



A-Level, GCSE, IGCSE & IB
Residential and Day Revision Courses in Oxford
Easter, Summer and Christmas Holidays
and School Half-Terms



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www.oxss.co.uk

Oxford Science Studies was founded in 1997 by a group of tutors from the University of Oxford. We are the only organisation in the UK to offer residential revision courses in all subjects at A-level, GCSE, IGCSE and IB during the Easter, Summer and Christmas school holidays. We now also offer non-residential revision courses during the school half-term breaks in February, May/June and October.

Our A-level courses are the only module specific revision courses in the UK. This allows our students to select the individual modules they wish to revise, and not waste time on those in which they are confident or have already achieved a satisfactory grade in a previous exam sitting.

Course dates

We offer the following courses each year:

Easter courses: 1, 2 or 3 weeks late March / April

Summer courses: 1, 2 or 3 weeks in August

Christmas courses: 1 week in December and 2 days in January

Half-term courses: February, May/June and October

The specific dates for each course can be found on our website at: www.oxss.co.uk

The value of holiday revision

With school holidays accounting for up to 30% of the calendar year, it is a fact of life that students who wish to succeed in their exams need to maintain some level of academic work through their school holidays. While we feel that it is unreasonable and counter-productive to expect students to study throughout the whole of their break, most students appreciate the importance of making efficient use of some of the holiday period.



Despite their best intentions, few students possess the will power and discipline to achieve much effective work during the holidays, and the threat of impending exams can cast a shadow over what should be a relaxing and enjoyable time.

Our revision courses are short intensive courses of tuition, revision and exam practice run by expert tutors, revision specialists and examiners in an environment geared towards concentrated study, away from all distractions.

Location

Our residential revision courses take place at St. Edward's (an independent boarding school set in grounds of 110 acres in the city of Oxford), St Peter's College (one of the undergraduate colleges of the University of Oxford), or occasionally at another Oxford University college. Most students are residential, but we also welcome day students (9.00am–6.00pm approximately).

Our half-term courses are non-residential and take place at our partner organisation, Oxford International College, in the centre of Oxford. The location of each course can be found on our website. The courses are taught exclusively by our own specialist tutors.

"Thank you very much for all of the help you have given me over the past four years . I can't wait to start at St Anne's (Oxford) this October and I'm sure your excellent courses enabled me to achieve my A-level grades of four As. I am extremely grateful for the support and superb teaching I received from your courses. Many thanks and best wishes"

Sarah C, Monmouth

Course features at a glance

Most of our courses feature the following:

- Over six hours of time-tabled study per day
- Less than three students per class on average
- 25% of our classes are taught one-to-one
- Module specific for AS & A2
- Tier specific for GCSE
- Level and year specific for IB
- Study skills seminars (Easter & summer only)
- Fully residential or day only
- Single or shared study bedrooms
- Practice exam sessions every day
- Progress reports from each tutor
- Friendly informal atmosphere
- Evening social events (e.g. bowling, cinema, quiz-nights etc.)
- CDs containing practice exam questions & answers to take home (optional)
- Almost all of our previous students would recommend us to a friend!



"I wanted to thank you. I had an absolutely fabulous time, and the tutors were fantastic! I learnt more in those two weeks than I have done in six months. Cheers"

Helle, Norway

Who can enrol?

- A-level (AS and A2), GCSE, IGCSE or IB diploma students from any year, including retakers.
- International students from other educational backgrounds who are preparing to study for A-level, GCSE, IGCSE or IB in the UK or overseas.
- We can accommodate students of all abilities.
- We admit students aged 14 years or above.



Number of subjects per course

The number of subjects offered varies slightly from course to course. Generally, it takes between one and two days to revise one A-level unit (AS or A2), or one subject at GCSE, IGCSE or IB. For example, a student enrolling for a week at Easter may take three A-level units from any subjects, or three GCSE or IB subjects.

Our courses are tailor made to accommodate the individual requirements of each student. A-level students can therefore select their chosen units from any subjects, and may combine AS and A2 modules as required.

For full details please visit our website for the specific course you are interested in.

Our tutors

We have brought together a core of tutors who we believe are the best in the business. Many are full-time tutors from our partner organisation **Oxford International College** (www.oxcoll.com) which offers individual and mini-group tuition all year round, as well as professional private tutors and researchers from Oxford University, private tutorial colleges and schools. These tutors have specialist experience of teaching intensive revision in small tutorial groups. This is a complementary but distinct skill from school teaching. Some of our tutors are A-level and GCSE examiners, and many are Oxford graduates who know what it takes to achieve top grades. This does not mean that we cater only for the 'high flyers'. We will help all students of any level or ability to reach their maximum potential in exams. Many of our tutors are currently, or have been, involved in academic research at university level, which often enables them to bring special insight and enthusiasm to their subject!

