Biological & Biomedical Sciences
2019-20

www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/nst/bbs
Natural Sciences Tripos
Part II
Biological and Biomedical Sciences
2019-20

Contents
1. Introduction
2. Course Aims and Learning Outcomes
3. Course Management
4. Course Structure
5. Registration Procedure
6. Examinations
7. Major and Minor Subjects and Permissible Combinations
8. Course Descriptions by Department
9. Dissertations
10. Example dissertation titles
11. Student Support
12. Gordon Wigan Prize
13. What our Students Say

www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/nst/bbs
1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of Part II Biological and Biomedical Sciences (BBS) is to provide a rigorous and intellectually challenging biological Part II subject, for both third year Natural Scientists and Medical and Veterinary Science students. NST Part II BBS allows students to maintain some flexibility in their study at Part II, allowing them to combine courses from more than one single subject biological Part II and a choice of non-biology subjects. It requires the submission of a dissertation.

Each candidate must take a Major and a Minor subject and a dissertation. The dissertation topic may be proposed by the candidate or chosen from one offered by the relevant Department and should be of up to 6,000 words, on a subject associated with either the Major or Minor subject. The dissertation must be prepared in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Faculty Board.

Additional information about the course is available on the Faculty of Biology website at:

www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/nst/bbs
2. COURSE AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Aims
The course aims to:

- to provide an education of the highest calibre in biosciences producing graduates of the quality sought by the professions, the public service, and industry
- to provide an intellectually stimulating and challenging learning environment in which students have the opportunity to develop their skills and enthusiasms to the best of their potential
- to provide flexibility in curriculum by allowing the theory papers of a single subject Part II in approved biology-related subjects to be combined with a paper from an approved list of other biology or non-biology subjects
- to provide training in scientific principles and evaluation of research and to encourage science-writing skills through preparation of a dissertation.
- to contribute to the national needs for practitioners and leaders in the sciences, medical and veterinary professions

Learning Outcomes
At the end of the course, students should have:

- an in-depth understanding of the core principles, and their experimental basis, of a chosen major subject
- additional advanced understanding in a chosen minor subject
- depending on subject choices, theoretical knowledge of disciplines and techniques useful to scientific research
- experience of independent work, including study of research papers and critical analysis
- developed skills in analysis of arguments and data
- communication skills used for reasoned argument in discussing scientific investigations and texts
3. COURSE MANAGEMENT

NST Part II BBS is managed by the Biological Sciences Committee for the Faculty of Biology.

The current overall Course Coordinator is Prof Nick Gay, who is a member of the Department of Biochemistry. The administration of the course is undertaken by Dr Claire Michel in the Faculty Board Office, which is located at 17 Mill Lane. If you have any administrative problems with the course, which cannot be solved within a particular department or by your College Director of Studies, please contact the Faculty Office (tel: (7)66899 or FacBiol@admin.cam.ac.uk).

In addition, Departmental Course Organisers are responsible for the detailed arrangements of the individual Major and Minor Subjects. A current list of Departmental Course Organisers, together with their contact details, are available on the Part II BBS website.

You should contact the Course Organiser for the Major/Minor Subject if you need any information about the arrangements of lectures, dissertations or examinations.

Departments will provide the same infrastructure for student support, departmental access, use of facilities, and supervision arrangements as they provide for their single subject students.

4. COURSE STRUCTURE

The course has three main components:

- A ‘Major’ Subject, which will typically draw on the core teaching of a single Part II subject, but may draw on modules offered by more than one department. The ‘Major’ Subject will involve a minimum of 96 contact hours (excluding supervisions)
- A ‘Minor’ Subject, normally provided by another department, which will involve 24-30 contact hours (excluding supervisions)
- A dissertation of up to 6,000 words
5. **REGISTRATION PROCEDURE**

Registration for NST Part II BBS is through the Part II Allocations Procedure used by biological departments for selection of students. You can indicate your preferred choice of department directly through the on-line portal in CamSIS, specifying that you wish to take the NST Part II BBS (dissertation) route. Details are available on the NST Part II website at:

[www.natsci.tripos.cam.ac.uk/students/third/ii-subject-allocation](http://www.natsci.tripos.cam.ac.uk/students/third/ii-subject-allocation)

The deadline for submission of choices through CamSIS is 6 May 2019.

