

Using the High School Curriculum as a springboard for finding best fit for students at UK universities

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Which curriculum does your school offer?



Questions to think about

- ▶ **When do you start encouraging students to think about College (University) choices/best fit?**
- ▶ **Do your students factor in future University choices when choosing High School subjects?**
- ▶ **Is there a part of the high school curriculum that students typically find harder to reflect on/find transferrable skills than others?**
- ▶ **What do you think the drawback of your curriculum is for applications to the UK?**
- ▶ **How effective do you think your curriculum is at preparing students for university ?**
- ▶ **Are there types of students you think are more suited to the UK system than others? What drawbacks do you see to UK universities for students?**



What do we mean by best fit?

- ▶ **Academic Fit** – course content, learning and teaching experience, assessment
- ▶ **Social Fit** – location, size, facilities, extra-curricular activities
- ▶ **UK context** - Academic, financial, personal, and professional.



Introduction to the UK Education system

- Over 160 Universities with more than 50,000 UG courses on UCAS
- 3-year Bachelors/ 4-year Integrated Masters
- More focused degree courses
- Independent learning



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Components of the HSC: Subjects

What skills do the subjects aim to develop?

- Foundations of knowledge
- Variety of assessments
- Breadth of subject choice with options for students to specialise.

How is this useful in finding best fit?

- Help inspire subject choice and future specialism
- Encourage thought around multi-disciplinary and combined honours options
- Understand how they prefer to demonstrate knowledge learned

Questions for students to reflect on:

- *Do I enjoy studying a breadth of subjects? Have I chosen subjects that are more similar? Are there crossovers between the subjects that I've enjoyed?*
- *Which subjects have I enjoyed the most? Are there similarities between them?*
- *In assessments how do I prefer being assessed?*
- *What skills have I developed by taking this subject? Eg. organisation, prioritisation, delegation, analytical, overcoming adversity.*



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Components of the HSC: Essay subjects and pre-university research qualifications

What skills do essays aim to develop?

- Enhance subject knowledge – skills of reflection on studies
- Develop research skills
- Helps communicate ideas and ability to develop an argument

How is this useful in finding best fit?

- Prepares students for University level study (UK courses often very focussed)
- Projects and Essays can be referenced in an application or discussed at interview and can be used to demonstrate suitable preparation for a course.
- Can develop an interdisciplinary approach
- Develops time management skills in the context of a large project

Questions for students to reflect on:

- *What were my essay or research projects on and did I enjoy that process?*



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Components of the HSC: Enrichment – outside core curriculum

What skills does enrichment develop?

- Develop skills such as:
 - collaboration
 - problem solving
 - decision making outside of academic setting
 - interact with different cultures

How is this useful in finding best fit?

- Inspires future activities – moving to college/university presents a lot of new opportunities and challenges.
- Helps students consider future balance – university is much more independent and students need to find that balance and way to make the most of their next step.
- Students gain experience working in teams (*useful for subjects like Engineering which often require project work*)

Questions for students to reflect on:

- Do I enjoy stepping out of my comfort zone and interacting with new people?
- Outside of academics, what do I want to focus on?



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Imperial: Material Sciences and Engineering

Imperial College
London

Subjects

- Materials explores connections between a breadth of subjects; Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, and other sciences (biology, computer science etc) - students from the IB are able to apply a breadth of courses topics to their course and explore the links further at university level

Essays

- Are utilised in Undergraduate Research Opportunities and interdisciplinary research of the department- Students from any year group can take part in research projects based at Imperial, with many sponsored by industrial partners. Students have to complete scientific academic writing as part of their degree also.