"Everything about the course was fantastic - the food, the accommodation, the surroundings and the amount I learnt. Chemistry and Biology are among my biggest weaknesses yet I felt I gained most from my teachers in these subjects. I cannot wait to return, I am so grateful for the confidence, and pleasure, the course gave me. My thanks are heartfelt."

Anna J, Hampshire

The Tutorials

Teaching is based on the tutorial system pioneered by Oxford and Cambridge universities, involving small study groups each with their own tutor. Tutorials generally last 50 minutes, which we have found over the years to be the optimum length in terms of students' concentration span. Our average group size is less than three students to a class and our maximum is 8 (see page 8). The small groups enable our tutors to tailor our courses to suit the individual needs of each student, taking into account the relevant examining boards and topics to be covered, as well as the ability of each student and any particular problems they may be experiencing with a subject.

Exam practice

We believe that exam practice is the key to success in public exams. Very often students who attend our courses have a good knowledge of their subjects, but are unable to reproduce this adequately in exams. Our method of teaching revolves strongly around exam practice and technique. After each tutorial, students immediately practice exam questions relating to the topics they have just covered. This not only serves to consolidate their knowledge, but it also enables our tutors to assess how the student will perform in real exams, and to identify any deficiencies in their exam technique.

"This is just a quick note to express my sincerest thanks to you – you will be pleased to hear that I gained an 'A' in my A-level Physics. I am, as you can imagine, delighted. That result, coupled with my other subjects, has meant that I am going to study Medicine at 'the other place' (Cambridge) next year! I cannot thank you enough"

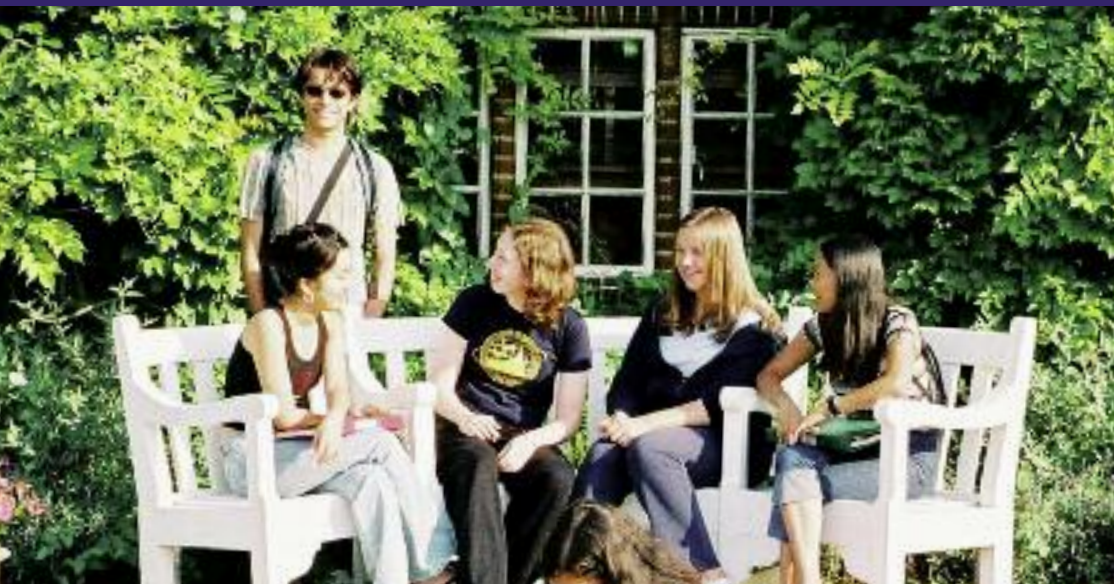
Edwina C, Guernsey

Course content

All of our AS and A2 courses are module specific and the course contents are drawn directly from the relevant syllabus specifications. For a small number of modules (less than 1%) where there is direct overlap between modules offered by different exam boards (e.g. Maths Unit C1), students from different boards may be mixed, but we guarantee that each tutorial will be directly relevant to every student's syllabus. All GCSE courses are tier specific and all IB courses are level specific.

If a student's requirements are unique for any part of the course and we are unable to place them in a compatible group, they will be offered individual tuition with no reduction in contact hours. About 25% of our classes are taught on a one-to-one basis.





Subjects available

Please note this is not an exhaustive list – we can offer most subjects on request.

