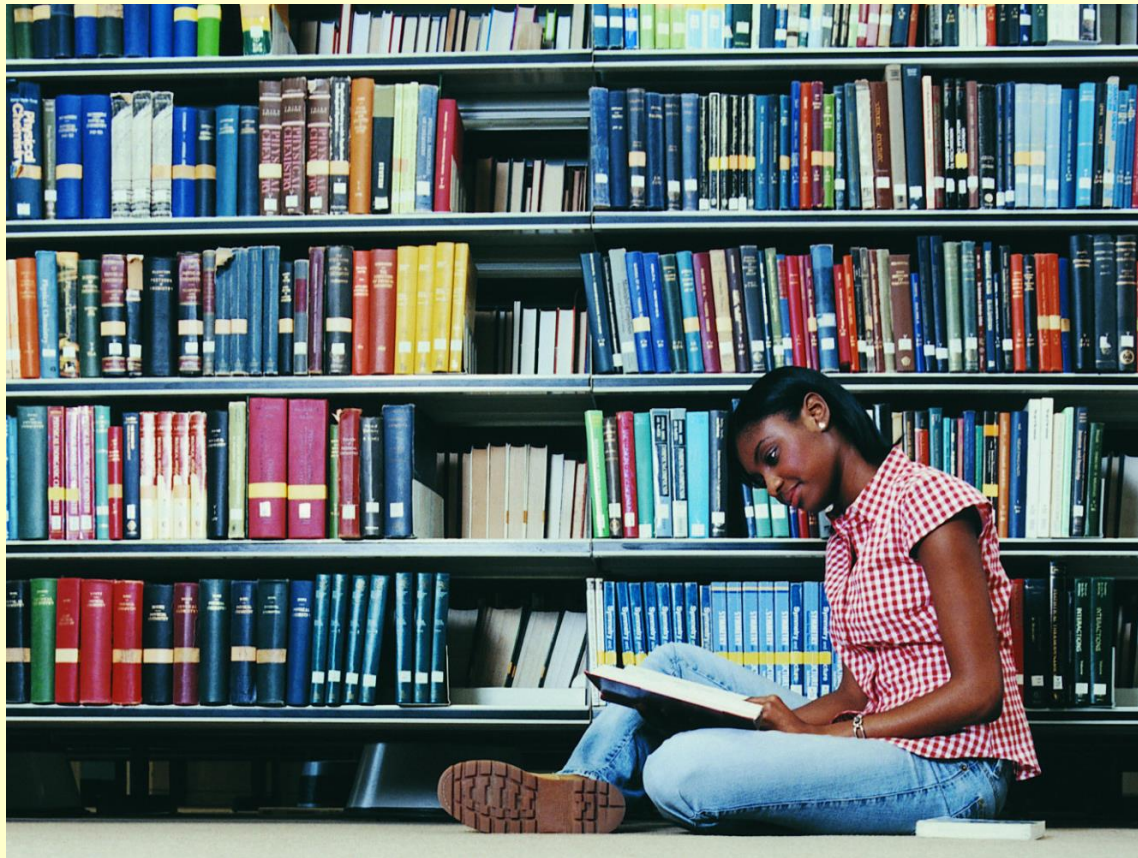


Super-Curricular Enrichment: Things You Can Do



Competitive Universities and Courses



- Deepening and enriching your subject knowledge is a key issue particularly for competitive universities (Oxbridge/ Russell Group)
- They want applicants to engage in **super-curricular** rather than extra-curricular activities.
- They will look for evidence of this in the **UCAS Personal Statement** and at **interview**.

What Type of Student are They Looking for?

- Does more than the basic demands of subject spec. and has **passion and enthusiasm for the subject**
- **Reads** on own initiative
- **Learns** on own initiative
- **Follows up ideas** and leads suggested by school learning
- Has developed particular areas of interest within the subject which are explored with **genuine enthusiasm**
- Has developed **new areas of interest** outside the specification

What is Super-Curricular? According to Oxford University

- Super-curricular activities are those that take the subjects you study further, beyond that which your teacher has taught you or what you've done for homework.
- You may go into more depth on something you picked up in the classroom or learn about a new topic altogether.
- You can explore your subject in many ways; for example, by reading, as well as watching videos online, downloading lectures, visiting museums or entering academic competitions.

