

CSFC PEERS MALAYSIA





INTRODUCTION

Cardiff Sixth Form College is very proud of its contingent of students from Malaysia who have all excelled under the college's care and guidance.

What follows are the testimonials of some of our Malaysian shining stars!



Lai Zong Bao

Former student of Lodge National School,
Kuching

Subjects Taken:

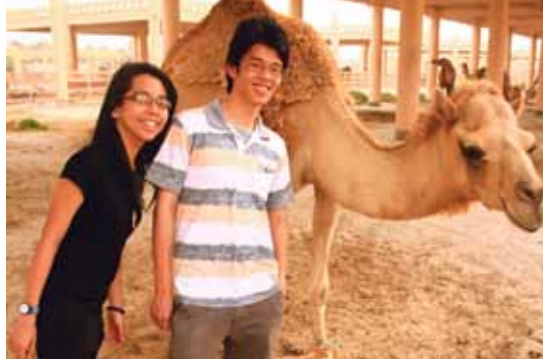
Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics and
Cambridge Pre-U Diploma

AS Grades: AAAA [Overall percentage: 98%]

Career Aspiration: Medicine

November marks eleven months since I arrived in the UK and first joined Cardiff Sixth Form College (CSFC). Like other Malaysians, I had just completed my SPM in December, and unwilling to wait a further 8 months to join A-Levels in September, I chose to enrol in the accelerated A-Level course which started in January, together with 6 other schoolmates.

Having to complete a one year course in half the time was a challenging task, but one made much easier by the support CSFC has provided. The level of commitment the teachers showed to help us through the course was unlike any other I had experienced before. All it needed was one student who couldn't catch up in class, and the teachers would be willing to stay back after class for hours just to ensure the student understood. Extra classes and tutorials during the weekend have also been extremely useful, allowing me to revise the entire week's work and clarify any queries with my tutor. Constant tests are aplenty in CSFC. While I was initially overwhelmed by the large quantities of homework and tests given out, I soon adapted to it. The school's principle of "Practice makes perfect" has rung true for me. By the time the exams came, there were no exam jitters as I just knew I would be able to perform after all the hard work, time and effort put in; not just by myself, but by all the members of staff.



Lai Zong Bao and Ashley Chiam in Bahrain on the college's Goodwill Ambassador Programme

The level of pastoral care provided by CSFC has also been outstanding. Being the first time away from home, having to live in a foreign country without any family was no doubt a totally new experience. The accommodation provided was newly renovated and in perfect condition when I moved in. Any problems which I have encountered in the accommodation throughout these 11 months have been addressed and rectified swiftly by the Accommodation Officer, often within a matter of days. Fortnightly progress meetings with the vice-principal have allowed me to voice any concerns I have.

CSFC places large emphasis in ensuring every single student makes a competitive application to university. I have greatly benefitted from the large amount of individual support provided. Through the college, I have had the chance to carry out work experience in a large variety of settings, from GPs to hospitals. Visits to universities such as Cambridge University and Edinburgh University organised by the school have been invaluable to me in making my university choices. Interview workshops and mock interviews organised have greatly boosted my self-confidence in preparation for my upcoming university interviews.

My experience in CSFC thus far has been thoroughly enjoyable. The quality of academic care and pastoral care the school provides has shown no sign of decreasing, despite me having settled down fully in the UK. I would sincerely recommend CSFC to any prospective students, especially for the accelerated course I went through. I have had no regrets about choosing CSFC and do not think I ever will.

Magdalene Ting

Former student of Lodge National School,
Kuching

Subjects Taken:

Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics and
Cambridge Pre-U Diploma

AS Grades: AAAA [Overall percentage: 99%]

Career Aspiration: Medicine

My experience at Cardiff Sixth Form College (CSFC) so far has been one which I believe is unmatched if I were to have been to any other college, be it in Malaysia or anywhere else in the UK, for A-levels. The major feature of this college that still continues to appeal to me is the small student body it boasts to have which, complemented with the high-levels of dedication from all teachers and staff in general, makes for a much focused approach which allows for a consistent achievement of academic excellence. Each student receives individual attention while at the same time, everyone, as a whole, benefits from the camaraderie of being an extremely close-knitted community.

