



## Reading List and Activities for Economics and Management

### Checklist of Actions for Oxbridge preparation

- Complete the course and college research booklet which covers entry requirements for your course (e.g. admissions tests during interviews). Use it to help you make informed choices.
- Respond and maintain email contact with your OMS Mentor and do not hesitate to ask questions which may help your Oxbridge preparation.
- Read British broadsheets such as The Daily Telegraph, The Independent or The Guardian regularly. Think critically about what you have read; what issues are raised and what assumptions are being made? What information is being relied on to draw which conclusions? How would you frame a counter-argument?
  - It can be useful to alternate between different papers so that you can appreciate the different stances they take.
- Make note of subject-related terminology to look up definitions with the aim of working them into future academic discussions on your chosen Oxbridge course.
- Keep a "Learning Log". Note down (i) book titles/ articles (ii) author (iii) your thoughts, feelings and observations (iv) context and relevance of the book/article (v) whether you agree with what you have read. Also summarise chapters/articles so that you can easily refresh your memory before interview.

### Subject specific

- Mini project: Familiarise yourself with (make note of) the works and theories of the three big names in Economics. What impact have they had on the modern world? Be prepared to talk about them in a tutorial.
  - Adam Smith
  - Karl Marx
  - John Maynard Keynes
- Choose several of these Economics-focused books and read them. Knowing them back to front is not nearly as important as taking in the overall message, noting down a summary of key points and having an opinion on points. Be prepared to talk about them and show notes on them.

#### Generalist books and fun books (start with these)

- *The Undercover Economist Strikes Back* by Tim Harford
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- *Everlasting Lightbulbs* by John Kay
- *Predictably Irrational* by Dan Ariely
- *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* by John Perkins
- *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* by Steven Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner

#### More focused books that perhaps require more prior knowledge

- *The Bottom Billion* by Paul Collier
- *How Rich Countries Got Rich and Why Poor Countries Stay Poor* by Erik S. Reinert
- *The Truth About Markets* by John Kay
- *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power* by Joel Bakan
- *The Writing on the Wall* by Will Hutton
- *The Dragon and The Elephant* by David Smith
- *Globalization and Its Discontents* by Joseph Stiglitz
- *Making Globalization Work: The Next Steps to Global Justice* by Joseph Stiglitz

- *Fooled by Randomness: The Hidden Role of Chance in Life and in the Markets* by Nassim Nicholas Taleb
  - *Free to Choose or (the more academic) Capitalism and Freedom* by Milton Friedman
  - *The Great Unravelling or The Accidental Theorist* by Paul Krugman
  - *End this Depression Now* by Paul Krugman
- You will not be expected to have read a great deal of management theory. Nevertheless, there are key ideas that it will benefit you to know. Note anything you listen to or read and be prepared to talk about it.
- *The Little Book of Big Management Theories* by McGrath and Bates
  - Go through The Economist's "Schumpeter" articles, reading any that interest you.
  - Listen to the Harvard Business Review Podcast
  - Read a magazine such as Fortune or Bloomberg to get real-life examples of how firms have put management philosophies into practice. Be prepared to talk about these "case studies".
- Try to find two more podcasts related to economics or business and listen to them regularly.
- As modern economists' thinking was shaped by the world depression of the 1920s, you might also like to read *Down and Out in Paris and London* by George Orwell and (for the US experience) *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck. The Undercover Economist, (<http://timharford.com/books/undercovereconomist/>), is a blog that shows you how today's real economists think.
- Attend lectures at the LSE – these are on a range of subjects and usually include very notable speakers  
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/LSEPublicLecturesAndEvents/>
- Sound maths skills are expected for all the courses you are considering, as they involve statistics. You can hone these skills by solving interesting maths problems and get help on two Cambridge websites:
- NRICH - <http://nrich.maths.org/public/index.php>
  - Plus magazine - <http://pass.maths.org.uk/>
- If possible, try to read The Economist as regularly as possible. Take note of articles of interest, writers and record your observations in relation.
- To hone your debating skills for your Oxbridge interview, watch "Question Time" on BBC2. Do also listen to BBC Radio4's "World at One" or "The PM Programme", which explain the background to the news. You can catch programmes you missed online on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/>.
- Read the book *How to Move Mount Fuji* by William Poundstone to learn and practise problem-solving skills.