



# Human, Social and Political Sciences (HSPS)

Written by:

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## Example Timetable

1-2 lectures almost daily; 1-2 supervisions a week (though this varies; at times you may have none, or even 3 supervisions a week); in total roughly 8-10 contact hours

## What are Supervisions Like?

For HSPS, supervisions are generally discussion-based. The style of supervisions is very conversational. The main aim of them is to talk about your essay/ideas/other relevant discussion points around the topic

## What is unique about the Cambridge course?

Definitely the variety of disciplines offered in HSPS, as well as the variety of topics within each discipline that the course covers

# What did you wish you knew when applying?

The course is taught very differently to how the subjects within it may be taught at A-levels, whether that be Politics or Sociology - it is definitely a lot more theoretical

# Favourite and worst thing about your subject?

Favourite thing is the variety within the course, and also the flexibility that it allows; worst thing is the lack of communication between the different departments within HSPS, causing disorganisation

# Application Timeline

**Summer:** work on personal statement inc., reading around areas of interest relating to the disciplines within HSPS

**September:** finalise personal statement

**October:** submit application, alongside written work

**November:** start prepping for interview and/or admissions test

# Personal Statement Tips

Talk about what genuinely interests you; mention any academic reading you've done, and critically give your opinion on it; make it unique, but not generic - what really sparked your interest in the subject?

# Entrance Test Tips

I didn't sit one, so not too sure. But generally practice organising your thoughts by writing essays on topics related to your subject

# Interview Tips

Be authentic - don't try to be someone you're not: show your true self. Treat the interview as a conversation - take them through your thoughts. Always ask for time to think if needed - don't rush your answers

## Recommended reading/activities

**Politics:** Politics as a Vocation (Max Weber) / How Democracy Ends (David Runciman) - also give a listen to his podcast (it's called Talking Politics)

**International Relations:** Clash of Civilizations (Samuel P. Huntington)

**Sociology:** The Social Structures of the Economy (Pierre Bourdieu)

**Social Anthropology:** The Gift (Marcel Mauss)

## Other

HSPS offers various lenses through which you can explore your interests, but ultimately you must use your own perspective to dissect said lenses. The course is what you make it - you design it yourself. So don't think that you have to think a certain way or think about certain things e.g., in your personal statement - speak about what genuinely interests you. Be authentic, and it'll help you stand out from the crowd. (:

