

Education

Written by:

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Example Timetable

The timetable for Education students is quite spread out, with a lot of free time for independent reading. The typical seminar timetable for a first-year student would look something like:

- Monday 11-1pm
- Tuesday 10-12pm
- Wednesday 2-4pm
- Thursday 2-4pm

In your second and third years, you will study five papers instead of four, but your timetable will still be fairly spread out.

What are Supervisions like?

Supervisions are arranged by your Director of Studies and are typically held in the Education Faculty. They are either one-to-one or in small groups, where you work closely with your supervisor (who are experts in their field). The first supervision is introductory, after which you are expected to write and prepare

written essays to be sent prior to the next supervision. Your supervisor will give feedback on it and discuss it during the supervision.

Supervisions are a key aspect of learning at Cambridge. I have really benefited from the knowledge and wisdom of my supervisors, and being able to discuss my ideas with them - while having them robustly challenged - is really an intellectually stimulating opportunity

What is unique about the Cambridge course?

The Education course is interdisciplinary, so you cover the history, sociology, philosophy, and psychology of education. There are also opportunities to explore other disciplines related to education like English, drama, and linguistics. This means you are guaranteed to find something that truly interests you. Personally, I have enjoyed learning about the sociology and psychology of education, but linguistics and sociolinguistics were also fascinating!

What did you wish you knew when applying?

I wasn't really expecting there to be a lot of free time in between lectures, so that was something that took me some time to get used to.

Favourite and worst thing about your subject?

My favourite thing would be the small cohort size; it makes the environment feel less intimidating. It also makes seminars more interactive and allows us to interact more with lecturers.

My worst thing would be the trek to the faculty, which is near Homerton! As someone who takes the University bus, this means leaving at least half an hour before lectures (if the buses aren't delayed or cancelled...)

Application Timeline

Summer: Starting to work on your personal statement, engaging in super-curricular activities (reading, lectures, MOOCs, etc.)

September: Finalising your personal statement

October/November: Submitting your personal statement. Preparing for interview if you've received an offer.

Personal Statement Tips

Draw on your own educational experience and how it has influenced your beliefs about the discipline

Reflect on the super-curricular you have done, what you agreed/disagreed with, and how they relate to education more broadly

Discuss your personal research interests in the field of education and anything you have done to explore them further. For example you might have specific interests in decolonising the curriculum, the science of learning, or children's literature.

Talk a bit about what you'd like to gain from studying the subject, and career plans more generally

Interview Tips

Re-read your personal statement and ensure you can talk at length about the things you have written

Ensure you have a thorough understanding of any books you have mentioned in your personal statement, in case the interviewers quiz you on them!

Speak your mind! Show the interviewers your thought process, even if you're unsure about something.

Recommended reading/activities

Paulo Freire's 'Pedagogy for the Oppressed' - this book challenges traditional conceptions of teaching and how they uphold oppressive power dynamics

Diane Reay's 'Miseducation' - this book explores how working-class students experience inequality in the current education system

Look into the works of key educational thinkers, such as Vygotsky, Piaget, and Dewey

Other

Some colleges may ask you to provide evidence of your written work; ask your college for more details.

