

## Oxbridge Interview Report

Name: Eunseo (Eunice) Kim

University: Oxford

Subject: PPE (Philosophy, Politics and Economics)

Written test sat when at Oxford or Cambridge? No

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### First Interview

College: The Queen's

Subjects: Politics/Philosophy

*Names of Interviewers and position within college, if known:*

Dr. James Grant (Philosophy tutor) and Dr. Piero-Domenico Tortola (Politics tutor)

*Were you given anything to look at before going into the interview? If so, please give as many details as possible (including how long you were given to prepare)*

Given 30 minutes to look at two texts were given; one for politics and one for philosophy.

Philosophy: The content of the text was similar to this 'Can you think of something that has not been perceived before? Surely this is a contradiction as you perceive the object as you are thinking. Thus, there is no object that exists without being perceived of.' Argue for or against the statement.

Politics: Land where two types of bread (Croissant and Bagel) were produced and the quantity of each bread produced was important political decision. Given four graphs and were asked to choose the most plausible scenario.

*If you were given something to prepare, what did they ask you about it once in the interview room?*

First asked the questions on the paper then went further asking related questions. For philosophy, the tutor suggested objections for my argument. For politics, I was also asked where in the ideological spectrum I would place my candidate if I was a campaign adviser and why.

*To what extent was the interview based around your personal statement- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one)? Please give some examples of questions asked about your personal statement.*

*Were you required to send written work to the university before interview?*

No

*Please write in the space below as many other questions as you can remember not covered above.*

Politics: How is the model different from the real world? The tutor suggested voters not voting when the candidate is located in the centre of the ideological spectrum.

Which question or kind of question did you find the most difficult to answer? Politics : When the tutor asked me about the assumption, it took time to understand what he was getting at although I knew the answer.

*How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this interview? 6*

*How well did your mock interviews prepare you for this one? (Please underline one of the following.)  
No use at all / A bit useful, but not much / Useful Preparation / Extremely useful- it felt very similar indeed.*

*Lastly, how do you think that you could have been better prepared for this interview?*

Discussing more texts that I have not seen before.

## **Interview 2**

College: The Queen's

Subject: Economics

*Names of Interviewers and position within college, if known:*

Dr. Clare Leaver and Dr. Rozana Himaz (both Economics tutors)

*Were you given anything to look at before going into the interview? If so, please give as many details as possible (including how long you were given to prepare)*

Two problems were given to look at for 30 minutes before the interview.

- 1) First one was about how to choose bus tariffs between different routes at off-peak hours
- 2) How to evaluate the effectiveness of free milk given to malnourished children. There were 2 regions (A and B) and only one region received milk. 40% of the children were malnourished but only 20% received aid.

*If you were given something to prepare, what did they ask you about it once in the interview room?*

- 1) The first interview asked me what I understood by the text and I had to clarify the nature of off-peak hours and the differences in cost. This led to a counter-intuitive answer which meant the people travelling longest distance had the cheapest fare. This was because the cost of an extra passenger during off-peak hours was the delay he or she causes to the bus drivers and the rest of the passengers. Then she asked me how it would be different in the peak time.
- 2) Asked about evaluating the differences in the regions such as relative differences between wealth in two regions A and B. If I were to collect data when would it be before the free milk distribution, in the middle or in the end? If the result of the height differences between those who received the milk and those who didn't is the same, does that mean that milk was ineffective? How would it be ineffective?

*To what extent was the interview based around your personal statement- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one)? Please give some examples of questions asked about your personal statement.*

*Were you required to send written work to the university before interview?*

No

*Please write in the space below as many other questions as you can remember not covered above.*

*Which question or kind of question did you find the most difficult to answer?*

Interpreting the text in the first part of the question.

*How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this interview? 8*

*How well did your mock interviews prepare you for this one? (Please underline one of the following.)  
No use at all / A bit useful, but not much / Useful Preparation / Extremely useful- it felt very similar indeed.*

*Lastly, how do you think that you could have been better prepared for this interview?*

Getting a text before the interview then discussing the text and the implications.

