

Biological Natural Sciences

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Example Timetable

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9 – 10	Chem lect.	E&B Lect.	Chem lect.	E&B Lect.	Chem lect.	E&B Lect.	
10 – 11	BOC lect.	Math Lect.	BOC lect.	Math Lect.	BOC lect.	Math Lect.	
11 – 12	Chemistry Practical (<i>odd weeks</i>) / E&B (<i>even weeks</i>)				Weekly Biology of Cells practical		
12 – 13			E&B Supo	Maths Bio practical			
13 – 14		BOC Supo					
14 – 15							
15 – 16							
16 – 17							
17 – 18		Maths Supo		Chem supo			
18 – 19							
Evening							

Key: **E&B** = Evolution and Behaviour **BOC** = Biology of Cells **Supo** = Supervision

The timetable above gives you an example of the contact hours for a typical 1st year Biological Natural scientist. It is then your responsibility to block out extra

time for completing supervision work; going over lecture content; society events and personal time. It is important to get really good at time management so that you can simultaneously keep up with a demanding degree and enjoy your time at Cambridge.

What are Supervisions Like?

Supervisions are a great way of discussing the parts of the lectures you didn't understand with an expert in the field. They are a great tool to receive 1-1 support and your supervisor should be a point of reference when you are stuck. In my experience, supervision style is very specific to the supervisor itself and can vary depending on who you have. Although teaching styles may differ, they are all expected to provide feedback and support for supervision work and help with the lecture content.

Supervision style also differs depending on the subject. For example, Chemistry and Mathematical Biology supervisions involve covering the answers to problem sheets provided a week before. Whereas, Biology of cells might involve more discussions on the content of your lectures.

What is unique about the Cambridge course?

Saturday lectures. Natsci is one of few subjects that have lectures on the weekend. Though it sounds daunting, it is possible to keep up with the work and most subjects require students to work over the weekend anyways.

Natural Sciences also provides the unique experience to study science generally. This differs heavily to the subjects offered at Oxford where you are expected to specialise from the start of the course. Specialisation does not occur until the third year of this course.

What did you wish you knew when applying?

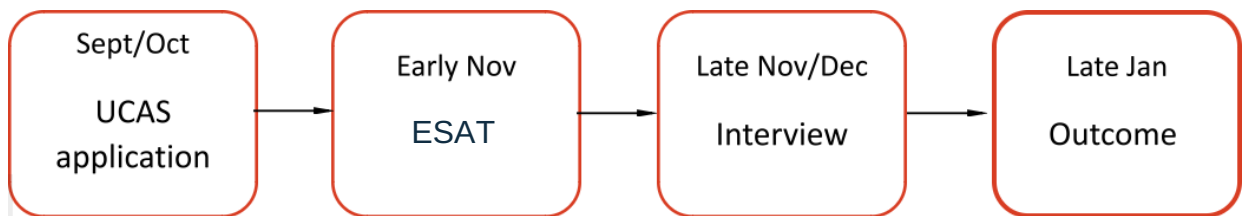
That there are slight differences between the colleges. Although the education aspect does not differ heavily due to it being centrally controlled, there are differences such as available bursaries and accommodation. Do research colleges thoroughly and speak to current students about their opinions.

Favourite and worst thing about your subject?

Favourite: interesting modules taught by really smart scientists

Worst: the work load

Application Timeline



Personal Statement Tips Entrance Test Tips

The most important thing to demonstrate in your personal statement is passion for your subject. How this looks like doesn't necessarily matter. It could be as simple as mentioning a recent paper/book you have read that has piqued your interest. Examples I included in my personal statement include Nick Lane's book "Power, Sex and Suicide" and the cordyceps fungus in the PS4 game "The Last of Us" and how I thought that was interesting.

A grammatical piece of advice would be to ensure that you try to speak in the active voice when detailing your experiences. So, instead of writing "I had the opportunity to partake..." write instead "I participated.."

Entrance Test Tips

The **Engineering and Science Admissions Test (ESAT)** is the new entrance test that is being introduced. The details of this can be found online. The key things to note are that this will take place either on the 15th or 16th October. This is a computer based assessment. Free practice materials will be made available in May 2024.

Interview Tips

Be yourself and be confident! The interview is likely going to involve you dealing with new bits of information and content that is outside of your A-level specification. The important thing here is to engage in the content and be

“teachable”. It is also important to ensure you are able to speak out loud and explain your logic to the interviewer clearly.

