

Ideas for wider reading

Strong applicants to Cambridge and other competitive universities have often explored their chosen subject through wider reading outside of their A Levels. This is called ‘supra-curricular’ activity, rather than ‘extra-curricular’, as it is primarily academic exploration, building on what you are studying in school or college.

The selection of reading lists and resources below have been gathered from Cambridge departmental and College websites, as well as the websites of other universities and online resources. **These lists are certainly NOT ‘required reading’ for Cambridge applicants and you are in no way expected to have read them before interview.** They simply provide some suggestions for places to start exploring your own academic interests independently.

It is important to critically engage with your wider reading: think about the authors’ arguments and use of evidence, and whether you agree. Reading quality news sources can be a useful way to encounter stories relevant to your academic interests and, more generally, to practise assessing arguments and weighing evidence. Some suggestions include:

- Broadsheet newspapers: The Guardian, The Times, Independent, Daily Telegraph
- BBC News online: www.bbc.co.uk/
- Al Jazeera English: www.aljazeera.com/
- The Economist: www.economist.com/
- CNN online: <http://edition.cnn.com/>
- The New Statesman magazine: www.newstatesman.com/

There’s also a wealth of resources, including entire undergraduate courses available for free with online lectures, downloadable course notes and academic discussion groups, available on sites including:

- www.coursera.org
- <http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/>
- www.edx.org/courses
- <http://www.khanacademy.org/>
- <http://oyc.yale.edu/>

You do not need to buy any books – as well as using web resources, it is always worth visiting your local library as well as your school or college library. If you have a university near your home, you might be able to gain access to their library collections as well, which will include more specialist academic books and journals. Whichever library you visit, try speaking to librarians and asking them

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to suggest relevant reading and online resources on particular subjects, or to order in books which you would like to have a look at.

If you are looking for suggested reading which is specific to Cambridge, it is worth checking College websites for their reading lists for offer holders, as well as looking at the relevant faculty pages; for example, King's College has particularly useful lists arranged by subject:

www.kings.cam.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/offerholders/reading-lists/index.html

Reading is a great way to explore subjects which you find interesting – but there are other ways to deepen your understanding: visit your local museums, monuments, galleries and natural features, and think analytically about nature, machinery or the built environment. Keep an eye out for seminars, taster days or other Outreach activities run by any local Universities which you could attend, or you might like to join a regional or national club or society related to your academic interests, and enter competitions such as essay prizes or maths Olympiads.

The best thing about super-curricular activities is that there are no exams or deadlines to worry about – you are free to follow your own lines of enquiry into the areas that interest you the most! Rather than seeing this as an exercise purely to give you something to write about in your personal statement, you should take time to explore things that you genuinely find interesting. Most importantly, you should enjoy your wider reading: don't feel pressured to read something just because it might look 'impressive' – use it as an opportunity to develop your own academic interests.

These suggested sources of wider reading begin with some university reading lists for prospective students or undergraduates, and then include links to websites of organisations or publications which may provide further resources. They have been arranged alphabetically in categories according to the Cambridge undergraduate courses, but students applying to other university courses should be able to find relevant resources by looking at the lists for related subjects.

Suggestions for the Humanities and Social Sciences

Anglo-Saxon Norse and Celtic:

www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/currentstudents/undergraduates/reading-lists/intro-reading.htm

Links to Anglo-Saxon sites and resources: www.ravensgard.org/gerekr/anglo.html

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies:

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www.britishmuseum.org/about_us/departments/middle_east/reading_list.aspx

www.ames.cam.ac.uk/dmes/islamic/preparatory.htm (Arabic & Persian Studies)

www.ames.cam.ac.uk/dmes/hebrew/preparatory.htm (Hebrew & Semitic Studies)

www.ames.cam.ac.uk/deas/chinese/preparatory.htm (Chinese)

www.ames.cam.ac.uk/deas/japanese/preparatory.htm (Japanese)