What is Super-Curricular Enrichment?

- **Cambridge:** 'As our admissions decisions are based on academic criteria, we expect to see evidence of students' super-curricular activities and **wider engagement with their area(s) of academic interest**, such as **READING** and other **exploration relevant to the course applied for.**'
- **Mike Nicholson of Bath University:** '.....universities (are) only interested in enthused, engaged and excellent candidates, rather than second-rate historians who happen to play the flute.'



Talk to Your Subject Teachers and Get their Advice

- Wider reading
- Websites
- Activities and visits
- Journals
- Magazines
- Courses and student conferences
- Work experience















Look for Guidance on Focused Wider Reading

King's College Cambridge Suggested Reading by Subject


READING LISTS


Please select the relevant subject to view the reading list and any preparation information from the Director of Studies and/or the Department.


 ANGLO SAXON, NORSE AND CELTIC READING LIST Read more	 ARCHAEOLOGY READING LIST Read more
 ARCHITECTURE READING LIST Read more	 ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES READING LIST Read more
 CHEMICAL ENGINEERING READING LIST Read more	 CLASSICS READING LIST Read more
 COMPUTER SCIENCE READING LIST Read more	 ECONOMICS READING LIST Read more
 ENGINEERING READING LIST Read more	 ENGLISH READING LIST Read more
 GEOGRAPHY READING LIST Read more	 HISTORY READING LIST Read more

<https://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/reading-lists>

University College Oxford has its own Super-Curricular Website: Staircase 12

[HOME](#) [ABOUT](#) [RESOURCES](#) [READING BANK](#) [TOP TIPS](#) [UNIV LIFE](#) [SEARCH:](#)





Hi! I'm Nelli, the Schools Liaison and Access Officer at University College. Univ is one of the 38 independent colleges of the University of Oxford, and it's my job to encourage students to think about applying and support them to make their best application.

What's this site all about then?

To get into a top uni, it's not enough just to do well at school: universities want students who are passionate about their subject, who think for themselves and who are independent learners. That means that if you're thinking about university, finding out what you're really interested in and developing that interest is a top priority.

Reading Bank

You might well have been told you need to 'read around the subject', but not be sure where to start (or just think reading is really boring). If that's the case, our Reading Bank is for you- it's full of reviews by current Univ students of books that they read before they came to Oxford that got them really into their subject. It's the perfect place to find inspiration. We've also got some videos of tutors reviewing books: these are well worth a watch as they also include some handy tips on what tutors are looking for in Oxford applicants.

Resources

It's never been easier or cheaper to find out about new things and learn by yourself: as well as old-school book reading, there's more than you could ever hope to learn online in the form of videos, radio programmes, lectures, online courses and more. However, lots of people don't know what's available, and when they do they don't know where to start.

That's where this website comes in. I'm gathering together all the amazing resources I'm finding into one place to save the hassle for you. You can navigate your way to resources relevant to a particular subject, or just browse a multi-disciplinary selection.

Top Tips

You've probably got some questions that aren't answered by Staircase12, whether they're about Oxford University or about higher education more generally. Luckily, there's already loads of useful information online- it's just a matter of finding it. I've put links to some of the most useful pages in the 'Top Tips' section, and I'll add more as I come across them.

Univ Life

I can't tell you what life at every university is like, but I can show you what it's like at University College. In the Univ life section you can meet some of our tutors in their video interviews, get a guided tour of the college, and get a glimpse of student life through the student photo galleries.

Err...so why is it called Staircase12?

My office is based on Staircase 12 in one of Univ's lovely quads. It's not possible for me to see as many of the brilliant students out there as I want to, so this is a kind of virtual office where you can get all the tips and advice I'd be giving you if we met in person.

Reading What ?

- Oxford University reading bank

UNIV
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OXFORD

Home About News & Features Events Learn @ Univ Live @ Univ Alumni Conferencing Applying to Univ

Contact Univ Give to Univ How to Apply

Reading Bank

The bookshelves of our Reading Bank are packed with book reviews by Univ students (and a few tutors thrown in for good measure.) They've chosen books which they either read before they came to Oxford, or they wish they had. Explore the reviews below or select a subject area such as Humanities or Social Sciences, followed by a specific subject (Classics, English, etc.) Why not explore our [Resources Hub](#) too.

