



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

# **Psychological and Behavioural Sciences Tripos**

## **Part IA Handbook**

### **Academic Year 2020–2021**

*The information contained in this Handbook is correct at the time of going to press (14/09/2020), but all matters covered are subject to change from time to time.*

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Facilities and Resources .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Office Staff, Communication &amp; Information .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Part IA: Overview .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Part IB Overview.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Part II Overview .....</b>	<b>28</b>
	BPS Accreditation .....	28
<b>7</b>	<b>Writing Essays .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Plagiarism.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Examinations &amp; Criteria for Assessment .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Complaints &amp; Problems.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Important Websites &amp; Links .....</b>	<b>44</b>

# 1 Introduction

Psychology has been taught at Cambridge for more than a century. In 1877 James Ward proposed that a laboratory should be established in Cambridge to study psychophysics, the relation between the physical properties of stimuli and experienced sensations. This proposal is said to have been rejected by the governing body of the University on the grounds that it would 'insult religion by putting the soul in a pair of scales'. However, in 1897, William H.R. Rivers was appointed University Lecturer in Physiological and Experimental Psychology; Rivers was to become eminent as a neurologist, psychologist, anthropologist, and psychiatrist. In 1901 psychology acquired a room, in 1903 a property in Mill Lane, and in 1912 the Psychological Laboratory proper opened. Research and teaching in experimental psychology has gone on to the present day.

For many years social psychology had been taught in the Department of Engineering, but in 1968 the University established a Social and Political Sciences Committee which brought together social psychology, politics and sociology into a single administrative unit. This became a fully-fledged Faculty (and Tripos) some 20 years later. In 1970 Martin Richards was appointed University lecturer in Social Psychology, joined by Colin Fraser and further staff to establish the later-named Department of Social and Developmental Psychology. This, together with the closely associated Centre for Family Research, became the home for a rich and varied programme of psychological and social research.

In 2012 psychology teaching and research in Cambridge was unified in a common Department of Psychology, by the merger of the Department of Experimental Psychology and the

Department of Social and Developmental Psychology. The new Department is spread over several sites, the central hub of which is within the Psychological Laboratory building on the Downing Site.

The Psychological and Behavioural Sciences Tripos (PBS) is a newly established degree, its first cohort began in 2013. PBS offers a broad range of content, focusing on psychology as the core discipline throughout the students' study. There is a clear progression from preparatory education in the first year, presentation of core material in the second year, building to research-led advanced topics in the final year.

## **The Learning Experience**

The Psychological and Behavioural Sciences are at the core of a broad range of overlapping disciplines, including Biological Anthropology, Evolution, Neuroscience, Philosophy, and Sociology. PBS reflects this by including options from a range of related disciplines which can be studied alongside the core material on Psychological Science.

Teaching is similar for all of the core and optional papers, and includes both lectures (in which a member of teaching staff presents material to a large class) and supervisions (where small groups of students discuss material with an academic). There are some differences between subjects in terms of the style and aim of lectures and other teaching sessions.

Students studying for PBS are required to take a specific set of examinations, with each topic for examination known as a 'paper'. Each paper will have a course of lectures and classes specifically designed and presented to prepare students for the examinations in question. The lectures are organised centrally by the University Departments or Faculty in question,

and the same lectures are attended by all students studying any given subject.

Lectures in different disciplines may differ substantially in the way in which the content is taught. Certain academic disciplines may require different skills and different types of knowledge, thus different styles of teaching and learning may be required. The range of optional papers within the Tripos gives PBS students the opportunity to study in different ways, as well as studying different types of content.

## **Supervision in PBS**

Supervisions are an essential part of teaching for most papers because they provide the opportunity for students to discuss particular topics in depth with individuals who are knowledgeable in the field. In supervisions, students present their understanding and analysis for discussion with academic staff. Supervisions also provide a focus for students' reading and written work, and an opportunity to get detailed feedback on their essays. For supervisions, students write essays (normally of around 1,000 to 2,500 words) in advance, which are reviewed by the supervisor and then discussed, usually in groups of two or three. Students will be offered typically between six and eight supervisions per paper (but up to 16 in some science subjects), and may also be given revision sessions. Students can expect to write between eight and twelve essays in the winter and spring terms (Michaelmas and Lent).

### *The Form and Content of Supervisions*

Supervisions are discussions between individual supervisors and small groups of students, usually lasting an hour. In preparation for supervision the supervisor will typically set an essay question and, drawing on the relevant paper guide, may

indicate reading materials which you should consult and analyse in order to address the question. Essays require substantial preparation in terms of reading, reflection, and composition. The questions posed are intended to cultivate the knowledge and understanding that you need in order to fulfil the learning requirements of the paper and, therefore, to succeed in the examinations. Students are typically asked to send completed essays to the supervisor in plenty of time for them to be read and marked before the supervision, when essays will normally be returned with comments.

Many supervisors will begin the supervision by making some initial and constructive comments on the strong and weak points of the essay. The supervisor may also ask the other students if they have any comments. Building on these initial comments, the supervisor then initiates further discussion of the question addressed by the essay. S/he will invite you to clarify basic concepts, theories and facts which pertain to the essay question. S/he will ask you to consider and respond to possible evidential or logical weaknesses in particular lines of argument, and/or in the preparatory readings. The supervisor will introduce you to ideas that are important in thinking about the essay question but which you may have failed to mention. S/he will raise new questions in an effort to test how well you can critically employ newly acquired knowledge in different contexts, a skill which is the real test of genuine understanding of the material and which is (accordingly) vital to success in examinations. The supervisor will also ask if you have encountered difficulties with the subject matter in your reading or in writing the essay, and will try to respond helpfully to any difficulties. S/he will clarify how material covered in lectures relates to that covered in the supervision. Students often find it valuable to take notes during supervisions, so it is necessary to bring a notepad and pen with you.

