

The Cambridge Long Vacation Scholarship Scheme was such an incredible experience and honestly one that I'd recommend to anyone thinking about applying. During my time there I had the chance to connect with professors in AI, statistics and healthcare, which was super valuable. With their advice I was able to get started on my third-year project looking at how machine learning could help radiographers detect malignancy and grade breast tumours in young women.

Outside of the academic side, there was so much to do in Cambridge. Barbra, our scheme organiser, set us up with loads of activities like high tea, tours of King's Chapel and art tours, all of which I really enjoyed. I also loved just exploring the city itself. It's so peaceful with amazing views, historic colleges, museums and tourist attractions so it has a very different feel from London!

One of the best parts for me was having full access to King's College. I spent loads of time in the college, utilising its buildings and libraries, exploring the grounds and enjoying meals in the dining hall. We could even rent punting gear, which was such a wholesome Cambridge experience which I definitely recommend! I also enjoyed the independence of living alone, bonding with my flat mates and being able to structure my time however I wanted.

If you're planning to do this scheme, I'd definitely recommend checking out *talks.cam* because there are so many interesting lectures going on throughout the summer, and it's a great way to network. I'd also say try to reach out to professors as early as you can since a lot of them take on students and they get booked up quickly.

I M 2nd Year - Mathematics and Statistics

The Cambridge Long Vacation Scheme has changed me so deeply – academically and personally. I arrived to deepen my legal research skills and left with a renewed sense of confidence, academic curiosity, and a connection to a city which felt like a fairytale.

In the silent halls of King's College library, where books, some ancient, some fragile, all alive with history – stood in towering stacks, I found a sanctuary. I even discovered a shelf with free books and eagerly collected them some on philosophy, biology, and even art. The chapel was filled with stained glass, filled with art and even though some pieces were incorrectly placed due to the war, it still showcased its story and beauty, but also the constant initials of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. On a secret rooftop tour, I saw traced graffiti from 18th century alumni and heard the wild tales of night climbers at Cambridge who scaled the chapel at night.

My primary research focus was commercial law, specifically retention of title clauses. I curated a portfolio of legal works referencing reservation/retention clauses, sourcing academic articles, case law, commentaries, and journals using King's College and Cambridge University libraries. I also drafted a piece on the dark sides of fashion week for the *Fashion Law Journal* – now published successfully.

The library offered medieval medical manuscripts, the history of soils, and a book on music and mathematics - an unexpected but fascinating combination. Beside my accommodation at Kings Parade, there was G. David's Bookshop which sold vintage classics. The market buzzed with life:

Chinese food, Greek gyros, gluten-free crepes, and fresh fruits. Even the ringing bells felt like part of the rhythm of discovery. There were stories too – the pioneering women at King’s College, Alan Turing’s statue, Xu Zhi Mo’s poem along the riverbank, and a portrait of a beloved porter. I spoke with academics like Jean Michel, researching voodoo dolls, who generously offered future research opportunities - the coolest professor I’ve met.

This scheme restored my confidence and showed me I not only belong in spaces like this, but I can also thrive. I leave with knowledge, connections, and a lasting sense of growth. My advice to future students: immerse yourself. Explore libraries, chapels, markets, and archives. Speak to academics, students, and porters. Let Cambridge challenge you and awaken curiosities you never knew existed. This was more than academic, it was a journey of self-discovery I’ll never forget.

E. A. 2nd Year – Law

I applied for the Cambridge Long Vacation Scholarship eager to progress academically and professionally, but also importantly explore the rich historical landscape Cambridge has to offer. I had the honour of partaking in cardiovascular research at the Strangeways Research Laboratory, making use of St John’s library and the various facilities available for students at St John’s College. I was initially slightly nervous to be in such an academically rigorous environment, yet I was also keen to contribute well to the team of expert researchers.

Everyone was extremely welcoming wherever I ventured, and researchers were eager to assist when I began coding large datasets for the first time. I left every day inspired by the people I had the opportunity to meet. Moving forward, I will carry their dedication and ingenuity to elevate my own desires to contribute meaningfully to the academic landscape of medicine. I believe I have fostered relationships that will last my entire academic career.

Aside from academic pursuits, I took many 5 am strolls across The River Cam, read novels by Dostoevsky very late at night in the library, and tried the infamous Buttery Brunch at St John’s! The highlight of my stay was having the opportunity to stargaze in the Institute of Astronomy!

I cannot emphasise enough the inspiration I have developed from my summer with Cambridge, and it will remain one of my favourite university summers to date.

Regarding tips for future students, I must emphasise the importance of beginning your application early. Finding supervisors can be tricky and plans can change, especially since many potential academics may be on holiday during various periods of the summer. Therefore, it is important to make your desired dates, academic intentions and goals clear when reaching out to potential supervisors. Do not be disheartened if the search takes a while!

Finally, I would like to thank both the University of Cambridge and Queen Mary University for this opportunity, and the incredible people I have learned from during this summer.

M.U. 2nd Year – Medicine

I very much enjoyed my time at Cambridge, which allowed me to focus in on researching for my dissertation and provided an opportunity to examine rare primary sources that are unavailable in Queen Mary. The various different libraries, particularly the relevant faculty libraries and the main college library, provide an unmatched academic resource. I was able to consult various experts in my subject area, from museum staff and librarians to academics.

