

Making the right A-Level choices

Student Booklet

1. Quiz

Firstly, discuss: who are these people and what do they do?

Next, see if you can match them up with the A levels and/or degree courses that led them to where they are today.

1. Emile Sande

A levels: Photography, Maths & Spanish

2. Greg Davis

A levels: Geography, Art, English Literature

Degree: English, Brown University, USA

3. Tom Daley

Degree: English and Drama, Brunel University

4. Clean Bandit

Degree: Neuroscience, University of Glasgow

5. Tinie Tempah

A levels: Media Studies, Psychology, Religious Studies

6. Emma Watson

Degree: Russian Literature, Physics, Architecture, University of Cambridge

(Answers at the end of the booklet)

2. Case Studies

Course Name & UCAS Code	A Level Grade Requirement (+ contextual offer)	Essential A Level subjects	Recommended or helpful A Levels	Any A Levels not accepted	Any GCSE or other requirements

CASE STUDY 1

COURSE NAME: Economics BSc (Econ)

INSTITUTION: University College London

UCAS CODE: L100



This degree, aimed at ambitious and mathematically capable students, provides a thorough grounding in economic theory, along with the technical tools, mathematics and statistics to assist in mastering the theory. Our highly regarded department offers a stimulating learning environment in central London, close to

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A*AA at A2 level in the first sitting.



CONTEXTUAL/ACCESS OFFER:

A*AB at A2 level in the first sitting, to include grade A* in Mathematics (and grade A in Economics if taking this subject).

one of the world's largest financial centres.

SPECIFIC SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS

- Grade A* in Mathematics (and grade A in Economics if taking this subject).
- With regard to the programme requirements, provided mathematics is taken at A Level (A2), the Economics Department has no preference as to the other subjects taken.
- In accordance with UCL's general entrance requirements, a minimum of two A Level subjects should be offered from the preferred list, which can be viewed on the UCL website.
<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/undergraduate/application/entry-requirements/preferred-level-subjects>
- We do not recognise General Studies and Critical Thinking for admissions purposes.

GCSE REQUIREMENTS

UCL encourages intercultural awareness in all its students, and considers experience of learning a foreign language a vital element of a broad and balanced education. UK students who do not have a GCSE grade 5 (or grade C) or equivalent in a foreign language (other than Ancient Greek, Biblical Hebrew or Latin) on admission to UCL will be required to acquire an equivalent level of language proficiency once they are enrolled with us.

CASE STUDY 2

COURSE NAME: Philosophy, Politics and Economics BA
INSTITUTION: University of Oxford
UCAS CODE: LOV0



Throughout the admissions process, tutors will be seeking to detect the candidate's future potential as a PPE student. Existing achievement (as revealed in official examinations, predicted examination results, and school reports), as well as performance in the pre-interview test and interview, is used mainly as evidence of

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

AAA at A2 level, all candidates must take the Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) as part of the application.



CONTEXTUAL/ACCESS OFFER:

Applicants from the most disadvantaged backgrounds will be strongly recommended to be shortlisted for interview, provided that they are predicted to achieve the standard conditional offer for the course, and that they perform to an appropriate standard in any required pre-interview admissions test. In this way, we aim to give students from the most challenging backgrounds the opportunity to showcase their potential through the interview and admissions testing.

future potential.

SPECIFIC SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS

- It is recommended for candidates to have studied Mathematics to A-level. PPE applicants should have sufficient interest in, and aptitude for, mathematics to cope with the mathematical elements of the course. Extra tuition will be available to students that have not studied Maths A-Level who require any assistance.
- You may apply for PPE having done any combination of subjects at school, with the exception of General Studies.; it is not necessary to have studied Politics, Philosophy or Economics. History can provide a useful background, but is not essential.
- If, and only if, you have chosen to take any science A-levels, we expect you to take and pass the practical component in addition to meeting any overall grade requirement.

GCSE REQUIREMENTS

GCSEs will be taken in to account when we consider your application but they are just one aspect that we look at. Higher grades at GCSE can help to make your application more competitive, and successful applicants typically have a high proportion of A and A* grades or 7,8 and 9 grades. However, we do look at GCSE grades in context.

CASE STUDY 3

COURSE NAME: Civil Engineering BEng
INSTITUTION: The University of Nottingham
UCAS CODE: H201



Civil engineers design and manage projects that help improve the world we live in. On our course, you'll learn about structures, geotechnics, materials, fluids, surveying and construction management. We work with local engineering professionals who will help with site visits and give you lots of helpful advice. You'll get the opportunity to work towards becoming a chartered engineer and be able to get work experience with well-known civil engineering companies.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

AAB at A2 level.



CONTEXTUAL/ACCESS OFFER:

ABB - We make contextual offers to students whose personal circumstances may have restricted achievement at school or college. These offers are usually one grade lower than the entry requirements. A foundation year is available for those with BBB grades.

SPECIFIC SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS

- Mathematics to A-level
- A level from physics (preferred), economics, psychology, 3D design, chemistry, biology, design and technology, geography, geology, computing or further maths.
- General studies, critical thinking and citizenship studies, global perspectives and research, thinking skills are not accepted.
- A level in Quantitative Methods is not acceptable in lieu of Maths requirements

CASE STUDY 4



COURSE NAME: BA Architecture

INSTITUTION: The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University

UCAS CODE: K100

BA Architecture is an innovative collaboration between The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University. The course, which is appraised by the Architects Registration Board (ARB) and the Royal Institute for British Architects (RIBA), allows you to take the first step to becoming an architect. You will benefit from the expertise of specialist practice and research-active lecturers, who provide a rich and stimulating environment in which to study architecture.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

AAA at A2 level.



CONTEXTUAL/ACCESS OFFER:

AAB - If you're a UK applicant under the age of 21, or have been in care for more than three months, we'll use contextual data alongside your undergraduate application in order to build up a full and rounded view of your achievement and potential.

SPECIFIC SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS

- A mixture of science or maths and humanities or arts subjects is preferred, but not essential.
- Art or Fine Art A-levels are particularly welcomed; however, please note that applicants with three arts-based subjects (for example, Art, Graphics and 3D Design, or Art, Photography and Design and Technology), or a BTEC Extended Diploma in Art and Design on its own will not be considered as meeting our entry requirements.
- We do not require a pass in the Science Practical Assessment.
- General Studies is welcomed but not normally included as part of the standard offer.

GCSE REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must demonstrate a broad general education including acceptable levels of Literacy and Numeracy, equivalent to at least Grade C or 4 in GCSE/iGCSE

English Language and Mathematics. GCSE/iGCSE English Literature will not be accepted in lieu of GCSE/iGCSE English Language.

CASE STUDY 5

COURSE NAME: Psychological and Behavioural Sciences BA



INSTITUTION: University of Cambridge (Available at all Colleges except Peterhouse)

UCAS CODE: C800

Psychological and Behavioural Sciences (PBS) at Cambridge gives you the opportunity to study cognitive, social, developmental and biological psychology within the broader context of the behavioural sciences. The course covers, for example, cognitive psychology, psychopathology, language, brain mechanisms, gender, family relationships and influences, personality, and group social behaviour. A wide range of options enable you to study the topics that interest you most in

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A*AA at A2 level. The following Colleges require applicants for this course to take an at-interview written assessment (if interviewed): Fitzwilliam, Gonville & Caius, Homerton, Hughes Hall, Murray Edwards, Newnham, Selwyn, Wolfson



CONTEXTUAL/ACCESS OFFER:

We don't use contextual data to systematically make conditional offers at lower grades, or to make allowances for a poor academic record. This information is simply intended to provide academic assessors with the fullest possible picture of an applicant, and the context in which their achievements occurred

greater depth.

SPECIFIC SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS

- No subject is required by all colleges. For a full list of college-specific requirements/preferences see: https://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/files/publications/pbs_subject_requirements_0.pdf
- Murray Edwards: A* in Mathematics or Biology if offered, or A* in an essay subject
- Robinson: A Level in at least two science/mathematics subjects, including psychology
- St Catherine's: A Level in at least one science/mathematics subject
- Selwyn: A Level in Maths, Biology, Physics, Chemistry or Further Maths
- Trinity and Wolfson: A Level Mathematics and Biology

- Critical Thinking isn't considered an acceptable third A Level subject for any course at Cambridge. Key Skills and General Studies aren't required or included in academic assessment.