All

Mrs Dalloway
By Virginia Woolf
Review by Alexandra (English Language and Literature)

The Philosophy Gym
By Stephen Law
Review by Maninder (Philosophy & Computer Science)

Professor Povey's Perplexing Problems
By Thomas Povey
Review by Krish (Engineering Science)

How Things Work
By Louis A. Bloomfield
Review by Matthew S (Engineering Science)

- <https://www.univ.ox.ac.uk/applying-to-univ/reading-bank/>

Reading What?

- Computer science – Cambridge workbook

<https://www.maths.cam.ac.uk/undergradnst/files/misc/nstworkbook.pdf>



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Faculty of Mathematics

MATHEMATICS FOR THE NATURAL SCIENCES WORKBOOK

- Stem subjects - Cambridge

<https://nrich.maths.org/advancedstem/>

A2 Factorisation

Factorise into the product of two factors:

(i) $x^2 - 1$; (ii) $a^2 - 4ab + 4b^2$; (iii) $x^3 - 1$.

A3 Quadratic equations

Find the roots of:

(i) $x^2 - 5x + 6 = 0$

(ii) $x^2 + 2x = 0$

(iii) $x^2 - x - 1 = 0$

(iv) $x^4 - 3x^2 + 2 = 0$.

Find Out More About the Subject You Want to Study



£5 or less on Amazon



The Oxford University Press (OUP) series of books *Very Short Introductions* give an excellent background to the major academic subjects

<https://global.oup.com/academic/content/series/v/very-short-introductions-vsi/?cc=us&lang=en&>



The Computer: A Very Short Introduction

Darrel Ince

The Computer: A Very Short Introduction shows how computers have changed so much since the room-filling, bulky magnetic tape running monsters of the mid-20th century. They now form a vital part ... [More](#)



Confucianism: A Very Short Introduction

Daniel K. Gardner

To understand China, it is essential to understand Confucianism. First formulated in the sixth century bce, the teachings of Confucius would come to dominate Chinese society, politics, economics, ... [More](#)



The Conquistadors: A Very Short Introduction

Matthew Restall and Felipe Fernandez-Armesto

The Conquistadors: A very Short Introduction investigates the facts and myths behind the Spanish invasion of the New World. With startling speed, Spanish conquistadors invaded hundreds of Native ... [More](#)



Conscience: A Very Short Introduction

Paul Strohm

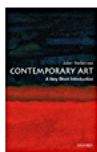
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Consciousness: A Very Short Introduction

Susan Blackmore

How can a physical brain create our experience of the world? What creates our identity? Do we really have free will? Could consciousness itself be an illusion? Exciting new developments in brain ... [More](#)



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Julian Stallabrass

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Charles Sheppard

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Jeremy Moon

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Corruption: A Very Short Introduction

Leslie Holmes

Corruption is one of the biggest global issues, ahead of extreme poverty, unemployment, the rising cost of food and energy, climate change, and terrorism. It is thought to be one of the principal ... [More](#)



Cosmology: A Very Short Introduction





Peter Coles

Cosmology: A Very Short Introduction explains what cosmology is and what cosmologists do, looks at the history of the subject, the development of the Big Bang theory, and more speculative modern ... [More](#)

MOOC's (massive open online courses)

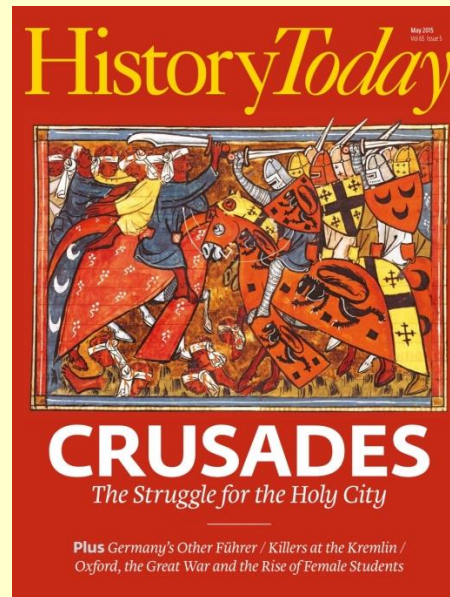
- Future learn : <https://www.futurelearn.com/>

Explore top online courses

			
The Open University Introduction to Cyber Security	University of Leeds Computer Programming for Everyone	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Sustainable Development in Humanitarian Action	The Open University Project Management: Beyond the Basics
Join free	Join free	Join free	Join free

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What is the Value of a Degree?