6. **EXAMINATIONS**

The maximum marks allocated for the course components are as follows:

- **Major Subject:** 64
- **Minor Subject:** 16
- **Dissertation:** 20
- **Total:** 100

The papers offered will normally be the same as those for the single Major Subject. For most Minor Subjects the paper is borrowed from another Tripos. There is a separate class list for NST Part II BBS.

The Faculty Board’s marking criteria are available on the web at:


7. **MAJOR AND MINOR SUBJECTS AND PERMISSIBLE COMBINATIONS**

The Major Subjects (Papers 402 - 429) and the Minor Subjects (Papers 103 - 143) available in 2019-20 are shown on the following tables.

The permissible combinations of Major Subjects and Minor Subjects are also shown. Please note that subjects and combinations offered are subject to change - these will be detailed in the Reporter. An more detailed table of compatible subject combinations is available on the Faculty of Biology website ([www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/nst/bbs/subject-combinations](http://www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/nst/bbs/subject-combinations))

You will need to consult the Department or Reporter Lecture List for detailed timetables when they are published.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Major Subjects</th>
<th>Permissible Minor Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>405</td>
<td>Pathology (B&amp;C)</td>
<td>104, 107, 108, 109, 111, 113, 114, 119, 120, 124, 128, 129, 130, 132, 133, 137, 140, 142, 143.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>408</td>
<td>Pharmacology</td>
<td>Maximum 15 candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>409</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>107, 122, 127, 128. Students may choose additional Minor Subjects that do not have lecture clashes with the Psychology modules chosen – please consult the relevant lecture timetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>411</td>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
<td>Maximum 7 candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>107, 122, 124, 128, 129, 136.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>Major Subjects</td>
<td>Permissible Minor Subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>414</td>
<td>Genetics</td>
<td>107, 108, 113, 114, 122, 124, 128, 130, 132, 136. Students may choose additional Minor Subjects that do not have lecture clashes with the Genetics modules chosen – please consult the relevant lecture timetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>415</td>
<td>Physiology, Development &amp; Neuroscience</td>
<td>124, 127, 131, 137. Students may choose Minor Subjects that do not have lecture clashes with the PDN modules chosen – please consult the relevant lecture timetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>424</td>
<td>Pathology (B&amp;E)</td>
<td>105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 113, 114, 119, 120, 124, 128, 129, 130, 132, 133, 134, 135, 137, 139, 142, 143.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>427</td>
<td>Zoology</td>
<td>Students may choose Minor Subjects that do not have lecture clashes with the Zoology modules chosen – please consult the relevant lecture timetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>428</td>
<td>Psychology, Neuroscience &amp; Behaviour</td>
<td>107, 108, 109, 122, 124, 128, 136. Students may choose Minor Subjects that do not have lecture clashes with the PNB modules chosen – please consult the relevant lecture timetables.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further Major Subject information is available at the NST Part II BBS website at: [www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/nst/bbs/MajorSubjects](http://www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/nst/bbs/MajorSubjects)

Detailed information about permissible subject combinations is also available online at: [www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/nst/bbs/subject-combinations](http://www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/nst/bbs/subject-combinations)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Minor Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>Human Evolution (HSPS Paper B3) <em>Maximum 20 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>Human Ecology and Behaviour (HSPS Paper B2) <em>Maximum 20 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>Neural Degeneration and Regeneration (PDN Module N5) <em>Maximum 15 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Philosophy &amp; Ethics of Medicine (HPS) <em>Maximum 50 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>Health, Medicine, and Society (HSPS Paper Soc 13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>The Family (PBS 8) - <em>Maximum 10 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>Central Mechanisms of Reward, Punishment and Emotion (PDN Module N6) <em>Maximum 15 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>Early Medicine (HPS) <em>Maximum 12 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>Modern Medicine &amp; Biomedical Sciences (HPS) <em>Maximum 12 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>Plant and Microbial Genetics (Genetics Module 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>Human Genetics, Genomics &amp; Systems Biology (Genetics Module 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>Evolutionary Genetics (Genetics Module 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>EnterpriseTECH (Judge Business School) - <em>Maximum 20 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td>Social Psychology (PBS 7) - <em>Maximum 10 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td>Exploring Music Psychology (Music Paper 17) <em>Maximum 3 candidate – candidates must demonstrate some musical knowledge to be permitted to study this option</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>127</td>
<td>Conservation Science (Zoology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128</td>
<td>Bioinformatics <em>Maximum 46 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>Minor Subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129</td>
<td>General Practice and Primary Care Research (Primary Care Unit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Maximum 8 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130</td>
<td>Vertebrate Evolution (Zoology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td>Neuroethology (Zoology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132</td>
<td>Mammalian Evolution and Faunal History (Zoology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133</td>
<td>Genetics, Development and Animal Diversity (Zoology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134</td>
<td>From Genome to Proteome (Biochemistry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135</td>
<td>Cell Cycle, Signalling and Cancer (Biochemistry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>136</td>
<td>Science Communication (ICE) - <em>Maximum 20 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>137</td>
<td>Surgical and Radiological Anatomy (PDN) - <em>Maximum 10 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>138</td>
<td>Developmental Neurobiology (PDN) - <em>Maximum 5 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>139</td>
<td>Molecular and Cellular Neuroscience (PDN) - <em>Maximum 5 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td>Sensory Transduction (PDN) - <em>Maximum 5 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td>Cellular Physiology (PDN) - <em>Maximum 5 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>142</td>
<td>Development and Stem Cells (PDN) - <em>Maximum 5 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143</td>
<td>Systems and Clinical Physiology (PDN) - <em>Maximum 5 candidates</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ICE: Institute for Continuing Education
HPS: History and Philosophy of Sciences
HSPS: Human, Social and Political Sciences
PBS: Psychology and Behavioural Sciences
PDN: Physiology, Development and Neuroscience