Accounting	Ancient History	Biology
Business Studies	Chemistry	Chinese
Classical Civilisation	Economics	English Language
English Literature	French	Geography
German	Government & Politics	History
History of Art	Human Biology	Italian
Latin	Maths	Media Studies
Music (theory)	Physics	Philosophy
Politics	Psychology	Sociology
Spanish	Theatre Studies	

All subjects are dependent on availability at the time of application.

“Alex told me after the first day with his geography teacher that he had learned more in that day in physical geography than in the previous year at school! Please thank his geography and economics teachers both of whom helped enormously. We were delighted with the service we received and the level of organisation and tuition. Many thanks again.”

Mrs B, Yorkshire

Study skills

During Easter and summer revision courses, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills seminars free of charge. The seminars are run by revision experts and cover topics such as:

- Time management
- Note taking
- Effective use of resources
- Revision techniques
- Prioritising and deadlines
- Essay techniques
- Memory skills
- Exam techniques
- Personal study plans
- Concentration and breaks
- Stress management

Revision CDs

Students leaving the revision course will have a clear idea of how to make best use of the remaining time before their exams. The emphasis is firmly on exam practice, which we have found to be the most effective way to prepare for exams. We can supply CDs containing exam questions and answers for many subjects (see online application form) for students to work through when they have left the revision course.

"My daughter Georgina attended your Easter course studying A-level Biology and Chemistry. We were very pleased with the course. Georgie found being immersed in the subject helpful and it enthused her for her studies. We have just received her results and she obtained As in both subjects and has been accepted for her first choice course, B.Sc. Optometry at Cardiff. At Christmas we were expecting a B and C."

Mrs M. Cornwall



A typical day

8.00 am – 9.00 am:	Breakfast
9.00 am – 9.50 am:	Tutorial 1
9.50 am – 10.40 am:	Exam practice 1
10.40 am – 11.00 am:	Morning Coffee
11.00 am – 11.50 am:	Tutorial 2
11.50 am – 12.40 pm:	Exam practice 2
12.40 pm – 2.00 pm:	Lunch
2.00 pm – 2.50 pm:	Tutorial 3
2.50 pm – 3.40 pm:	Exam practice 3
3.40 pm – 4.00 pm:	Afternoon tea
4.00 pm – 4.50 pm:	Tutorial 4
4.50 pm – 5.40 pm:	Exam practice 4
6.00 pm – 7.30 pm:	Dinner
7.30 pm – 10.00 pm:	Social programme ('Entz')

"My son Alex attended the course at St Edwards during the second week and found it both thoroughly enjoyable as well as very helpful for his studies. He was very well looked after by your staff and would love to return again. I would like to thank you for the outstanding care and attention he was given. Alex is returning to school with a very positive attitude and increased confidence. Once more many thanks"

Mrs B, Kent

Please note: while most days of most courses follow the above format, occasionally the timetable will vary from the above.

Accommodation and meals

For residential students, accommodation can be in a shared or single study bedroom within the school. Residential wardens are present in every building. Boys and girls are accommodated in separate buildings or separate parts of a building. For our Easter courses at St Edward's, we provide full board accommodation including breakfast, morning coffee, lunch, afternoon tea and an evening meal, all freshly prepared on the premises and served in the dining hall. Non-residential students will be served morning coffee, lunch and afternoon tea. Special dietary requirements can be catered for. For courses held at Oxford University Colleges (e.g. Christmas revision at St Peter's College, Oxford) half-board accommodation is offered, leaving students free to explore Oxford at lunch time.



Why choose Oxford Science Studies?

Although we are the only organisation offering residential revision courses during the Summer and Christmas holidays, at Easter there are many to choose from. How can you choose between them and find the right course for you? Here are some questions we would expect to be asked.

1. What is the average group size? Our overall average group size from the last three revision courses over the past 12 months was 2.3 students, broken down as follows: A-level (AS & A2): 1.8; GCSE: 2.7; IB: 1.5. We believe these are the smallest in the UK.

2. What is the maximum group size? Our maximum group size is eight students, although this rarely occurs and would only be necessary for a few core tutorials during the course. Occasionally a tutor will take a larger group for the first tutorial so that the tutor can assess the group and divide it into two or more smaller groups. So for the first tutorial only the group size may exceed eight.

3. Are the courses exam board specific? Our A-level courses are not only board specific, they are also module specific, meaning that students select the precise modules they wish to revise. Our GCSE courses are not always board specific, as all boards cover the same core topics. Our GCSE courses are all tier specific, where relevant. For all courses we guarantee that every tutorial will cover topics specifically relevant to the exam board and module selected.

