

# MABECS *QuickGuides*



ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT  
APPLYING TO THE

# University of Cambridge

SPECIALLY CURATED FOR YOU BY



BEFORE WE GO FURTHER...



## Who is MABECS

MABECS is Malaysia's most experienced advisory service on UK degrees.

Our service is free of charge.

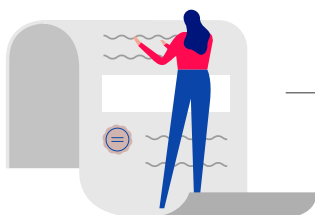


To find out more about MABECS' history and services, turn to the inside back cover. To reach a MABECS Education Advisor, call or WhatsApp us at +603-7956 7655 or email [enquiries@mabecs.com](mailto:enquiries@mabecs.com)

## From enquiry to successful student placement, we take care of it all.

### 1 Advice & guidance

Find guidance on the right course and university including rankings, research ratings, entry requirements, and more.



2

### Application

Our experienced UK education advisors will advise you on the required documents and relevant procedures. Note that the application method is different from the postgraduate level.



### 3 Test Preparation & Mock Interviews

We provide assistance for LNAT, UCAT and others tests that might be required by UK universities. We also provide mock interviews for Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science and Oxford & Cambridge.



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### Air tickets & accommodation

Yes, we also help to provide guidance from flight bookings, visa applications and suitable accommodations to stay in.

## Study in the UK!

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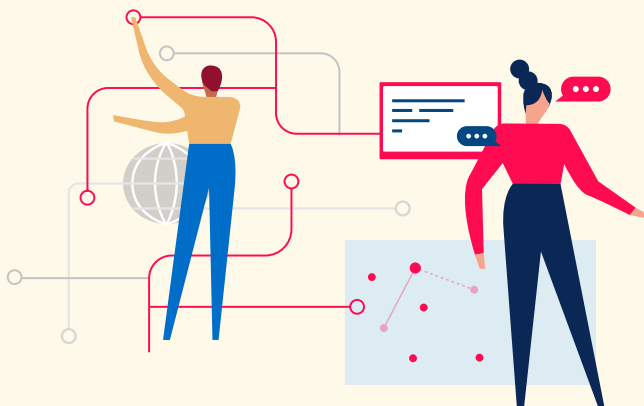
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# Have a different set of questions about studying in the UK?

Call us\* at **03-7956 7655** to reach us immediately, or email **[enquiries@mabecs.com](mailto:enquiries@mabecs.com)** if you're the shy type.

\*Our Education Advisors have all been educated in the UK with over 10 years of experience in counselling. They help provide first-hand information on UK education as well as student life in the UK.



## DISCLAIMER

*The MABECS QuickGuides are for reference purposes only.*

*Course content, entry requirements, and tuition fees could change from time to time.  
You're advised to check the specific university website for the latest information.*

01



# **BEFORE APPLYING**

## Cambridge or Oxford: Should I apply?

This QuickGuide is primarily about the University of Cambridge; there is a separate QuickGuide for the University of Oxford. However, you might note the similarities between Cambridge and Oxford.

Cambridge and Oxford are certainly two of the most famous universities in the UK and are the only universities which you cannot put together on your UCAS application. Additionally, Cambridge might email a link and ask applicants to complete an additional questionnaire(s). Academic levels at entry for these two universities are higher than any other UK university, and on top of that, competition is intense.

But the fact that they are famous and that they are difficult to get into, are not good reasons for applying.

Although Cambridge and Oxford can be very different from most UK universities, they also have many similar features with most UK universities. This means that it's not good enough to say that you'd want to apply to Cambridge or Oxford because "they're famous", or that "they're different". Before making your decision to apply to either of these universities, you should study and research the situation carefully so that your decision is based on valid and wise reasoning.

Both Cambridge and Oxford are collegiate universities so the sense of community is very strong, as you spend three or four years in the same College, living and socialising with the same group of people, who are studying a wide range of subjects. Durham University, for example, has a similar, strong collegiate organisation; but at Cambridge, the colleges have a supervision role as well.

All degree courses at both of these universities have a strong theoretical base upon which applications are developed. Both universities, for example, have a unified Engineering programme. There is considerable flexibility in your (later) choice of study. At Cambridge, this is organised through the Tripos System; a degree structure unique to Cambridge with further details later in this guide.

Admissions Tutors are looking for the students whom they believe:

- have the most academic ability and potential
- will benefit from and flourish in the Cambridge learning environment
- are best suited to the course they applied for

We hope you'll consider these points carefully before making your decision. If you'd like to find out more on the differences and similarities not covered in this QuickGuide, please contact our MABECS Education Advisors.





## Cambridge Colleges

Successful candidates will receive an offer from a College at Cambridge, not from the university. When applying to Cambridge, students can make an “Open Application”, that is, not specify a College. Alternatively, you can choose to apply to a specific College if you have strong reasons for doing so (beware of weak reasons: e.g. travelling time – Cambridge is quite a compact city; the college has a nice name; etc.).

All applicants should read the College entries in the Cambridge prospectus, or the College websites at [www.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cam.ac.uk), because to do yourself justice in your application, you need an understanding of what College life is about. That after all is one of the important reasons for applying to Cambridge.

You could also read the alternative prospectus: [www.applytocambridge.com](http://www.applytocambridge.com). It has some interesting insights, and some trivia.

The Cambridge University Malaysia Society (CUMaS) is also a helpful contact and often gives talks in various schools and colleges in Malaysia over the summer and members are usually happy to share their own experiences and insight. Find out more here: [www.cumas.org](http://www.cumas.org).

If you choose a College which is “famous” for something – alumni, a subject or a building – you should remember that many others will apply for the same reason and the number of applicants may be higher than average as a result.

Colleges outside the City Centre are Churchill, Fitzwilliam, Girton, Homerton, Murray Edwards, Newnham, Robinson, and Selwyn. All the rest are in the centre of Cambridge but Queens', King's, Clare, Trinity Hall, Trinity, St John's, and Magdalene are also on The Backs. What are “The Backs”? Find it out as you research.

# Cambridge Degrees

First of all, the word “Tripos” can usually be understood to mean “degree”. Secondly, all Cambridge courses start with a wide, strongly theoretical base on which later applications are developed. So in Scientific and Engineering areas, you start with several subjects and choose your specialisation later.

This delays major decision-making about the educational base of your life and career until you have your own knowledge and experience to judge by. But it also gives you dependable knowledge and understanding on related disciplines to your own, a valuable skill in many situations, including project, teamwork and research.

Thirdly, there is a tremendous amount of flexibility in the system, not only in each Tripos but also between them. This allows many combinations to be developed as you become more certain of your own interests and skills.

Having said that, most students stay in the same Tripos throughout their time at Cambridge. Nevertheless, you should understand how the complex Tripos System works.

In particular, you should know about your own Tripos and its style, aims and choices. This QuickGuide is meant only as a starting point. There is a lot of information in the university website [www.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cam.ac.uk) which you should refer to.





## A. The Cambridge Medical Tripos

### Years 1, 2 and 3 (pre-clinical studies)

In **Years 1 and 2**, you study the medically-relevant core scientific knowledge and skills needed as a medical professional.

The main areas of learning are covered by courses in :

- Functional Architecture of the Body
- Homeostasis
- Mechanisms of Drug Action
- Neurobiology and Human Behaviour
- Human Reproduction

The clinical strand of **Years 1 and 2** involves:

- Introduction to the Scientific Basis of Medicine
- Social Context of Health and Illness
- Preparing for Patients

**Year 3:** You specialise in one of a wide range of other subjects offered by the University (sometimes known elsewhere as intercalation) to qualify for the BA degree. Options include:

- Part II Biological and Biomedical Sciences in Natural Sciences (offering a range of subjects such as Pathology, Physiology, Zoology, History and Ethics of Medicine);
- A single Part II Natural Sciences subject;
- A subject less obviously related to medicine, such as Anthropology, Management Studies or Philosophy.

**Year 4, 5 and 6** (clinical studies): Clinical studies are based at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. As well as being a tertiary hospital with an international reputation for medical excellence, Addenbrooke's is the site of several major biomedical research institutions. You would also spend time in other regional NHS hospital through East Anglia and in general practices in Cambridge and the surrounding region.

For further information about studying Medicine at the University of Cambridge, see the School of Clinical Medicine website.



## B. Natural Sciences Tripos

Natural Sciences (NST) offers a wide range of physical and biological science subjects from 16 departments. The broad first year is combined with increasing specialisation in the second year, and the possibility of total specialisation in the third year. The breadth of the course reflects the blurring of boundaries between the different sciences, and before committing yourself to one department, you get to study a variety of subjects, some of which may be new to you. This means you can change your mind about which subject to specialise in.

