Cambridge Seminars College



A-Levels

Shaping your future in the heart of Cambridge

About Cambridge Seminars College

Cambridge Seminars College was founded in 1981 and over the past 45 years has been educating students from around the world and successfully preparing them for entry to university in the UK. The College prides itself on the one-to-one support which it offers to students, and on the success that this helps them to achieve.



Why should I study A-Levels?

A-Levels, along with the International Baccalaureate Diploma, are the two "gold standard" qualifications that all universities in the UK accept for entry to undergraduate studies. Through specialisation and depth, A-Levels allow students to focus on three or four subjects which enables them to develop more in-depth subject knowledge and academic maturity. A-Level studies will also challenge students to think critically, analyse complex information through research and writing, whilst also helping them to improve their time management skills. All these things are critically important if students want to achieve good A-Level results and become a successful undergraduate at university.

Why should I consider studying A-Levels at Cambridge Seminars College?

Cambridge Seminars College has 45 years' experience of teaching A-Levels to students from a wide range of educational backgrounds and nationalities, and prides itself on the success its students have achieved over this time. All College teachers are highly qualified and experienced practitioners of their respective subjects, and some also work for the Examination Boards as A-Level examiners. External inspection reports also comment favourably on the quality of the teaching and learning experience on offer to students.

What are the alternatives to A-Levels?

The International Baccalaureate Diploma is the obvious alternative, but for students who have studied within a 12-year education system, in comparison to the 13-year education system in the UK, a University Foundation Programme may be a suitable alternative. All highly selective universities, however, generally expect students to have studied A-Levels or the International Baccalaureate Diploma and to have achieved good results to be considered for entry.

What are the entry requirements for A-Levels?

Students embarking upon A-Level studies will generally have previously completed either GCSE or iGCSE qualifications. The grades achieved in these will be an important consideration in evaluating a student's suitability for A-Level study, although students who have completed other qualifications will be considered on their individual merits. Achieving good grades in previous academic qualifications provides a degree of confidence that a student will be able to cope with the academic demands of A-Levels and achieve success.

What A-Level subjects should I study?

Subject choices will depend upon the entrance requirements for the degree course a student intends to study at university, and these entry requirements might vary depending upon the universities a student applies to. It is therefore important that students check university entry requirements carefully before deciding upon which A-Level subjects to study.

How many hours of tuition will I receive each week?

An A-Level requires approximately 360 guided learning hours per subject over a two-year period. This typically equates to five or six hours of tuition per subject per week. Students will also be expected to undertake several hours of independent study in each subject every week, in addition to completing homework tasks issued by teachers.

How will my progress be monitored?
We believe that regular assessment is vital in motivating students, and for monitoring their performance and progress. All A-Level students at Cambridge Seminars College are expected to complete regular formative tests in each of their subjects, as well as completing homework tasks issued by teachers. Progress is discussed in regular one-to-one tutorials with a personal tutor. Where improvement in performance is necessary, actions to achieve this are agreed and reviewed in subsequent tutorial meetings.

How many examinations will I take for each A-Level subject?
Modern A-Levels are largely “linear”, with final examinations taken at the end of the second year covering all content, though some subjects include coursework or practical assessments. Examinations place emphasis on critical thinking, application and analysis over rote memorisation of facts. Teachers advise students on the assessment rubric for each of their subjects at the beginning of Year 12.

Is past academic performance important?
Past academic performance is important because it acts as an indicator of academic potential and future success at A-Level standard. All A-Levels require significantly higher levels of independent learning, analysis and depth of understanding compared to GCSEs. Strong academic performance at GCSE level is, however, generally a very good predictor of how well a student will cope with the academic demands of A-Level study.

How many A-Level subjects should I study?
Most students elect to study either three or four subjects at A-Level. It is important that the subjects selected are based on a student's intended degree course. Students are strongly encouraged to take time to peruse the websites of the universities they are thinking about applying to for information on the exact entry requirements for their intended degree course. Staff in Cambridge Seminars College are always very happy to help and advise students. What is also important is not merely the number of subjects a student decides to study at A-Level, but the quality of the final grades they achieve.

How much homework will I be given?
Students can generally expect to receive homework in all their subjects each week, and this can take a variety of forms. As a guide, students will be expected to engage in independent study each week for as many hours as they have teaching in each subject. This will equate to about 15-20 hours of independent study each week, which may, or may not, include the time spent completing homework tasks.

Who will help me with my UCAS application?
College teachers with experience of the UCAS application procedure guide students through the process in dedicated UCAS workshops, as well as in one-to-one tutorials. Staff involved in supporting students with UCAS applications are all highly experienced and provide students with the very best support and advice they can. Students are always encouraged to submit a “balanced” UCAS application and to apply to universities that have entrance requirements similar to the student's predicted A-Level grades to maximise the number of university offers they hopefully receive.

How many students will there be in my classes?
Class sizes vary depending on individual subjects, but most classes tend to have no more than 10 students. This ensures that all students can contribute to class discussions in a meaningful way whilst also receiving sufficient individual attention throughout their time studying at the College.



What should I do to ensure I get the best grades possible?
There are several strategies that can be employed to help students achieve the best possible A-Level grades which include early preparation, active study timetables, and examination techniques. From the start of their A-Level course, students can refer to the syllabus and schemes of work as a checklist to ensure every aspect of each subject is covered. Moreover, understanding is much more important than memorising. Students are always encouraged to focus on understanding fundamental concepts before committing this information to memory. Students are also strongly encouraged to make full use of all core textbooks for their subjects as well as other relevant material that can be found on selected websites such as Google Scholar and Books.

Does Cambridge Seminars College offer A-Level re-sit courses?
The College is always happy to receive applications from students considering repeating their A-Levels. All applications will be considered on their individual merits, and students will be invited to visit the College to discuss their individual needs before a decision on their application is made.

Who are the teachers?
Staff who teach A-level courses at Cambridge Seminars College are all qualified teachers, experienced in teaching and assessing their subject at A-level standard. Many also have experience of working for examination boards as A-Level examiners. Many possess postgraduate qualifications and some also have experience of working in industry which enables them to share with students ways in which the theory taught in the classroom can be applied to real life situations.

What is the application procedure?
Students should complete a copy of the CSC Application Form, available on the CSC website, and return it by email to admissions@csc.uk. All applications will be considered on their individual merits and assessed based on academic background, English language level, and suitability for A-Level study. Successful applicants will then receive an offer letter with details of the next steps in the enrolment process.

How much are the tuition fees?
Up-to-date information on fees and other costs associated with A-Level studies can be obtained by visiting the College website: www.csc.uk.

Does the College provide accommodation to students?
The College has its own boarding houses which students can apply to live in during their time as a student at the College. Details of other accommodation options are also provided to students. Details of these are also available by visiting the College website: www.csc.uk.

If I have any more questions about studying A-Levels, where can I get help?
Students are encouraged to contact the College by emailing ask@csc.uk with any questions they might have, and their request will be forwarded to a member of staff who can help and who will get back in contact with them.



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