How to apply

Step-by-step guide on how to make a University application

(Applicant Portal)

1. Check your eligibility (see page 2 of this document)

2. Select your course (see page 2 of this document)

3. Contact supervisor(s) (see page 3 of this document for detailed guidance on finding a supervisor)
   Applicants for the PhD and MPhil must identify a supervisor and agree on a research project before submitting their application.
   You do not need to identify a supervisor for the MPhil in Basic and Translational Neuroscience.

4. Look at sources of funding (see pages 3-4 of this document)

5. Check deadlines you are working towards (funding or application – whichever comes first)
   The deadline for those applying for funding for courses starting in January 2024 and April 2024 has passed.

Gates USA funding round deadline is

Wednesday 11 October 2023, at 23:59pm (midnight) UK time

The PDN application deadline for the consideration for University Funding Opportunities is

Thursday 4 January 2024, at 23:59pm (midnight) UK time

6. Apply online via the Applicant Portal:

   Applicant Portal

Please read on for more detailed guidance
Eligibility and entrance requirements:
Postgraduate study at the University of Cambridge is intense and very intellectually demanding, so the University has high academic entry requirements. You are normally expected to hold or to have achieved by the start of your course:

- minimum of a good 2:1 honours degree from a UK university or an equivalent standard from an overseas university in a relevant biological subject; and
- completion of, or release from, any current training or education course

To check if your international qualification meets the University minimum requirement, please consult the International section of the University website.

Entry requirements: you should be aware that meeting the University’s or departments’ minimum academic requirements does not guarantee entry; it is only one of the factors taken into account when academic selectors make their decision. Many other factors are also important, such as suitability for the course, proficiency in English, relevant experience, references, availability of a suitable supervisor, and the number of available places.

Competence in English: if English isn’t your first language, you will be required to submit evidence that you meet the University’s English language requirement before you are admitted to your proposed course of study. Note: You do not need to take the language test before you apply. If you are made a conditional offer and have not already met our language requirements, one of the conditions of your offer will be that you pass a test at the required level. Please note that test results only remain valid for two years.

FAQ for international students

Widening participation: We are committed to widening participation at postgraduate level.

Contextual Admissions pilot
The course to which you are applying is piloting an additional step in the application process for postgraduate study this year. We are including this step to improve contextualised understanding of your application. The additional step will be presented to you as part of your main application process on the Cambridge Graduate Applicant Portal. For more information about what the pilot aims to do and how your data will be used, please see here.

Decide which course to apply for:

**PhD in Physiology, Development and Neuroscience**

**MPhil in Biological Science (Physiology, Development and Neuroscience)**

The PhD degree normally involves a minimum of three or maximum of four year course of research, although part-time degrees are now possible. The MPhil degree is a one year course of research and is also available as a part-time degree. Both culminate in the submission of a dissertation which is defended in an oral examination. Training involves a combination of instruction from within the research group, learning the skills and developing research experience on a day-to-day basis, and formal training courses. The latter are designed to develop extra technical and transferable skills.

Other courses

**MPhil in Basic and Translational Neuroscience** [Additional course information]

MPhil in Biological Sciences by advanced study to apply for October 2024 entry, please see:
Developmental Biology: [https://www.postgraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/courses/directory/blblmpdby](https://www.postgraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/courses/directory/blblmpdby)
Reproduction and Embryogenesis: [https://www.postgraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/courses/directory/blblmprae](https://www.postgraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/courses/directory/blblmprae)
Link to course information and other pathways: [https://www.mphil.bio.cam.ac.uk/](https://www.mphil.bio.cam.ac.uk/)

There is a single round of admissions each year for the following list of funded programmes and studentships. Deadlines will be published on their webpages.

- University of Cambridge - MRC DTP iCASE Programme
- Cambridge Biosciences DTP PhD Programme
- Centre for Trophoblast Research – details to be confirmed
- Wellcome Trust/MRC 4 year International PhD Programme in Stem Cell Biology
- Cambridge 4 year British Heart Foundation Programme in Cardiovascular Research
**Finding a supervisor**
Applicants for the PhD and MPhil must identify a supervisor and agree on a research project before submitting their application. Find a supervisor and research project area from the groups listed in the PDN research themes. Make contact with the supervisor(s) by email/telephone to find out more information about possible projects. You are advised to do this as early as possible.

*Note: You do not need to identify a supervisor before applying for the MPhil in Basic and Translational Neuroscience*

**Funding:**
Look into the costs and fees for postgraduate training in Cambridge.

Postgraduate Funding Search  Search awards administered by the University of Cambridge (departments, faculties, colleges, central offices and other internal sponsors)

There are several funding opportunities at Cambridge for prospective postgraduate students, from a wide variety of sources including the Cambridge Trust, Gates Cambridge, Vice-Chancellor’s Awards and Cambridge International Studentships, Harding Distinguished Postgraduate Scholars Programme, Colleges (check information on individual College websites), Departments (research groups may have specific funding for students from time to time, these will be advertised on this webpage), Research Councils and central University funds. See the ‘Postgraduate funding at Cambridge’ YouTube video.

There are two deadlines to consider when applying for funding, the application deadlines and the funding deadlines (not applicable for January or April 2024 applicants). Application for both is via the same online form but you must apply by whichever deadline comes first. Which this will be depends on the course and your status as explained at this link:  [https://www.postgraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/application-process/how-do-i-apply](https://www.postgraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/application-process/how-do-i-apply)

**The PDN application deadline for the consideration for University Funding Opportunities is**

**Thursday 4 January 2024, at 23:59pm (midnight) UK time**

(for applicants applying for admission in October 2024, January 2025 and April 2025)

**Students from the USA who wish to be considered for the Gates USA funding need to apply much earlier as their deadline is:**

**Gates USA deadline is**

**Wednesday 11 October 2023, at 23:59pm (midnight) UK time**

External funding and Loans
FindAPhD.com  Helpful information on sourcing funding for graduate studies.
Vacancies pages  Individual studentships may be advertised on the University of Cambridge vacancies page

**Selecting a College**
For guidance and tips on how to select a College see: overview and how to choose a College

**Making your application**
All applications must be made using the:

**Applicant Portal**

Application fee
Full details on whether there is an application fee for the course you are applying to can be found at this link

The PhD in Physiology, Development and Neuroscience course is exempt from the application fee.

For MPhil in Biological Sciences (Physiology, Development and Neuroscience) applicants for admission in Lent or Easter Term 2024 you will need to pay an application fee of **£50** before you can submit your application.  **Note: The Postgraduate School of Life Sciences has a scheme which enables three applications to be made with payment of a single application fee. A list of eligible courses and further information can be found here.**  Information on the application fee beyond this can be found at this link.
Information on the application fee for the MPhil in Basic and Translational Neuroscience can be found at this [link]. Note: The Postgraduate School of Life Sciences has a scheme which enables three applications to be made with payment of a single application fee. A list of eligible courses and further information can be found [here].

Information is also provided on eligibility for [application fee waivers].

We recommend you read the information at the following links:

- How do I apply
- Postgraduate Admissions Pages
- Supporting documentation
- References
- What happens after applying

Hopefully most of your questions will be answered. For other queries please refer to our [FAQ guide] which is available on our website.