



Selwyn College
Cambridge



English

Full details about the course are available from

www.english.cam.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/

and

www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/courses/english

The subject at Selwyn

The Cambridge English course offers much freedom in choosing which works to study. We at Selwyn encourage students to exercise this choice from an early stage. As the course progresses, our students are increasingly involved in devising their programmes of reading; supervisors advise on matters of range and depth, and help students balance the demands of the course with their own interests and needs.

The central feature of students' work is a weekly essay, discussed in one-to-one, paired, or small-group college supervisions. The College also arranges regular Practical Criticism discussion classes and language teaching (where appropriate).

Selwyn is very conveniently placed for English students, being situated next door to the Faculty Building, the English Faculty Library, and the University lecture block. The College Library holds over 40,000 books, including those most relevant to this subject, and stock is continually being updated.

Split Tripos: While we do sometimes admit students to read for just Part I of the Tripos, if we are convinced that the interest in English is genuine, we should point out that students who do so often end up feeling that they have missed out, since Part I English lays the foundations for the much more wide-ranging Part II, which most students find the most exhilarating part of their course. Changing into English for Part II is possible but presents problems because students have missed the full grounding given at Part I. We have had students transfer successfully but have insisted that they take an extra year over their Part II.

The Teaching Fellows

The Teaching Fellows in English are:

Dr Philip Connell, University Senior Lecturer, who specialises in literary and intellectual history between 1650 and 1840; Dr Bonnie Lander Johnson, who specialises in English literature, drama and culture from 1500-1700; Dr Sarah Meer, University Senior Lecturer, who specialises in nineteenth-century literature and culture and nineteenth-century literature and culture. Dr Jean Chothia is Emeritus Fellow in English and still plays a large role in College life. She specialises in drama, dramatic language, and Shakespeare in performance.

Qualities we are looking for

University study of literature is among the more solitary courses – most of a student's time is spent alone with books. We need to be convinced that applicants have the motivation to read intensively by themselves and organise their studies efficiently and will retain their strong interest in literature throughout the three years of the course. We therefore look for people who have decided for themselves that English is their subject and who have a genuine interest in literary language and structures, as well as the skills to excel in the course.

Subject requirements

We are happy to consider applicants taking English Language and Literature A-Level. Because the Cambridge course is almost exclusively literary in content and approach, our selection process naturally concentrates on literature. Such students may have less experience of criticising a range of literary work than candidates who offer straight English Literature A-Level, and it is therefore particularly important that they read as widely as possible to broaden their knowledge.

Pre-interview assessment

Selwyn requires applicants in English to take the English Literature Admissions Test (ELAT). This is a 90-minute assessment taken on **31 October 2018** at an authorised centre. You can find out more details online:

<http://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/elat/about-elat/>

Interviews

There will be a single subject interview with two of the College's English Fellows. It is likely that we will give you a short piece of writing to read while waiting and to comment on during the interview.

You will also have a shorter general interview. This is intended to let us find out more about your motivation in applying for English 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 English Literature.

Written work

We want to enable candidates to show their abilities to best advantage. We therefore ask applicants to submit two pieces of work they have written on literary subjects which may be used as basis for discussion at the interview. These should not be timed essays or pieces written specially, nor need they be the pieces for which you had the highest marks, but should be work that is lively or challenging, and that concerned novels, poems or plays that particularly interested you. This will give us a better idea of how you might respond to the challenges of an English course.

Finding out more and Open Days

The Faculty of English will be participating in the Cambridge Open Days on 5 and 6 July. See the insert in our prospectus about this and other open days at Selwyn. Full details are also available on our website.

The English Faculty has produced a website called Cambridge Authors www.english.cam.ac.uk/cambridgeauthors which is intended for people considering studying English at University. It was mostly written by Cambridge students, and offers a variety of resources and approaches relating to ten authors who studied at Cambridge, from Christopher Marlowe to Zadie Smith.



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