



# Philosophy

Full details about the course are available from

<http://www.phil.cam.ac.uk/prosp-students/prosp-ugrad>

and

[www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/courses/philosophy](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/courses/philosophy)

## The subject at Selwyn

Selwyn provides strong support for philosophy and is able to look back on a series of distinguished results in the subject over many years. The College is just two minutes' walk from the Faculty, where most of the teaching takes place, and the fact that Selwyn is known to encourage smaller subjects is also an advantage.

There are either one or two philosophy students in each year of study at Selwyn. In the first year, all students take five papers (metaphysics and philosophy of mind; ethics and political philosophy; logic; set texts; general). In the second year, students take compulsory papers in metaphysics and epistemology, and logic. In addition they select a number of papers from other areas including ethics, Greek and Roman philosophy, early modern philosophy, philosophy of science, political philosophy and experimental psychology. In the final year, the student may select a combination of papers with no compulsory subject areas. Coursework can be submitting in the place of one paper in both the second and the third years. In the final year, it is also possible to submit a dissertation on any philosophical topic.

Teaching revolves around weekly supervisions, lectures and, for some subjects, discussion groups and classes. The supervision is a particularly suitable method for learning to philosophize; the students are given a weekly opportunity to deepen their understanding of the relevant subject matter and develop their critical skills.

A number of lively speaker regularly visit Cambridge and undergraduates are encouraged to join the famous Moral Sciences Club, where they can listen to likes of Derek Parfit, Judith Thomson and Noam Chomsky. This is supplemented in Selwyn by a student lead seminar every term. The College Library holds over 40,000 books, including those most relevant to this subject, and stock is continually updated. The Library also provides a pleasant study area.

Selwyn has recently produced a number of young scholars who have graduated at or near the top of the University Class List, and have won College Prizes for excellence. Many of our students have gone on to undertake postgraduate study in Philosophy or other subjects, where they have again excelled.

## The Teaching Fellow

Our Director of Studies for Philosophy is Dr Maarten Steenhagen, whose main fields of interest are perception and the mind.

## Qualities we are looking for

We are looking for ambitious and hard-working Philosophy students who relish a challenge and seek to excel. Study at University is very different from work at school. As philosophy is relatively rarely studied at the pre-university level, applicants are expected to demonstrate a strong interest in the subject. But in addition to such an interest, applicants must be able to demonstrate a capacity for clear-headed logical reasoning and abstract thought.

If you read Philosophy at Cambridge, you will be expected to organise your own routine of study. Your supervisors will discuss a weekly essay based on intensive reading with you each week, and your Director of Studies will keep a close eye on your progress, but there will be no one standing over you organising your daily timetable for you. Only those with the deepest commitment to Philosophy will have the motivation and stamina necessary to cope with the course, and to continue to improve their skills.

## Interviews

There are two interviews. The subject interview is conducted by the Director of Studies, usually along with another philosopher, and lasts about half an hour.

You will also have a shorter general interview. This is intended to let us find out more about your motivation in applying for Philosophy at Cambridge. It is intended to give us a fuller sense of your aptitude for your chosen course, the maturity of your approach towards academic work, and your interests in and beyond Philosophy.

## Admissions Assessment

As at other colleges, applicants will be asked to complete a University-wide written Philosophy aptitude assessment in Cambridge as part of the selection process. This will take an hour and is divided into critical thinking type questions in the first part and an essay in the second part.

## Finding out more and Open Days

The Faculty of Philosophy will be participating in the Cambridge Open Days on 4 and 5 July. See the insert in our prospectus about this and other open days at Selwyn. Full details are also available on our website.



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