



KEBLE ACCESS AND ADMISSIONS 2024

This is our sixth annual report on our access and outreach activity in academic year 2022-23, as well as undergraduate admissions in the last round, December 2023.

Highlights:

- **We welcomed our first four students on the new Astrophia Foundation Year**
- **With the appointment of a College Digital Communications Officer we were able to considerably increase our presence on social media**
- **Over 2,200 students from state schools visited the College on organised tours**
- **Our subject taster days had a clear impact on admissions, including from under-represented groups**

Access and Outreach Goals

We aim to admit students with the potential for academic excellence from the widest possible range of places and backgrounds. Our access and outreach activities are designed to find people who will thrive in the College and to support them in making competitive applications. We focus particularly on encouraging applicants from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented parts of the country, by helping to raise attainment in schools and assisting students with decision-making and the application process. There's also work to support students from under-represented environments once they are on course, both financially and academically. We are also active in enhancing student diversity by, for example, encouraging the flow of BME applicants or encouraging women to apply to STEM subjects, where they are generally under-represented.

We try to achieve these goals by a broad mix of activities in Oxford and in our link local authorities in the West Midlands. We invite groups from around 200 schools to visit the College and meet our students, and we hold events for schools, teachers, parents/careers in the region itself. As well as working with our colleagues in other colleges and in the University, we partner with other organisations interested in access and widening participation, some of which you can read about below.

The table below summarises our goals and how we are trying to achieve them. Many of our activities are aimed at more than one goal.

Goals	Activities
1. To admit more students from socio-economically disadvantaged and/or under-represented areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Visits • Virtual sessions and webinar • Digital Outreach • Subject Taster Days at Keble • The Ambassador Platform • Partnership with the Brilliant Club • Opportunity Oxford • Open Days (specifically offer holder events) • Support UNIQ residential summer schools • Focus on Data and Evaluation
2. To strengthen our presence in our Link Region in the West Midlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with the Access Project • Virtual events for teachers and for parents/carers • Work with other Oxford colleges as part of the West Midlands Consortium • Work closely with teachers to understand schools' needs
3. To increase the flow of BME candidates at Keble	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with Target Oxbridge • Partnership with the Brilliant Club • Subject Taster Days at Keble
4. To increase the numbers of women applying for STEM subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with Departments • Support UNIQ • Subject Taster Days at Keble

Our activities are carefully targeted. The two main criteria for deciding which schools to work with and which students to invite to our events are geodemographic measures: (i) ACORN is a classification of an area's socio-economic profile; (ii) POLAR is based on the level of progression to Higher Education in an area. But we also fine-tune these general metrics to take account of individuals' circumstances for example, time spent in care, free school meals, and first-generation applicants. We also consider other intersecting factors of disadvantage, such as ethnicity (BME), as well as gender in terms of underrepresentation in STEM, and try to target participating students accordingly.

Our outreach and access activities are designed to enable students to make good, informed decisions about their future and to encourage them to aim high. By providing support and guidance on the admissions process, or by holding subject taster days, we also try to enable students to make the best applications they can. If that leads to an offer at Keble we are understandably pleased, but we also encourage students to apply to whatever course, college, or University they think suits them best. Keble is only one college at Oxford, and we cooperate with our colleagues across the University to achieve our common goals.

Access and Outreach Activities 2022-23

School Visits

School visits typically take place during term time and enable state schools and colleges from our link region in the West Midlands to visit college. School visits are offered for Years 7-12, with age-specific material adapted and used for each event. All visit programmes involved an information and guidance session with a focus on demystifying Oxford, an opportunity to tour the college and meet with student ambassadors, and lunch in the dining hall. Depending on a school's preferences or needs, the rest of a programme might contain visits to museums or additional colleges; sessions focused on the admissions process (e.g. interview skills); or subject taster sessions facilitated by Keble graduate students (recruited through the MCR volunteer scheme). In 2022-23 we hosted 53 full-day visits for state schools, as well as college tours for students attending events at other colleges, with a total 2273 school students visiting Keble. Demand for these visits remains incredibly high and our calendar is consistently full.