At the end of the supervision, the supervisor may set an essay question for the next supervision or help you understand how this supervision relates to future ones, or to the overall shape of the paper. As well as this formal help, it is important to grasp that much of the discussion in supervisions takes place between fellow students. You are encouraged to respond to each other's arguments and, in this way, to acquire understandings not just from the supervisor, but from each other.

Other types of supervision may be involved in subjects where the material to be learned does not fit in an essay, for example mathematical or technical knowledge. In these cases, supervision discussion may focus on the solutions to specific problems. The supervisor will typically provide a 'problem sheet' of questions for a student to attempt before the supervision.

### *Arrangements for Supervision in PBS*

In Cambridge, lectures and classes are formally the responsibility of the Department, and supervisions are formally the responsibility of the Colleges. All students have a [Director of Studies](#) in their College, and it is the responsibility of the Director of Studies to arrange supervision for each of the papers taken by his or her students.

The way in which supervision is organised varies from paper to paper, and Directors of Studies usually discuss supervision arrangements with students at the start of the course and provide them with overall guidance. For some papers, Directors of Studies typically organise students directly into supervision groups and allocate a supervisor to each group; for other papers, supervisions are organized by the department that is offering the paper. Supervisors should

arrange their supervisions well in advance, and will notify students of any changes to the time, date or venue in good time. Students should expect to be contacted by their supervisor in the first few weeks of term. If you have not been contacted by the end of October you should notify your Director of Studies immediately. In all cases, Directors of Studies provide clear guidance about supervision and help to ensure that all students have adequate supervision arrangements for their papers.

### *Questions and difficulties*

If you have any questions regarding the arrangement or conduct of your supervisions, you should consult your Director of Studies. You may raise wider or general queries about supervision (not about specific supervisors) with the student representatives, who can bring them to the PBS Management Committee, and with the course organiser if matters relate to the content of a specific paper. Any problems you encounter with supervision should be raised immediately with your Director of Studies (see Section 14 for the complaints procedure); do not wait until the end of the term or the examinations, as difficulties in supervision should be put right as soon as possible.

Due to the additional complications caused by Covid this year, we will be introducing additional channels of communication for challenges in the online learning environment. These will be explained further at inductions in October.

## **Student Workload**

Academic life at Cambridge can be exciting and stressful at times. Students are driven and strive for excellence in their work, and naturally spend considerable amounts of time



working. However, being successful academically does not mean that students must be working continuously around the clock every single day. On the contrary, being successful depends on effective time management and working efficiently. With that in mind, students are recommended to work up to about 48 hours per week during a normal term time week. This includes time spent at lectures, practicals, supervisions, in private study, and preparing for supervisions. However, you may find that in occasional weeks, work demands require less time than this. On the other hand, there may be moments when you find yourself doing more. The important point is that although there will be occasional fluctuations in work demands, you should try to establish a regular pattern of work and effective time management.

## **Part IA Structure**

In the first year, Part IA, of the PBS Tripos students take four papers: **two core papers** and **two further papers** chosen from a range of options. The two core papers provide an introduction to psychology. The optional papers allow students to explore a variety of subjects: archaeology, biological anthropology, evolutionary theory, philosophy, politics, social anthropology, and sociology.

The optional papers in Part IA are 'borrowed' from other Faculties, and PBS students may be supervised alongside students taking other Triposes.

Each paper has its own paper guide, in which the objective and requirements for the paper are laid out and the teaching arrangements are explained. Most paper guides also contain detailed reading lists, sample essay questions and past or sample exam papers. More information about the papers is available on the [PBS website](#).

As some paper guides are updated frequently throughout the year, it is usually a good idea to re-check the information and the reading lists in the relevant paper guide before commencing a new essay. Section 4 outlines each paper in brief (p.18), but you can find more details on aims/objectives and how the course will be taught and assessed in the full paper guides, accessed via the link above.

## **Educational Aims**

The course aims to:

- provide an education in psychological and behavioural sciences of the highest calibre in order to produce graduates of the quality sought by industry, the professions, and the public service, and to provide academic teachers and researchers for the future;
- provide students with knowledge and skills in social, developmental, biological, and experimental psychology within the broader context of the behavioural sciences appropriate to future professional work;
- encourage students to develop a critical approach to their studies, evaluating theory and evidence accordingly;
- allow students to develop specialised knowledge and research skills in one or more subjects, by studying these in depth if they so choose, equipping them with skills to communicate effectively in written and numerical forms;
- produce graduates who can think independently and are capable of applying their knowledge and skills effectively and with integrity;

- provide an intellectually stimulating environment in which students have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

## **Advice from previous students**

Students from the first cohort of PBS were asked what advice they would give to new students in Part IA. Here are some of the tips they gave:

“Use the reading lists as much as possible. Get a head start with reading, in particular if you haven’t done A level Maths or Biology.”

“Know that you can change papers if you regret your choices!”

“Ask supervisors/lecturers etc about any questions because they have been very helpful.”

“The more journal articles you read around the lectures the better. Enjoy the lectures - they’re great!”