Science Subjects offered within Natural Sciences:

### YEAR 1

#### °PART IA.

- Biology of Cells
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Earth Sciences
- Evolution and Behaviour
- Materials Science
- Mathematics
- Mathematical Biology
- Physics
- Physiology of Organisms

### YEAR 2

#### °PART IB.

- Animal Biology
- Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
- Biology of Disease
- Cell and Developmental Biology
- Chemistry (two options)
- Earth Sciences (two options)
- Ecology
- Experimental Psychology
- History and Philosophy of Science
- Materials Science
- Mathematics
- Neurobiology
- Pharmacology
- Physics (two options)
- Physiology
- Plant and Microbial

### YEARS 3 AND 4

#### °PARTS II AND III.

- Astrophysics\*
- Biochemistry\*
- Chemistry\*
- Earth Sciences\*
- Genetics
- History and Philosophy of Science
- Material Science\*
- Pathology
- Pharmacology
- Physical Sciences
- Physics\*
- Physiology, Development and Neuroscience\*
- Plant Sciences
- Psychology
- Psychology, Neuroscience and behaviour
- Systems Biology (Part III only)
- Zoology

\* These subjects offer a fourth year/ Part III options, leading to a MSci Degree



## C. Cambridge Engineering Tripos

Part I (Years 1 and 2) provides a broad education in engineering fundamentals, enabling you to make a genuinely informed choice about the area in which to specialise from your third year (many students change direction as a result). Part II (Years 3 and 4) then provides in-depth training in your chosen professional discipline.

### **Year 1 (Part IA)**

The broad foundation of the first two years (Part I) gives you an understanding of the basic principles of a wide range of subjects, together with an appreciation of the external pressures under which these ideas are likely to be applied.

### **Year 2 (Part IB)**

You study eight papers on core subjects at a more advanced level.

### **Year 3 (Part IIA)**

Professional specialisation begins in earnest and you study 10 papers from an extensive portfolio, from which a core is associated with one of the following disciplines:

- Aerospace and Aerothermal Engineering
- Bioengineering
- Civil, Structural and Environmental Engineering
- Electrical and Electronic Engineering
- Electrical and Information Sciences
- Energy, Sustainability and the Environment
- Information and Computer Engineering
- Instrumentation and Control
- Mechanical Engineering

Alternatively, you can choose (General) Engineering, in which there are fewer restrictions on paper combinations.

In addition, you take an Extension Activity (selected from several topics, usually relevant to your professional discipline) and, in the final term, choose two from a variety of design and computer-based projects or projects in a foreign language.

#### **Year 4 (Part IIB)**

Progression to Part IIB is dependent on achievement in Parts IB and IIA, and successful completion of Part IIB leads to the BA and MEng degrees.

In Part IIB, further specialisation is possible and you select eight papers from nearly 100 options which vary each year.



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# APPLYING TO CAMBRIDGE

# Start here: UCAS

## UCAS

1. Submit UCAS form and transcript - deadline 15 October 2025 BUT follow the internal deadlines set by your school.
2. After submitting your UCAS application, your application will be acknowledged by the College you applied to (open applications are allocated to Colleges shortly after the 15 October UCAS deadline).
3. You will be emailed instructions to submit an additional form “My Cambridge Application”. The fee to submit this form is £60. Complete and submit this by the 22 October 2025 deadline.
4. Your Cambridge college will send you a link for an additional form called “Additional Applicant Information Form (AAIF).” You must complete the form in one sitting. It is not possible to save and return to it later.
5. If invited for the online interview, there is also an interview fee. (Information about interviews for 2025 entry will be updated in June 2025.)



## Interviews and Admissions Assessment

**For UCAS form that are submitted by September**, interviews are usually held in Malaysia in November. They are normally conducted by University of Cambridge subject specialists, and are one-on-one, lasting about 30 minutes. Most suitably qualified applicants are called for interviews held in Malaysia.

Interviews in Cambridge are held in early December. In this case, there are usually two or more interviews, often with interviewers working in pairs.

Candidates cannot be interviewed both in Malaysia and in Cambridge. There is no guarantee that a candidate who opts for an interview in UK will be called. Is there an advantage in being interviewed in Cambridge? Students are interviewed in the College to which they have applied (or been assigned in the case of an open application), and so they get to meet the decision makers, and have the chance to see the College and Cambridge life. However, whilst accommodation in College for the interview is normally provided, the airfare to UK has to be paid by the candidate; and there is no certainty on whether you will receive a place in the university despite flying there for the interview.