Further Minor Subject information is available at the NST Part II BBS website at: [www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/nst/bbs/Minors](http://www.biology.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/nst/bbs/Minors)
8. Course Descriptions by Department

Detailed course descriptions are available on the web and in course handbooks: the following brief outline gives a basic introduction to course content for the Major Subjects.

8.1. Pathology

The department offers nine Major Subjects.

Papers 402 - 407 & 424 - 426 Pathology

Students are able to take various combinations of two single subject modules:

- Module A: Cancer and Genetic Diseases
- Module B: Immunology
- Module C: Microbiology and Parasitology
- Module D: Virology
- Module E: Dynamics of Infectious Diseases

Note that the combinations of modules A and E is not possible.

BBS students will have the opportunity to present a paper or project in one or more of their Pathology options.

For further information see:

www.path.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/third_year/NST-PartII-BBS
8.2. PHARMACOLOGY

The department offers one Major Subject.

**Paper 408  Pharmacology**

Students follow the same lectures as for the single subject. In addition, there is a series of methods and skills lectures and workshops. The course provides students with the concepts and knowledge required to understand developments in the pharmacology and drug discovery. The course is divided into two sections and typically covers:

**Systems Pharmacology:**
- Drug Discovery
- Cancer
- Metabolic diseases
- Cardiovascular diseases
- Neurotransmission and chronic pain

**Molecular and Cellular Pharmacology:**
- Receptors and ion channels
- Cellular signalling
- Controlling the cell proteome

BBS students will give a short talk on the topic of their dissertation to the Department at the end of Lent Term.

For further information see: [www.phar.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/bbs](http://www.phar.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/bbs)
8.3. PSYCHOLOGY
The department offers one Major Subject.

**Paper 409 Psychology**

Students take the same lectures and exam papers as for the single subject. The course provides students with the conceptual tools and background knowledge required to understand developments in the sciences of mind and brain, including appreciation of the range of behavioural and physiological sources of evidence and multiple levels of theoretical analysis.

The examination format is as follows:

Paper 1 is subdivided into three sections:
- Statistics;
- Methodology and experimental design;
- Essay questions that address conceptual and historical issues.

Papers 2, 3, and 4 are divided into one section each

- Section A. Cognitive and Experimental Psychology (Paper 2);
- Section B. Behavioural and Cognitive Neuroscience (Paper 3);

Each Section contains several lecture courses that range from 6 to 32 lectures in length, with all lectures taking place in the Michaelmas and Lent terms only.

Please note the 2019-20 Psychology timetable has not been confirmed yet.

The Psychology Department runs Touching Base sessions for Part II Psychology students (one in Michaelmas, one in Lent). These sessions offer a chance to discuss general progress, projects/dissertations, transferable skills (e.g. communication, analytical skills), and exam queries and anxieties. BBS students are routinely encouraged to attend these sessions.

*Students must have taken MVST Part IB or NST Part IB Experimental Psychology to take this Major Subject.*

For further information see:

[www.psychol.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/ug/nst-ii/info](http://www.psychol.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/ug/nst-ii/info)
8.4 BIOCHEMISTRY

The department offers one Major Subject.