“Have an open mind about what to try! You might go in with ideas about what you are interested in but be prepared to try lots of new things, this course offers SO many options and I really would not have found out what I want to do without it.”

“Be as organised with your notes as you can be (you’ll be grateful for it in Easter Term!), ask for help if needed, take time off to do things you enjoy, and start revising early!”

## 2 Facilities and Resources

### Current Students Website

The Tripos maintains a webpage for current students, where you can find current timetables, information on writing essays, deadlines, and other policy documents. All students should visit the [Current Students pages](#) on the PBS website as a first resource for information.

### E-Learning Sites

The department uses Moodle as the e-learning platform and all first-year students taking PBS papers are added as participants to the [PBS Tripos Part IA Moodle site](#) prior to the start of term. This site provides resources such as handouts and past exam papers for students electronically.

For your optional papers, the department that offers the papers will enrol you on to the relevant moodle site. If you change paper once term has started do make the teaching administrators aware so you can be enrolled on to the relevant site.

It is very important that you check that you have access to this site and inform the administrative staff ([teaching@psychol.cam.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@psychol.cam.ac.uk)) immediately if you do not.

Lectures will be available Online via Microsoft Teams and Panopto. These platforms, and their role in different kinds of will be explained at induction. Whilst some Lectures will be presented live, ALL lectures will be recorded and available for the course of the year.

Additional Microsoft Teams will be established for each degree part and each paper across PBS to further facilitate both online learning, but also community building across the cohort.

## **Libraries**

The [Department of Psychology Library](#) is a specialist psychology library housed on the first floor of the Psychological Laboratory. It holds copies of all core psychology texts for the PBS Tripos. The Library stocks multiple copies of books that are in high demand.

Unfortunately due to the space constraints of the department, we cannot re-open the library in a covid-secure manner. We will however be offering a click and collect service from reception. We will also endeavour to make sure reading lists contain electronically accessible material where appropriate, and we are purchasing a large number of E-books for core content on our reading lists.

Please note that other libraries will be adopting their own policies, so please consult the relevant library page for appropriate guidance:

The [Social and Political Sciences Library](#) on Free School Lane has an extensive social and developmental psychology collection. The SPS Library holds multiple copies of many essential texts.

The Psychology Library and SPS Library maintain e-learning sites that provide access to many articles and book chapters referenced on reading lists. Access to these materials is course-specific and requires a Raven password.

**Other libraries** that may be useful to you during the PBS course include the [University Library](#), the [Moore Library](#), the [Casimir Lewy Library](#) (philosophy), the [Computer Laboratory Library](#), the [Haddon Library](#) (archaeology and anthropology), the [Marshall Library](#) (economics), the [Radzinowicz Library](#) (criminology), and the [Seeley Historical Library](#).

Further information on other libraries can be found at <https://libguides.cam.ac.uk/psychology-guide>.

**College libraries** complement the specialist libraries found in the faculties, departments, and the University Library. College libraries aim to buy most recommended reading for Part I and as much as possible for Part II. College libraries have a yearly budget for PBS. Inform your Director of Studies, Tutor, or College Librarian if you would like to request the purchase of particular items.

To search for print and electronic books and journals across the University, use [iDiscover](#).

Use the following links to access an [A-Z list of databases](#) that the University subscribes to and the [complete list of e-journals](#).

[Apollo](#) is the University repository which holds research output from members and is managed by the [Office of Scholarly Communications](#).

## Green Challenge

The Department of Psychology holds a Gold Green Impact award and is committed to reducing its impact on the environment by saving energy and minimizing waste. You will see throughout the department a number of recycling bins provided for paper, cardboard, plastic, cans and tins and would encourage all students to use these and to be considerate of switching off lights, reducing waste etc.



If you would like to get more involved, here's how:

- Keep up-to-date with news and opportunities by [subscribing to the Greenlines newsletter](#).
- Visit the [Environment and Energy Section's student webpage](#) to find out more about projects including Green Impact and the [Living Laboratory for Sustainability](#).
- Email [environment@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:environment@admin.cam.ac.uk) with any questions or to find out more about any particular opportunity.
- [Opportunities](#) include paid [internships](#), support running your own environmental project, and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)

accredited auditor training and experience through [Green Impact](#).



### **3 Office Staff, Communication & Information**

The administrative staff are always helpful and can usually provide up-to-date information on most matters related to the undergraduate programme. However, students can often find information more quickly in the first instance by using the information provided on the PBS website or in this Handbook.

The Department Offices communicate by email with students using email lists for Part IA, Part IB, and Part II. For messages related to particular papers, emails carry a heading to signal which paper. Academic staff and supervisors also use email to notify students of meetings, necessary changes and so on. It is therefore important to read your emails regularly and carefully. If for any reason you do not believe you are receiving emails please notify the teaching administrators as soon as possible.

Directors of Studies are students' first and main port of call for information on all matters related to your studies and academic choices. Directors of Studies are fully informed about the structure of the Tripos and choices therein. We advise you to make use of their expertise and knowledge of your individual interests and strengths.

The office of the Teaching Administrator and Teaching Secretary (Richard Sellens and Louise White) is located in the Department of Psychology main building on the Downing Site. PBS administrative queries should be sent to:  
[teaching@psychol.cam.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@psychol.cam.ac.uk)

## Student Representation and Feedback

Student representation and feedback in PBS is important. Student representatives are appointed to represent each year of the course. Two Part IA representatives are appointed to sit on the PBS Staff/Student committee, and recommendations from that committee are put to the PBS Management Committee and the Department Teaching Committee. The Part IA representatives will be randomly chosen, from any students who put themselves forward for the role. If you are interested in serving in this capacity please email the Teaching Administrator.