Al Jazeera English: www.aljazeera.com/

Architecture:

www.murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk/students/newstudents/readinglists/architecture/

www.clare.cam.ac.uk/data/uploads/Architecture.pdf

<http://www.dow.cam.ac.uk/index.php/about/freshers/reading-lists/304-architecture>

www.archi-ninja.com/list-of-architecture-books-for-student-architects/

<http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/offerholders/reading-lists/architecture.html>

Classics:

www.classics.cam.ac.uk/current-students/incoming_students_reading/

www.kings.cam.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/offerholders/reading-lists/classics.html

www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/index.htm

www.artsci.wustl.edu/~cwconrad/classics.html

Centre for the Study of Ancient Documents: www.csad.ox.ac.uk/csad/

The Roman Society: www.romansociety.org/

The Hellenic Society: www.hellenicsociety.org.uk/

Economics:

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www.econ.cam.ac.uk/prospect/PrelimReadingList.pdf

www.econ.cam.ac.uk/prospect/ba/list.html

<http://sociologystudents.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/economic-sociology-reading-list1.pdf>
(Economic Sociology)

Institute for Economic Affairs: www.iea.org.uk/

The Economist magazine: www.economist.com/

National Institute of Economic and Social Research: www.niesr.ac.uk/

International Monetary Fund: www.imf.org/external/

Education:

www.educ.cam.ac.uk/undergradstudy/tripos/contenteducation/Education.pdf

Educational Psychology Links: www.edpsycinteractive.org/materials/internet.html

English:

Read widely and think critically about what you read. Pursue your own interests in literature, but bear in mind that it is a good idea to read some pre-twentieth century works and poetry as well as contemporary novels.

www.kings.cam.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/offerholders/reading-lists/english.html

www.english.cam.ac.uk/cambridgeauthors/

Paradise Lost: www.christs.cam.ac.uk/darknessvisible/

Poetry Society: www.poetrysociety.org.uk/

Literary Review: www.literaryreview.co.uk/

Times Literary Supplement: www.the-tls.co.uk/tls/

Geography:

www.caths.cam.ac.uk/home/?m=page&id=659

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<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/geography/study/undergraduate/Preliminary-Reading-List.pdf>

National Geographic: www.nationalgeographic.com/

Geographical Association: <http://geography.org.uk/>

Royal Geographical Society: <http://www.rgs.org/HomePage.htm>

Joint Nature Conservation Committee: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/>

Geological Society: www.geolsoc.org.uk/index.html

British Geological Survey: www.bgs.ac.uk/

History:

<http://www.hist.cam.ac.uk/prospective-undergrads/virtual-classroom/suggested-reading>

<http://www.hist.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/tripos-papers/part-i-papers-for-2012-2013>

Internet Medieval Sourcebook - hundreds of primary texts available online:

www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook2.asp

Internet Modern Sourcebook – thousands of primary sources, secondary sources and texts on historiography: www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook.asp

Reviews in History: www.history.ac.uk/reviews/

British Museum: www.britishmuseum.org/

History Today Magazine: www.historytoday.com/

BBC History: www.bbc.co.uk/history/

Historical Association: <http://history.org.uk/>

Royal Historical Society: www.royalhistoricalsociety.org/

British Museum: www.britishmuseum.org/explore.aspx

History of Art:

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<http://www.hoart.cam.ac.uk/admissions-1/undergraduate-admissions/what-will-i-study/preparatory-reading>

www.hoa.ox.ac.uk/applicants/undergraduates/suggested-reading.html

www.courtauld.ac.uk/degreeprogrammes/documents/BAReadingList.pdf

www.ucl.ac.uk/art-history/courses/summer_reading_lists

Royal Academy: www.royalacademy.org.uk/

Fitzwilliam Museum: www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/onlineresources/

Ashmolean Museum: www.ashmolean.org/collections/

Human, Social and Political Sciences (encompassing Archaeology, Anthropology, Politics, International Relations and Sociology):

The official HSPS suggested reading list:

www.hsps.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/prospective/HSPS_Suggested_Reading_For_2013_Entry.pdf

www.kings.cam.ac.uk/files/undergraduate/hsp-sreading-for-prospective-students.pdf