The University of Cambridge website indicates: Applicants who are eligible to be interviewed in a country listed above are strongly advised to apply by the appropriate deadline and request an interview in that country. There is no advantage to being interviewed in Cambridge. Overseas interviewers are academic experts with a broad range of subject expertise and experience in admissions who are appointed by the Colleges of the University of Cambridge to interview applicants on their behalf. Many of them are current or recent Admissions Tutors and Senior Tutors with considerable experience in comparing fields of applicants across subjects.

Results of the application would usually reach candidates in January. Some candidates may not succeed in winning a place in the College to which they applied. If that college considers their application to be strong, they may be put into the 'pool'. They may then receive an offer from another College.

## Admissions Assessment

Applicants are required to sit for a subject-specific written assessment. Some candidates may be asked to sit for this written test around the time of the interview. Most other candidates will be required to sit for this on the 9-15 October 2025 of each year for which registration is required (please note that the deadline to register for these tests would usually be in 16 September 2025 of the year before entry). Please contact your school or the British Council for more information on registration for these written tests. Applicants for Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, will need to register and sit for the UCAT and ESAT.

Please check the University's website for more details of admissions assessment:

<http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/applying/admission-assessments>



## Personal Statement

A very important part of your application to a competitive university is the “Personal Statement”. You will write one for UCAS – all universities read your UCAS statement.

The starting point is to remember that the person who reads it will be looking for evidence of real commitment and interest in the subject you plan to study. Applicants are strongly warned against plagiarising material – UCAS runs a plagiarism detection system for all applications.

Guidance from the University of Cambridge regarding personal statements (extracted from the University website):

“As part of your UCAS application, you’ll need to write a Personal Statement. Personal statements give you the chance to tell us about your subject interest(s), and the process of writing a personal statement can often help you to better understand your academic interests and intellectual motivations.”

At Cambridge, all admissions decisions are based solely on academic criteria (ability and potential). Therefore, in your personal statement, the university advise you to:

- explain your reasons for wanting to study the subject at the university
- demonstrate enthusiasm for and commitment to your chosen course
- express any particular interests within the field
- outline how you’ve pursued your subject interest in your own time

This information is often used as a basis for discussion at interview.





03



**FIND OUT MORE**

# “How can MABECS help me?”



If all that information is making you feel overwhelmed, don't worry. You're not alone. Countless students have felt the same way and they've found it helpful to consult MABECS for their UK degree applications. For an overview of our services, check out the Inside Front Cover page.

Here is how your MABECS Education Advisor can help you in detail:

1

## BEFORE APPLYING

MABECS provides detailed information on:

- UK universities' environment, fees, and facilities
- course structure, content and specialisation
- entry requirements and university standards
- specific university's research ratings and teaching quality assessments



We can also recommend suitable and relevant universities based on your academic results and preferences.

3

## PRE-DEPARTURE HELP

MABECS provides guidance on:

- visa applications
- accommodation arrangements
- flight bookings

2

## APPLICATION

MABECS provides detailed information on:

- undergraduate degree application explained from start to end
- personal guidance for your Personal Statement
- mock interviews
- monitoring the progress of your application
- providing advice at stages where important decisions need to be made
- being the intermediary (middle person) between you and universities if our assistance is required
- counselling sessions with visiting UK admissions tutors and university representatives
- IELTS registration with the British Council



## About Us

MABECS was set up in 1985 to assist students in Malaysia to find suitable places at universities in the United Kingdom.

Since 1985, students we have counselled have successfully enrolled in top UK universities – both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Whether you're an individual student seeking counselling for your UK degree application, or an education institution hoping to achieve the same for your pre-university students, MABECS is here to help.



Visit our website at [www.mabecs.com](http://www.mabecs.com) for a quick overview of how MABECS helps students from start to end of their UK degree application process. You'll also find many helpful articles on studying in the UK, including real student stories!

## UK degree applications made easy

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**Monday to Friday:**  
9:30am to 4:30pm

**Saturdays, Sundays and public  
holidays:** Closed



# UK degree applications made easy.

We take care of everything in your UK degree application with your cooperation - free of charge.



## Student-centred

Our strong student-centred approach to counselling means that we give students the fullest possible information on all available options to help them make sensible decisions.



## Free Consultation

Advice, information and assistance with applications, are given free of charge and our Education Advisors are always ready to sort out any problems that may arise, and to brief you on preparations for travel to the UK.



## Accessible

Our friendly multi-racial, open-access office, can be easily reached by public transport, and no appointment is necessary to drop in and browse through the reference library, talk to an Education Advisor, or complete and send an application.