



Psychological & Behavioural Sciences

Full details of the course are available from

<http://www.pbs.tripos.cam.ac.uk/prospective>

and

www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/courses/psychological-and-behavioural-sciences

The subject at Selwyn

The Psychological and Behavioural Sciences Tripos (PBS) course aims 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 Fabian Grabenhorst 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.

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.

Admissions Assessment

Selwyn College will ask PBS candidates to sit a written test when they come for interview.

Finding out more and Open Days

The Psychology department and the PBS course will be represented in the virtual Cambridge Open Days on 2 and 3 July. Full details are also available on our website.

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