Paper 411  Biochemistry

The course is grouped into four 24 lecture modules, one of which has a branched structure to provide internal choice. In addition there is a series of methods and skills sessions and students are expected to attend the Departmental Research Seminar Series.

Module A: Structural and Chemical Biology
Module B: From Genome to Proteome
Module C: Stem - The Dynamic Cell
    plus either:
        Branch 1 - Bioenergy OR
        Branch 2 - Molecular Microbiology of Infectious Disease
Module D: Cell Cycle, Signalling and Cancer

Essential Methods and Skills : These feature key methods such as bioinformatics. Also included are data handling classes using past examination papers as core material to study approaches to data analysis and interpretation. Teaching of transferable laboratory and communication skills (such as graphic illustration, record keeping, data analysis, database searching and essay and report writing) are embedded in the course. BBS students will take part in bioinformatics sessions and group supervisions where they will give presentations on their dissertation, present analysis of data and scientific papers and take part in Journal Club sessions, so developing oral presentation skills and skills in questioning others on their presentations and developing a critical approach to scientific literature.

For more information see:

www.bioc.cam.ac.uk/teaching/third-year/biochemistry/part-ii-biochemistry
8.5. PLANT SCIENCES

The department offers two Major Subjects.

Paper 412  Plant Sciences - Cellular
This comprises the following modules from the single subject:
P LM1  Plant Signalling Networks
PLM2  Microbes: Evolution, Genomes and Lifestyle
PLL1  Plant Genomes and Synthetic Biology
PLL3  Exploiting Plant Metabolism

Paper 413  Plant Sciences - Ecological
This comprises modules from Plant Sciences and from Zoology:
PLM3  Evolution and Ecosystem Dynamics
ZM2  Conservation Science (Zoology)
PLL2  Responses to Global Change
ZL4  Applied Ecology (Zoology)

BBS students will conduct a short presentation during Lent Term.

For further information see: www.plantsci.cam.ac.uk/teaching/plants
8.6. Genetics

The department offers one Major Subject.

Paper 414 Genetics

Students take four of the five modules offered for the single subject:

Module 1 Chromosomes and the Cell Cycle
Module 2 Plant and Microbial Genetics
Module 3 Developmental Genetics
Module 4 Human Genetics, Genomics and Systems Biology
Module 5 Evolutionary Genetics

The fifth module may be offered as a Minor Subject by students taking Major Subject Genetics.

Modules 2, 4 and 5 are offered as Minor Subjects to students who are not taking Major Subject Genetics.

BBS students will give a short oral presentation on their BBS dissertation subject to the rest of the Part II class at the end of the Lent Term.

For further information see:

www.gen.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/nst2-genetics-overview
The department offers one Major Subject.

**Paper 415 Physiology, Development and Neuroscience**

Choose any four modules from:

**Michaelmas:**
- N1 Developmental Neurobiology
- N2 Molecular and Cellular Neuroscience
- N4 Sensory Transduction
- N7 Neural Circuits and Behaviour
- P1 Cellular Physiology
- P3 Fetal & Placental Physiology
- P4 Development: Patterning the Embryo
- P9 Cell Assembly and Interactions

**Lent:**
- N5 Neural Degeneration and Regeneration
- N6 Central Mechanisms of Reward, Punishment and Emotion
- N9 Neuronal Plasticity, Modulation and Behaviour
- P2 Development and Stem Cells
- P5 Bioinformatics
- P6 Development: Cell Differentiation & Organogenesis
- P7 Pathophysiology of Cancer
- P8 Systems and Clinical Physiology

Students must specify to the department which 4 modules they intend to take.

A module taken as part of a Major Subject cannot be taken as a Minor Subject.

BBS students are able to sign up to the neuroscience workshops (in which students make presentations) and participate in the journal clubs in many of the PDN modules.

*For further information see:*

[www.pdn.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate-1/part-ii-courses](http://www.pdn.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate-1/part-ii-courses)
The department offers a single Major Subject made up of modules offered in the single subject, and some modules offered by Plant Sciences and Genetics.

