

TIPS ON THE COLLEGE BOOK GRANT, FOR STUDENTS OF ENGLISH

1. These notes are written principally for undergraduates starting out in their first year of the English course at Caius, though they should serve as a reminder for those in their second and third years. Since you will very likely not need to take any direct action on this score for a number of months, put this memorandum away carefully where you will be able to find it later on.
2. Some of you may already know that Caius operates a modest scheme to assist undergraduates with the expense of buying books connected with their studies. We recognise that books are essential to effective study, and that you will need to own for yourself a number of basic texts and works of reference, so that you may become intimately familiar with their contents and layout, annotate them and add your own commentaries and bibliographical supplements, and have them constantly at your elbow within your personal working space (see 'Tips on Books and Libraries'). We recognise too that important texts are expensive even in paperback form, and that building up even a basic working reference library for yourselves will strain finances quite severely.
3. To assist with these problems, admittedly to a very modest extent, the College has agreed to make available to each undergraduate during each year of undergraduate study a subsidy towards the purchase of books (including CD-ROM or e-book texts) acquired during the year in question in direct connection with your official course of study. You must have purchased these books (new or secondhand) for your own use; and if these conditions are met you may apply for half of the cost of your purchases to be remitted to you by the College up to a total of £40 in each academic year.
4. To apply for this book grant you will need to complete the application form attached to this note and clip to it the bookseller's official receipts for each of your purchases; then bring the application to me as your Director of Studies so that I can endorse it as representing approved expenditure. If you make purchases over the internet, evidence of payment will meet the College's requirements. Each year's approved application must be lodged with the College Bursary by the division of Easter Term, and the payment of the amount for which you are eligible will be credited to your College account.
5. No official guidance has been provided concerning what may or may not be considered an authorised expenditure on books, and I therefore provide this informal and unofficial note for our own domestic purposes. I take the view that there are many books which you may buy or wish to buy which could be held to have some relevance to the study of English literature, without being of self-evidently central and continuing usefulness to your work. But there are some books which fall clearly into the category of more or less essential tools for the English course: a decent collected Shakespeare, Chaucer, Milton; decent dictionaries (English and foreign); good editions of major English authors and of important individual works; maybe an up-to-date atlas; etc, etc.

6. Since the total annual allowance available to each of you is not lavish, I suggest that you voluntarily restrict purchases under this scheme to the category outlined above. I further suggest that you exclude all secondary works of literary history or literary criticism, however useful, and use your allowance to buy only primary works of actual literature, or works of authoritative reference.

7. None of this is to suggest that you will not wish to buy other kinds of works, nor that other kinds of works will not be of value to you. These proposals are solely to enable your Director of Studies to authorise any claim form submitted, insofar as it abides by these guidelines, without hesitation or difficulty; and to demonstrate a responsible use of the scheme in what I take to be its intended spirit.

8. If anyone should wish for some bibliographic advice about good editions to buy, and possible sources of discounted prices, I am always willing to be consulted at any time. If there are or may be any problems, please try to consult me in advance of an actual investment.

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Director of Studies in English

Gonville and Caius College,
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