### **Interview 3**

College: Lady Margaret Hall

Subjects: PPE

*Names of Interviewers and position within college, if known:*

Tutors in each subject

*Were you given anything to look at before going into the interview? If so, please give as many details as possible (including how long you were given to prepare)*

Not before the interview but a short text was given during the interview for Philosophy. It was about the Heap's Paradox 'If one extra student walks across the lawn, there is no perceptible difference to the lawn and the students saves two minutes. Thus there is overall good. However, when all the students walk across the lawn, the beauty of the lawn would be destroyed so overall it would be worse off.' How can you explain this.

*Were you required to send written work to the university before interview?*

No

*To what extent was the interview based around your personal statement- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one)? Please give some examples of questions asked about your personal statement.*

One tutor just mentioned that she thought I was interested in human rights and moved on to the prisoners' rights questions.

*Please write in the space below as many other questions as you can remember not covered above.*

Philosophy: If the first students walk across the lawn is it a bad thing? If that is a good thing, what about the second student and the last person walk across the lawn? How can it be that a collection of good produces a bad in the end?

Economics: How do you measure the number of words people use? Would an interview environment be useful in getting data?

Politics: Should prisoners get a vote? What is the strongest argument for and against? What other groups of people are excluded from getting a vote and why is that?

*Which question or kind of question did you find the most difficult to answer?*

The Economics one was unexpected when later I realised it was about data collection and statistics.

*How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this interview? 6*

*How well did your mock interviews prepare you for this one? (Please underline one of the following.)  
No use at all / A bit useful, but not much / Useful Preparation / Extremely useful- it felt very similar indeed.*

*Lastly, how do you think that you could have been better prepared for this interview? Going to debating society (I later found out that they discussed the exactly the same question two weeks before the interview but I missed it due to Target 2.0)*

#### **Interview 4**

College: LMH

Subjects: PPE

*Names of Interviewers and position within college, if known:*

Three subject tutors

*Were you given anything to look at before going into the interview? If so, please give as many details as possible (including how long you were given to prepare) No*

*To what extent was the interview based around your personal statement- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one)? Please give some examples of questions asked about your personal statement.*

The politics tutor asked me about my Extended Project.

*Were you required to send written work to the university before interview? No*

*Please write in the space below as many other questions as you can remember not covered above.*

Politics: What do think about the Libyan intervention? Do you agree with foreign intervention?

Philosophy: Logic questions-differentiating between valid and invalid arguments. Can the conclusion be false although the premises are true?

Economics: Draw  $y=15(1-e^{-x/10})$  How many workers would a farmer want to employ and choose the correct graph that illustrates this.

*Which question or kind of question did you find the most difficult to answer?*

*How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this interview? 8*

*How well did your mock interviews prepare you for this one? (Please underline one of the following.)  
No use at all / A bit useful, but not much / Useful Preparation / Extremely useful- it felt very similar indeed.*

*Lastly, how do you think that you could have been better prepared for this interview?*

Revise the C3.C4 Maths and learning different arguments about current issues such as the Libya intervention.

## Oxbridge Interview Report

*Please answer in as much detail as possible. Your responses will definitely help other Surbiton girls to win a place at Oxford or Cambridge.*

Name: Olivia Gill

University: Cambridge

Subject: Economics

Written test sat when at Oxford or Cambridge: Of what did it comprise ?

A 30-minute test, with one question. I was given a piece of graphical data and asked to analyse and explain any economic links as well as an general patterns the data followed. The graph showed the relationship between the yearly rate of change in population growth and the yearly rate of change of the price index of a selection of goods.

How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this written test ?

6/10

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### **First Interview**

College: Trinity Hall

Subject, if applying for joint honours:

Names of Interviewer(s) and / or position within College, if known (e.g., Admissions Tutor):

Dr Cristiano Rostuccia and Dr Monojit Chatterji

Were you given anything to look at before going into the interview ? If so, please give as many details as possible (including how long you were given to prepare).

n/a

If you were given something to prepare, what did they ask you about it once in the interview room ?

n/a

To what extent was the interview based around your personal statement- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your personal statement.