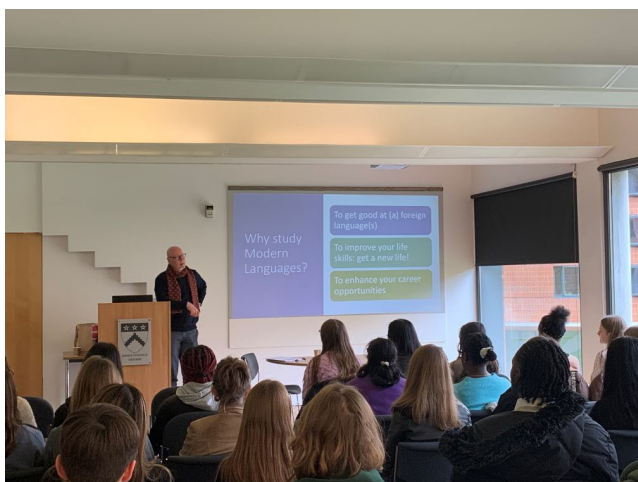
Each Oxford college is [linked to a Local Authority](#) to ensure that all schools have a first point of contact within the University. Keble is linked with **Birmingham, Sandwell, Solihull, Coventry, and Warwickshire**. We are also pleased to be working with Oriel and University Colleges as part of [Oxford for West Midlands](#).

Subject Taster Days at Keble

In 2022 Keble launched a programme of Subject Taster Days for Year 12 students. These are designed to help students make strong applications by learning more about a particular subject offered at Keble. They are hosted in collaboration with Keble tutors and usually with the assistance of the relevant departments.

Of the students who attended four subject taster days in 2022 and 2023 48% and 29% respectively applied to Oxford. There was a noticeable 'Keble effect', with Keble being first-choice college for 22 out of 65 applicants to Oxford in 2022, and 12 out of 47 in 2023. Of those who applied, 13 and 8 respectively received offers from Oxford colleges. Three and 2

respectively were made offers at Keble. The Subject Taster Day offer rates were similar to the University average offer rate (1/5), but offer rates to students with disadvantage factors were higher than average. According to a UCAS Strobe analysis about overall University destinations, of the 135 students who attended the Keble Subject Taster Days in 2022, 115 applied to higher tariff Universities, and 110 were made offers by higher tariff Universities; this is significantly higher offer rate compared to a socio-demographically similar control group.



Subject taster day presentation

Partnerships

Keble has continued existing partnerships and embarked upon new ones, looking to strengthen its presence in the West Midlands and to attain access and outreach goals.

The Brilliant Club

The Brilliant Club mobilises the PhD community to share its expertise with state schools that most need help. Keble has partnered with the Brilliant Club and has welcomed 600 students on school trips from 2018-2022. According to a UCAS Strobe evaluation, these students are more likely to apply to Oxford or Cambridge than the control group. In 2022-2023, 261 Scholars Programme students from 24 schools were welcomed by Keble College for their Launch or Graduation event. Of all students attending a trip, 83% were Brilliant Club target students. The feedback from Launch events, in particular, was very positive, with 95% of students enjoying their visit to the university (compared to 88% nationally). Students studying with a University of Oxford researcher made strong progress across academic competencies – an 18-point average increase in subject knowledge, critical thinking and written communication, all exceeding national averages.

The Access Project

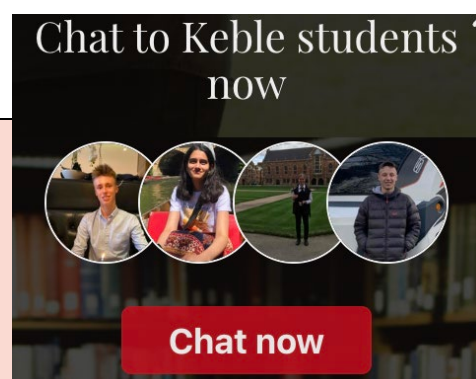
The Access Project (TAP) is grounded in the local community and is part of Keble's widening participation efforts in the West Midlands. The aim of the partnership is to enhance