**Paper 427 Zoology**

Two modules from:

- Module ZM1: Vertebrate Evolution
- Module ZM2: Conservation Science
- Module ZM3: Human Evolutionary Ecology
- Module ZM4: Neuroethology: The Neural Basis of Adaptive Behaviour
- Module ZM5: Evolution and Behaviour: Genes and Individuals
- Module ZM6: Cell Assembly and Interactions
- Module ZM7: From Genome to Proteome
- Module ZM8: Development: Patterning the Embryo

Plant Sciences M3: Evolution and Ecosystem Dynamics

and two from:

- Module ZL1: Mammalian Evolution and Faunal History
- Module ZL2: Responses to Global Change
- Module ZL3: Evolution and Behaviour: Populations and Societies
- Module ZL4: Applied Ecology
- Module ZL5: Genetics, Development and Animal Diversity
- Module ZL6: Development: Cell Differentiation and Organogenesis
- Module ZL7: Cell Cycle, Signalling and Cancer
- Genetics Module 5: Evolutionary Genetics
- Borrowed paper: Bioinformatics

A module taken as part of a Major Subject cannot be taken as a Minor Subject.

*A limited number of module combinations are not possible. Please check the timetable and see further information at:*

[https://www.zoo.cam.ac.uk/study/NST-II-Zoology](https://www.zoo.cam.ac.uk/study/NST-II-Zoology)
The course offers a single Major Subject made up of modules offered by Psychology, PDN and Zoology.

**Paper 428  Psychology, Neuroscience and Behaviour**

Choose any four modules from the list below, which will be offered by the Departments of Psychology, PDN and Zoology:

- PNB 1  Emotional Regulation and Motivation (Psychology)
- PNB 2  Evolution and Behaviour: Genes and Individuals (Zoology)
- PNB 3  Neuroethology: The Neural Basis of Adaptive Behaviour (Zoology)
- PNB 4  Developmental Neurobiology (PDN)
- PNB 5  Molecular and Cellular Neuroscience (PDN)
- PNB 6  Sensory Transduction (PDN)
- PNB 7  Neural Circuits and Behaviour (PDN)
- PNB 8  Memory (Psychology)
- PNB 9  Neural Degeneration and Regeneration (PDN)
- PNB 10 Central Mechanisms of Reward, Punishment and Emotion (PDN)
- PNB 11 Neuronal Plasticity, Modulation and Behaviour (PDN)

Students are asked to choose modules from at least two departments. A module taken as part of a Major Subject cannot be taken as a Minor Subject.

In the Lent Term, a PNB Symposium takes place, during which all students present a poster of their project or dissertation to their peers and the general neuroscience community.

For further information see: [www.psychol.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/ug/nst-ii/info](http://www.psychol.cam.ac.uk/undergrads/ug/nst-ii/info)
**8.10. BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

This department offers one Major Subject:

**Paper 429 Human Evolution, Ecology and Behaviour**

Students take the two following papers:

B2: Human Ecology and Behaviour
B3: Human Evolution

In addition, students choose two papers from the following list:

B11: What Finches Tell Us About Humans
B12: Culture Evolves
B13: Health and Disease Throughout Human Evolution
B14: A Technologically Dependant Lineage
B15: Friends, Relatives and Communities: Human Social Evolution
B16: Genomes: Ancient, Modern and Mixed
B17: Our Extended Family: Primate Biology and Behaviour
B18: Decoding the Skeleton

BBS students will give a talk on the topic of their dissertation, followed by questions, during Lent term

*For further information, see: [www.bioanth.cam.ac.uk](http://www.bioanth.cam.ac.uk)*
9. Dissertations

You will be required to write a dissertation on a topic related to either your Major or Minor Subject, of up to 6,000 words excluding appendices, tables, figures, footnotes and bibliography. You will be required to submit your title (chosen from a list offered by the Departmental Course Organiser or suggested by you) by Division of Michaelmas Full Term. Your title is approved by your Supervisor, the Departmental Course Organiser, and then returned to the Faculty Office for final approval by the BBS Course Coordinator, who will also establish that all students taking the course have submitted an appropriate title. Your dissertations must be submitted to the Departmental Course Organiser by the first Friday of the Easter Full Term.

The purpose of the dissertation is to give you an opportunity to produce a substantial piece of original work. It should be an extended account of a topic or question that lies broadly within the field of either your Major or Minor Subject. In producing your dissertation, you will be expected to show skills in researching primary literature, critically evaluating published information, and marshalling arguments to produce a structured critical assessment of a defined topic. Detailed guidance for both students and supervisors is available on the BBS website.