“I am sure that I would not choose to have attended any other college, if given the chance.”

Magdalene Ting

Joining the 18-month, accelerated course, the entire AS syllabus had to be completed in a mere 5-month period, with preparation for the Cambridge Pre-U Global Perspectives and Research (a separate exam comparable to A-level that demands for more independent study) running alongside this. What I can be sure of is that the strong support from all the staff and the emphasis on hard work had been crucial in achieving success in all 9 modules taken in the summer. This bears testament to the effectiveness of the weekend tutorial classes which undeniably provide extra reinforcement to the knowledge gained through weekday lessons. Moreover, the teachers are always willing to arrange extra one-to-one sessions outside of the regular classes should we seek more help.

Yet, the support given in terms of academic help does not end there. In terms of personal statement and interview help, the college has taken initiative in requesting ex-students from the college to come in on a regular basis to mentor us in both. This is fortified with the holding of several interview workshops throughout the year, apart from an Oxbridge Students Conference in London to which those interested in applying to Cambridge or Oxford are taken to. Healthcare and Academic Diploma sessions are conducted every weekend and aim to stretch our thinking and knowledge beyond the confines of the syllabus. As the deadline for UCAS nears, the college staff have been putting in significant amounts of effort in helping us with our Personal Statements.

To add, there has always been, since day-one, the constant emphasis on striving to make our university applications outstanding, either through aiding us in the self-arrangement of work experience placements or suggesting locations for us to try for voluntary work, be it in charity shops, nursing homes, local hospices or even schools. In the aspect of work



placements, the college strives to offer us a good mixture, such as placements at the GP and hospitals, with the Goodwill Ambassadors Programme in Bahrain being a one-of-a-kind exception, giving us first-hand insight into the workings of a hospital in a completely different social setting.

Help is given by the college even to those who initially find themselves uncertain of which career path to follow. Speaking from personal experience, apart from medical work experience, I also obtained a week-long placement at Cavendish Laboratory, University of Cambridge and this was when I was torn between Medicine and Physics. This opportune week turned out to be one of the most unique and fulfilling experiences for me as I worked with researchers as part of the Thin Film Magnetism Group, being fortunate enough to take part in laboratory experiments such as the MOKE and SQUID, used to measure the magnetic moments of cobalt nanoparticles. Time spent there allowed me to gain a solid insight into

what a general career in academia would entail. In terms of extra-curricular or extra-academic activities, the college actively sends students as representatives in debating competitions and Model UN Conferences while encouraging us to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Occurring parallel to all this, the pastoral support provided to each student is simply beyond words. Regular progress meetings with the Vice Principal give us the opportunity to put forward concern. We students have also been able to approach any staff to discuss matters, even if they are unrelated to our academics and especially if they involve our university applications such as choice of universities etc. These personal bonds that one makes with the staff only prove to be an exceptional advantage as office hours no longer act as the limits to our interactions. In terms of accommodation, the Accommodation Officer continually works to ensure that we do not lack any essentials. All students are in turn expected to have a high standard of behaviour. It can be said that the strict enforcement of college rules only occurs in line with the need to care for our safety and well-being.

For catering, the employment of a Malaysian chef has allowed for a good choice between Western or Oriental-styled food. Suggestions on how the variety of dishes can be improved are also always taken into consideration.

I am sure that I would not choose to have attended any other college, if given the chance. I believe my time here at CSFC to be something exceptional, and for this, I would sincerely thank the staff and their good will.