students' academic performance in schools that most need help, and to assist students in making successful applications and transitions to University. TAP offers one-to-one tuition to students by volunteer tutors, as well as mentoring in school and enrichment activities through a dedicated team of school-based Access officers. Keble partnered with TAP in 2018 by supporting the programme at Colmers School in Rednal, then continued with the recruitment of Waverley school in Birmingham in 2021. Both schools face significant adversity. As of January 2024, 44.9% of pupils at Colmers School are eligible for Free School Meals, almost double the national average of 23.8%. At Waverley School this number is 42.9%. In 2022-23 the 40 students enrolled at Colmers were offered 773 tutorial hours by volunteer tutors, and the 37 at Waverley 563 tutorial hours. Of those, 247 were delivered by Keble alumni. In 21/22 and 22/23, the majority of students at Colmers secured places at universities local to Birmingham - at Coventry, Wolverhampton, Aston and Birmingham City, which reflects the issues of cost-of-living, as well as cultural expectations of the students. Like Colmers, the majority of students at Waverley secured places at universities local to Birmingham in 2022 and 2023. Out of the 17 students that applied to top third universities in 2022-23, 8 were made offers, with 2 accepting them.



Keble at Large

Keble at Large (KAL) is our society of student volunteers that actively contributes to all the activities listed in this report. It is set up to bust myths about Oxford, encourage people from underrepresented backgrounds to apply, and offer students practical advice for admissions. Apart from facilitating school tours and workshops for state school students, usually from our link region of Birmingham and the West Midlands, KAL volunteers connect with students through a variety of outreach channels. Via the [KAL Instagram](#) (1,800 followers), students have done takeovers, giving insight into what life is like on their degree and answering any questions that prospective applicants may have. KAL volunteers also enhance our [Keble Outreach YouTube channel](#) with student-produced videos offering interviews advice in different subjects, footage of college accommodation, and a student-led perspective of life at Keble (54,000 views).



Pop-up window on the Keble website, which enables school students to chat with current Keble at Large Ambassadors.

Target Oxbridge

Target Oxbridge works with school students of mixed or sole black African and Caribbean heritage to increase their chances of getting into Oxbridge. Since 2022 Keble has officially partnered with Target Oxbridge, offering financial support for 3 places on the programme each year, as well as offering rooms and facilities for events. Over the past five years, the programme has helped an increasing number of black students and students of mixed race with black heritage get to Oxford. Out of the 160 Target Oxbridge students, 86 applied to Oxford for 2023 entry. 53 were interviewed and 26 received offers, resulting in a success rate of 30% for Target Oxbridge's Oxford applicants (the results for Cambridge were similar). One placed at Keble to read Maths and Computer Science. 72% of these offer holders have two or more Oxbridge access flags.

The Ambassador Platform

The Ambassador Platform is an online forum where prospective students can speak confidentially to current Keble students from similar backgrounds. The platform is moderated by members of the access and outreach team. Applicants can either 'chat' with individual students or take part in live Q & A events. Indicatively, from 1 January 2023 to 1 January 2024, 102 new accounts were created on the platform. Of those prospects, 28 applied to Oxford, of which 25 were UK domiciled. 10 put down Keble as their first-choice college. 5 students were made offers from various colleges, including Keble. While the access profile of the applicants was notable, the access profile of the students to whom offers were made was not.

Digital Outreach

With the addition of a Digital Communications Officer in March 2023, we were able to start posting more regularly across existing Keble social media channels, with an Access and Outreach focus to the content on Instagram and TikTok (added in June 2023). This resulted in steady growth in followers and engagement levels. We have also created a series of new long format A&O videos on the College YouTube channel, including "Unlocking Oxford: Explaining the Oxford Collegiate System", "What does it take to be 'The Ideal Oxford Student'?", "Oxford Interview Top Tips", "Why Oxford?", "A Guide to Oxford Open Days" and "What to expect when visiting Colleges on an Oxford Open Day", all available via this playlist: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYBX0ZLtKkOL9QndfOCmTBHiwhf5QgTuY>

The table below shows our progress to October 2023.

