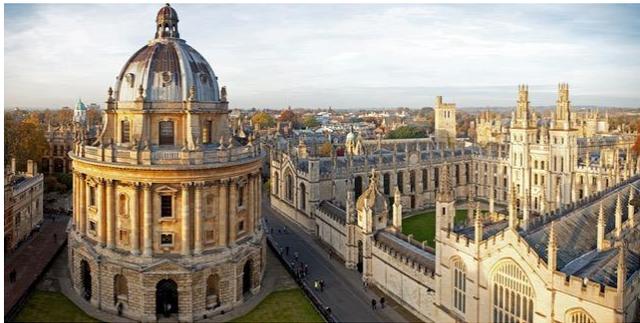


## OXBRIDGE

(\* - see vocabulary, below)



Oxford



Cambridge

The British cities of Oxford and Cambridge are famous for their universities, both ranking\* among\* the best in the world. Students from all over\* the United Kingdom and all over the world dream to study there, or at least to visit these places some day.

The Oxford dictionary defines the noun ‘Oxbridge’ as: ‘Oxford and Cambridge universities regarded\* together.’ The Cambridge dictionary also recognises the existence of ‘Oxbridge’ as an adjective meaning: ‘belonging\* or relating\* to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.’

So the word Oxbridge is a portmanteau\* of the names Oxford and Cambridge, used to designate the two oldest and most prestigious universities in the UK and their students, distinguishing them from all of the other British universities.

Oxbridge refers to the shared characteristics\* of the two universities: they are the two oldest universities in the UK, and they have the same institutions and facilities\* on their campuses. Oxford and Cambridge have an identical collegiate\* structure, they both have publishing houses\* (the Oxford University Press and the Cambridge University Press), as well as museums, botanical gardens, debating societies\*, and even renowned comedy groups.

Oxford and Cambridge are widely\* regarded as elite places, welcoming students of high social and intellectual status. This vision of Oxbridge led to a pejorative use of the term: you can talk about Oxbridge to criticise the fact that the British political and cultural establishment\* comes from both places. The perception of Oxbridge as an elitist place has been reinforced in the past months when the British newspaper *The Guardian* revealed the extent\* of the two universities’ wealth\*.

A study conducted by the newspaper showed that Oxbridge owns\* £21 billion in assets\*: this includes lands, estates, investments, endowments\*, etc. Oxford University and Cambridge University both own billions of pounds, but each college in each city also has its share\* of the fortune. To put things into perspective, it is interesting to note\* that these £21 billion are superior to the combined wealth of the other 22 biggest universities in the UK. With this sum, Oxbridge could pay the tuition fees\* of every single student in the UK (British students but also international ones) for a year, and there would still be £3 billion left.

It also appears that Oxbridge is the biggest landowner\* in the United Kingdom: together the two universities own 51,000 hectares of land throughout\* the UK, which is far more than the Church of England's possessions. Among the properties owned by Oxbridge, you can find almost any type of place: farmlands, woodlands, castles, retail outlets\*, industrial zones, houses, and also many sports centres.

When asked about this substantial\* wealth, the universities responded that they could not use their money haphazardly\*, because their funds are regulated and allocated \*to specific causes; which explains why all of this money is not used to create outreach\* programmes for underrepresented students, as many people wish.

ranking : *se classant*

among : *parmi*

all over : *partout*

regarded : *considéré*

belonging : *appartenant*

relating to : *en rapport avec*

a portmanteau : *un mot-valise*

the shared characteristics : *les caractéristiques communes*

a facility : *une installation*

collegiate : *universitaire*

a publishing house : *une maison d'édition*

a debating society : *un club de débats*

widely : *largement*

the establishment : *la classe dirigeante*

the extent : *l'étendue*

wealth : *la richesse*

to own : *posséder*

assets : *capital*

an estate : *une propriété*

an endowment : *une dotation*

a share : *une part*

to note : *remarquer*

tuition fees : *des frais de scolarité*

a landowner : *un propriétaire foncier*

throughout : *à travers*

a retail outlet : *un point de vente*

substantial : *conséquent*

haphazardly : *n'importe comment*

allocated to : *affecté à*

an outreach programme : *une programme d'accompagnement*

<https://goenglish.fr/fr/blog/post/9-oxford.html>