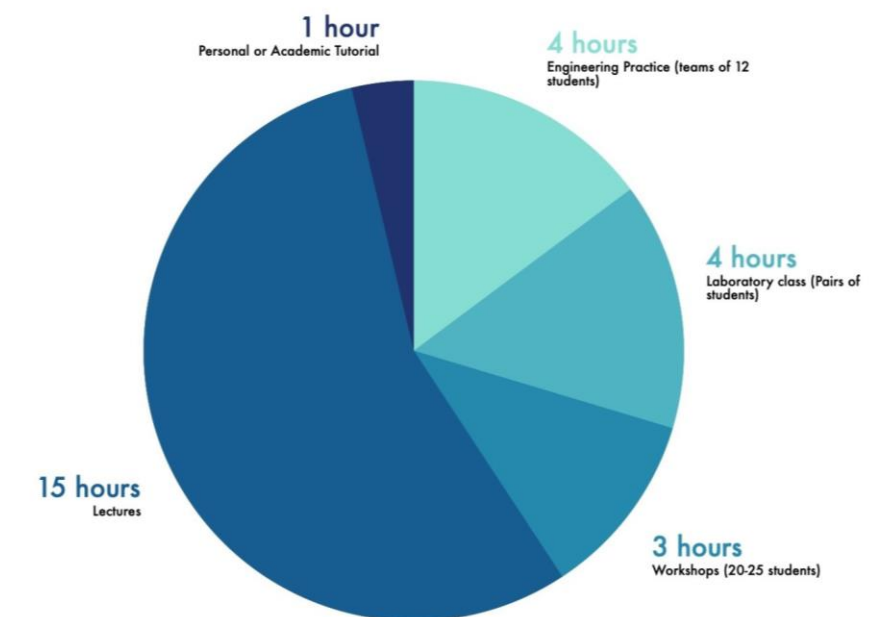
Group Work

- experience working in teams, collaborative work – the way that Materials is taught is through a variety of Engineering practice, workshops and problem-solving challenges.
- Students in year 1 have to problem solve, design, manufacture, assemble and automate a solution to an engineering challenge
- **Group problem-solving** - Students complete very hands-on practical modules, working in teams from day 1 of their degree course.

Teaching and learning style

- A typical week in Years 1 and 2 has about **27 hours of contact time**. 15 hours of lectures (3 hours per day)
- 4 hours Engineering Practice (which consists of **teamwork in a company of 12**)
- 4 hours **laboratory classes** (where students work in pairs)
- 3 hours **of workshops** (which involves problem-solving sessions with 20-25 students) - Collaborative learning
- 1 hour of personal or academic tutorial in groups of four.

A typical week in Year 1 and 2



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Cambridge: Human, Social and Political Science



Subjects

– HSPS is multi-disciplinary and allows choice from the start.

Essay

- prepares for undergraduate dissertation, 10,000 words. Extended writing throughout.

Enrichment

- Global thought and context to discussions. People focussed subject areas.

Other teaching and learning

- Encourages questions, analysis and critical reflection, builds on TOK
- Group supervisions and seminars

Teaching and learning style

Supervisions
Seminars
Lectures



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Resources

myheplus.com

Oxplore.org

Best Fit Colleges Blog:

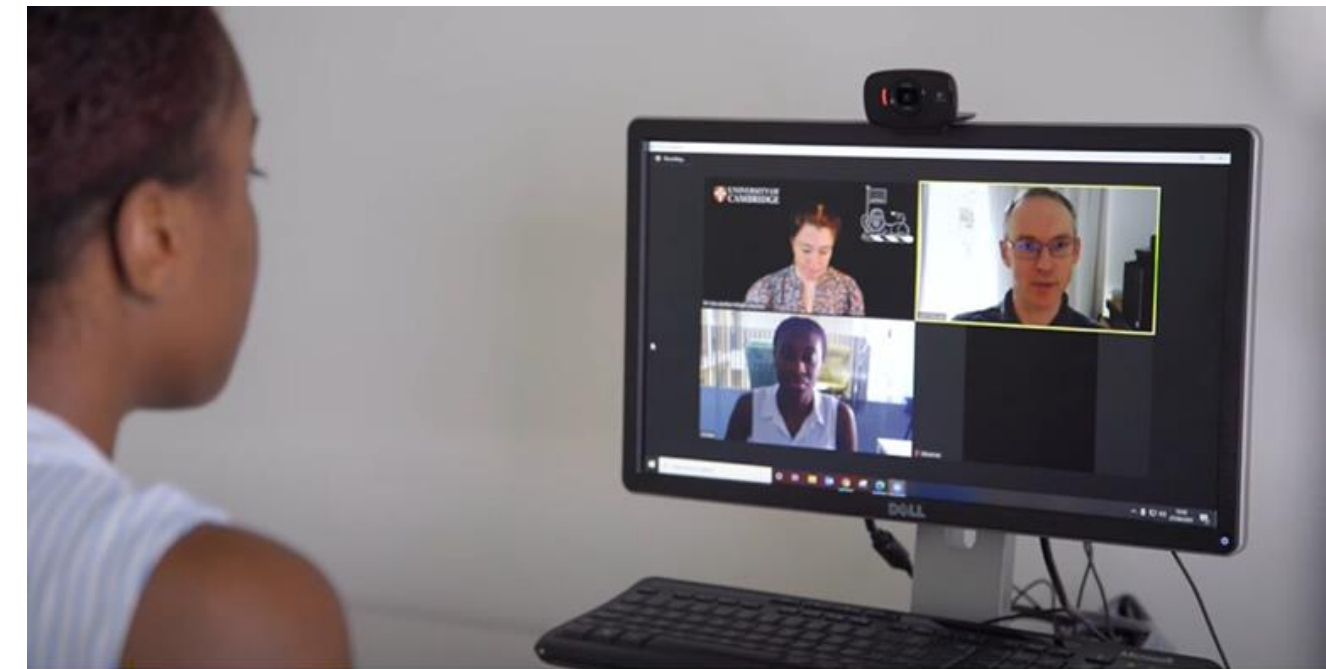
<https://xello.world/en/blog/college-planning/best-fit-college/>

US Labour Statistics: Fastest Growing areas

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/fastest-growing.htm>

What Skills Do Employers Look For – UCAS

<https://www.ucas.com/careers/getting-job/what-are-employers-looking>



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Questions and Feedback

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