Social Media Channel	Followers as of January 23	Followers as of Oct 23	New followers (Mar-Oct)	Number of posts (Mar-Oct)	Other notable analytics
TikTok	0	491	+491	70 posts	4500 likes
Instagram	2,939	4,713	+1,774	111 posts, 319 story posts	100x increase in page reach. 50x increase in engagement.
YouTube	153	263	+110 subscribers	5 videos and 46 'shorts' posted	+5,000 views in 6 months

Some top performing Access and Outreach posts have included:

- Instagram: [‘Foteini common misconceptions about Oxford video’](#) (86K views)
- Instagram: [Oxford Open Day at Keble video](#) (20k)
- YouTube [‘What does it take to be the ideal Oxford student?’](#) (1.2k views)

Virtual Sessions and Webinars

In 2022-23, 2042 state school students engaged with our virtual school sessions and webinar series for schools. We host these on our own, but also in collaboration with Oriol and University Colleges (the Oxford for West Midlands Consortium) and Cambridge colleges linked to the same region. These range from general sessions about Oxbridge/University, to more specialised sessions offering a comprehensive guide to Oxbridge and its admissions process for sixth form students. In 2023 we ran a virtual teachers’ conference, which was targeted at, but not limited to, teachers in this area. Resources have been recorded and are kept on file for future use by the schools we work with. Keble also participated in University-wide virtual initiatives, such as the Opportunity Oxford Welcome Day event in 2023.

During the summer term, we offered a series of Admissions Webinars open to state school students from all areas, including information and guidance on preparing for admissions tests and interviews; introducing the college and tutorial systems; Q&As. A separate session was hosted for parents, carers and supporters. These webinars received more than 800 registrations from across the UK. Feedback for these sessions was very positive and meant that demand for similar sessions from schools in our link areas could be managed efficiently during a busy term which saw the return of school visits and Subject Taster Days. We keep

in touch with schools and interested audiences through updates posted regular on our [Outreach Twitter account](#).

Open days

The college welcomed more than 2700 visitors over three open days. A large team of student ambassadors, recruited principally from Keble at Large, gave hundreds of tours and answered even more questions to prospective applicants, their families and supporters. The college holds an Offer Holder event as part of the first summer Open Day, which enables them to take advantage of the Open Day programme (view accommodation, etc). We also held tutor panels (STEM & Humanities/Social Sciences) on both the summer and autumn Open Day where visitors had the opportunity to ask tutor subject-specific questions; these run parallel to a parent/carer session.

UNIQ

UNIQ is the University of Oxford's access programme for UK state school students. Priority is given to students with good grades from backgrounds that are under-represented at Oxford and other universities. Every year more students from diverse backgrounds get offered places at Oxford with help from UNIQ. Like most other colleges, Keble supports UNIQ's efforts by offering subsidised accommodation, meals, and facilities for their popular Yr 12 summer schools (50% discount). In 2023, Keble offered the above for a week of activities in college.

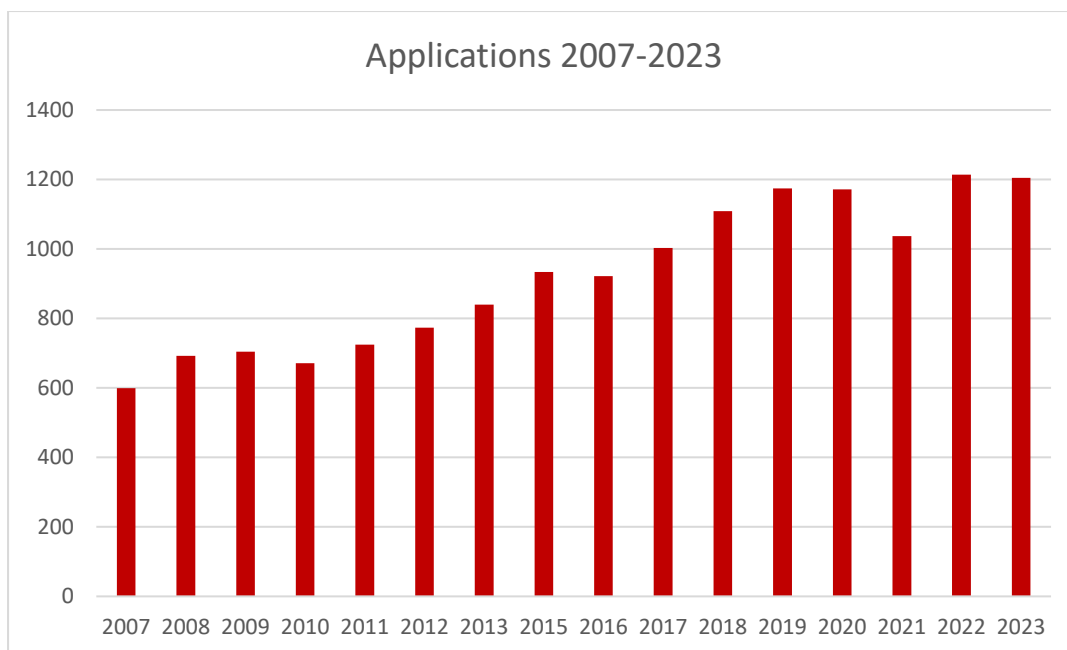
UNIQ+

[UNIQ+](#) is the University's Access programme for postgraduate students. It is aimed at talented undergraduates from under-represented groups, who would find continuing into postgraduate study a challenge for reasons other than their academic ability. Keble supported UNIQ+ in 2023 by offering subsidised accommodation for their residential programme at the HB Allen Centre.

Applications and Admissions December 2023

Applications

In the December 2023 admissions round there were 1205 individual applications to Keble, slightly down on the previous year (as they were for the whole University) but still high by recent standards.



Applications to Keble alone have doubled in the period 2007-2023 and it has become increasingly impractical to interview everyone who applies. We shortlist applicants for interview according to criteria agreed across the colleges for each subject and there are marked variations in the proportion of applicants who are shortlisted. In 2023 43% of applicants were shortlisted (up from 38% the year before). A very large number of applicants, the vast majority of whom have achieved and/or are predicted to achieve top grades in their school exams, were therefore disappointed. Of those who applied to us, 16% were made offers at Keble or another college. We ourselves made 140 offers, including one for entry in 2025.

Because some subjects received many more applicants per place than others, and because some (now most) make use of pre-interview tests, the exact criteria for shortlisting vary. At least for UK applicants, tutors are able to make use to an increasing amount of contextual information, about individual candidates, the areas they come from, and their relative school performance, to inform their decisions. More information on how we use contextual data can be found [here](#) on the University's website. More context for this process can be found in the University's [Access and Participation Plan](#).

Although some subjects are more popular than others in terms of their applications, we always encourage prospective applicants to go for what really interests them. We think they will do best in studying that way.

Admissions

The University (and therefore by extension the colleges) have agreed an [Access and Participation Plan](#) with the Office for Students.

Part of this plan ('participation') is about improving the performance of key groups while on course, notably by reducing or eliminating gaps in attainment. Part concerns access, how Oxford is going to address its well-known inequalities in admissions. A key element of this plan is the setting of new and more demanding targets for admitting students from areas of lower participation in higher education (POLAR4) and/or socio-economic disadvantage (ACORN), as well as from under-represented groups. The three main targets are:

- Target 1: to reduce the gap in participation rates for disadvantaged students (ACORN) to 3:1 by 2024-25.
- Target 2: to reduce the gap in participation rates for under-represented students (POLAR4) to 8:1 by 2024-25.
- Target 3: to eliminate the gap in offer rates for Asian applicants by 2021-22.

The University publishes an annual [Admissions Statistical Report](#) which is accessible from its website. This report contains statistics about socio-economic disadvantage, gender and ethnicity, and school type for each subject and college. These figures are retrospective and they concern 'accepts', i.e. students who take up their places at the start of the year, rather than 'offers', i.e. students to whom offers have been made. The figures are presented as three-year rolling averages, which evens out some of the normal annual variation.

The following sections report on Keble's performance on some of the key access measures, with a focus on the most recent admissions round (which is not included in the University's report).

Socio-economic disadvantage

The access targets agreed across the University are expressed as ratios between the most and least advantaged or represented quintiles of POLAR and ACORN classifications. The lower the ratio, the closer the College or University is to the target.

