

BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

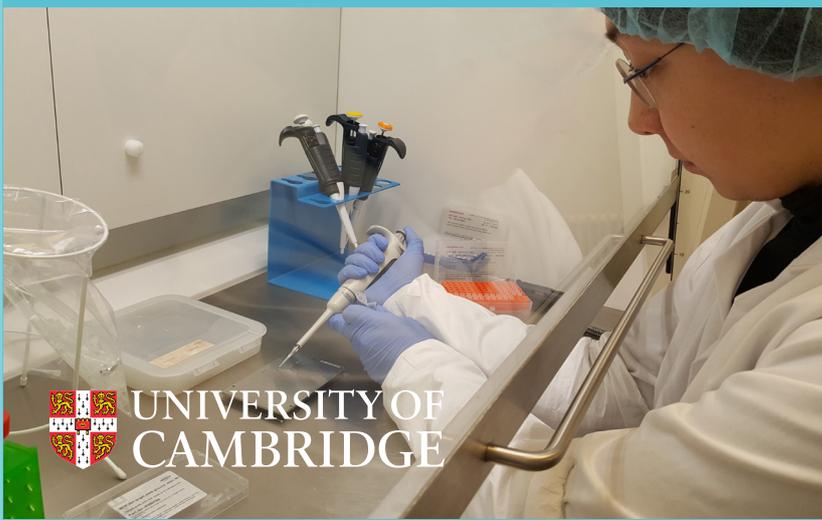
Anthropology is the study of humans in a comparative perspective - comparing societies and cultures, looking at change over time, exploring human diversity. Biological Anthropology applies this comparative approach to studying human evolution and adaptation by:

- comparing humans and other animals to understand human uniqueness and biological continuity
- exploring the hominin fossil and prehistoric records to unravel the processes that shaped our evolutionary history over the last 5 million years
- investigating variation in human development and health across the world to understand the mechanisms that underlie how populations differ in their response to the environment
- studying the resilience of human populations in the face of ecological, nutritional and social challenges today and in the past
- looking at individual behaviour in terms of evolution and adaptation and its underlying cognitive basis
- understanding the basis of human genetic variation today, its evolution, and how it shapes our susceptibility and resistance to disease

Biological Anthropology is an extremely diverse field - it encompasses all the biological and behavioural sciences, but focuses on humanity. Biological anthropologists can be palaeontologists, primatologists, geneticists, archaeologists, ecologists, physiologists, ethologists, epidemiologists, osteologists, among others!

Most people in the subject do fieldwork, usually in relatively remote places. This may involve chasing chimpanzees in Guinea, tracking the routes taken by ancient hominins across the Sahara, mapping gene and language boundaries in Indonesia, investigating child development in southern Africa, or digging up archaeological sites in places as different as Kenya and Kurdistan.

A lot of the work also happens in the lab - from osteoarchaeology, to physiology, to genetics, to ancient DNA.



STRUCTURE

Modules can either be one or two terms long. In each year you choose the equivalent of four two-term modules:

Year 1

- World Archaeology
- Archaeology in Action
- Introduction to the Cultures of Egypt and Mesopotamia
- Babylonian Language 1
- Egyptian Language 1
- Being Human: Interdisciplinary Perspectives
- Humans in Biological Perspective
- A module in another department, including Social Anthropology or Psychology

Year 2

Compulsory modules:

- From Data to Interpretation

And two from:

- Human Ecology and Behaviour
- Human Evolution
- Human Comparative Biology

Optional modules may include:

- a third core module from the list above
- Archaeological Science
- Archaeology in Action
- Palaeolithic Archaeology
- Other modules from Archaeology or another department, including Social Anthropology or Psychology

Year 3

Compulsory modules:

- Comparative Human Biology or Major Topics in Human Evolutionary Studies
- Dissertation

Optional modules may include:

- Health and Disease Throughout Human Evolution
- Friends, Relatives and Communities: Human Social Evolution
- Decoding the Skeleton
- What Finches Tell Us About Humans
- Genomes: Ancient, Modern and Mixed
- Our Extended Family: Primate Biology & Behaviour