Aaron Chieng

Former student of Lodge National School,
Kuching

Subjects Taken:

Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics and
Cambridge Pre-U Diploma

AS Grades: AAAA [Overall percentage: 96%]

Career Aspiration: Dentistry



*Aaron Chieng and Jordan Kho on Oxbridge
Preparation Day at the college*

During my stay in Cardiff, my welfare has always been taken care of by the staff in school especially Mr. and Mrs. Sarwar, Mr. Farzal and Mr. Hussain, who have been exceptionally helpful. From academics to accommodation, every problem that I have faced has been swiftly dealt with. Whenever we have any problems, we can always arrange progress meetings with Mrs. Thompson and she will always be willing to listen to what we have to say. Any suggestions given by us will be taken into serious consideration and amendments will be made as soon as possible to satisfy our needs. For example, the catering menu which was once lacking in variety has been changed into a menu that everyone is happy with after it was brought to staff's attention.

“This dedication and support given, I believe, can never be found in any other institution.”

Aaron Chieng

When we are faced with any issues regarding our accommodation, we contact Mr. Hussain and he will send someone to repair them or he will attend himself regardless of what time of the day it is. Besides that, our comfort during our stay is also of the utmost priority to Mr. and Mrs. Sarwar. Both are willing to provide us with any household facilities that we have requested to ensure that we are happy with our accommodation. This dedication and support given, I believe, can never be found in any other institution.

The support given to us regarding our university application is definitely worth rating a five star rating. The UCAS sessions provided by Mrs. Sarwar was extremely helpful as we were being guided through the application process. Mr. Farzal and Mrs. Sarwar have also provided us with ample support when it comes to our personal statement. They were willing to spend hours outside of office hours going through our personal statement to ensure that it is up to the required standard. Their willingness to spend their spare time for our success deserves our appreciation and thanks.

The teachers in this college are both dedicated and friendly. They provide extra classes to all the students willingly to ensure that we achieve the best of our ability. The genuine intention to help the students achieve the best possible results is what made this college the leading Sixth Form College in the UK.

My stay in Cardiff Sixth Form College has been a happy and successful one. The support given by staff and the pastoral care for our welfare has been top notch. I would like to say that I am glad to be a student of Cardiff Sixth Form College and I am grateful for all the help and attention that has been given to me.

Zen Foo

Former student of Sri KDU, Kuala Lumpur

Subjects:

Mathematics, Further Mathematics,
Economics, Chemistry, Physics

Career Aspiration:

Economics

Coming to CSFC has certainly been an eye opening experience for me. Although I've only been here for two months, its easy to recognise the culture that exists within the four walls of our building: personal hard work and self-motivation to achieve where you want to be.

Even though it is a norm here to excel in everything that we do, we definitely would not have been able to muster the determination to push on without the continuous support from our dedicated teachers. I admit, we are sometimes pushed to our limits, however it is not without good cause. I feel that of all schools, this is certainly one school that prepares us for the high expectations that university life, and ultimately the rest of the competitive world, will demand from us. CSFC's zero-tolerance policy may seem harsh to some, but in my opinion, it disciplines us not to take the world for granted, and to take responsibility for our own actions. All in all, I do not regret coming to this college at all as I feel that I am being provided with invaluable tools that I will need in order to survive the competitive world that awaits me.



Ashley Chiam

Former student of SMK Batu Lintang,
Kuching

Subjects Taken:

Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics and
Cambridge Pre-U Diploma

AS Grades: AAAA [Overall percentage: 92%]

Career Aspiration: Medicine

I came to know about the college through reading the Borneo Post, a Sarawak's local newspaper. They came to Kuching as part of the United Nation Goodwill Ambassador Programme. My parents and I met with Mrs Sarwar while she was still in Kuching and soon, I was informed of my acceptance into the college.



Ashley Chiam on a college trip to Bleinhelm Palace

After first entering the country and college, I was homesick for a few weeks. However, I soon overcame it with the pastoral support given by tutors. We had progress meeting every other week whereby we discussed our concerns with the Vice Principal, Mrs Thompson. Moreover, we could also address our concerns with the

Executive Director, Mrs Sarwar outside school's hours. We had everything that was essential in our accommodation to ensure our wellbeing and our studies were uninterrupted. There are 5 flats, 2 kitchens and a common room in total in our accommodation.