11:13, Thu 8 Dec 2011

Professors Kate Purcell and Peter Elias, from the Institute of Employment Research, discuss the value of a degree.

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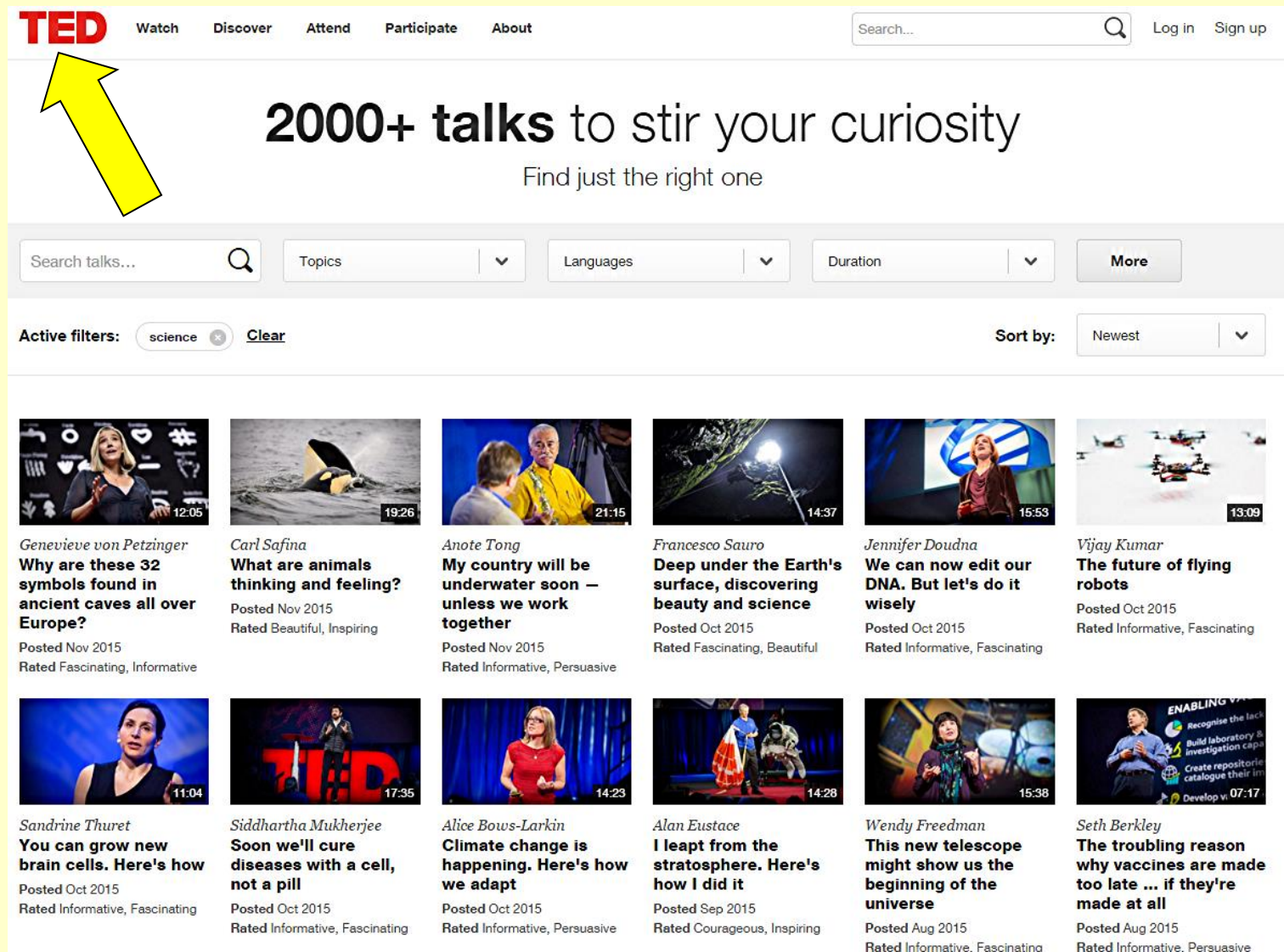
<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/newsandevents/podcasts/media/>

