

Outreach Newsletter: October 2025

Welcome to the October edition of our Outreach newsletter!

Please do pass this on to anyone who may be interested in receiving this bulletin. They are very welcome to subscribe using this [link](#). If you wish to be removed, please email outreach@chem.ox.ac.uk.

Thank you for reading!

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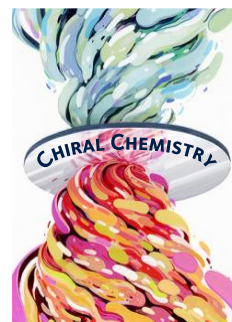
Oxford chemists identify
honey offering in a 2,500-
year-old shrine **[REPEAT]**



Upcoming Events:

KS5 Chiral Chemistry Workshops **[NEW]**

We would like to announce the 2025–2026 academic year dates for our Chiral Chemistry workshop. This is our online workshop for UK state school KS5 Chemistry students and teachers, which is delivered by our Department Ambassadors. Dates and times have been designed to avoid interruption of lessons. The session focuses on 3D shapes, chirality, the role of chirality in biological systems and the resources available to research chemists looking at proteins, such as the main protease in SARS-CoV-2, the latter being an active area of research in our Department. There is also an opportunity to ask our Ambassadors questions about their research and their academic careers to date. Students may attend without a teacher, provided we have a teacher contact.



Wednesday 8 th October 2025	15:45–17:00
Wednesday 5 th November 2025	15:45–17:00
Wednesday 3 rd December 2025	15:45–17:00
Tuesday 20 th January 2026	16:45–18:00
Tuesday 10 th February 2026	16:45–18:00
Wednesday 15 th April 2026	15:45–17:00

[REQUEST A SPACE](#) 

Explore Chemistry – A super-curricular series **[NEW]**

KS5 UK state school students and their teachers are invited to sign up for this series of talks and Q&As. There will be a week to watch a pre-recorded talk (posted online), reflect and note any questions before joining a 45-minute online live Q&A session with the researcher presenting the talk.



Our first talk will take place on Wednesday 8th October, 17:15–18:00 – please ensure you are subscribed to the mailing list to receive updates!

[SIGN UP TO THE SERIES](#) 

Please note that for Chiral Chemistry and Explore Chemistry places are limited to students from state schools in the UK, Isle of Man and Channel Islands, and where we are oversubscribed, we will prioritise places for students who meet our widening participation and access criteria. Further information about this can be found at

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/about/increasing-access>

 ROYAL SOCIETY
OF CHEMISTRY Future Chemists' Competition 2026
[REPEAT]

Registration is now open for the brand-new RSC Thames Valley Future Chemists' Competition 2026, taking place at the **Chemistry Teaching Laboratory, University of Oxford** on **Tuesday 13th January 2026 and Wednesday 14th January 2026**.

The competition, for state schools in the Thames Valley region[#] only, is free to enter and is open to teams of four pupils, two from Year 8, and two from Year 9. The day will involve hands-on practical lab challenges.

[#]The Thames Valley region covers schools in the following postcodes:
OX (all), RG (all), SL4, SL5, SL6, SL7, GU11, GU12, GU14, GU51, GU52.

There are bursaries available to support school attendance. The programme will take place during the school day and lunch will be provided. Teams need to be accompanied by an adult (this does not have to be chemistry teacher). Register via this [link](#).

Centre for Personalised Medicine Art Competition [REPEAT]



The Oxford Centre for Personalised Medicine is inviting students in Years 7–9 to get creative and share their thoughts on the meaning of 'personalised medicine' through art.

Personalised medicine means different things to different people – from using genetic information to tailor treatment, to understanding a person's story and what matters most to them. This competition is a chance for young people to express what they think it means.

Students can submit any form of visual art – a drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, or more – as long as it can be photographed. All entrants receive a certificate, and cash prizes will be awarded to standout submissions. Group entries are welcome too!

Winning artworks will be considered for display at prestigious locations across Oxford, including the John Radcliffe Hospital, Churchill Hospital, Centre for Human Genetics, and St Anne's College.

More details, including a short video about the competition, and downloadable information for teachers available [here](#).

Oxford College Workshops [REPEAT]

You are warmly invited to request a **College Workshop** when arranging a group visit with a College. Find out about your link colleges [here](#). Please note, the inclusion of one of our workshops is subject to the college's capacity to host your visit. Please do copy us (outreach@chem.ox.ac.uk) into any correspondence with the College team regarding the inclusion of one of our workshops. *If you do not hear back from your link college within 14 days, do get in touch directly with us.*



Unlock the OXbox – Graffiti Game

A puzzle box workshop for Year 9 (13–14 yrs), featuring a series of practical and theoretical problems. Minimum of 12 students from UK state schools.

Unlock the OXbox – Poison Puzzle

This is for KS4 (14–16 yrs) and is a series of practical and theoretical chemistry problems. Minimum of 12 students from UK state schools.

"It is fantastic for the students to have this opportunity to apply their knowledge to a problem-solving activity and so enjoyable for them." – Teacher

Unlock the OXbox – Lab Lurker

A series of practical and theoretical chemistry problems for KS5 (16–19 yrs) students. Would suit a class where at least half of the students are studying A level (or equivalent) in Chemistry. Minimum 12 students (at least six studying Chemistry A level, or equivalent), from UK state schools.