Feedback on the course can be given in several ways: Feedback can be given to student representatives to pass on to staff, but students can also directly contact Directors of Studies, Course Organisers, the Teaching Administrator, and the PBS Director with feedback. Students will be encouraged to complete the National Student Survey, which gives the opportunity to provide feedback to the University on a larger scale.

Online surveys are sent out to students towards the end of each term, asking for anonymous feedback on specific papers. Surveys in the first two terms are used to discover any issues during the year, and to remove these problems before the year ends.

## Key Committees

Discussions and decisions that relate to the Tripos take place within the following committees:

The ultimate decision-making body of the Tripos is the **PBS Tripos Management Committee**. It deals with matters relating to finance and organisation, as well as ratifying

decisions made by other bodies. It meets approximately once per term and is attended by representatives of all Departments which contribute to PBS.

The **Department of Psychology Teaching Committee** is the forum for discussion of, and policy development on, undergraduate teaching provided by the Department of Psychology.

The **Teaching Sub-Committee (PBS)** is the forum for discussion between all PBS paper coordinators, and reviews ongoing teaching practice, which meets once per term.

The **PBS Staff/Student Committee** is chaired by the Director of PBS, and includes representatives of undergraduate students from Part IA, IB and Part II. The Committee meets once in Michaelmas Term and once in Lent Term.

The **Directors of Studies Committee** meets once per term, and is a forum for discussion between Colleges and the Tripos.

## 4 Part IA: Overview

**PBS 1** and **PBS 2** are the core papers in PBS. Students must take these two papers and then choose **two further optional** papers. The papers on offer in 2020-21 are displayed below.

All students must register paper choices with the teaching office by **Friday 16 October** at the latest. They should also notify their Director of Studies of the papers that they are taking. Some optional papers, as noted in the Optional Paper guide that is circulated to students, have limited spaces available for PBS students or have practicals which need to be arranged. Students who wish to take any of these papers should inform the Teaching Administrator by **noon on Friday 25 September**. If this deadline is missed students may not be offered their preferred papers.

Your Director of Studies can give you more information on how your choices in Part IA may support your options in Part IB and Part II of the Tripos. Some paper combinations may not be available, due to timetable constraints.

### Part IA: The Papers

#### **PBS 1: Introduction to Psychology**

**Course organiser:** Dr Kate Plaisted-Grant  
([kcp1000@cam.ac.uk](mailto:kcp1000@cam.ac.uk))

##### *Brief description of the paper*

This course aims to introduce a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of Psychology. Through studying this course, students will develop their understanding of how the different approaches address

specific topics within psychology. Topics are selected such that students without prior training in psychology will not be disadvantaged.

## **PBS 2: Psychological Enquiry and Methods**

**Course organiser:** Prof Jeff Dalley ([jwd20@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jwd20@cam.ac.uk))

### *Brief description of the paper*

This course covers the foundations of psychological study, including the mathematical and biological knowledge and skills required to engage with the research literature. The material on this course provides a foundation for all later study of psychology, providing students with the intellectual tools required to evaluate psychological material in later years.

Teaching includes a range of techniques, including mathematics lectures and examples classes, and interactive sessions each fortnight.

## **A1: World Archaeology**

**Borrow from:** Part I of the Archaeology Tripos.

This paper focuses on key thresholds in the unfolding story of how and why societies change, starting from the origins of the human species. You will study the emergence of culture and the use of symbols, domestication of plants and animals, and the development of social inequalities and leadership. Further themes will include the analysis of archaic states and early empires, the impact of writing systems, and the appearance of cities. You will gain an understanding of the relationship between archaeological data (sites and artefacts) and the diverse theories that help to explain long-term societal change, including ecological and evolutionary models, current social theory, and the post-colonial critique. The place of

archaeological heritage in the modern world will also be discussed.

## **B1: Humans in a Biological Perspective**

***Borrowed from:*** Part I of the Archaeology Tripos.

The paper covers major topics in Biological Anthropology, including non-human primate biology, evolution and behaviour, human origins, comparative perspectives on human health, growth and nutrition, and human genetic diversity. The paper introduces students to behavioural and gene-environment interactions, and the ecology and adaptations of modern populations in the context of their growth, health and cultural diversity. Specific topics covered include the diversity of primates, major patterns and processes in the evolution of humans, the burden of malnutrition and interrelationships with poverty, the role of nature and nurture in shaping the human mind, and insights into the genetic diversity within and between human groups.

## **NS 1: Evolution and Behaviour**

***Borrowed from:*** Part IA of the Natural Sciences Tripos.

***Highly desirable:*** *A level Biology*

This option covers the full range of biology disciplines and is relevant to the study of [Cell and Developmental Biology](#), [Ecology](#), [Genetics](#), [Plant Sciences](#), [Psychology](#) and [Zoology](#). You're introduced to the major principles of evolutionary theory, and explore the origin, evolution and diversity of life on Earth; and major transitions such as the origin of eukaryotes and multicellularity (using new and fast-evolving methods and techniques).