I Tunes U App



- iTunes U is a learning resource offering free educational content that users can download from the iTunes Store straight to their computer or mobile devices.
- iTunes U has new research and lectures by academics from all the top universities in the UK and abroad
- It also features specially commissioned topical pieces in which academic experts contextualise events, for example, the re-launch of the Large Hadron Collider and the 40th anniversary of the Internet.
- It has a more limited website which can be accessed on PCs and Android devices

Watch TED Talks



The screenshot shows the TED website homepage. At the top, the TED logo is in red, followed by navigation links: Watch, Discover, Attend, Participate, and About. A search bar is on the right with a magnifying glass icon, and links for Log in and Sign up. Below the navigation bar, a large heading reads "2000+ talks to stir your curiosity" with the subtitle "Find just the right one". A filter bar below this contains a search input "Search talks...", a Topics dropdown, a Languages dropdown, a Duration dropdown, and a More button. Under the filter bar, "Active filters:" shows "science" selected with a star icon and a "Clear" link. To the right, "Sort by:" shows "Newest" selected with a dropdown arrow. The main content area displays a grid of 12 talk cards. Each card features a thumbnail image, the speaker's name, the talk title, the posting date, and a rating. A yellow arrow points to the TED logo in the top left corner.

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Search talks... Topics Languages Duration More

Active filters: science Clear Sort by: Newest

Speaker	Talk Title	Date	Rating
Genevieve von Petzinger	Why are these 32 symbols found in ancient caves all over Europe?	Posted Nov 2015	Rated Fascinating, Informative
Carl Safina	What are animals thinking and feeling?	Posted Nov 2015	Rated Beautiful, Inspiring
Anoteg Tong	My country will be underwater soon — unless we work together	Posted Nov 2015	Rated Informative, Persuasive
Francesco Sauro	Deep under the Earth's surface, discovering beauty and science	Posted Oct 2015	Rated Fascinating, Beautiful
Jennifer Doudna	We can now edit our DNA. But let's do it wisely	Posted Oct 2015	Rated Informative, Fascinating
Vijay Kumar	The future of flying robots	Posted Oct 2015	Rated Informative, Fascinating
Sandrine Thuret	You can grow new brain cells. Here's how	Posted Oct 2015	Rated Informative, Fascinating
Siddhartha Mukherjee	Soon we'll cure diseases with a cell, not a pill	Posted Oct 2015	Rated Informative, Fascinating
Alice Bows-Larkin	Climate change is happening. Here's how we adapt	Posted Oct 2015	Rated Informative, Persuasive
Alan Eustace	I leapt from the stratosphere. Here's how I did it	Posted Sep 2015	Rated Courageous, Inspiring
Wendy Freedman	This new telescope might show us the beginning of the universe	Posted Aug 2015	Rated Informative, Fascinating
Seth Berkley	The troubling reason why vaccines are made too late ... if they're made at all	Posted Aug 2015	Rated Informative, Persuasive

<https://www.ted.com/talks>

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Science & Nature



Highlights



A-Z



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The Reith Lectures

The Black Hole: Based on Professor Stephen Hawking's Reith...



BBC TWO

Horizon

2010-2011: 9. What Is Reality?



BBC TWO

David Attenborough's Natural Curiosities

7 episodes



BBC FOUR

Nature's Wonderlands: Islands of Evolution

3. Madeira: Island Ark



BBC RADIO 4

The Reith Lectures

Inside the Mind of Professor Stephen Hawking



BBC FOUR

The Brain with David Eagleman

2. What Makes Me?



BBC ONE

Attenborough and the Giant Dinosaur

BBC TWO

How Earth Made Us

1. Deep Earth



BBC NEWS

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BBC ONE

Countryfile

Winter Special



BBC TWO

Natural World


2010-2011: 4. The Himalayas

BBC Programme Archive <http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/collections.shtml>

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Browse collections

Art and Artists




British Sculptors
Artists in stone, metal and wood
Exploring the work of Britain's most influential 20th-Century Sculptors.