Were you required to send written work to the university before interview? Yes / No (underline one). If "Yes", to what extent was the interview based around it- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one)? Please give some examples of questions asked about your written work.

I sent an essay explaining how supply side policies affect economic growth, I was asked to explain what kind of supply side policy I would implement if I choose one that had never been done before and was the least conservative. This led to a small discussion on immigration.

Please write in the space below as many other questions as you can remember not covered above.

Create a formula to show the cost of producing one good in pounds in terms of the cost of producing the same good in dollars.

In India you can exchange one rupee for 0.01 dollars. In New York you can exchange one dollar for 125 rupees. What kind of economic activity would this lead to?

The interviewer went up to a whiteboard and drew a straight line, which represented a 100m beach. He explained that there were two sellers providing exactly the same good for exactly the same price and asked if I was one of the sellers where I would place myself on the beach. He then asked if there were three sellers what situation would arise and where would the sellers eventually end up placed on the beach to secure the most profit.

Which question or kind of question did you find the most difficult to answer?

I found the questions on the exchange rate the most difficult to answer as I had never used my mathematical skills in terms of economics before, also the questions were long so there was a lot of information to take in to answer the question.

How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this interview?

7/10

How well did your mock interview(s) prepare you for this one? (Please underline one of the following.) No use at all / A bit useful, but not much / Useful preparation / Extremely useful- it felt very similar indeed.

The mock interviews gave me confidence in the interviews however they did not prepare me for any questions asked.

Lastly, how do you think that you could have been better prepared for this interview?

I feel it would have been hard to better prepare for this interview as no questions were based on my personal statement, the current news or anything I had been taught before. The exchange rate question relied on my AS knowledge but the maths involved was unlike anything I had seen before in economics.

## Interview 2

College: Trinity Hall

Subject, if applying for joint honours:

Names of Interviewer(s) and / or position within College, if known (e.g., Admissions Tutor):

Dr Tadashi Tokieda and Professor Tom Korner

Were you given anything to look at before going into the interview ? If so, please give as many details as possible (including how long you were given to prepare).

n/a

If you were given something to prepare, what did they ask you about it once in the interview room ?

n/a

To what extent was the interview based around your personal statement- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your personal statement.

Were you required to send written work to the university before interview ? Yes / No (underline one). If “Yes”, to what extent was the interview based around it- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your written work.

Please write in the space below as many other questions as you can remember not covered above.

If the price increased by 33% but fell by 25% what was the net percentage change?

If the price increased by 25% but fell by 33% what was the net percentage change?

If the price increased by 100% then fell by 100% what was the net percentage change and what was the final price?

Draw the curve  $x+2y+6=0$

A line was drawn and I was asked to give an equation for it

The point where these two lines cross gives the centre of a circle with a radius 2, give an equation of this circle.

I was then given three inequalities and asked to find the region that satisfied them.

I was then given two dice one which on every side there was a three, the other four sides were a four and two were 0. I was asked which dice was the stronger and asked to justify my answer. I was then presented with

another dice with three side which were ones and three sides which were fives and asked the same question again.

Which question or kind of question did you find the most difficult to answer ?

The percentage changes in price were the hardest to answer as I wasn't sure whether to calculate a new percentage after the first increase of decrease.

How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this interview ?

8/10

How well did your mock interview(s) prepare you for this one ? (Please underline one of the following.) No use at all / A bit useful, but not much / Useful preparation / Extremely useful- it felt very similar indeed.

Again my mock interviews gave me greater confidence but did not prepare me for the questions asked.

Lastly, how do you think that you could have been better prepared for this interview ?

I think it would have been hard to prepare for this interview as there was such a large spread of questions they could have asked, by being on top of maths covered at school was the only way to be prepared and confident.

## Oxbridge Interview Report

*Please answer in as much detail as possible. Your responses will definitely help other Surbiton girls to win a place at Oxford or Cambridge.*

Name: Ravleen Kaur

University: Cambridge

Subject: Economics

Written test sat when at Oxford or Cambridge: Of what did it comprise ?

