



SHADOWING  
SCHEME 2026

# INTRODUCTION TO SHADOWING SCHEME MENTORING



[CAMBRIDGESU.CO.UK/SURVEYS/MENTORAPPLY26](https://www.cambridgesu.co.uk/surveys/mentorapply26)

# WHAT IS THE SHADOWING SCHEME?

The Cambridge SU Shadowing Scheme is a free university access scheme that gives students in Year 12 (or other UK equivalents) the unique opportunity to 'shadow' an undergraduate mentor during a three day residential. Shadows are selected based on both academic and widening participation criteria - they will be on track to make competitive University applications, but will benefit greatly from the insight and support that the Scheme provides. Mentors are particularly crucial to this, and make a transformative difference to Shadows!

During the Scheme, Shadows will stay in College accommodation, attend lectures, take part in a range of events and activities, and get advice on applying to Cambridge from staff and students. Using a secure, moderated online platform, participants can also stay in contact with their Mentor after the Scheme, receiving ongoing support in order to help them make well-informed, successful University applications.

The residential aspect of the scheme will last for three days. The dates for the 2026 Scheme are:

- 25th-27th January 2026
- 1st-3rd February 2026
- 8th-10th February 2026

You won't have to do all three weekends in order to sign up - most people do just one!

Deadline: 20<sup>th</sup> October 2025

After this date, the names of those who have signed up will be passed on to Colleges for the Senior Tutor's approval, and successful applicants will be invited by the SU to complete mandatory training and a DBS check.



**CONTACT US HERE: [SHADOWINGSCHEME@CAMBRIDGESU.CO.UK](mailto:SHADOWINGSCHEME@CAMBRIDGESU.CO.UK)**

# INTRODUCTION TO MENTORING

## Why should you mentor for the Shadowing Scheme?

- All Mentors will get a free enhanced DBS check and 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 knew and guide a student's application to
- University
- All Mentors receive a little gift from your SU to say thank you!

## What is expected for Shadowing Scheme Mentors?

- Attend mandatory safeguarding training and follow the Code of Conduct (included in the application form)
- 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 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 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 [shadowingscheme@cambridgesu.co.uk](mailto:shadowingscheme@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.



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