There are strict regulations set by the college to ensure the student's safety that every student must abide by. The curfew is at 10.30 and there is zero tolerance for alcohol consumption. The tutors here work hard in order for us to pass with flying colours and successfully enter our first choice university for our chosen courses. We were given extra one to one tutoring whenever we experienced difficulty in certain subjects. After finishing the syllabus, we were given mocks to both familiarise ourselves with questions and to fully grasp the subject itself. After a long day in college, we unwind by going to David Lloyds, a gym with various facilities such as badminton courts, tennis court, a swimming pool etc.

During our application to universities, the college provided all the help we need for our personal statement. We were given workshops and feedbacks and finally, the 'close to perfection' Personal Statement was produced. After the application, we were getting ready for interviews and the college provided mock interviews to increase our confidence during our interviews. Mrs Sarwar arranged various interview sessions and workshops with ex-students and tutors to provide guidance and tips for interviews.

As part of the United Nation Goodwill Ambassador Programme, we went to the International Hospital of Bahrain. We shadowed doctors from various departments to experience first-hand multi-disciplinary Medicine. Through this experience, we understood the responsibility of a doctor and the qualities doctors must have to provide the best treatment and care to patients.

Throughout my time in Cardiff Sixth Form College, I had great fun learning and making new friends. In this close-knit community where everyone is caring and friendly, I found my second family.

Jordan Kho

Former student of Lodge National School,
Kuching

Subjects Taken:

Mathematics, Further Mathematics,
Economics, Physics and
Cambridge Pre-U Diploma

AS Grades: AAAA [Overall percentage: 98%]

Career Aspiration: Economics

Having been in CSFC for little past 11 months, I can easily say that it was a right decision to come here although offered a place in other colleges. Having not only the best teachers who are chief examiners and are experts in their field, the constructively competitive environment and supportive staff also contributed to the outstanding success of this school. Easily, CSFC is the top college in UK.

With an extremely small student body, no person is a stranger in the college, thus a close relationship is formed within the school. It is this special feature that makes CSFC stand out among other colleges, the individual attention provided here is second to none. Every student is given more than enough help throughout the year. Preparations into university and advice from teachers are stressed upon in CSFC. Many events are organised such as mock interviews from ex-students, work experience and educational trips. All of which would give an upper hand when applying to university.

With a location in the center of Wales, students may enjoy a city life specially in Cardiff. The efficient transport system allows students to take the occasional bus down to areas of special interests during the weekend. The various events organised by the school as well as external events in Cardiff (such as the Michael Jackson Tribute Concert) will keep many students entertained.

If you are a student who seeks the best education and future and can balance between work and play, CSFC is the right place for you.



Jordan Kho performing at the 2011 College Cultural Event

“CSFC stands out among other colleges, the individual attention provided here is second to none...”

Jordan Kho

Marcus Sim

Former student of Lodge National School,
Kuching

Subjects Taken:

Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics and
Cambridge Pre-U Diploma

AS Grades: AAAA [Overall percentage: 99%]

Career Aspiration: Medicine

Initially, I was hesitant about coming to Cardiff Sixth Form College for A-levels. I had only heard about CSFC a few months before starting here, so for my parents, the idea was understandably unsettling. Also, I already had a place at another institution, with the deposit paid. But hearing Mrs. Yasmin Sarwar, college tutor and Executive Director, talk so passionately about the students and college struck a chord with me. The idea of a small college community with close pastoral support really appealed to me as an international student. This combined with the college's academic success and track record of getting students into universities of their choice soon cleared my doubts.



Having been here for almost a year, I have never once looked back on my decision. The atmosphere here is amazing with a diverse international and local community. This combined with the small student numbers result in a really tight-knit and supportive community. The teachers, too, are incredibly helpful and are willing to go the extra mile for their students; coming in to give extra lessons and having personal sessions to help those who are struggling. In addition to normal lessons, we have tutorials on the weekends where knowledge gained during the week is consolidated and reinforced. Having completed my entire AS syllabus in addition to a Cambridge Pre-U GPR module in a span of only 5 months, my success in the June exams is a testament to the hard work and effort from the dedicated staff and teachers.

