

Hi Fresher Medics!

Congratulations on getting in to the best course at the best college! My name is Amy and I am the president of Pembroke Medical and Veterinary Society.

I'm sure you are all excited and nervous in equal parts for the upcoming year. Firstly, don't worry (easy to say, I know!) you are all in the same boat. There are 8 medics and 2 vets at Pembroke in each year. Look out for each other, medicine is a tough course which can be made so much easier by having a solid support network.

There are three main modules in MVST 1A (Medical and Veterinary Science Tripos); **Functional Architecture of the Body (FAB)** The anatomy component of the course and includes full cadaveric dissection.

Molecules in Medical Science (MIMS) This is biochemistry and has a focus on two main clinical topics of diabetes and cancer.

Homeostasis (HOM) Physiology and this covers the normal systemic functions of the human body.

In addition to these there are an additional three smaller modules that must be completed;

Social Context of Health and Illness (SCHI) Sociology and ethics

Introduction to the Scientific Basis of Medicine (ISBM) Epidemiology and statistics

Preparing for Patients A (PfP) Coursework based on 2 GP visits

The teaching is split into lectures, practicals and supervisions. In a normal week you will have about 10 hours of lectures, 8 hours of practicals and 3 hours of supervisions although this does tend to change.

Supervisions are small tutorials (generally in groups of 4) that go over the lectures and practicals of the week and any work that has been set. Supervisors set essays and questions to complete, depending on the supervisors you will get on average 2 essays a week. Personally, having done sciences at A Level I was terrified about having to write essays again but scientific essays are new to everyone and you will get better at them, I promise!

Medics have the reputation of 'work hard, play hard' and there are many medic events both in college and university. The Pembroke Medical and Veterinary Society hosts educational talks by fellows and professors and less educational nights such as the infamous unspecified event and the annual MedVet dinner. The university MedSoc has a freshers bar crawl and a ball. You will tend to make a lot of medic friends from other colleges and swaps, formals and nights out with them can be a lot of fun.

Some general advice that I wished I knew when I was in first year;

- Don't go into supervisions unprepared; it can be tricky to hide behind your supervision group especially if everyone's had the same thought. Having no idea what is going on in a supervision is awful and you come out feeling so confused (although this does happen to me even when I'm fully prepared...) so aim to go through the lectures beforehand.

- Try and read the lecture notes in advance, you won't get as lost in a lecture and will know when to pay attention to a particularly tricky part.
- Don't leave your essays to the night before, it's not fun and you will be exhausted, leading me on to...
- SLEEP. You absolutely need this and there is no short cut. We've all tried and it doesn't work, the album of sleeping medics in lectures on my phone proves that.
- If you are struggling in any way, talk to someone! College has a great pastoral care network including your tutor, DoS, college nurse, college parents, friends etc. Please don't suffer in silence!

Most of all, enjoy yourselves! Medicine is a long and difficult course but you need to have a life outside of it all!

Looking forward to meeting you all in October, get excited!

Medic love,

Amy xxx

ps please send any questions my way, email at697@cam.ac.uk or drop me a facebook message www.facebook.com/amy.thompon.712 , and if you ever need anything throughout the year (help/advice/shoulder to cry on etc) just shout- I have an everlasting supply of tea and cake.