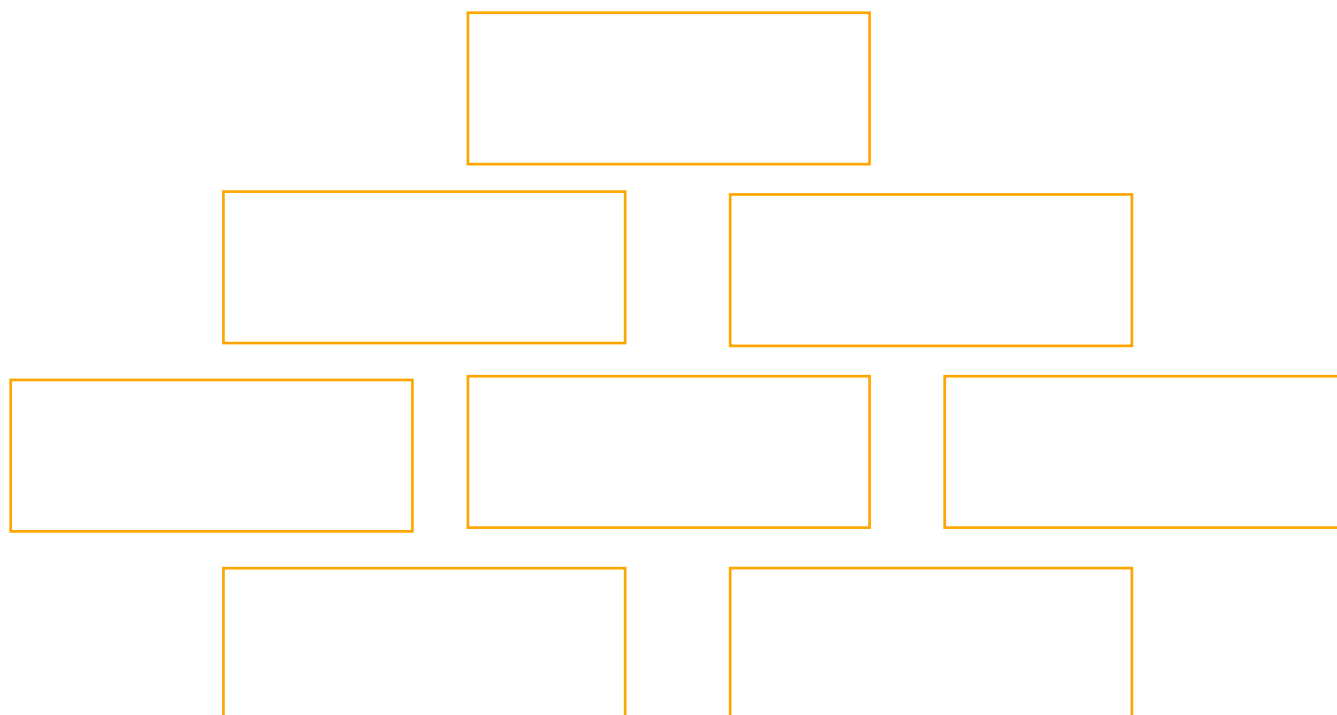
GCSE REQUIREMENTS

There are no GCSE (or equivalent) requirements for entry to Cambridge. GCSE results are looked at as a performance indicator, but within the context of the performance of the school/college where they were achieved.

3. What factors might affect your A-Level choices?

I enjoy these subjects the most.	I like the teacher	
There are certain subjects that I need for the degree course I want to do	I am good at these subjects.	My friends are choosing these subjects.
It's perceived as a "hard" subject.	My parents/carers are keen for me to take these subjects.	It's a popular subject at my school/college

Places these factors in order of importance on the Diamond 9 pattern below (most important factors at the top, least important at the bottom).



Following the group discussion, would you change the order of priority? Have another go at the Diamond 9.

For progression not determined by privilege

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www.causeway.education

4. What if I don't know what I want to do at university yet?

Go to The Uni Guide A-Level Explorer:

<https://www.theuniguide.co.uk/exploratory-widgets/a-level-explorer>

Use the dropdown menu to enter the subjects you might enjoy studying at A Level. The website generates exact, close and unexpected matches based on what other students have chosen with similar courses

A Level subjects:

A Level 1	A Level 2	A Level 3

Degree courses:

Best matches	Close matches	Unexpected matches

- Which of these degree courses would you consider?
- Which of these degree courses would you not consider?
- Did any of the results surprise you?

Quiz Answers:

1. Emile Sande – MBE, 4 time Brit winner, #1s with "Read All About it" with Professor Green and "Beneath Your Beautiful", a collaboration with Labrinth

Neuroscience Degree, University of Glasgow (originally accepted onto Medicine course)

2. Greg Davids – Comedian, Taskmaster, Inbetweeners (teacher for 12 years)

English and Drama, Degree, Brunel University

3. Tom Daley - Olympic Bronze medallist for GB in Diving

A Levels – Photography, Maths, Spanish

4. Clean Bandit – Band, #1s with "Rather Be" with Jess Glynne and "Rockabye", a collaboration with Sean Paul

Russian Literature, Physics, & Architecture Degrees, University of Cambridge

5. Tinie Tempah – 6 #1s – the most achieved by a UK rapper

A Levels - Media Studies, Psychology, Religious Studies

6. Emma Watson – Actress

A Levels – Geography, Art, English Literature

English Degree in the US (Brown University)