In the tables below the years are the year of main entry of that cohort, i.e. 2024 refers to applicants who were interviewed in December 2023 and made offers in January 2024. The targets refer to arrivals (students accepted) but the figures in the table are for offers. Not all offer-holders meet the conditions of their offer and a few of those that do nonetheless decline their offer, so there will always be slight differences between the two measures.

Year	ACORN Target accepts	Keble offers	Oxford offers
2020	4.7:1	2.5:1	2.9:1
2021	4.3:1	2.9:1	2.7:1
2022	3.7:1	3.7:1	2.6:1
2023	3.3:1	2.9:1	2.9:1
2024	3.0:1	6.1:1	2.9:1

Year	POLAR target accepts	Keble offers	Oxford offers
2020	14.5:1	7.9:1	7.6:1
2021	13.1:1	7.5:1	6.3:1
2022	10.8:1	5.8:1	6.0:1
2023	9.4:1	7.7:1	7.9:1
2024	8.1:1	11.4:1	8.3:1

As far as Keble is concerned, we started off in a strong position in 2019 and made progress in the right direction but at a rate lower than intended. In the last round, there was a reversal of the trends on both counts. In part, this was because we targeted more offers at, for example, applicants who qualified for Free School Meals but who did not match the POLAR and ACORN measures. Although it is difficult to assess trends based on relatively small numbers over just four year, nonetheless we recognise that this prompts us to avoid complacency and maintain our access and outreach efforts.

Ten offers were made under the University's [Opportunity Oxford programme](#), which was the highest number for Keble. In addition, a further 7 standard offers were made to candidates flagged as Opportunity Oxford.

School type

Although none of the University's access targets refer to the type of school applicants attend, i.e. state or independent, there is, understandably, intense public scrutiny in this measure as a proxy for inequality. The greater availability of contextual data, for example on whether applicants qualify for free school meals or have been in care, makes it less and less meaningful to use such proxies.

Of offers made to applicants from the UK in the most recent round, 69 per cent were to students from state schools. This was above the level of the previous year (65%) but not as high as in some earlier years. The admissions data we get do not enable us to fully distinguish between selective and non-selective state schools.

Other data

In the 2023 admission round: 47% of offers were to female applicants (compared to 41% of applications); 11% were to applicants who reported some kind of disability (13% of applicants); 80% were to Home (UK) students (75% of applications). Detailed figures by ethnicity are published in the [University's annual report on admissions data](#). In the most recent completed round for which data are available (admission in 2019-2021), 28.9% of accepts were classified as BME.

Foundation Oxford



Keble is one of nine colleges making offers to students in the University's inaugural Astrophoria Foundation Year programme. Four of the 35 offers made for 23-24 entry were at Keble, in PPE, Law, English, and History. In total, there were 553 UK applications for places across the colleges.

The Astrophoria Foundation Year is a one-year fully-funded foundation programme for UK state school students with significant academic potential, who have experienced severe personal disadvantage and/or disrupted education which has resulted in them being unable to apply directly for an Oxford undergraduate degree programme.

The entry requirements for the courses are lower than those for an undergraduate course at Oxford – for example, where a subject requires AAA for a prospective undergraduate, Foundation Year students would need to achieve BBB. Students who pass their Foundation Year course at the required level will have the opportunity to progress onto the first year of their chosen undergraduate degree without the need to reapply.

Participants will study in one of four programme streams (Classics, History, English and Theology; Chemistry, Engineering and Materials Science; Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE); and Law). During the Foundation Year, they will be taught centrally by teams of tutors appointed to the four courses. In their 'Year 0', the Foundation Year students will live in Keble, be members of the JCR, and join in with all the activities and opportunities open to other undergraduates. They will receive free tuition and accommodation, as well as a bursary to help with living costs.

Keble Senior Tutor, Ali Rogers, said: "Taking part in the Astrophoria Foundation Year enables us to add another dimension to our efforts to open up the University's opportunities to individuals with the potential to succeed but who have encountered challenging circumstances."

Other participating colleges include: Exeter, Jesus, Lady Margaret Hall, Mansfield, Somerville, St Anne's, Trinity, and Wadham.