Natural Sciences Tripos, Part III: Entry requirements 2020-21

The Committee of Management for the Natural Sciences Tripos, in consultation with the Faculty Boards of Physics and Chemistry, Biology, Earth Sciences and Geography, and the Board of History and Philosophy of Science, has defined the standards required for entry to each subject of Part III of the Natural Sciences Tripos (see Regulation 5(a) for the Tripos (Statutes and Ordinances, p. 379)), with effect from the courses commencing in the academical year 2020-21, as follows:

**Astrophysics**
In order to be a candidate for honours in Astrophysics in Part III of the Natural Sciences Tripos, a student should have obtained at least a II.1 in Astrophysics or Physics, or in Part II of the Mathematics Tripos. Candidates will be considered on a case-by-case basis so that it can be ascertained that they have a good grasp of at least three appropriate applied mathematics courses in the examination.

**Biochemistry**
In order to be a candidate for honours in Biochemistry in Part III of the Natural Sciences Tripos, a student should have obtained at least a II.1 in Biochemistry in Part II of the Natural Sciences Tripos.

**Chemistry**
For this year progression to Part III Chemistry is permitted for anyone satisfying any of the following criteria:

(1) A 2.1 or better in the summer 2020 sitting of Part II
(2) A 2.1 overall in Part IB 2018/19
(3) A 2.1 in both Part IB Chemistry A and Chemistry B in 2018/19
(4) An average mark of 60% when Part IB Chemistry A and Chemistry B in 2018/19 are aggregated.
(5) This criterion only applies to students who only took only ONE of Chemistry A and Chemistry B: a 2.1 in either subject.

Note that the above represents a relaxing of the usual academic requirements. However, students are reminded that Part III Chemistry is a masters-level course and represents a significantly higher level of challenge than does Part II and it is for this reason we look for evidence that students can perform consistently at the 2.1 level. Anyone unsure about the academic expectations of Part III should discuss the matter with their Director of Studies.

**Earth Sciences**
In order to be a candidate for honours in Earth Sciences in Part III of the Natural Sciences Tripos, a student should normally:

*Either* have obtained at least a II.1 in Earth Sciences in Part II of the Natural Sciences Tripos;  
*Or* have obtained a II.1 in Part II Physical Sciences with at least 70% in Half Subject Earth Sciences

**Materials Science**
In order to be a candidate for honours in Materials Science in Part III of the Natural Sciences Tripos, a student should have obtained at least a Pass in Materials Science in Part II of the Natural Sciences Tripos.

**History and Philosophy of Science**
In order to be a candidate for honours in History and Philosophy of Science in Part III of the Natural Sciences Tripos, a student should have obtained at least a II.1 in History and Philosophy of Science in Part II of the Natural Sciences Tripos.

Students who have not taken History and Philosophy of Science in Part II of the Natural Sciences Tripos will be considered on a case-by-case basis. These students should have obtained at least a high II.1 overall class in Part II.

**Physics**
In order to be a candidate for honours in Physics in Part III of the Natural Sciences Tripos a student should have obtained at least a II.1 in Physics in Part II.

Students who have not taken Physics in Part II of the Natural Sciences Tripos (for example, those who have read Part II of the Mathematical Tripos, Part II Astrophysics, or Part II Physical Sciences Half
Subject Physics) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. These students should usually have obtained at least a high II.1 overall class in Part II, and have covered an appropriate range of courses in physics.

**Systems Biology**

In order to be a candidate for honours in Systems Biology in Part III of the Natural Sciences Tripos: a student from the Natural Sciences Tripos should:

*Either* have obtained at least 55% in either Mathematics or Mathematical Biology in Part IA of the Natural Sciences Tripos;

*Or* have obtained at least 55% in Mathematics in Part IB of the Natural Sciences Tripos

*And* (2) have obtained at least a II.1 in a single-subject Part II of the Natural Sciences Tripos. Participation by students from the Mathematical Tripos will be considered on a case-by-case basis and a II.1 in Part II is normally expected.

**All subjects**

In addition to the standards mentioned above, candidates should have fulfilled any subject prerequisites as outlined in the appropriate programme specification.

The application process for each subject is defined on the subject webpage together with details of any constraints on numbers or additional information that may be required.

**Consideration of special cases**

A student who has not met the required standard or who has not offered the required subjects as specified above, or who has not complied with the published deadline for receipt of applications, may request consideration as a special case. A request for special consideration should be forwarded by the student’s Director of Studies or Tutor to the Secretary of the relevant Faculty Board using the pro forma provided, at the earliest opportunity and, at the latest, within two weeks of the results being announced. The Director of Studies or Tutor should state the reasons for requesting dispensation, confirm that the College supports the request and is able to support the student, and believes that the student will be capable of undertaking the Part III course successfully. The application must be accompanied by copies of supervision reports, and a detailed breakdown of the student’s marks, year by year and subject by subject. The Committee nominated by the Faculty Board to consider special cases is not expected to consider circumstances of a nature on which the Applications Committee would normally make a judgement.

Representations regarding progression decisions are allowed for under the review procedure for examinations for undergraduate and certain other qualifications.