- **Archaeology:**

www.britishmuseum.org/about_us/departments/prehistory_and_europe/reading_list.aspx

www.archanth.cam.ac.uk/ProspectiveStudents/archaeology.html

www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/freshers/rlists/arch/

<http://www.thenakedscientists.com/HTML/podcasts/archive/archaeology/> (Podcasts)

Current Archaeology Magazine: www.archaeology.co.uk/

Young Archaeologists' Club: www.yac-uk.org/

British Museum: www.britishmuseum.org/explore.aspx

- **Anthropology:**

www.archanth.cam.ac.uk/ProspectiveStudents/bioanth.html

www.archanth.cam.ac.uk/ProspectiveStudents/socanth.html

www.ox.ac.uk/document.rm?id=1027

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www.ihs.ox.ac.uk/prospective-students/introductory-reading/

www.isca.ox.ac.uk/prospective-students/degrees/social-anthropology/reading-list/

Discover Anthropology: www.discoveranthropology.org.uk/

Royal Anthropological Institute: <http://therai.org.uk/>

Association on Social Anthropologists: <http://theasa.org/>

- **Sociology**

http://www.hsps.cam.ac.uk/pps/current/undergraduate/Paperguides/Part1_2012-13/part1paper2.pdf (First year Sociology paper)

<http://sociologystudents.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/economic-sociology-reading-list1.pdf>
(Economic Sociology)

British Sociological Association: www.britisoc.co.uk/

British Journal of Sociology: <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/BJS/home.aspx>

BBC 'Thinking Allowed' programme: www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qy05

- **Politics:**

http://www.hsps.cam.ac.uk/pps/current/undergraduate/Paperguides/Part1_2012-13/part1paper1.pdf (First year Politics paper)

http://www.hsps.cam.ac.uk/pps/current/undergraduate/Paperguides/Part1_2012-13/part1paper5.pdf (International Relations paper)

<http://tutor2u.net/blog/index.php/politics/comments/politics-reading-list/>

Oxford Politics microsite: <http://politicsinspires.org/>

The Economist magazine: www.economist.com/

Political Studies Association: www.psa.ac.uk/

UK parliament: www.parliament.uk/

United Nations: www.un.org/en/

Chatham House on International Affairs: www.chathamhouse.org/

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Amnesty: <http://amnesty.org/>

Land Economy:

www.landecon.cam.ac.uk/courses/undergradstudy/newstudents.htm

Institute for Economic Affairs: www.iea.org.uk/

Joint Nature Conservation Committee: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/>

Law:

<http://www.law.cam.ac.uk/faculty-resources/courses-and-subjects/tripos/papers/criminal-law-tripos/6/reading-list> (Criminal Law)

<http://www.law.cam.ac.uk/faculty-resources/courses-and-subjects/tripos/papers/law-of-contract-tripos/8/reading-list> (Law of Contract)

<http://www.law.cam.ac.uk/faculty-resources/courses-and-subjects/tripos/papers/law-of-tort-tripos/7/reading-list> (Law of Tort)

www.ox.ac.uk/document.rm?id=1955

Department of Justice: www.justice.gov.uk/

Judiciary of England and Wales: www.judiciary.gov.uk/

Legislation database: www.legislation.gov.uk/

Counsel Magazine: www.counsellmagazine.co.uk/

Guardian Law pages: www.guardian.co.uk/law

BBC Law in Action: www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006tgy1

Linguistics:

<http://www.mml.cam.ac.uk/undergrad/LingTripos/lingsummary.html>www.ling-phil.ox.ac.uk/reading_prelims

www.kings.cam.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/offerholders/reading-lists/linguistics.html

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<http://linguistlist.org/issues/>

Modern and Medieval Languages:

Read newspapers and magazines, watch TV and films and listen to the radio. Read literature in English translation, as well as trying some in the original language.

