

Hello Pembroke Historians!

Congratulations on making your offers! We're Eliza and Hannah, your History reps for the year, and we can't wait to meet you! Now that the initial celebrations are over, you might be wondering what exactly History at Pembroke is like. Hopefully this letter will give you a better idea of what living and studying here is like. (Heads up - it's great).

First of all, you may be wondering whether you need to be doing any preparatory reading before arriving. You don't need to worry about this at all! Every paper is approached from the perspective that you don't really know anything about the topic. You'll have a different reading list every week for your essays, and there's plenty of time to cover all the relevant books and articles. So unless you really want to do some reading beforehand you can just relax and enjoy the rest of your summer!

The essays you write are a starting point for discussion within your weekly supervisions, which make up the core of your teaching for each paper. You will usually have eight supervisions per term, writing an essay on a different topic within your papers each week. Your supervisor will never expect these essays to be perfect - unlike essays at school, these are intended to be your first word on a subject, not a concrete answer. So there's no need to become worried if you are unsure about any of the concepts or themes that have cropped up in your reading - your supervisor is there to help you to understand them. Supervisions might seem daunting at first, but once you settle into the swing of things they become an enjoyable opportunity to relax and talk about some really interesting ideas with an expert on the topic.

Alongside supervisions, you'll also have lectures and classes. All lectures are optional, but you should probably go to all of the core lectures on each paper, to get a solid understanding of the period you've decided to study. Beyond that, lectures are a chance to delve deeper and to broaden your interests both within your papers and outside of them. Later in the year, you'll start having classes within Pembroke for HAP (Historical Argument and Practice, a compulsory first-year paper), and in the History Faculty building for Themes and Sources, a long, coursework-style essay, which will be due in the January of your second year. But you'll be told more about this nearer the time...

When you arrive, you'll have a meeting with your Director of Studies (DoS), who will clear up any queries you might have, as well as taking you through the course in more detail. Your DoS is always available to help to solve any academic problems you might have, and you'll have meetings at the start and end of each term to see how you're getting on. In the first week we'll also organise a History lunch so you can get to know all of the second and third-year Historians at the college. So hopefully, if ever you need advice or a chat, there will always be a familiar face you can turn to! Your tutor and the college nurse are also there to help if ever you need it.

Life at Pembroke is not all work! You'll have lots of time to make new friends, develop new skills, join societies, and generally have fun! If you have any questions, don't hesitate to email us (our email addresses are [ed463@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ed463@cam.ac.uk) and [hb467@cam.ac.uk](mailto:hb467@cam.ac.uk)). You can also add us on Facebook and chat to us on there!

We really look forward to meeting you!

Eliza Dickinson and Hannah Brown



Here is a photo of us looking happy at BOP. Also, it's Eliza on the left and Hannah on the right ☺