No test

How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this written test ?

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### **First Interview**

College: Selwyn

Subject, if applying for joint honours:

Names of Interviewer(s) and / or position within College, if known (e.g., Admissions Tutor):

Bjorn Wallace, Ken Coutts

Were you given anything to look at before going into the interview ? If so, please give as many details as possible (including how long you were given to prepare).

No

If you were given something to prepare, what did they ask you about it once in the interview room ?

N/A

To what extent was the interview based around your personal statement- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your personal statement.

Were you required to send written work to the university before interview ? Yes / No (underline one). If “Yes”, to what extent was the interview based around it- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your written work.

No

Please write in the space below as many other questions as you can remember not covered above.

I was asked the following questions:

What is budget deficit?

What is a government bond?

What are the risks of owning a government bond? This was then discussed further, and the interviewer gave me a few examples of different types of bonds, and asked which one would be the best to own. We then continued to discuss government bonds further, and talked about the effect of inflation, why people would buy government bonds in the first place, and other questions such as why it is important to have government bonds were also discussed.

What effect did the bubonic plague have on the economy? This then led to discussing what prices changes there would have been in the factors of production, and what would happen to demand in the economy.

Which question or kind of question did you find the most difficult to answer ?

I found the simple definitions the most difficult, as although I was able to provide the definition, I was uncertain on how to expand my answer apart from just giving the definition.

How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this interview ? 7/10

How well did your mock interview(s) prepare you for this one ? (Please underline one of the following.) No use at all / A bit useful, but not much / Useful preparation / Extremely useful- it felt very similar indeed.

My mock interviews were very useful in providing me with interview experience, but in terms of content, the format was not very similar and the types of questions I was asked in this interview were very different to what I was asked in my mock interview.

Lastly, how do you think that you could have been better prepared for this interview ?

As most of the questions were easily answerable from knowledge of AS and A2 Economics, (which I had revised before the interview) I feel there was not much more I could have done to prepare for the interview. However, looking back on it, I feel I could have answered some questions in more depth, eg the definition ones.

## **Interview 2**

College: Selwyn

Subject, if applying for joint honours:

Names of Interviewer(s) and / or position within College, if known (e.g., Admissions Tutor):

Dr Smith

Were you given anything to look at before going into the interview ? If so, please give as many details as possible (including how long you were given to prepare).

No

If you were given something to prepare, what did they ask you about it once in the interview room ?

N/A

To what extent was the interview based around your personal statement- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your personal statement.

I was asked questions about Young Enterprise, and if I had enjoyed being Finance Director of our team. I had also written in my personal statement about a book called “Keynes, The Return of the Master” and although I was asked no direction questions about the book, I was asked what my views on Keynes were, and whether his policies and theories should be taken more notice of nowadays. I was also asked what I had learnt from my work experience.

Were you required to send written work to the university before interview ? Yes / No (underline one). If “Yes”, to what extent was the interview based around it- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your written work.

No

Please write in the space below as many other questions as you can remember not covered above.

I was asked what sparked my interest in Economics. We then went on to discuss what I would do if I was advising the government on how to run the economy, and what I thought was the most crucial thing affecting the UK's economy currently.

Which question or kind of question did you find the most difficult to answer ?

The hardest question to answer was the one about advising the government, as I was unsure what to say, but as the question was asked just after our discussion on Keynes, I said I would advocate Keynesian policies and went on to describe some from my knowledge.

How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this interview ? 8/10

How well did your mock interview(s) prepare you for this one ? (Please underline one of the following.) No use at all / A bit useful, but not much / Useful preparation / Extremely useful- it felt very similar indeed.

This interview was much more like my mock interviews, as I was asked questions from my personal statement, similar to ones I had been asked before. However the other questions were slightly different, and I had not been asked such questions before.

Lastly, how do you think that you could have been better prepared for this interview ?

I feel I was well prepared for this interview as I knew my personal statement well, and had been reading the news etc so knew about current events.

