Application Guidelines

Experience Postgrad *Life Sciences* Summer 2022 Internship Programme

11 July 2022 – 2 September 2022

Experience Postgrad *Life Sciences* offers a number of paid 8-week research internships to selected talented undergraduate students who are currently registered at universities in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Along with our partner sponsors for this programme the Postgraduate School of Life Sciences at the University of Cambridge is committed to widening participation in postgraduate studies in the Life Sciences. The University will be using positive action under the Equality Act 2010 to tackle the underrepresentation of and overcome the disadvantage experienced by certain groups.

This document provides information about the type of information which you will need to send to us, if you are asked to give evidence in support of any of the Widening Participation criteria that you have selected on the Application Form.

Please read these guidelines carefully before making your application.

1. Application Method

You must apply to this programme via the link on the Experience Postgrad *Life Sciences* website. We will not consider applications that are sent to us via other means.

2. Assessment Criteria

Applicants will be assessed competitively, on the basis of both academic achievement and academic potential in the context of their education to date. In the circumstances where all other things are equal, priority will then be given to those who are from groups that are currently underrepresented in postgraduate study in the Life Sciences and/or who have experienced some form of educational disadvantage, using positive action under the Equality Act 2010 where appropriate¹.

¹ The University will monitor the impact of any positive action taken and intends to use positive action only where appropriate.
Please note that you must be on course for a 1st or a 2i in your undergraduate degree, as evidenced by your referee.

The aim of the programme is to encourage and facilitate participation in postgraduate studies in the field of Life Sciences by talented students. We are looking for evidence of academic potential within the context of your education to date, and an indication that you could thrive in the intense teaching and learning environment of postgraduate study at Cambridge.

Evaluation of your application will therefore include consideration of all your responses on the application form.

3. COVID-19

The programme is designed as a residential event, but should Covid-19 government guidelines prevent this, we reserve the right to amend the programme to a blended or online programme instead. Details concerning how this will affect the programme will be added to the website. Regardless of format, participants on the internship programme will be paid.

4. Application Dates

- The application deadline: **14 February 2022**
- Shortlisting: week commencing **28 February 2022**
- Brief online conversation with selection panel: c. **late March / early April 2022**
- Offers expected to be made: **late April / early May 2022**

The programme will operate a short waiting list, in case any selected candidates are unable to take up their place. We will inform you if you are on the waiting list.

5. Accommodation and pay (residential programme)

Participants on the programme will be paid the Real Living Wage (currently £9.90 per hour), paid monthly, for a 35-hour week. The programme duration is 8 weeks of full-time work, and you must participate for the full 8 weeks.

Participants will be provided with free-of-charge single accommodation by Corpus Christi College, for the duration of the programme including weekends. Rooms will be allocated at random, unless a student has specific needs (which you are invited to set out in the Disability Section of the application form). You are expected to live in this accommodation for the duration of the programme, other than in exceptional circumstances agreed with the programme organisers and will be subject to College regulations whilst you are resident in College accommodation. Please note that postgraduate students are usually housed in accommodation based outside the College grounds. Accommodation within the College grounds, which is limited, is prioritised for undergraduate students and this programme aims to give you a ‘postgrad’ experience.

You will be expected to arrive by 5 pm on 10 July 2022 and to depart on 3 September 2022.

The programme will also include a number of additional events (such as career talks, presentations, and social events) which will take place outside normal working hours. You are strongly encouraged to attend them as part of your career- and cohort-development opportunity.
6. Essential conditions

- You must be settled in the UK on 1 July 2022 and have been ordinarily resident in the UK since 1 July 2019, not mainly for the purpose of full-time education or be a national of the Republic of Ireland.\(^2\);
- You must be studying for an undergraduate bachelor degree in a Life Sciences discipline at a UK or Republic of Ireland higher education institution (this does not include integrated master degree courses);
- You should be on course for a 1st or a 2i, as evidenced by your academic transcript to date and/or your referee;
- You must be in the penultimate year of your bachelor's degree before participating in the programme;
- You must be available to participate in all elements of the programme from 11 July 2022 to 2 September 2022 during normal working hours (9am to 5pm on weekdays);
- You must consent to abide by the terms and conditions of the offer, should you be made one, and commit to providing all requested feedback within one month of the close of the programme.

7. References

Your referee should be either a tutor or other academic at your current institution who knows you and your work well. This referee will be contacted automatically when you submit your application, and will be asked to fill in a form as a reference. As part of the form, your referee will be asked to comment on your Widening Participation Status for the purpose of the Experience Postgrad Life Sciences programme. We strongly advise, therefore, that you ensure that you make your referee aware of any relevant circumstances concerning the widening participation criteria you intend to select on the application form and check they are happy to provide a reference before you submit your application.

8. Research Experience / Area of Interest

We would like to know whether you have had experience of research during your undergraduate course, either at your current institution or through another organisation.

Please indicate on the Application Form if you have undertaken a placement or work experience in a research lab for a total duration equal to or exceeding 4 weeks, full-time. We particularly encourage applications from undergraduates currently studying at higher education institutions where research or lab experience may not be as readily available as in more research-intensive institutions.

Your answer to this question alongside the question concerning your area of research interest will help us to gauge which project you might potentially be most suited for.

Please note that we will not be able to change your research project in the circumstance where you have been offered one and you have accepted it.

\(^2\) This does not include any non-UK national holding any type of time-limited UK visa, including international students on Tier 4/Student visas.
9. Widening Participation Criteria

We may contact you to request evidence to support the Widening Participation criteria you have selected in order to ensure transparency in our assessment processes and fairness for all.

Acceptable evidence is set out in the table below. If you are asked to provide evidence, you must do so within two weeks of the request; we advise that you ensure that you have the evidence in place before you submit your application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free School Meals</td>
<td>A letter or other notification from your school</td>
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<tr>
<td>From one of the most deprived areas of the country: check that your postcode at point of entry to undergraduate study ranks within one of the 50% most deprived neighbourhoods (i.e. within deciles 1-5) on the relevant government Index of Multiple Deprivation: England (<a href="#">here</a>), Scotland (<a href="#">here</a>), Wales (<a href="#">here</a>), and Northern Ireland (<a href="#">here</a>).</td>
<td>Proof of your postcode at point of entry to undergraduate study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From an area where it is unusual for people to go to university: your postcode at point of entry to undergraduate study falls into Q1 or 2 of the government’s POLAR4 classification (check here: <a href="#">POLAR search tool</a>)</td>
<td>Proof of your postcode at point of entry to undergraduate study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entered university from a Care background or as a Foyer resident</td>
<td>A letter from the Local Authority or Foyer confirming this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are in receipt of full state support for maintenance for this course of undergraduate study</td>
<td>Student Finance Notification of Award letter for the full amount of maintenance received</td>
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10. Online conversation

We will invite shortlisted candidates for a c. 20 minute long online conversation with a panel of academics in March/April 2022 (date to be confirmed). The aim of this discussion will be to finalise our short list of applicants, our wait-list, and to find the best match between
applicant and research group. The conversation will focus principally therefore on your motivations for undertaking the programme and your research interests.