The second half of the option explores animal behaviour in an evolutionary context, including the evolution of behaviour,

sociality, culture and intelligence; comparative studies of learning and memory; the evolution and behaviour of primates and humans; and evolutionary psychology. You develop practical biological skills through practical classes and a field course. By the end of the year, we hope that you'll agree with Theodosius Dobzhansky (1900-75) that 'nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution.

## **NS 2: Mathematical Biology**

***Borrowed from:*** Part IA of the Natural Sciences Tripos.

***Essential:*** A level Maths

Mathematical Biology is the first-year Natural Sciences mathematics course designed for biologists. The course teaches a range of skills in mathematical modelling, probability, computational biology and statistics. The course is designed to approach these areas from an integrated, biological point of view. A range of mathematical and statistical techniques, including matrix algebra, basic probability and probability distributions, hypothesis testing, regression, ordinary differential equations, local stability analysis, coupled differential equations and mathematical modelling are introduced in the context of biological systems. The course also teaches simple computer programming, via the statistical programming language R. This is taught in the 1.25hr practical classes, which occur every week during term.

The course is taught jointly by members of staff from all Departments in the School of Biology (Biochemistry, Genetics, Pathology, Pharmacology, PDN [Physiology, Development and Neuroscience], Plant Sciences, Psychology, Veterinary Medicine and Zoology), as well as staff from the MRC-CBU (the Medical Research Council's Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit).

Choosing this option: A level in mathematics or equivalent is required to take this course as a PBS student.

## **PHIL 1: Metaphysics**

*Borrowed from: Part IA of the Philosophy Tripos*

This course examines a wide range of metaphysical topics of perennial interest. The primary question about causation is simply: what is it for one thing to cause another? Your alarm clock may go off every morning just before sunrise; but it doesn't cause the sun to rise; so what is missing? The question of free will is immediately related: what is it to have free will? Certain accounts of free will suggest that there is a tension between the existence of free will and the existence of (deterministic) laws of nature. But if there are these laws of nature, what are they, how do we learn about them, and what would it mean for them to be broken? These are the questions raised in the topic of induction and miracles. The final two topics concern minded beings. The question of personal identity asks what we are, metaphysically speaking, and what it takes for us to persist through time? Relatedly, one might ask what it is to have a mind, and here we consider two classic views: dualism and functionalism.

## **PHIL 2: Ethics and Political Philosophy**

*Borrowed from: Part IA of the Philosophy Tripos.*

The course introduces students to a selection of the main problems in moral and political philosophy. The topics studied are divided into five main subject areas:

**Introduction to Metaethics:** This part of the course introduces students to some of the central questions in metaethics. One topic centres on the so called 'fact/value distinction'. Is there, indeed, such a distinction? If so, what is it? Is it possible to make inferences from descriptive or non-



moral claims to evaluative, normative, or moral claims? Can moral properties be identified with natural properties? A second topic is concerned with whether moral judgments are objective or subjective. Can we know what is morally right and wrong? Or is there nothing to be known because moral judgements merely express emotions or preferences? Are there facts about what is good or valuable, and if there are do they obtain independently of human thought or feeling?

**Moral Psychology:** The second area of the syllabus is focused on questions concerning moral decision-making and moral motivation. Can people act altruistically or is there always a selfish element in motivation? What sorts of motivation does morality require? What sorts of justification can be given in favour of moral motivation? What roles do affective and cognitive attitudes play in moral judgment and moral motivation?

**Introduction to Normative Ethics:** This part of the course is concerned with the question what the right thing to do is. Does morality require us to maximise pleasure and minimise pain? Must we act only in ways that are universalizable? Is it permissible to kill one so that five others may live? What is virtue? Students will be introduced to three central approaches to normative ethics: consequentialism, deontology, and virtue ethics.

**Equality of opportunity:** It is intuitive to think that our society is just only if we each have an equal opportunity to receive key benefits available in our society. But what does equality of opportunity mean in this context? And which benefits should we be concerned with? Is equality of opportunity compatible with private education? With affirmative action? With financial reward for natural talents? With family life?

## **POL 1: The Modern State and its Alternatives**

*Borrowed from: Part I of the HSPS Tripos.*

The modern state is the predominant basis on which political authority and power are constructed across the world today. Where there is no modern state, there tends to be civil war or occupation by other states. Where modern states are ineffective, politics is unstable and sometimes violent, and governments struggle to manage the economy. The first section of this paper looks at the origins of the modern state, the arguments that were first used to justify it, and the dangers and dilemmas that the power of the modern state created in politics.

Within modern states, representative democracy has become the predominant form of government in the world. It excites because it appears to offer equality, liberty and self-rule, but it also frequently disappoints in practice as it rarely does realise these values and the goods it promises frequently clash with each other. The second section of the paper looks at the origins of representative democracy in the United States, the paradoxes of the rise of the United States as a democratic society, and the kinds of politics created by representative democracy today in view of the expectations about the 'rule of the people' that accompany it.

The final section of the paper examines the coherence and persuasiveness of alternatives to, and critiques of, modern democracy and the state, and the nature of politics as disagreement.