The structure of the scheme was very loose, which facilitates independent study, allowing you to make the most out of your time there. There were a few organised events, the highlight of which was touring the Kings College Chapel Roof. Cambridge is a lovely city to explore, particularly all of the different libraries. Some of the most enjoyable activities I partook in included punting on the River Cam and visiting Cambridge's extensive selection of museums, the best being the Fitzwilliam museum.

To make the most out of the Cambridge Long Vacation Scheme, I would advise planning roughly what you want to research and work on in advance to make the most of your time. I would suggest that anyone coming onto the scheme contacts academics far in advance of coming and ideally talk to them about your research before you arrive, as during the summer many academics are not in residence and uncontactable.

A.A. 2nd Year – History

The organisation of the scheme was fantastic! All details we required for a smooth stay at King's College were provided well in advance. Any notices for unforeseen circumstances or changes were delivered promptly. I was very happy to see that Ms Barbara Tucker curated a full list of available activities during our stay, which made it even more memorable.

I initially thought that we would only be having a free program and that no events would be available for us to attend. I also didn't think I would meet so many wonderful people and get to spend some recreational time together. The whole experience wasn't merely an educational journey - it was a summer camp with studies in mind :)

I spent the time at King's College working on my literature review on the topic of 'Social Invisibility', which my Social Psychology professor, Dr. Janelle Jones, is currently demystifying. Also, I used the time to study for the GRE exam as part of my Master's program applications that I will be submitting next year. I first started by drafting a robust and effective timetable that would divide my focus on different parts of the required work for both tasks. I'd alternate the order of tasks by type every other week so my mind doesn't get overwhelmed and indolent by repetition.

I wish I had planned more time for unique to Cambridge recreational activities, as many are offered by the private sector at affordable rates. Of course, the university cannot suggest any specific businesses to us, as the faculty must remain impartial and refrain from advertising businesses, so I wish I had researched my options better. As a kayaker, it was too late when I realised how many options there are to hire a SUP or a private punt. At least I have something else to come back for :)

Try to plan activities ahead! There is so much that Cambridge has to offer. I am sure you will find something specific to your interests that will make you fall in love with this town even more. The programme organisers at King's also provide a list of activities taking place throughout the duration of the Long Vacation Scholarship, so I suggest you definitely check those out.

A K. 2nd Year –Psychology

The Cambridge long vacation scheme was the perfect opportunity to embark on an independent learning path which cultivated and supported my goals of as a future clinical researcher.

During my time in Cambridge, I explored several topics of interest: understanding drug discovery and optimisation in the pharmaceutical world, investigating the link between Vitamin D deficiency and gestational diabetes, and considering whether existing neurodegenerative drugs could be repurposed for other uses. Additionally, I undertook several online courses such as introduction to biochemistry and neuroscience by HavardX.

I immersed myself in these areas by taking advantage of the University Library and King's Library's extensive collection of resources. Alongside my independent work, I attended numerous seminars; my favourite being the Systems Vaccinology lecture series at the Biomedical Campus.

Cambridge's rich academic and historical environment provided ample networking opportunities. I attended the Scleroderma and Raynaud's conference to learn from patients' experiences, visited academics at the Department of Pharmacology, explored cell-sorting machines in the Department of Pathology, and enjoyed lectures at the Sainsbury Laboratory.

Beyond academics, I embraced the city's cultural side: exploring its history, visiting the botanical gardens (free for students), punting on the River Cam, and touring countless museums.

Overall, my experience at Cambridge was both enlightening and stimulating. It boosted my confidence, strengthened my independence, and reshaped my approach to self-directed learning.

H.O – 2nd Year - Pharmacology and Innovative Therapeutics

The Cambridge Long Vacation Scheme was an excellent opportunity to focus on my dissertation ahead of third year, while working in a different environment and accessing resources not available at QMUL. I primarily used the University Library to access readings unavailable at QMUL, which proved invaluable for strengthening my literature review. As my dissertation ideas began to take shape, I sought feedback from professors at QMUL and had the chance to meet Professor Gray in Cambridge, an expert in austerity and regional inequality, whose advice helped refine my research direction. Alongside dissertation work, I also began drafting my PhD proposal in preparation for applications later in the year. Additionally, I undertook some broader research for an education company, which complemented my academic work.

Outside of research, one of the most enjoyable aspects was the change of pace in Cambridge itself. I spent time exploring the city, walking in green spaces, and sampling new coffee shops. This slower rhythm provided a welcome contrast to London and made the experience personally refreshing as well as academically useful.

In terms of organisation, I would note that activities arranged by the scheme itself were limited. Beyond a cream tea and a few tours, the programme was entirely self-paced. Furthermore, many academics were away during the summer, meaning opportunities for meetings were scarce - I was fortunate to speak with one professor, but this should not be assumed.

My advice to future students would be to arrive with a clear plan for how you want to use your time, as the scheme will not provide a set structure. Take full advantage of the libraries and resources, which are the real strength of the opportunity and don't rely too heavily on meeting

academics, as many may be away. Also, make sure to balance work with time to enjoy Cambridge; invite friends to visit, explore the city, and enjoy the change of scenery.

Overall, the CLVS gave me valuable time, space, and resources to make significant progress on my dissertation and future plans.

E. S 2nd Year - Politics