

Natalie Thompson for Target and Access Executive

Hi, I'm Natalie and I'm a second-year History student (read: I have a lot of time), and I'm standing to be JCR Target and Access Executive.

Experience

Access background

- A non-selective state comp in the north which you *definitely* haven't heard of.
- The only person from my school to attend Oxbridge.
- From Cumbria, one of Fitz's link areas, and so have a good knowledge of one of the areas the college specifically targets.

InsideUni

- I lead a small team of students from across O*ford and Cambridge - this will provide useful experience for leading the Target and Access sub-committee.
- I recently wrote a guide for teachers supporting potential Oxbridge applicants - this was approved and praised by senior admissions tutors at both universities, and is currently being distributed to schools across the country.
- I organised and participated in access discussion panels which I'd like to continue this year.

Delegoats

- Last academic year, I regularly led tours of the college and Q&A sessions for students from a variety of age ranges.
- I continued this role remotely, participating in virtual open day panels and producing video content over the summer.

Other access projects

- Through my work at InsideUni, I've made contacts with the heads of many other access-related projects, including Zero Gravity, Project Access and the Clydeside Project.
- I've had meetings with several senior figures working in outreach and engagement across O*ford and Cambridge.
- I'm a CAMbassador, representing the university to students from widening participation backgrounds.
- I mentored a student in last year's CUSU Shadowing Scheme and am looking forward to being involved in the scheme again this year.
- I regularly contribute blog posts to the newly-established Cambridge Access Movement.

Manifesto

Remote access work

- Access work shouldn't stop just because we can't go into schools or run college tours at the moment - initiatives like virtual open days should be seen as opportunities to engage more students, including those who wouldn't ordinarily be able to travel to Cambridge to visit.
- I will work with the Schools Liaison Officer to produce more online and video content for outreach.
- I intend to continue training sessions for students to talk to their former schools - many schools are inviting former students to speak to pupils virtually at the moment.
- By building on links I have established with university-wide and national access initiatives, I will promote opportunities to engage with access and outreach work to interested students.
- I will also explore the possibility of running BME and Disability Open Days virtually.

Finances

- I will work to remove fines for breaking Covid rules, which disproportionately affect students from lower income backgrounds.
- I will aim to make information about bursaries and other financial support systems more transparent.
- I will also work with the President and Treasurer to negotiate rent increases.

Care leaver tutors

- I intend to continue the work from previous years to provide a dedicated tutor for care-experienced students, to ensure their specific needs are understood and acted upon.

Supporting students from access backgrounds

- I will work with the liberation officers to ensure access is representative of all students.
- I will collaborate with the Welfare and Class Act Officers to host socials and discussion panels for all students from access backgrounds. By talking to current students about the issues they overcame while applying to Cambridge, we can better understand the concerns of prospective applicants and can continue to present Fitz as a friendly, non-typical Cambridge college.

**Feel free to contact me with any questions, either on Facebook or by email -
nmt35@cam.ac.uk**

Ali Khalid - Target and Access Officer

Fitzwilliam College has a reputation for providing opportunities for all students, regardless of their background. It is fantastic that access and outreach work is a priority here, and to have the opportunity to contribute to these efforts would mean so much to me. I attended a non-selective state school from a low participation area in East London, where I was the only person in my sixth form to receive an offer from Cambridge or Ox*rd. I want to make an impact and lessen fears that Cambridge is an unachievable goal, and encourage more students from all backgrounds to see Cambridge not only as a place they can access but somewhere they can excel.

Experience

- **Social Mobility Foundation Student Representative** - I work to encourage Year 12 students to apply for the Aspiring Professionals Programme. I deliver presentations and run workshops to support their applications and make them aware of the opportunities available to them.
- **Sixth Form Access Workshops** - During Sixth Form, I ran workshops after school to support year 12 students preparing their university applications. I offered personal statement advice alongside a checking service, conducted mock interviews, and held 1 to 1 sessions to demystify the Oxbridge application process.
- **Premier Tuition Access Work** - Having attended and visited schools in 'low applicant areas', a recurring issue was that students were not aware of opportunities available to them. I hold tailored classes to students from Year 10 to Year 13 in Redbridge to support University, Apprenticeship and work experience Applications. I am using this platform to make students aware of the opportunities offered by The Sutton Trust, The Social Mobility Foundation, Upreach, Uptree, and SEO.
- **BAME Student Mentoring Programme** - I virtually mentor students interested in attending Oxbridge/Russell Group Universities. This year I have worked with 8 students and offered free advice on selecting courses, universities and writing personal statements.
- **PRIME Diversity Access Scheme member** - As a student from an access background, I was part of the PRIME scheme that aimed to broaden access to legal work experience opportunities.
- **Clifford Chance ACCESS representative** - As part of the firm's efforts to broaden access this year, I promoted their suite of virtual events and supported Q&A sessions regarding applications.
- **ClickCambridge student Q&A panel** - I am supporting student Q&A panels to help Year 12 students prepare for university applications, addressing fears/concerns they may have about applying to Cambridge and offering my honest thoughts about my time as a BPA student at Cambridge.
- **Cambridge University Student Union Shadowing Scheme**
- **Fitzwilliam College Interview helper (2020)**

Manifesto:

- **Expanding efforts to widen participation in target areas** - I hope to achieve this aim by building on the work of the previous Target and Access Officers. For example, Increasing the number of workshops and insight days aimed at students from low participation backgrounds, and hosting tailored sessions with potential applicants to offer advice and answer questions they have.
- **Introducing a mentoring scheme at Fitzwilliam College aimed at Care Leavers** - Only 6% of Care leavers attend University, compared to almost 50% of the general population. I want to expand efforts to reach students from a younger age and communicate that Cambridge is for them, and factors like money isn't an issue when they apply.
- **Expanding the promotion of Fitzwilliam College on Social Media** - When applying for Cambridge, I want students to be aware that Fitz is a welcoming environment for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. For example, Increasing the presence of current students from disadvantaged backgrounds on social media, and shining a light on their stories.
- **More open days for BME and Disabled students** - I propose hosting tailored open days later in the year led by students from similar backgrounds to mitigate fears that Cambridge is not for them. It will be an opportunity for current students to talk through their own experiences at Fitz and offer advice to prospective students.
- **Introducing a platform/website for prospective students to ask questions** - Continuing Tami's work, I feel prospective students would benefit massively from an online platform where they can ask questions about the admissions process to current students. Whilst applying, my school had little experience with the Cambridge admissions process, and I didn't have contact with anyone already studying here. I know that having the opportunity to ask questions to current students directly, would have increased my confidence and will encourage more students to see Cambridge as an achievable goal.
- **Working alongside social mobility organisation's to increase contact with students from Access backgrounds** - Organisations such as The Social Mobility Foundation already host workshops attended by hundreds of students from access backgrounds. I feel our current students can make a welcome contribution to personal Statement advice and interview workshops, showing more students they can belong here at Fitz.