## **SAN 1: Social Anthropology: The Comparative Perspective**

*Borrowed from: Part I of the HSPS Tripos.*

Social Anthropology addresses the really big question – what does it mean to be human? – by taking as its subject matter the full range of human social and cultural diversity. What does this diversity tell us about the fundamental bases and possibilities of human social and political life, and how contemporary global changes manifest themselves in people's lives across the world? In this paper you will learn how such taken-for-granted categories as gender, ethnicity, sexuality, economy, politics, and the state are subject to radical cultural variation, and how everyday matters such as food, clothing, work, and trade may be bound up with religious and other symbolic meanings that vary between societies. You will also learn about the main kinds of social theory developed by anthropologists in response to the challenge of understanding this diversity, and about the distinctive forms of ethnographic field research anthropologists use in order to gain first-hand knowledge of the societies they study. To this end we look closely at two very different core ethnographic texts: a study of a girls' initiation ceremony from central Africa, and an account of conversion to Christianity in highland Papua New Guinea.

## **SOC 1: Modern Societies I: Introduction to Sociology**

*Borrowed from: Part I of the HSPS Tripos.*

The course introduces students to the discipline of sociology in two parts. In the Michaelmas term students are thoroughly acquainted with core sociological concepts and concerns (e.g. class, bureaucracy, social solidarity, social change). We do this through a critical engagement with the ideas of three central figures in the history of modern sociological thought: Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim. Towards the end of Michaelmas and throughout Lent, we build on the foundations laid by the classical theorists and develop a systematic analysis of key institutions and aspects of modern societies including: the modern state and the rise of

nationalism; citizenship and the welfare state; the media and public life; class and inequality; gender and the family. We conclude with a broader reflection on the changing nature of modern societies in our contemporary global age.

## 5 Part IB Overview

In the second year students take four papers. All students must study **PBS 3: Social and Developmental Psychology**, and **PBS 4: Cognitive Neuroscience and Experimental Psychology**.

Optional papers available in the second year cover a similar range of subjects from the first: anthropology, sociology, neurobiology, and philosophy.

## 6 Part II Overview

Third year PBS students must complete a **research dissertation**, based on empirical research. Along with the research dissertation, students must take three additional papers, from a range of advanced psychological topics based around the research strength of the Department, including topics in social and developmental psychology, and modules from the Natural Sciences Tripos Part II Psychology course. Papers are also available which cover a range of topics building on those available in the first two years. This will allow students with interests in relating psychological knowledge to specific fields to pursue their related interest to a final year undergraduate level.

### **BPS Accreditation**



The  
British  
Psychological  
Society

The PBS Tripos is accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) as conferring eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC), provided the Part II research dissertation receives a pass mark and that a Lower Second Class Honours (2.2) or higher is achieved in Part II.

GBC is an entry requirement for all BPS accredited postgraduate training courses and is also required to work towards becoming a Chartered Psychologist. Information on how to become a psychologist can be found on the [BPS website](#).

# 7 Writing Essays

It is hard to overstate the importance of a good essay-writing style. But there is no single way of writing a good essay. Different subjects will prompt you to write in different ways, and different styles are equally acceptable when well executed. Nevertheless, these guidelines (given in no particular order of importance) are intended to help you develop an effective writing style.

- Answer the question: an essay that fails to address the question will be marked severely, no matter how entertaining or elegant it is.
- Good writing always has a structure: to excite and maintain the reader's attention, you must order your thoughts. Planning a structure is a crucial phase in essay composition. Even if you are averse to writing to a plan, be wary of writing a disordered stream of allusions, impressions and asides, and of unintended repetition. You will need paragraphs. Paragraphs usually make a single point. If the point is a complex one, you may need several paragraphs, and these should connect.
- Sentences: from an examiner's perspective, long and involved sentences are difficult to parse. However, using nothing but short sentences will limit your powers of expression. Sentences in a good essay are likely to vary according to the subject and the kind of point you are trying to make.
- Do not try to say too much: the question on which you are asked to write may be general, its potential scope enormous. But you only have a week, and sometimes less,

to prepare for it and write, and you are normally asked to write between 1,200 and 2,500 words.

- Be persuasive: the object of any piece of written work is to say what you want to say as clearly and persuasively as you can. This will entail justifying why you are thinking about the matter at hand in the way that you do, why you argue about it in the way that you do, why you reach the conclusions you do, and, if you cannot reach a conclusion, why you cannot.
- Good writing strives to be *exact*, and where appropriate, precise. Exactness and precision depend not only on syntax, but on a wide and inventive vocabulary. Do not unthinkingly adopt the terms of the authors you read. For some essays, these terms will be what are at issue. But even in these cases, perhaps especially in these cases, you should ask yourself whether the given term is the most appropriate and effective.
- Prepare for your essay by reading as widely as you can, and beware of deciding too soon on the argument you will make. In thinking how to start writing, which for most people is the most difficult moment, it might be helpful to start from a question that came to you in your reading and refused to go away. But do not decide too soon on your argument. If you are unsure of your starting- or end-point, say why.
- Be scrupulous about referencing your sources and readings: you are expected to give a bibliography or reference list of your readings at the end of the essay. Any quotations used should be fully attributed: giving author, work, date and page number(s). Normally quotations are attributed in the middle of the essay text in a form such as this - Mitchell (2010, p. 12) – with fuller information on the

work given in the bibliography. *Plagiarism* (see below) – the unattributed use of another’s written work in an essay or exam answer – is on the rise among students, and academic staff are required to take serious disciplinary measures with any student found to be plagiarising. Accurate sourcing is essential.