Aside from academic study, we are given membership to the nearby David Lloyd Sports and Leisure Centre which boasts an excellent gym as well as an indoor swimming pool and numerous courts for badminton, tennis and squash. This gives us a positive and healthy outlet for stress as well as allowing for holistic development through participation in clubs like Badminton, Football and Tennis alongside the A-level course.

With regards to university applications and Personal Statements, the college has always been incredibly supportive. From the weekly Healthcare and Academic Diploma sessions run by ex-students of college to the Careers Days and interview workshops, the college seeks to really prepare us for university. The amount of time and effort put into reading through all our personal statements and university applications is admirable and is proof of the dedication you find here at CSFC.



Students on a college trip to Churchill College, Cambridge University

At CSFC, there is a constant drive for excellence as the college strives to help us stand out amongst a large crowd of quality applicants, whether it is through insightful work placements or through the participation of extra-curricular activities like the Duke of Edinburgh or the Nuffield Bursary Scheme. The latter gave me the opportunity to work alongside a research scientist in search of anti-inflammatory therapeutics for conditions like arthritis and septicaemia during my summer, while work experience in both laboratory and clinical settings helped cement my decision to study Medicine. The college Goodwill Ambassador Programme is another incredible experience which involves carrying out work experience and charity work in a foreign country. All of this has helped shape me, preparing me for university life.

My experience at CSFC has so far been an enjoyable one. The close relationships you form with both the teachers and the students really offer a sense of community which, I believe, was what helped me settled in so easily despite starting only in January. That combined with the strong emotional support of the staff and tutors are what make CSFC an especially excellent institution for international students coming away from home for the first time. Cardiff Sixth Form College may be small, but with its academic excellence, prestigious extra-curriculars and flawless university track record, it is certainly a force to be reckoned with.

“...my success in the June exams is a testament to the hard work and effort from the dedicated staff and teachers.”

Marcus Sim

Shu Lynn Lim

Former student of Sri KL, Kuala Lumpur

Subjects Taken:

Mathematics, Additional Mathematics, ICT, Religious Studies, Chemistry, Biology and Physics

GCSE Grades: 5 A*, 1 A & Distinction in Additional Mathematics

Career Aspiration: Economics

This is my second year in Cardiff Sixth Form College. I first heard of the college when Mr and Mrs Sarwar, the college representatives came to a secondary school in Malaysia. I got to know more about the college and decided it would be a good opportunity to study abroad in a small, supportive college.

Being supportive was an added advantage as I was only 15 at that time. As I wanted to take my Form 3 government exam, I had to start my GCSEs two months late. When I had just started my classes, I found it very different from my classes in Malaysia. As the classes were in small groups of an average of 10 students in small classrooms, it was easy to concentrate and so easy to get into the flow of the lessons.

Now I am in my AS year and I am actively involved in many of the activities the college offers such as NASA club, debate club and the Cultural Event. The college also arranges many extra classes, especially when examinations are nearing. What I admire is the amount of dedication from the teachers who spend the time to come into the college during the term breaks to give us extra help on our subjects and to teach us the right exam techniques. Besides this, we get work experience where we get to have a taste of our future jobs. This gives us a chance to think about our choice of university course.



Shu Lynn and Ashley Chiam on a college trip to Bleinheim Palace

Besides the academic sector of the college, I'm confident to say that the accommodation and catering we are provided with is great. As it is a small college, everyone knows each other. The college staffs treat you as if you are close to family. This helps a lot when it comes to homesickness. Although there are so many different opinions, the college never gives up trying to satisfy everyone but this is not only for our accommodation and catering. Progress meetings are carried out once in two weeks where we get to have individual meetings with Mrs Thompson, the Vice Principal to talk about the progress of our studies and any problems we have. It could be the canteen food, difficulty to cope in certain subjects or even stress.

