

I am now a student at Corpus Christi College, University of Cambridge. I study Modern and Medieval Languages (Spanish and German), having started in October 2015. I attended King Edward VII from 2011 right through to 2015 and genuinely believe I would not have achieved things quite in the same way if I had studied elsewhere.

When I was applying to study for my A levels, even though there were only three students wanting to study the course, the school agreed I would be able to study A level Spanish so I didn't have to move to another Sixth Form college. As a result, I feel the necessity to have self-discipline and commitment set me up well for starting my degree at the University of Cambridge. The staff at King Edward VII were fantastic in supporting me with any extracurricular activities I knew would help me, and weren't at all insistent on what I 'must' do to get to Cambridge – I was given the freedom to determine my own plans whilst knowing the support was there when and if I needed it. The Modern Languages staff were very supportive in helping me to find and secure places on the Cambridge University Shadowing Scheme, the Corpus Christi Languages and Classics Summer School as well as encouraging me to do the two stays with host families I did in 2013 and 2014. I could also not thank Dr Pye and Mrs Taylor enough for hard-work and dedication in ensuring that I had the best personal statement I could possibly have for my Oxbridge applications, and who went out of their way to ensure that I was as prepared as I possibly could be for the very challenging Cambridge interviews. Mrs Pallett was always there to allay my worries, whilst also being very supportive in helping me to achieve my best with the 'Art of Brilliance' and other extra-curricular activities. King Edward VII was the best place that I could have asked for in valuing the wellbeing and opinions of every single student. If I could summarise the support system at King Edward VII, as my experiences show, it is obvious that they have all bases covered for their students, regardless of their academic ability.

During my time at King Edward VII, I played a very active role in the entirely student led 'Art of Brilliance' positive psychology scheme. This gave me many opportunities to take part in several public speaking events including one of the world's first positive psychology conferences. As well as the public speaking, I was able to develop my confidence and work well in a very close team with people from all different year groups at King Edward VII. Not only did I get involved with this, but I also wrote a short book entirely in French. The book, called 'Sans Essayer,' was part of an extra-curricular project I developed both in my spare time and one or two lunchtimes a week, and it made a major contribution to my Cambridge application. The book is now published online and this was certainly an amazing experience for me thus far and not one I would have received without King Edward staff. Undoubtedly, one of my favourite things about my time at King Edward VII was being an Academic Mentor for French and Spanish (2014-2015). This involved, for the main part, working closely with a More-Able group of 5 students in French, whose progress I followed from the start to the end of their GCSE, as well as working with other abilities in smaller groups in another French class and a Year 10 Spanish class. The skills that I developed whilst doing this have been influential during my time at Cambridge University this far.

The main piece of advice I would give to new and current students at King Edward VII would be that you can never be too ambitious. Coming from a single-parent family, being the first in my whole family to go to university and having a few other problems along the way, I never thought I would be writing a case study like this from Cambridge! Make the most of any support the staff offer you, make use of and enjoy the extra-curricular opportunities and above all, know that I am only one example of an academic path. It is not compulsory to go to university, but it is compulsory to try your best and put all your effort in to whatever your career goals are. Best of luck to all of you :)