- Explain: It is often useful to understand how others have approached an issue, but you should never just report what they have said. Mention them only if you intend to engage with them. You will usually be asked to read authors taking different points of view. It is essential that you understand what these are and explain them. In your essays, and in examination answers, you must never presume that your reader already knows the source and needs no more than a brief allusion to it. The reader may not know of it, and even if s/he does, will want to know what you know of it, what you take from it and make of it. Always acknowledge those whom you have read through a reference in the text and in your bibliography at the end of the essay (*see also the guidance on plagiarism, in the next section*).
- Conclusions: Essays often work towards a definite conclusion, but they do not have to. A supervision essay is not the final word on a subject. It may end in irony or paradox, or with more questions than it began with. You might want to regard it as evidence of thought and work in progress, to be revised or extended in discussion.
- Bibliography: Beware the machismo of listing numerous works in your bibliography: better essays can sometimes come from reading and engaging intelligently and critically with just one or two key texts. Bibliographies are a useful reminder, when you return to reading an earlier essay, of the thought-path you took when writing the essay. Some



word processing packages include a bibliography programme. This can be a useful means of recording everything you read (or at some point intend to read) and of instantly recalling references for insertion into your writing.

- Retain your handwriting skills: Essays can be written on a computer, but be careful not to lose the habit of writing by hand, as this remains essential for examinations. Practise writing timed essays by hand for several weeks before an examination.

## 8 Plagiarism

The following guidance has been issued by the Faculty of Biology. Students should also ensure that they read and understand [the University-wide statement on plagiarism](#).

Plagiarism is defined as presenting as your own work words and thoughts that are not your own. It is a form of cheating and treated as such by the University's ordinances. If you are in any doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, ask your Director of Studies to talk you through the issue.

### The scope of plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as submitting as one's own work, irrespective of intent to deceive, that which derives in part or in its entirety from the work of others without due acknowledgement. It is both poor scholarship and a breach of academic integrity.

Examples of plagiarism include copying (using another person's language and/or ideas as if they are a candidate's own), by:

- **quoting verbatim** another person's work without due acknowledgement of the source.
- **paraphrasing** another person's work by changing some of the words, or the order of the words, without due acknowledgement of the source.
- **using ideas** taken from someone else without reference to the originator.

- **cutting and pasting** from the Internet to make a pastiche of online sources.
- **submitting someone else's work** as part of a candidate's own without identifying clearly who did the work. For example, buying or commissioning work via professional agencies such as 'essay banks' or 'paper mills', or not attributing research contributed by others to a joint project.

Plagiarism might also arise from **colluding** with another person, including another candidate, other than as permitted for joint project work (i.e. where collaboration is concealed or has been forbidden). A candidate should include a general acknowledgement where he or she has received substantial help, for example with the language and style of a piece of written work.

Plagiarism can occur in respect to all types of sources and media:

- text, illustrations, musical quotations, mathematical derivations, computer code, etc.
- material downloaded from websites or drawn from manuscripts or other media.
- published and unpublished material, including lecture handouts and other students' work.

Acceptable means of acknowledging the work of others (by referencing, in footnotes, or otherwise) vary according to the subject matter and mode of assessment.

Failure to conform to the expected standards of scholarship (e.g. by not referencing sources) in examinations may affect

the mark given to the candidate's work. In addition, suspected cases of the use of unfair means (of which plagiarism is one form) will be investigated and may be brought to one of the University's Courts. The Courts have wide powers to discipline those found guilty of using unfair means in an examination, including depriving such persons of membership of the University, and deprivation of a degree.

## **How to avoid plagiarism**

The stylistic conventions for different subjects vary and you should consult your Course Organiser or project supervisor about the conventions pertaining to your particular subject area. Most courses will issue written guidance on the relevant scholarly conventions and you are expected to have read and to follow this advice. However, the main points that apply to submitted work (e.g. dissertations, project reports) are:

- when presenting the views and work of others, include in the text an indication of the source of the material, e.g. 'as Sharpe (1993) has shown,' and give the full details of the work quoted in your bibliography.
- if you quote text verbatim, place the sentence in inverted commas and give the appropriate reference, e.g. 'The elk is of necessity less graceful than the gazelle' (Thompson, 1942, p 46) and give the full details in your bibliography as above.
- if you wish to set out the work of another at length so that you can produce a counter-argument, set the quoted text apart from your own text (eg by indenting a paragraph) and identify it by using inverted commas and adding a reference as above. NB long quotations may infringe copyright, which exists for the life of the author plus 70 years.

- if you are copying text, keep a note of the author and the reference as you go along, with the copied text, so that you will not mistakenly think the material to be your own work when you come back to it in a few weeks' time.
- if you reproduce an illustration or include someone else's data in a graph include the reference to the original work in the legend, eg (figure redrawn from Webb, 1976) or (triangles = data from Webb, 1976).
- if you wish to collaborate with another person on your project, you should check with the Course Organiser to see whether this might be allowed and then seek their permission.
- if you have been authorised to work together with another candidate or other researchers, you must acknowledge their contribution fully in your introductory section. If there is likely to be any doubt as to who contributed which parts of the work, you should make this clear in the text wherever necessary, e.g. 'I am grateful to A. Smith for analysing the sodium content of these samples'.
- be especially careful if cutting and pasting work from electronic media; do not fail to attribute the work to its source. If authorship of the electronic source is not given, ask yourself whether it is worth copying.

Please note that during written answers for unseen examination papers, you will not be penalised for failures to reference information in this manner.

**The Golden Rule: The examiners must be in no doubt as to which parts of your work are your own original work and which are the rightful property of someone else.**

## **Turnitin UK software use**

Turnitin UK is a program which matches text in work submitted to the software, to that of a large database of online sources.

