



# INTRODUCTION: SHADOWING SCHEME MENTORING



2024

## WHAT IS THE SHADOWING SCHEME?

The Shadowing Scheme is Cambridge SU's flagship Access Scheme, and is one of the UK's longest running student-led access residentials. It is aimed towards state-educated Year 12 students in England & Wales, S5 in Scotland, and Year 13 in Northern Ireland, who are on track to achieve highly in their A-Levels or Advanced Highers. The Scheme prioritises applicants who are under-represented at Cambridge, such as those who are eligible for free school meals, or have been/are in local authority care.

The Scheme aims to demystify some of the myths and misconceptions surrounding life at Cambridge, should they choose to study here, as well as developing an understanding of University admissions. During the Scheme, prospective students (who are referred to as 'Shadows') are paired with a current undergraduate (their 'Mentor') studying a subject they are interested in.

### Residential Scheme

The residential takes place over three days from Sunday afternoon to Tuesday morning and repeats over three weeks. Each week there is a different group of Shadows. Mentors may volunteer for one or two weeks of mentoring and this year's dates are:

- 28-30 January
- 4-6 February
- 11-13 February

During the Scheme, Mentors are responsible for accompanying their Shadow around Cambridge and showing them a slice of your life at University. This includes taking them to your contact hours, eating with them in College and dropping them off at SU events. Mentors will be a Shadow's primary insight into Cambridge life, answering questions honestly and providing information that they wished they had known as an applicant.

### Online Mentoring

Mentors can contact their Shadows before, during and after the residential via a secure online platform called MentorNet. This is a moderated platform so that any inappropriate language is flagged to SU moderators. Mentors are expected to talk to their Shadows before the residential to get to know each other, and after the residential to help out with any queries they may have about University applications.

# BECOMING A MENTOR

## Why You Should Mentor for the Shadowing Scheme

- All students who sign up will get a free enhanced DBS check and certificated safeguarding training based on NSPCC guidance
- Mentoring looks great on a CV!
- You will connect with a prospective student over shared interests
- You can share what you wish you known and guide a student's application to University
- All Mentors receive a little gift from your SU to say thank you!

## What is Expected of Shadowing Scheme Mentors?

All Shadows are under-18, therefore they are legally children. All Mentors must abide by the [Mentor Code of Conduct](#). Being a Mentor is a voluntary commitment for approximately 2 full days during Lent term.

- Attend mandatory safeguarding training and follow the Code of Conduct
- After 5pm, accompany your Shadow **at all times** when they are not in a supervised event or with another Mentor or Access Officer
- Take your Shadow to your contact hours (when allowed) and include them in your daily teaching
- Introduce them to your life in Cambridge, introducing them to friends and taking them to events and activities
- Be honest about about your experiences of applying to and being at Cambridge

## What Support is There for Mentors?

The Shadowing Scheme has been running for over 20 years. The SU has a full-time member of staff who organises the Scheme within a wider team of ten people dedicated to looking after all our participants. This includes the Activities Team who support the events and logistics of the Scheme, and the Safeguarding Leads who are on call 24/7 throughout the residential.

All Mentors receive a full Mentor Guide with a timetable, advice and expectations for the residential. Mentors in your College are coordinated by your JCR Access Officer who will receive extra training for this. During your own training session, you can ask any questions you might have. Most importantly, you can email [access@cambridgesu.co.uk](mailto:access@cambridgesu.co.uk) at any time or pop into the SU on the Third Floor of the University Centre to talk to a team member.

You can sign-up here: [www.cambridgesu.co.uk/surveys/mentorapply24](http://www.cambridgesu.co.uk/surveys/mentorapply24)

**Deadline: 19th October 2023**