 'big' tutorial-style questions in a five-minute video essay. Fourteen tutors at St Edmund Hall generously gave up their time to design a thought-provoking question and mark entries, with prompts ranging from 'Is privacy dead?' to 'How can we retrieve the ideas of people who left no written records?'.



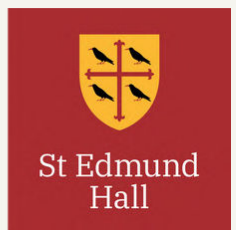
"Thanks again for the great day yesterday. I'm definitely going to apply for Oxford now after seeing the College and talking to the tutor."

– Competition Winner

In 2023, the Big Think Competition had 85 entries, an increase of 57% on its launch year. With fourteen subjects on offer, this was also an increase on 2022's ten subjects offered. We were delighted to see that of the entrants, approximately 20% were from our link regions of Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Rutland.

A Prizewinners' Day for winners of the competition was held in June 2023, with both tutors and winners in attendance. Looking forward to next year's competition, we introduced a new reminder option for the competition on the College website, allowing potential participants to receive an update when the 2024 iteration of the competition launches.

Interactions



Visits to St Edmund Hall

In 2022-2023, we hosted 47 visits to St Edmund Hall for schools and colleges in our link regions. With each school who visits receiving a programme of sessions tailored to their needs, groups from Year 6 to Year 12 have benefitted from first-hand experience of Oxford. Several schools received a hands-on academic workshop as part of their visit, with some others visiting one of the University museums. Year 11 groups were able to hear a university's perspective on A-level choices, helping students make informed decisions. All Year 12 groups who visited participated in an interactive application workshop, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to make a competitive application to Oxford in the future.

Inbound School Visit Itinerary

- Welcome and Introductions
- Oxford Explained Talk
- College Tour
- Q&A with Student Ambassadors
- Lunch
- Taster activity
 - museum visit
 - department visit
 - hands-on academic workshop
 - application masterclass



Visits to Schools

This year, we ran 33 visits to schools in Leicestershire and Derbyshire to speak on a number of topics, including introductions to university and Oxbridge, student finance, informed A-level choices, interviews and more.

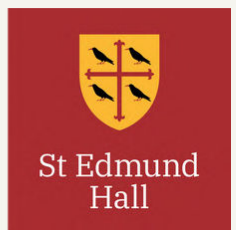
Outreach Roadshow

Every September, the Outreach Team travels to schools in our link regions for a week with student ambassadors in tow, bringing a little bit of Oxford to schools and colleges less able to make a day visit to the College. In September 2022, we visited ten schools across Leicestershire and Derbyshire, interacting with 681 students from Year 10 to Year 13.

Remote Events

The Outreach Team ran 14 online events this year, including interview and admissions workshops, online programme launches for Unlock Oxford Rural participants, parents and carers events for both the Unlock Oxford and NextGen programmes, and a 'Meet the College' event for Opportunity Oxford offer-holders.

Student Ambassadors



Student ambassadors are an integral part of the outreach work carried out at St Edmund Hall, providing friendly positive role models for pupils, and supporting key outreach events.



Giving students a relatable experience of Oxford, student ambassadors lead tours of the College and run Q&A sessions as part of inbound school visits.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, 23 new ambassadors were recruited, totalling 84 ambassadors for the academic year. Of these 84 ambassadors, 13 (15%) contributed more than five hours over the academic year. In total, approximately 211 hours of volunteer time were contributed by St Edmund Hall student ambassadors.

In May 2023, the first Student Ambassador Formal took place, with key members of the College Office and 19 of the most engaged student ambassadors in attendance. This key event allowed us to celebrate ambassadors' achievements as well as thank ambassadors for the time they volunteered over the course of the year.