Newspapers:

Le Monde: www.lemonde.fr

Suddeutsche Zeitung: www.sueddeutsche.de

El Pais: www.elpais.com

Corriere Della Sera: www.corriere.it

Diario de Noticias: www.dn.pt

www.multikultura.org.uk/ (German, Spanish and French exercises)

- **French:** www.mml.cam.ac.uk/french/courses/ugrad/advice.html
- **German:** www.mml.cam.ac.uk/german/courses/ugrad/ (Links to Options A & B have suggested texts)

<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~spet0201/readinglists/prelims/top.html>

- **Italian:** www.mml.cam.ac.uk/italian/courses/ugrad/ (Links to Options A & B have suggested texts)
- **Portuguese:** www.mml.cam.ac.uk/spanish/courses/ugrad/initioport.html (Ab initio)

www.mml.cam.ac.uk/spanish/courses/reading/default_Port.html (Portuguese option B)

www.thingsmeanalot.com/2009/10/sunday-salon-portuguese-literature.html (Portuguese literature in translation)

- **Russian:**

www.mml.cam.ac.uk/slavonic/courses/ugrad/UnderGuide.pdf

<http://lizoksbooks.blogspot.co.uk/2008/11/top-10-fiction-hits-of-russian.html> (Russian literature)

- **Spanish:**

www.mml.cam.ac.uk/spanish/courses/ugrad/initiospanish.html (Spanish Ab initio)

<http://www.mml.cam.ac.uk/spanish/courses/ugrad/spb1.html> (Spanish - use of language)

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Music:

www.mus.cam.ac.uk/applicants/undergraduate/before-you-begin/

www.mus.cam.ac.uk/internal/files/2011/09/Tripos-guide-11-121.pdf

www.kings.cam.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/offerholders/reading-lists/music.html

Royal Academy of music: www.ram.ac.uk/

Philosophy:

www.phil.cam.ac.uk/pros_students/reading_list_prosp_ugrads.pdf

www.kings.cam.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/offerholders/reading-lists/philosophy.html

Philosophical Society: www.philosophicalsociety.com/

Theology:

www.divinity.cam.ac.uk/apply/introductory-reading

www.kings.cam.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/offerholders/reading-lists/theology.html

www.spc.ox.ac.uk/uploads/Theology%20List%202011.doc

Ian Ramsay Centre for Science and Religion: www.ianramseycentre.info/

Suggestions for the Sciences

These suggested sources of wider reading begin with some university reading lists for prospective students or undergraduates, and then include links to websites of organisations or publications which may provide further resources. As these reading suggestions are organised according to the Cambridge undergraduate courses, suggested resources for Physics, Chemistry and Biological Sciences can be found under 'Natural Sciences', where we have also included more general resources which may be of interest to you if you are considering any science course.

Chemical Engineering:

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www.ceb.cam.ac.uk/pages/frequently-asked-questions.html#qn19

www.ceb.cam.ac.uk/pages/reading-list.html

Chemical Engineering Resources and web forum: www.cheresources.com/content/articles/

Links to Chem Eng journals and articles – some links broken, but many still useful:

http://home.nas.net/~dbc/cic_hamilton/eng.html

Computer Science:

www.cl.cam.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/preparation/

www.comlab.ox.ac.uk/admissions/ugrad/Background_reading

Oxford's Geomlab: www.cs.ox.ac.uk/geomlab/home.html

The Guardian's list of Comp Sci resources: www.guardian.co.uk/teacher-network/2012/jan/24/top-ten-computer-science-teaching-resources

National Cipher Challenge: www.cipher.maths.soton.ac.uk/

Micromouse Competition: www.tic.ac.uk/micromouse/index.asp

Engineering:

www.eng.cam.ac.uk/admissions/information/reading.html

Online library and Engineering web forum: www.engineering.com/

Royal Academy of Engineering: www.raeng.org.uk/

Institution of Civil Engineers: www.ice.org.uk/

Mathematics:

www.maths.cam.ac.uk/undergrad/admissions/readinglist.pdf

www.maths.cam.ac.uk/undergrad/admissions/workbook.pdf

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www.maths.ox.ac.uk/system/files/attachments/introbook12.pdf (See page 12 for suggested reading)

www.maths.ox.ac.uk/prospective-students/undergraduate/practice-problems

Millennium Mathematics Project: <http://mmp.maths.org/>

Institute of Mathematics: www.ima.org.uk/

Plus Magazine: <http://plus.maths.org/content/>

Further Maths Support Network: www.fmnetwork.org.uk/#

STEP website: www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/adt/step

National Cipher Challenge: www.cipher.maths.soton.ac.uk/

Medicine/Veterinary Medicine: (see also Natural Sciences)

www.bio.cam.ac.uk/sbs/facbiol/mvst/keyconcepts.html

www.ox.ac.uk/document.rm?id=1918

www.ox.ac.uk/document.rm?id=1919

www.kings.cam.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/offerholders/reading-lists/medicine.html