You can mix and match Graffiti Game, Poison Puzzle and Lab Lurker puzzle boxes for groups including Year 9, KS4 and KS5 students, as long as there is a minimum of 12 students in total (a minimum of three from a Key Stage is required).

Other Opportunities: Application Support for Oxford

Oxford University Islamic Society [REPEAT]

The Oxford University Islamic Society (OUIsoc) is expanding its outreach efforts to support prospective Muslim students applying to Oxford. Their dedicated Access Team runs a range of initiatives designed to ease the transition to higher education, address common misconceptions, and involve parents in the process. To stay up to date with upcoming opportunities, events, and resources, teachers and school representatives are encouraged to join the OUIsoc Access Mailing List.



Who it's for: Muslim students in sixth form, regardless of background or level of spirituality, as well as teachers and school staff supporting them. Stay connected:

- Join the OUIsoc Access [Mailing List](#)
- For more information, visit [OUIsoc's website](#) or email the Access Team directly at: ouisoc.outreach@gmail.com

Materials Science Open Days [NEW]

Applications are open for the Materials Science open days in February and March 2026. Attendees will experience lectures, tour the department, meet students, and more!



When: 17th & 18th February, 17th & 18th March 2026 – in person, 20th February 2026 – online.

Where: Department of Materials/Online (Zoom webinar).

Audience: Prospective Y11 & Y12 students

How:

Register for the 17th & 18th February [here](#).

Register for the 20th February [here](#).

Register for the 17th & 18th March [here](#).

To find out more visit their [website](#).

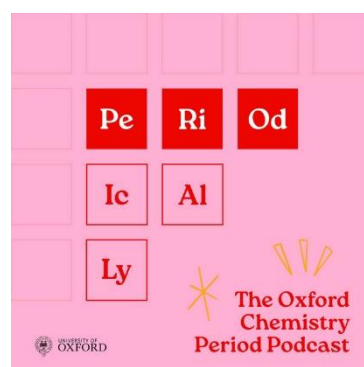
Other Opportunities: Enrichment and CPD

RSC Women in Chemistry [REPEAT]

A reminder that there are resources for practical challenges, information about research and profiles of team members available via their [website](#). These are particularly suitable for Science Clubs in schools, community groups, such as Scouts and Guides, as well as for enjoyable holiday challenges.

PERIODically Podcast [REPEAT]

PERIODically is a podcast created by undergraduate and postgraduate Chemistry students at the University of Oxford to discuss their experiences of how having a period has affected their time studying Chemistry. The podcast aims to discuss how the physicality and intensive nature of studying Chemistry can be affected by symptoms of periods (such as cramps, mental health and medical issues) and seeks to shed light on these problems, tackle stereotypes and misconceptions, and start a conversation on how study can be improved for those with periods. You can find further information and links to listen [here](#).



Trinity College Teacher CPD Programme [REPEAT]

Trinity College invites state school teachers and colleagues responsible for student progression to university, to participate in their free online Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme. This comprehensive programme is designed to provide practical information, guidance, and support for teachers working with students aspiring to apply to Oxford or other higher education institutions.



What's Included?

- Insights into the Oxford application process, admissions tests, and interviews.
- Strategies for higher education applications, personal statements, and teacher references.
- Flexible attendance with a certificate for completing all six sessions.

Who is it for? UK state school teachers, and they particularly welcome teachers from non-selective schools, especially those new to Oxford applications, Russell Group universities, or higher education progression in general.

When and where: Sessions from 13th January to October 2025, online. Residential Easter 2026.

Programme Highlight: Residential (optional): A free, fully funded three-night Teacher Enrichment Residential during Easter 2026, allowing participants to explore a subject area or teaching practice using the University of Oxford's library collections.

How to Register: Sign up [here](#).



Photo by [Elena Diaz](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Lincoln College Teacher CPD Conference **[New]**

Lincoln College have opened their applications for their free one-night, one-day CPD conference for state school teachers and school leaders with responsibility for progression, to help them support and encourage their pupils in all higher education applications. This exciting programme provides up-to-date information and guidance on:

- The Oxford application process.
- Reference writing.
- Personal statements.
- Admissions tests and interviews, and more!

When: 6:30 on Tuesday 16th December, to 16:00 on Wednesday 17th December.

Where: Lincoln College

Other important information: This entirely free event, includes accommodation on the night of 16th December, lunch and dinner in their fifteenth-century hall, and a networking drinks reception. Travel reimbursements are also available for those travelling from outside Oxford.

How: Register your interest [here](#).



Learning Resource:

Oxford chemists identify honey offering in a 2,500-year-old shrine **[REPEAT]**

Researchers from the Department of Chemistry have solved a decades-old archaeological puzzle by re-investigating the molecular composition of an intriguing residue found in bronze jars excavated from a 6th century BCE Greek shrine in Paestum, southern Italy.

In this new study, the researchers used a suite of modern analytical techniques, including mass spectrometry for proteins and small molecule compositional analysis, to determine its molecular makeup. A-Level Chemistry teachers are likely to find the reference to multiple analytical techniques, particularly mass spectrometry, of interest for their classes. Read more about the research [here](#).