84

trained student ambassadors

15%

of ambassadors volunteered more than five hours of their time

211

hours of volunteer time contributed by students

“Once again, thank you for putting such a useful programme together, it was greatly appreciated and makes a real difference to some of our students (several of whom hadn't been out of Leicester before). Please pass our thanks onto your student ambassadors – their enthusiasm and knowledge was expertly conveyed and made the visit all the more useful.”
– State school teacher, Leicester

Online Engagement

The Outreach Team strive to deliver innovative and engaging online content alongside face-to-face interaction, providing information to young people, their families and their teachers.

In particular, our email newsletter for teachers allows another point of contact between schools and the Outreach Team, empowering teachers to engage with both the College and the wider University. The newsletters signpost key admissions information, offer invitations to events run by the Outreach Team to schools, as well as share outreach opportunities from across the University with schools.

This year, mindful of the time pressures on teachers, we introduced two subscription choices for our newsletter: a streamlined edition containing only key information, or an expanded edition containing details of all available Oxford-based opportunities for schools.

A huge thank you to the Hall's Communications Manager, Claire, for her insights and work on the below.



Images from the 'Why Apply to Teddy Hall: A Student's View' video.



Project

Details

Videos

- 2022 saw the release of two new outreach-focused videos on the St Edmund Hall YouTube Channel: 'Why Apply to Teddy Hall: A Student's View' and a student-tutor interview video.
- In June 2023, we filmed an additional video, a tour of St Edmund Hall led by two student ambassadors, which was released in September 2023.

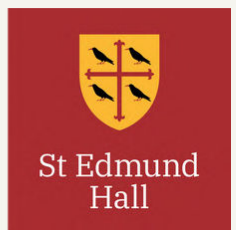
Outreach Twitter

- Showcasing our work with schools, signposting key admissions information and connecting more informally with schools, the platform has proved a valuable resource in making our work more transparent to both the public and the wider St Edmund Hall community.

Email newsletters

- 10% increase in teacher subscribers
- Additional Year 11 newsletter to support Year 10 Unlock Oxford attendees

Future Directions



The Outreach Team's main priorities for the upcoming academic year, 2023-2024, are as follows:

1

Analysing the most recent data, the Outreach Team will update existing school records with the aim of reprioritising schools throughout the 2023-2024 academic year.

With a focus on data and evaluation, we prioritise working with schools in our link region who most need our help. Recursive analysis allows us to ensure that we direct our efforts as efficiently as possible.

2

The Unlock Oxford Urban programme will be marketed to additional high-priority schools to increase the reach of this opportunity across the cities of Leicester and Derby.

Being mindful to balance the number of places for students per school, we hope to increase the number of schools offered a residential opportunity in both Leicester and Derby.

3

We aim to offer the Unlock Oxford Rural programme to more high-priority schools with the objective of doubling the number of schools on the programme by July 2024.

Whilst the Unlock Oxford Rural programme was originally devised for students in rural areas, its value within suburban areas quickly became apparent. By working closely with teachers in our link regions, we plan to introduce more flexibility into the programme, allowing it to be adapted for a wider range of schools and their individual needs.

4

Ongoing work and consultation will be carried out in schools in more rural areas to support teachers and students, developing digital outreach as effectively as possible.

Whilst remote and online interventions proved valuable during the pandemic, we are careful in their use given the prevalence of 'screen fatigue' and the reported limited impact of online events. We aim to continue to explore the value of remote interventions for schools, particularly those in our link regions who may experience difficulties in visiting Oxford.

Acknowledgements

The outreach work that takes place at St Edmund Hall would not be possible without the support of many individuals. A huge thank you to the teachers, staff and students at the many schools with whom we work.

Thank you also to all the tutors and fellows at St Edmund Hall, especially those who have generously given their time to deliver taster sessions, join tutor panels and contribute to the Big Think Competition.

We would also like to thank our Student Ambassadors, as well as key staff including Sue, Belinda, Molly, Craig, Alice and Melody. Thank you also to the Library, the Lodge, the Seryery, the Kitchen, and the Housekeeping and Maintenance teams for all their work helping make school visits happen.

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