Psychological and Behavioural Sciences

Full details of the course are available from
http://www.pbs.trpos.cam.ac.uk/prospective
and
www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/courses/psychological-
and-behavioural-sciences

The subject at Selwyn
Psychological and Behavioural Sciences Tripos (PBS) is a new
course, aiming to allow a student to explore all aspects of
psychology from society to neuroscience. The course will be
accredited by the British Psychological Society as providing the
Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership and is thus a
suitable platform for postgraduate professional training courses
in psychological disciplines such as Clinical Psychology.

During all three years of PBS, students can complement the
main topics in psychology with study of their choice from a wide
range of subjects, including subjects from the humanities (e.g.
history of science, philosophy of science, philosophy of mind),
social sciences (including introductory papers in sociology,
anthropology and politics) or biological sciences (evolution and
behaviour).

At Selwyn we encourage students to be adventurous in their
choice of optional papers, and encourage them to explore the
range of different possibilities that the course allows.

The Teaching Fellows
Dr Marta Halina is the Director of Studies in PBS. We also have
a number of fellows in HSPS and Natural Sciences who cover
aspects of the PBS course. We are therefore able to provide a
good deal of the supervision for all three years of the course
either in house, or with the aid of carefully selected external
supervisors.

As well as teaching and organising teaching for Selwyn, all of
these Fellows research in their own University Departments.

Qualities we are looking for
What we are looking for is a genuine commitment to, and
interest in, Psychology as a broad subject, from the biology of
the brain to human interaction. We are looking for people who
are fascinated by the relationship between mental events and
the natural world, and who want to find out and understand more
about people’s minds, and the brains which produce them.

We expect you to have a good record in a range of academic
disciplines, including science; you should be comfortable with
principles of science and not afraid of mathematics, or hard
work. Above all, we are looking for people who have the
potential to think scientifically and critically about how the mind
works.

Pre-interview assessment
All candidates for Psychological and Behavioural Sciences are
asked to take a pre-interview written assessment, which will
take place in schools and other assessment centres on 2
November 2017. You must be registered in advance
(separately to your UCAS application) to take the assessment.
The registration deadline is 15 October 2017. Your assessment
centre must register you for the pre-interview assessment (you
cannot register yourself).

Interviews
You can expect a subject interview, together with a shorter
general academic interview. The longer interview will
concentrate almost exclusively on matters within psychological
sciences; we will be trying to assess how you think and the level
at which you can think. Typically, you will be presented with
issues or problems within psychology to discuss.

These discussion problems are deliberately open-ended, and
we do not wish you to answer them from factual recall, but rather
you will need to think through the problem, including things you
know already, and information you are given. We are interested
in a lot more than your ability to recall facts, we wish to see your
ability to take on new information, as well as use the knowledge
that you have in new and possibly unfamiliar situations.

On the day of the interviews you may also be given a short piece
of writing to read. You will then be asked to discuss it in your
subject interview.

In addition, applicants also have an interview with one of the
Admissions Tutors. This is designed to learn about your
interests and activities outside the Psychological Sciences, your
motivation in choosing to study PBS at Cambridge, and the
maturity of your approach towards academic work.

Subject requirements
A wide range of A-level (or equivalent) subjects may be relevant
to PBS. We require at least one core science subject (Biology,
Chemistry, Physics or Mathematics). A-level Psychology is not
required, nor particularly advantageous. Ideally, you will also
have some non-science subjects within your A-levels.

If you are taking other post-16 qualifications, we are looking for
broadly similar coverage of science and non-science subjects
mentioned for A levels.

Finding out more and Open Days
The Psychology department and the PBS course will be
represented in the Cambridge Open Days on 6 and 7 July. See
the insert in our prospectus about this and other open days at
Selwyn. Full details are also available on our website.