British Medical Association: <http://bma.org.uk/>

Royal Society of Medicine mailing list: www.rsm.ac.uk/medicalcareers/index.php

Online introduction to anatomy: https://camtools.cam.ac.uk/access/content/group/071fad89-2687-4b3f-0047-a99afea45e73/Basic%20Anatomy/fabinfo/basic_anatomy.htm

Radio programmes on medical ethics: www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b007xbtd

Wellcome Trust: www.wellcome.ac.uk/

Human Genome Project: <http://genome.wellcome.ac.uk/>

Oxford Medical School Gazette: www.omsg-online.com/

Institute of Biomedical Science: www.ibms.org/

Physiological Society: www.physoc.org/

British Veterinary Association: www.bva.co.uk/

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Natural Sciences:

Suggested Reading:

www.cam.ac.uk/about/natscitripos/prospectus/reading.html

www.materials.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/booklist.html (Materials Science)

www.bioch.ox.ac.uk/aspsite/index.asp?pageid=422 (Biochemistry)

www.ox.ac.uk/document.rm?id=1919 (Biomedical)

www.ox.ac.uk/document.rm?id=1953 (Chemistry)

www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/freshers/rlists/es/ (Earth Sciences)

General Interest:

New Scientist Magazine: www.newscientist.com/

Scientific American Magazine: www.scientificamerican.com/

Cambridge Science Podcasts: www.thenakedscientists.com/HTML/podcasts/

Oxford Science Podcasts: <http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/units/mathematical-physical-life-sciences-division>

Oxford Science Blog: www.ox.ac.uk/media/science_blog/

Biological, Biomedical and Life Sciences and Zoology: (See also Medicine/Vet Med)

Wellcome Trust: www.wellcome.ac.uk/

Human Genome Project: <http://genome.wellcome.ac.uk/>

Educational resources at the Natural History Museum: www.nhm.ac.uk/education/index.html

BBC Science and Nature programmes: www.bbc.co.uk/sn/

Institute of Zoology: www.zsl.org/science

Botanical Sciences at Kew: www.kew.org/

Chemistry:

Chemistry World Online: www.rsc.org/chemistryworld/

RSC Journals: <http://pubs.rsc.org/en/Journals?key=Title&value=Current>

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RSC membership: www.rsc.org/Membership/Networking/chemnet/

Biochemical Society: www.biochemistry.org/

Biochemistry for schools: www.biochem4schools.org/

Physics:

Institute of Physics (including free membership for 16-19 year-olds): www.physics.org/

British Physics Olympiad: www.physics.ox.ac.uk/olympiad/

Oxford Astronomy site: www.galaxyzoo.org/

Geological and Materials Sciences:

Geological Society: www.geolsoc.org.uk/index.html

British Geological Survey: www.bgs.ac.uk/

Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining: www.iom3.org/

UK Centre for Materials Education: <http://materials.ac.uk/>

Psychological and Behavioural Sciences:

http://www.hsps.cam.ac.uk/pps/current/undergraduate/Paperguides/Part1_2012-13/part1paper3.pdf (Old course, but useful reading lists!)

<http://www.pbs.tripos.cam.ac.uk/prospective/faq#section-8>

<http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/files/undergraduate/pbs-reading-for-prospective-students.pdf>

www.ox.ac.uk/document.rm?id=1582

www.dur.ac.uk/natural.sciences/freshers/rlists/psyc/

British Psychological Society: www.bps.org.uk/

The Psychologist Journal: www.thepsychologist.org.uk/

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