



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE  
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

## Academic Interviews for Modern & Medieval Languages

All candidates applying for Modern & Medieval Languages (MML) are required to send in written work as part of their application. Please check the Applicants' website under "Written Work" for further details.

Those invited for interview will have at least two interviews: one with the Tutor for Modern Languages and one or more (depending on the combination of languages concerned) with Teaching Fellows in Modern Languages.

If you are invited to interview, you will be sent a reply form on which you will be asked to indicate the following:

- The language in which you wish to do the oral test part of the subject interview;
- The topics and/or texts and/or films you are studying for your language A level(s), or equivalent, exams;
- The titles of any other books or films you would particularly like to discuss in the subject interview.

The subject interview is likely to involve two or more interviewers, and, after initial introductions designed to put you at your ease, the normal pattern of questioning is as follows:

- You will have been provided beforehand with two short texts in the language indicated on your reply form and instructed to choose one of these as a basis for the oral test. You will be asked to read a portion of the chosen text and to answer questions about the content of the text in the language concerned. This will usually be followed by a few questions in English about linguistic features of the text and you may be asked to translate a few lines of the text into English. This part of the interview normally lasts less than 10 minutes. If you are studying more than one language at A level, you may also be asked at a later point in the interview to respond briefly to a short text in the second language they wish to study, or to speak briefly in that language, at a level that is appropriate to your current studies;
- You will then be asked to discuss aspects of books you have read, or films you have seen, or first-hand experiences you may have had that relate to the languages and cultures you wish to study. Questions will initially be prompted by the titles you have listed on your reply form and/or indications in your application papers of what they already know about the literature and cultures they wish to study. Supplementary questioning is likely to be prompted by things that you said in response to the initial questions;
- Either at the beginning or the end of the interview there may also be one or two questions of a general nature relating to your motivation for, and interest in, the subject as it is studied in Cambridge, or to their current studies. You are also given an opportunity at the end of the interview to ask one or two questions about what is involved in studying modern languages in Cambridge.

You are not permitted to use a mobile phone, Blackberry or other electronic device while considering the short texts ahead of your interview.

On the day of your interviews you will also be required to take a one-hour written assessment, which follows the format set by the MML Faculty. This involves summarising and responding to the content of a short English passage in one of the languages you wish to study, and commenting in English on aspects of the passage.

More information on the Cambridge MML written assessment, a specimen paper and the marking scheme can be found through the [Cambridge admissions page for MML](#).

In order that we can see for ourselves what sort of work you have been doing on your present course and take this into account in our overall assessment of your application, we ask you to send us two recent pieces of written work. These may be items written either under controlled conditions or in your own time, but ideally one should be written in English and the other in one of the languages you would like to study at Cambridge (please contact the Director of Studies if you want to discuss what combination of items would be appropriate in your particular case). You may be asked questions in the interview about the written work you have submitted if time permits, but this does not happen in all cases.

No special preparation is necessary, or indeed desirable, for either the Tutor's interview or the subject interview. We try to conduct our interviews in a friendly and informal manner, and you should not feel daunted by the prospect of them.