Even though it is not common to start studying abroad at this age, I personally enjoy studying at this college. Despite the amount of hard work I have to put in, it pays off. At the end of the day, it is about getting the results and entering your favoured university.

Lisa Liew

Former student of Lodge National School,
Kuching

Subjects Taken:

Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics and
Cambridge Pre-U Diploma

AS Grades: AAAA [Overall percentage: 93%]

Career Aspiration: Dentistry

Looking back on when I moved to Cardiff in my AS year, I remembered how the teachers and students of this college were very welcoming and did made me feel right at home.

I have to sincerely thank Mr. and Mrs. Sarwar, Mr. Farzal and all the teachers for their endless hard work and support for inspiring me and helping me to broaden my outlook on life throughout my time here aside from their commitment and guidance in helping me achieve excellent results after a challenging year. The students' welfare has always been taken care of and the close teacher-student rapport is what makes this college unique. I really appreciate all the efforts the college has put in to ensure that we are constantly happy. Through arranging weekly progress meeting with Mrs. Thompson, started catering Chinese food to increase the variety of food and help settle our accommodation problems. I honestly have to say this college had given me the best education and opportunities besides supporting every one of us during the process of our university application. For this and more, thank you Cardiff Sixth Form College!



Mico Chai

Former student of Sri KL, Kuala Lumpur

Subjects Taken:

Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Economics and Cambridge Pre-U Diploma

AS Grades: AAAA [Overall percentage: 97%]

A-Level Grades: A* in Mathematics

Career Aspiration: Mathematics

I am currently doing my A2 year at Cardiff Sixth Form College. I was introduced to Cardiff Sixth Form College when the college representatives, Mr and Mrs Sarwar, visited my secondary school in Malaysia. What first attracted me was the college's fantastic grade records for the past few years. After meeting the college representatives, my parents and I decided that CSFC is the right college for me to pursue my A-level studies.

As my IGCSE examination ended on November 2010, I decided to join the January 2011 intake. For a head-start, I chose to join CSFC a month prior to the start of my course. The college staffs were very kind and approachable which helped me to overcome my homesickness. Also as a sixth form college, the tutor-student relationship is very much commendable. My Mathematics tutor acknowledged that I was able to do a few Mathematics modules in a very short time upon my arrival and thus registered me for 4 Maths modules in the January AS modular examination. Having had to go through a 5-month accelerated AS course and do modular exams for all 5 AS subjects in June, sitting some exams in January largely reduced my burden.



Throughout my AS year, I had progress meetings every other week with our Vice Principal during which we discussed any problems we faced, academically or otherwise. I feel that the pastoral support given by the college staff especially Mrs Sarwar, our welfare officer, is applaudable. Being appointed as International Deputy Head Girl, I came to know of the hard work and effort the college staff put in to improve students' welfare. One of the things we did was producing a Canteen Questionnaire to get suggestions from students on how to improve the catering.

With excellent tutors, some of whom are ex-WJEC board examiners, and the long schooling hours, CSFC ensures academic strength in its students. The amount of effort that the tutors put into helping us is inspiring. Staying back late in college and coming in on weekends to seek academic help is common here. I came to this college with a belief that I would have a better chance of getting into my preferred choice of University, the reason being that at this college, we are aided in our search for relevant work placements and are provided with interview workshops.

With a 'work hard, play hard' ethos, CSFC has helped me to develop both academically and socially whether it is by participation in the annual Cultural Event or through my involvement in Debate and Badminton clubs. I believe my time here at CSFC has been an incredible experience, and it is both an honour and a pleasure to be able to study at such a respectable institution. These cherished moments are experiences which will stay with me long after I have left CSFC, my second home.



Students on the college Duke of Edinburgh Programme



Delegates on the college's Goodwill Ambassador Programme to Bahrain

“...it is both an honour and a pleasure to be able to study at such a respectable institution.”

Mico Chai

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