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Francis Bacon at the BBC
The artist discusses his paintings and influences
Examining the life and work of a controversial and respected artist.

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Henry Moore at the BBC
The artistic life of a master of sculpture
From groundbreaking arts documentaries to 'Blue Peter', the BBC celebrates the art of a 20th-Century master.


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Van Gogh
Portraits of the Artist
Exploring the continuing fascination with one of the world's most popular artists.


[view collection >](#)

Books and Writers




Agatha Christie
A look at the life and craft of the world's most successful crime writer
Remembering the best-selling author of all time.

[view collection >](#)




Enid Blyton
Remembering the creator of Noddy and the Famous Five
Why have accusations of racism and sexism not diminished this writer?

[view collection >](#)




George Orwell at the BBC
The writer of 'Nineteen Eighty-Four' holds true to his ideals
Documents, letters and internal memos explore Orwell's BBC broadcasting career.

[view collection >](#)



HG Wells on the Future
BBC broadcasts from the father of science fiction
The novelist speculates on the shape of things to come.

[view collection >](#)



Modern Writers
Interviews with remarkable authors
The story of the novel in the 20th Century, as told by the writers themselves.

Get Relevant Experience



- This depends on the subject you want to study. Some subjects like Medicine or Vet Science require extensive work experience and it is expected for subjects such as Nursing, Teaching or Social Work.
- For other subjects you should try to gain relevant experiences in the world outside school such as theatre visits for English, industrial and business experience for subject such as Economics, Business Studies and Engineering, voluntary work for caring careers.
- **Difficult at the moment but keep this in mind!**

Medicine Work Experience: Case Study



- By the time you send off your UCAS application in early October of Year 13 you will need to have completed extensive work experience
- Start in Year 12
- 3-4 weeks or more BUT check specific requirements
- Range of different experiences in variety of settings eg hospital work, GP, voluntary work in socially different areas
- Keep a diary/journal of insights but not just descriptive

In Summary-

- (1) Talk to Your Subject Teachers and Get their Advice
- (2) Look for Guidance on Focused Wider Reading
- (3) Find Out More About the Subject You Want to Study
- (4) Use Cambridge HE+ Website to find out about the Latest Research
- (5) Read Subject Magazines/Journals
- (6) Keep up to with Relevant Events with Newspapers and their Websites
- (7) Use Relevant Lectures/ Podcasts
- (8) Watch TED Talks
- (9) Use TV and Radio Catch Up Archives
- (10) Get Relevant Experience

No-one expects
you to do all 10!!



- Choose a few topics or issues in your subject to follow up in depth using a variety of the 10 resources
- Develop an area of interest in the subject, but outside the exam spec
- Find out much more about something in the spec that interests you
- Above all, be able to show **knowledge** and **enthusiasm**

Top tips (from Oxford University)

- *Be open minded.* Do not be afraid to try out some things that are different to what you're used to. You might discover your next new hobby!
- *Find connections.* Look for links in between different things that you have explored. By doing this you really test how well you've understood the ideas and you could even come up with unique ideas of your own. Making comparisons and contrasts is good ways to do this.

Top tips (from Oxford University)

- *Think actively and ask questions.* Don't just accept the arguments that you come across. Try and challenge them and think of counter examples. Would it be the same in all situations? Is there another way of solving that problem? What do you really think?
- *Pause and reflect.* While reading articles or listening to podcasts, stop to think. What is your opinion? You might find it useful to write a short paragraph to practice articulating your own ideas about a subject

<https://www.univ.ox.ac.uk/applying-to-univ/explore-your-subject/>

What about Extra-Curricular Activities?



- Interests outside your subject are important for your own all-round development , Employers particularly like to see these on your CV.
- They show you can manage your time and deal with the competing pressures of academic life
- **BUT** the more competitive the course the less significant they are and it is super-curricular activities that will make the difference