

Teach First Futures - Easter Schools

Over the Easter Break, a group of us went to Easter Schools at either Oxford or Cambridge University. For four days we stayed in their student accommodation, not only learning about their university, but general life when studying: what you do, what it's like, what you can do for fun, facilities on offer and more. We picked an academic stream such as History, Politics, Engineering, Maths, etc., and spent a few hours each day looking at a chosen topic within that subject. We also had a society evening, choosing from debating, sports, etc., and spent the evening immersing ourselves in the social side that university can offer. On the last evening we had a formal dinner and party, celebrating our achievements throughout the last few days and enjoying the company of our new friends.



The theme of the Easter School was 'No Limits'. That is, pushing ourselves to our stretch zone and doing something we normally would not do, whether it be raising our hands in a session, or walking up to a group of strangers and introducing ourselves.

My academic stream was History, specifically: Women and Politics from the late 19th century to the early-mid 20th century. Learning lots about the various women involved in the suffrage movement, knowledge that has proven useful in my A-Level History lessons, even if we are not directly talking about women and the vote. My chosen society was debating, something which I love to do. Telling a stranger why you disagree with their viewpoint is always nerve racking, but the friendly and open atmosphere made me learn lots of skills, as well as how a professional debate is structured.

I know I can speak for all of us when I say that we loved our time at these universities. At first it was nerve racking, especially for those of us who were on our own, but we quickly made lots of friends from all over the country who shared similar interests to us, and they are people we will keep in contact with. In terms of choosing a university, it has given us an insight into what a top university is like, something we likely would not have had otherwise. While some of us now know that Oxford or Cambridge is what we aim for, and others know it is not for them, we are all in agreement over one thing: this experience has given us a much needed insight into not only Oxford and Cambridge, but university in general, making it easier to pick what university we would want to go to, or even if it is right for us.

- Taylor Tumbridge (Year 12)