### **Interview 3**

College: Selwyn

Subject, if applying for joint honours:

Names of Interviewer(s) and / or position within College, if known (e.g., Admissions Tutor):

Dr Christos Genakos, Mr Georgios Kolios

Were you given anything to look at before going into the interview ? If so, please give as many details as possible (including how long you were given to prepare).

No

If you were given something to prepare, what did they ask you about it once in the interview room ?

N/A

To what extent was the interview based around your personal statement- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your personal statement.

Were you required to send written work to the university before interview ? Yes / No (underline one). If “Yes”, to what extent was the interview based around it- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your written work.

Please write in the space below as many other questions as you can remember not covered above.

This interview was mainly based on logical problem solving, which was not directly related to Economics. My first question was about auctions, and the interviewer gave me a number of scenarios, and asked what my bidding pattern would be.

Next, the interviewer went up to a whiteboard and drew a straight line, which represented a 100m beach. He then placed a seller of water at 75m, and asked me where I would place myself on the beach if I was another seller, selling an identical product at an identical price to the other seller. We then continued to discuss the problem further, and I was asked where both sellers would eventually end up, and the answer was the middle of the beach. The interviewer then asked me what would happen if there were four sellers instead of two, and I had to draw on the beach where they would all end up to create a stable situation. I found this more challenging, but with a few hints, I eventually worked the answer out.

The final question involved a game with playing cards. The question was, that if there were 3 cards on the table, and two players, which player would win the game provided that you can either pick up one card or two, and player 1 always goes first. After I worked this out, the problem then proceeded to 5 cards, then 6 and finally I was asked which player I would want to be in each situation, and if I was player 2, how many cards would I want on the table.

Which question or kind of question did you find the most difficult to answer ?

I found the card problem the most challenging, but eventually did work it out with a few hints.

How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this interview ?

7/10

How well did your mock interview(s) prepare you for this one ? (Please underline one of the following.) No use at all / A bit useful, but not much / Useful preparation / Extremely useful- it felt very similar indeed.

Although my mock interviews did provide me with lots of experience, I had not been asked such problems in any of my mock interviews.

Lastly, how do you think that you could have been better prepared for this interview ?

I don't think it was possible for me to prepare much for this interview as the problems mainly involved logical thinking. I could have researched such problems on the internet and practiced them though, which would have helped.

## Oxbridge Interview Report

*Please answer in as much detail as possible. Your responses will definitely help other Surbiton girls to win a place at Oxford or Cambridge.*

Name: Victoria James

University: Cambridge

Subject: Economics

Written test sat when at Oxford or Cambridge: Of what did it comprise ?

A 1 ½ hour test with three sections - 1) Maths applied to economics, manipulating functions, differentiation. All unfamiliar and nothing from the syllabus of either maths or economics (besides basic differentiation)

I was asked to differentiate a function, and then by manipulating it I had to form two new equations. After this I was given some values to put into the equation and using another equation (not given, had to think of by manipulating the first) another value had to be found.

2) Economics based comprehension – There was a small passage (3 paragraphs) about patents, the use of patents in the world markets and how, in particular, they may have helped Britain to start and follow through with the industrial revolution. There were five questions, the first one being average-level comprehension and reading between the lines of the text, asking why patents were beneficial and why they could encourage economic growth. The other four required knowledge of patents and their effect on growth and development. The second question asked what we assume from the previous question, and could this assumption ‘hold’? (As in would it be a long term effect of patents or just a short term effect). A third question asked how the government should decide on the length of the patent, and what factors should be taken into consideration? A fourth question asked what were the adverse effects of patents on economic growth. The fifth and final question asked how we could see if there is a connection between patent length and the rate of economic growth. The main idea of each of the questions was about technological advancement linked to patents.

3) The third section of the test was an essay which they recommended to write around 2-3 pages for. There were three choices for the essay: the first question was mainly political/economics/philosophy based (sorry don’t remember title!). The second option was about the Eurozone and would be the effect on the British economy if it were to break up. The third option (which I picked) was about what policies governments should follow to stimulate economic growth, and if they are not following the policies you are suggesting, why do you think this is?