The program will be used to check the originality of assessed work, such as the Part II dissertation. Cases of suspected unfair practice including plagiarism, potential data fabrication, or collusion will be investigated by the Chair of Part II Exams on a case-by-case basis. This investigatory meeting may involve examiners, supervisors, College Tutors or the University Proctors. Following the investigatory meeting, the Chair may recommend that penalties be applied to the final mark. All penalties to be applied will be agreed at the final Examiners' meeting.

Further guidance on the use of Turnitin UK will be given to students who must submit assessed work.

## 9 Examinations & Criteria for Assessment

In Part IA students are assessed by four written examination papers. Some of the optional papers also have assignment components that contribute to your exam marks. Copies of past exam papers are available on the PBS Part IA Moodle site. Examinations are held in the Easter term; a timetable will be released in April.

For students borrowing the PBS1 paper from another Tripos, it is important to note that the essays produced for that examination are expected to form a coherent narrative that effectively address the question. This mode of assessment may differ from other subjects, where brief notes, outlines, or short answers may be suitable.

### Marking Criteria for exam scripts

Papers borrowed from other Triposes have their own marking criteria, so students should check the necessary course websites for information on borrowed papers. The marking criteria for PBS papers are based on those used by the Faculty of Biology:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>First (70+)</b>	Work which is excellent in the range and command of the material covered. Work that is excellent in its understanding of the subject; that has engaged closely with the question; and that is well planned and complete.

A first class mark may be awarded on more than

one set of criteria: there may be a great deal of relevant information, displaying substantial knowledge and understanding; the arguments and presentation may be stylish; the approach may be original, critical or unorthodox. An upper first would be an outstanding performance, meeting all, or virtually all, of these criteria; a low first would meet at least some of these criteria.

**Upper Second**  
(60-69) Work that shows a good knowledge of the topic and the material covered in lectures; that is presented in an organised way; and clearly argued and focused on the set question.

**Lower Second**  
(50-59) Work that overall shows a reasonable competence in the understanding and presentation of the relevant material.

Certain types of uneven work would fall into this class: detailed factually-correct work that did not relate a broad knowledge of the topic to the specific question asked, or work with clear organisation and some insight but with serious omissions of factual knowledge.

**Third**  
(40-49) At the upper end of the class, work that just shows competent knowledge of the basic, core material.

At the lower end of the class, work that shows some knowledge of the material but with serious deficiencies in understanding, coverage and organisation; this will include work that is unduly brief or largely misses the point of the question.



**Fail** ( $<40$ ) Work that is irrelevant, shows a considerable degree of ignorance or is short and superficial. Where the question is barely attempted.

## **PBS Classing Criteria**

The Part IA PBS examination contains a variety of different subjects, which use different criteria and marking schemes, and produce marks of different distributions.

- The classing criteria for PBS are designed to ensure that all four papers of the examination are weighted equally.
- The Examiners responsible for each paper will award the candidate a mark which determines their class for that paper. Papers from other Triposes have their own marking criteria; for PBS papers the Faculty of Biology marking criteria is followed, listed on the previous page.

The following Class boundaries are applied to marks:

Class I	70
Class II.i	60
Class II.ii	50
Class III	40
Fail	$<40$

- In order to achieve any overall class for Part IA PBS, a candidate must attain that target class, or higher, in at least two papers; and also must attain at least the next lower class in all papers. Alternatively, a candidate must attain an average mark across all four papers that is equal to that target class, or higher. Candidates will be awarded the higher of the two classes.

- Candidates who fail one paper or more will be considered for failing, but examiners have discretion.
- For the purposes of ranking candidates within each overall class for the Tripos as a whole, each mark is scaled to give a rank mark. The mean of a candidate's rank marks is used to determine their ranking within each class. Discretion will be exercised by the Examiners in considering the class of individual candidates at the boundaries.

As an illustration, to achieve a first, a candidate must receive marks of 60 or above (at least an upper second) in all papers, two of which are 70 or above. Similarly, to achieve an upper second, they must achieve at least 50 in all papers, and 60 or above in two papers.

# 10 Complaints & Problems

We hope that your studies on the Tripos will run smoothly; however, if you have a problem, the following people can help you:

**For any problems concerning:**

Supervisions

Step 1: Director of Studies

Step 2: Course Organiser

*Please note that if your supervisor holds either of these roles and you wish to speak to someone else, you may contact any of the people below.*

Teaching/Structure of Papers

Step 1: Course Organiser

Step 2: Director of PBS (Dr Lee de Wit  
[lh26@cam.ac.uk](mailto:lh26@cam.ac.uk))

Timetable/Structure of the Tripos

Teaching Administrator:  
[teaching@psychol.cam.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@psychol.cam.ac.uk)

General Issues

Teaching Administrator or Teaching Secretary ([teaching@psychol.cam.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@psychol.cam.ac.uk)), or Student Representative

# 11 Important Websites & Links

## [Current Students webpage](#)

These pages include:

Timetables, paper guides, marking criteria.

## [PBS Part IA Moodle Page](#)

These pages include:

Past exam papers, lecture handouts and resources.

## **Library Homepages**

[Psychology Library](#)

[HSPS Library](#)

These pages include:

Catalogue Searches, help & support, referencing information & resources.

## [Libraries Gateway](#)

These pages include:

Catalogue searches, contacts/opening hours, EJournals.

## [Interactive University Map](#)