4. How many subjects per week? Many Easter revision courses offer only one A-level subject per week, forcing students to attend for two or more weeks to cover all the subjects they need. We offer three AS/A2 modules per week chosen from up to three different subjects, although students may of course choose to revise two or three modules from the same subject.

5. Are revision courses your core business? Many Easter revision courses are offered by large schools or tutorial colleges whose main focus is full-time education, and for whom the Easter revision courses are a small side business. At Oxford Science Studies, we specialise only in revision courses and all of our efforts and resources are focussed on delivering the highest quality courses to our students. That is why each year over 800 students will attend one or more of our courses.

6. Can I talk to any previous students? If, after having read this information, you have any doubts regarding the quality of our courses, we will be glad to put you in touch with students who studied the same subjects as you at one of our previous revision courses during the last year. We are always delighted to hear our students say that they would recommend us to a friend and as this is something that we hear a lot, it would be our pleasure to put you in touch with a former OXSS student so you can find out for yourself what they thought.

What about CIFE?

We are sometimes asked why we are not members of an organisation called CIFE, the Conference for Independent Further Education. This is the professional association for the 19 private sixth form and tutorial colleges in the UK which operate full-time courses. The executive committee of CIFE is made up of the Principals of some of these colleges. CIFE does not include specialist providers of revision courses, such as Oxford Science Studies.

"Just thought you'd like to know that Max, who attended your Easter week's French revision course turned a 'U' grade mock AS into a 'B' grade in the actual AS. He'd lost confidence in his French, chiefly by not having grasped some of the basics. The one-to-one tutoring you provided allowed him to ask the stupid questions without embarrassment and cover his knowledge gaps. When he got back to school he was firing on all cylinders. Please can you pass on the terrific result to his tutor. Thank you and we will no doubt be seeing you again at Easter."

Mrs D, Buckingham

What the students say

We run three revision courses during the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays, with over 800 students attending in total. Here is what they thought of our courses.

	Excellent or Good	Fair	Poor
Overall impression of course	98%	2%	0%
Quality of teaching	100%	0%	0%
Relationship with tutors	96%	4%	0%
Improvement in exam grades	95%	5%	0%
Overall enjoyment	94%	5%	1%
	Yes	Maybe	No
Would you recommend us to a friend?	96%	4%	0%

What the papers say

From The Daily Telegraph, Parents & education section, 'Any questions' column:

A reader writes:

Could you recommend an A-level revision course over the Christmas holidays?

John Clare, Education Editor replies:

A four-day course starting on January 2 and covering most subjects at GCSE and A-level, is offered by Oxford Science Studies, a well-established and reputable body. Teaching, mostly by Oxford graduates, in classes no bigger than six, covers the core elements of each subject, with an emphasis on study skills and exam technique."



Our Summer School was featured in The Independent in an article entitled “Summertime and the studying is easy”:

“For students who know which university they want to go to but are nervous about passing their exams there are plenty of crammer courses that offer the chance to improve revision techniques.

Dr Mario Peters runs the Oxford Summer School and provides a selection of intensive revision courses for sixth-form and GCSE students. He finds that there is a big demand for his courses. “The days of cramming three or four A-level subjects into the end of a two-year course are a thing of the past, and by sacrificing one or two weeks of their holidays, students can return to school primed and full of confidence.”

Teaching is based on the tutorial system employed by Oxford University involving small study groups each with their own tutor. “We really try and focus on individual students. We find out which modules they want to do and pick out topics.”

Yasmeen Aslam, 18, went to the Oxford Summer School for a week’s intensive revision programme. She was given tuition in Chemistry and Biology and stayed at Somerville College for a week. She decided to do the course because she was about to enter the last year of her A-levels and wanted to start the next year prepared and able to grasp concepts. She thinks it was a worthwhile experience. “The tuition was fabulous. I got an A in one of my modules in January and a lot of the exam techniques I learnt there I applied. Also I had quite a few problems last year with organising my time and I learnt about time management.”



“I studied GCSE Chemistry and Physics with you at Easter and I found it helped me enormously as the lectures clarified many aspects of these subjects, which I found to be the weakest of my GCSE subjects. I am pleased to inform you that I achieved As in both of these subjects. As a dyslexic I find revision hard, with so much information to take in at once. The course helped me revise all my subjects allowing me to apply the skills I learnt by breaking down subjects into smaller sections. Without the revision course I do not think I would have gained the confidence in my science subjects and would not have done so well, therefore I would like to thank you.”

Francesca K, Buckingham

Registration

To reserve a place, please complete the online application form at www.oxss.co.uk or call 01865 240637.

Course fees

Course fees for each specific course are included on the online application form at www.oxss.co.uk.

OXFORD SCIENCE STUDIES



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