How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this written test?      6 ½

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### First Interview

College: Gonville and Caius

Names of Interviewer(s) and / or position within College, if known (e.g., Admissions Tutor):

Dr Victoria Bateman, Fellow of Economics

Were you given anything to look at before going into the interview ? If so, please give as many details as possible (including how long you were given to prepare).

No

If you were given something to prepare, what did they ask you about it once in the interview room?

N/A

To what extent was the interview based around your personal statement- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your personal statement.

No mention of personal statement or SAQ at all

Were you required to send written work to the university before interview ? Yes / No (underline one). If “Yes”, to what extent was the interview based around it- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your written work.

No

Please write in the space below as many other questions as you can remember not covered above.

My first interview was based around a graph which I was told to draw. I was told that on the y axis was output per worker, and on the x axis was k (capital). I was told to sketch the relationship between output per worker and capital, and explain what was happening to the gradient of the curve, and what it meant for the worker/capital/output level and total and marginal returns. I was then asked to write a possible equation for the curve, then differentiate this equation and say what the differentiated version of this equation meant in relation to the graph. After this I was asked to draw two more curves on the same axis given different situations, and give possible equations for these curves. The interviewer then asked me what would happen when two out of the three lines met, and what this meant for the economy

Which question or kind of question did you find the most difficult to answer ?

All the questions were manageable although all off syllabus – I was told after that it was a graph studied by undergraduates

How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this interview ?

8 ½

How well did your mock interview(s) prepare you for this one ? (Please underline one of the following.) No use at all / A bit useful, but not much / Useful preparation / Extremely useful- it felt very similar indeed.

My mock interviews were incredibly useful as far as confidence is concerned, and I wasn't nervous in the slightest when going into the interview. However, this interview was extremely different to both my mock interviews, so in this sense they didn't prepare me so well.

Lastly, how do you think that you could have been better prepared for this interview ?

I don't think I could have prepared for this interview in any way at all, other than knowing my maths (functions, differentiation and graphs) very well. In fact I think I greatly over prepared myself for both interviews – I didn't use anything I'd revised or learnt in either of them

## **Interview 2**

College: Gonville and Caius

Names of Interviewer(s) and / or position within College, if known (e.g., Admissions Tutor):

Dr Clive Lawson, Fellow of Girton College and Assistant Economics Tutor

Were you given anything to look at before going into the interview ? If so, please give as many details as possible (including how long you were given to prepare).

No

If you were given something to prepare, what did they ask you about it once in the interview room ?

N/A

To what extent was the interview based around your personal statement- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your personal statement.

Personal Statement and SAQ not mentioned at all

Were you required to send written work to the university before interview ? Yes / No (underline one). If "Yes", to what extent was the interview based around it- none / a bit / quite a lot (underline one) ? Please give some examples of questions asked about your written work.

No

Please write in the space below as many other questions as you can remember not covered above.

As soon as I entered the room I was asked whether we can save the environment and have economic growth, or whether we cannot have the two, and that by having one you cannot have the other. After this the interview asked whether I knew about 'dematerialisation'. I replied no, and then he interviewer began talking about it. There was an equation on a whiteboard:  $M=H(M/C)(C/H)$  (M being materials used for production, H being number of human beings, and C being total consumption). He asked me to define each of the three parts of the equation (H, M/C, C/H) with respect to the ultimate goal of reducing the number of materials used for production. He then asked me to give examples of dematerialisation, possible costs and benefits of dematerialisation, and how it could actually have a mainly negative effect on the economy in the long term (the last part was more the answer he was looking for rather than in the main part of the question).

Which question or kind of question did you find the most difficult to answer ?

All the questions were unfamiliar as again, they were not on the syllabus and environmental economics is one areas which I've paid less attention to than the Eurozone crisis or the British economy as I assumed these would be more important. I did find some of the questions quite challenging and they were relatively more difficult than those in the other interview.