You can expect to receive a maximum of four supervisions with your Dissertation Supervisor to provide guidance on your dissertation.
10. Example dissertation titles

Below are examples of dissertation titles proposed in the past:

- An insight into cation-pi interactions involved in structure and signalling in the plasma membrane. (Biochemistry)
- How can genomic data be used to understand cancer evolution and to assist with cancer therapy? (Genetics)
- New insights into the molecular basis of hereditary haemochromatosis. (Pathology)
- Corticotrophin-releasing factor system as a potential target to treat affective disorders. (Pharmacology)
- The nature and treatment of cognitive deficits in schizophrenia. (Psychology)
- The Role of Working Memory in Successful Second Language Acquisition (Psychology)
- The neurobiology of placebo analgesia. (PDN)
- The physiological risks of ultra-endurance events. (PDN)
- Is diversity the spice of life? Exploring the relationship between nature, biodiversity and psychological well-being. (Zoology)
- The effects of neonicotinoids on pollinator behaviour and survival (Zoology)
- Transcriptional signature matching strategies in computational drug discovery and repositioning. (Bioinformatics)
- The ethics of global research funding. (History and Philosophy of Sciences)
- A Biopsychosocial Model of Gender Identity and Dysphoria. (Psychological and Behavioural Sciences)
- Examining the prediagnostic events and activities of renal cancer patients diagnosed via an emergency presentation: protocol for a cohort study using CPRD data (General Practice and Primary Care Research)
- Too much information? The ethical ramifications of PREDICT, an open-access breast cancer prognosis tool (Philosophy and Ethics of Medicine)
11. Student Support
The department in which you are taking your Major Subject will be designated as your “home” department. If your Major Subject comprises modules offered by more than one department, one of these departments will be assigned as your “home”; this will usually be the department in which you are doing your dissertation. As an NST Part II BBS student you will have access to the same resources and support in your home department as single subject NST Part II students.

12. Gordon Wigan Prize
The Gordon Wigan Prize for Biological and Biomedical Sciences shall be awarded to the candidate who is at the top of the class list for NST Part II BBS, and achieves a First Class mark. The prize is a book token for a value of £100.
13. WHAT OUR STUDENTS SAY

Rachel, BBS 2017-18

Major Physiology, Development and Neuroscience

Minor Subject: General Practice and Primary Care Research

"For my third year I did the BBS course with major in Physiology, Development and Neuroscience (PDN) and minor in GP and Primary care research offered at the Primary Care unit. I really enjoyed the BBS course! Doing both major and minor subjects allows you greater breadth. My major, PDN, was very cutting edge, scientific and theoretical. But as a medic, I really appreciated the pragmatism and clinical relevance of my minor subject. BBS allowed me to do these very contrasting subjects in parallel! With BBS you write a dissertation, as opposed to a lab based project. Though your departments usually offer a notional list of titles you have the freedom and flexibility to approach essentially anyone in your department with any question and they can make it happen. For instance, I concocted a question based on a single paper which really piqued my interest and was able to approach its author to supervise me. I appreciated this freedom as I felt I was committing my time to something I really was interested in.

My minor subject in GP and primary care research was a particular highlight of my part II. In Michaelmas, we were taught by the senior academics in the Primary Care Institute in the methods used in primary care research and taught how to critique it. Then in Lent, we were placed with one of the research teams and through supervisions were able to explore many of the particular research issues in their field. Our lecturers and supervisors were approachable and enthusiastic. It opened my eyes to areas of research and careers paths within medicine I didn't know existed. And as a final bonus - there were only 4 people on the course in my year! We got to know each other really well, did multiple formals and keep up with each other now in Clinical school."
Lauren, BBS 2017-18

Major Subject: Biochemistry
Minor Subject: EnterpriseTECH

"After studying a range of topics during the first two years of Natural Sciences, BBS was a great way to specialise (studying a Biochemistry major) while studying another subject I love and want to pursue in the future (EnterpriseTECH as minor). There’s many options of topics and ways to study, so BBS subjects are definitely worth looking into when deciding on third year.

The courses are well organised timetable, logistics and assessment wise. Even though you’re studying two subjects, the workload doesn’t seem more than students just studying a single. In most BBS major subjects, you’ll do a dissertation as coursework instead of a lab project, which also makes Easter/Lent term less stressful!

Being a member of two departments is also great, and you get to work with and know a lot more students and staff. Loved my time as a BBS student, how the course let me study and has fuelled my passion for multiple topics, and how it’s opened many doors for future study and careers."