How, out of 10, would you rate your performance in this interview ? 7

How well did your mock interview(s) prepare you for this one ? (Please underline one of the following.) No use at all / A bit useful, but not much / Useful preparation / Extremely useful- it felt very similar indeed.

Again, useful as far as confidence and expressing ideas is concerned, but my mock interviews didn't prepare me for the content. We stayed on one subject and didn't change at all – the interviewer gave me no scope to go off track and talk about something else, which I felt was a major advantage in the mock interviews

Lastly, how do you think that you could have been better prepared for this interview ?

Possibly looking more into environmental economics. However I would never have guessed that the interview would be based around that as it's not necessarily an obvious topic to look at, especially considering the current economic climate.

Did not do a third interview

## Oxbridge Interview Report

Name: Yu Jeong Son

Subject: Economics

University: Cambridge

### First Interview (Downing College; Dr McCombie, Mr Allington):

My first interview lasted for 20 minutes. As soon as I entered the room, the interviewers immediately started asking questions. The first question I received was “How would you put monetary value of human lives?”, which was the most difficult question in both interviews. I got embarrassed as I did not expect to be asked this type of question nor I had thought about the issue deeply before. As I struggled to answer, the interviewers gave me an extra question where I had to choose between a drug that will prolong the lives of people who suffer from cancer by five years and a drug that will extend the lives of people with dementia by five years as the head of the NHS and I had to explain why, and he suggested that I use the costs and benefits analysis to approach the question. The discussion was mainly about how I would measure the value of human lives in an objective and numerical way. I firstly got confused between moral values and economic viewpoints and one of the interviewers pointed out that for me.

For the second question, he gave me two options to choose and explain the rationale behind my choice. I could choose either to receive 300 pounds from him on the spot or I was able to divide the 300 pounds and receive 100 pounds a year for the next three years. I chose to receive the 300 pounds separately as I explained the relationship between the value of money and high inflation and that inflation is expected to decrease in the future. The final question was a relatively basic economic question which was about real interest rate and its implications on the economy.

There were no questions about the content of my personal statement or current issues.

### Second Interview (Downing College; Professor Arestis, Dr Alcock)

My second interview was also 20 minutes long and it was a mathematics based economics interview. I was asked to give an example where Mathematics can be useful in Economics. As I gave the theory of the firm and more specifically profit maximisation, the interviewers asked me to express profit maximisation in mathematical terms and prove that this is a profit maximisation point where I used differentiation to get first and second derivatives. Furthermore, they specifically asked me to calculate the possible range of values of a multiplier effect in macroeconomics. As I had some difficulties, they provided some hints and I was able to get to the correct answer in the end. As an extra question, they wanted me to explain why the monetary theory and Keynesian theory often produce different results and analyses even when they use the same data and look at the same variables. Personally, I feel that my second interview went more smoothly than the first one probably because I felt more

familiar with the interview environment and the interviewers were more encouraging than the interviewers in my first interview.

Again, none of the questions were about my personal statement or current affairs; they were all purely theory based.

### Written Test (Downing College)

I sat a written mathematics test for Economics after I had two subject-based interviews. There were 12 questions to complete in half an hour. The level of difficulty was similar to A2 single Mathematics, and no Further Mathematics was required, although I found that doing Further Mathematics was an advantage. The questions were largely about calculus and drawing graphs. Calculators were allowed to be used.

### Overall

The actual interviews at Cambridge were different in many ways from the mock interviews I did before the actual interviews. The mock ones were largely focused on expanding my arguments in my personal statement or the current issues such as the Eurozone crisis and my opinions about them. Although, I still found mock interviews extremely useful as they gave me an idea of what an interview is like and made me become used to the interview environment, I think that if I had been able to receive mock interviews that were more focused on out-of-box questions, they would have been more useful preparations.

Personally, I found the preparation for the Bank of England Target 2.0 competition which I did shortly before Cambridge interviews very useful as it made me aware of the overall current UK economic situations which I was able to refer to while answering questions given in the interviews.