

Fresher's Guide

St. Peter's College



The Middle Common Room

2011

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WELCOME!

Welcome to the Middle Common Room of St Peter's College! When accepted into St Peter's, you automatically became a member of the Middle Common Room (**MCR**). 'MCR' means two things. First, as the name suggests, the MCR is a room (or really a couple of rooms) in College. Secondly – and more importantly – the MCR is the society of between 100 and 150 graduate students, fourth year undergrads and visiting students at St Peter's. Along with your faculty, it is probably the most important group of people you will associate with at Oxford (and, indeed, in general). It will also hopefully be a little more fun than your faculty.

The MCR organises events for each week of term. These include Formal Halls, Guest Nights, day trips around the UK, lectures, punting excursions, barbecues, wine tastings, film screenings and Bops (Oxford speak for a party). Outside term time, there are more informal get-togethers for the graduates who remain here. The MCR – through the MCR Committee – is also the chief mechanism through which graduate issues are represented to the College, so if you have a query or a problem, be it general or specific, it can be addressed through the MCR.

This guide contains precious knowledge gathered by the MCR throughout generations of graduate students and is divided into three parts ranging from basic information, College-related aspects of your graduate life, and last but not least, the organisation and role of your MCR. This guide is particularly aimed at graduates from outside the United Kingdom, but it should also be helpful for graduates from the UK.

Settling into Oxford takes time, especially for the large number of students we have coming from outside the UK. To help with this process, we strongly suggest you attend the College and MCR events in Freshers' Week (known in Oxford as "0th week"). In order to be in Oxford for all the events it is best to arrive by 0th week – **Sunday, October 2nd**. We will have tours of the College and of the city, opportunities to meet MCR members who can answer your questions, as well as the infamous Freshers' Week BOP. Make sure you pick up a copy of the Freshers' Week Guide, which will be available in the MCR, as it will explain what is happening during Freshers' week. This will also be put in your pigeon holes (post boxes in the Lodge see 'Mail' section of this guide) for you to collect on arrival.

One of the greatest strengths of St Peter's is its lively and supportive graduate community. Whether in a party, at a pub or in lecture from a fellow MCR member – we always end up having a lot of fun. Study at Oxford can be exhausting. To get away from it all, and to make sure you don't miss out on the complete Oxford experience, where better to go than the MCR?

Once again, welcome. We look forward to meeting you!

Andrew Elliott

President

Andrea Szöllösi

Vice-President

Marina Demetriades

Treasurer

Melania Zauri

Social Secretary

BASICS

This section goes through the things you should know to help you settle into Oxford. Please have a read. Many of these issues will also be explored during MCR events in **Freshers' Week**.

ARRIVAL

Unlike some Universities, we're not very fussy about this. If you let David Launchbury, our Accommodation Officer, know when you intend to arrive, he will make sure that your college accommodation (if you have decided to take a college room) is ready and waiting. His email address is: david.launchbury@spc.ox.ac.uk.



When arriving in Oxford, you should first make your way to the College to sign in. If you are arriving by air, you will land at Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted or Luton Airport. Regular coaches run direct to Oxford from all four airports (for Gatwick and Heathrow timetables and online booking see www.oxfordbus.co.uk - the bus is called "The Airline" and for both Stansted and Luton see www.nationalexpress.com).

Cheaper return fares for limited periods are available. The closest airport is Heathrow. Buses also run more frequently from Gatwick and Heathrow compared to Stansted or Luton, however Stansted or Luton may save you money. You should stay on the bus until it arrives at the Oxford bus station at 'Gloucester Green'. It is the final stop. Once you get off the bus, make your way to 'Gloucester Green'. It's the stone-paved square behind the shops that immediately face the bus. Gloucester Green is used as a market on several days of the week. If it's full of stalls when you arrive, make your way around the outside to your right, passing the Old Fire Station and the Falafel Stand. Otherwise simply walk across the square and take the first right to George Street, passing The Odeon Cinema. On reaching George Street, look across the street. You will see a coffee shop called 'Coffee Republic'. Coffee Republic is on the corner of George Street and New Inn Hall Street. Pass Coffee Republic and walk up New Inn Hall Street. Just past the Methodist Church, you will see on your right the sandstone of St Peter's College. The main building, through which you enter is separated from the street by a lawn and has a set of automatic glass doors. You'll now be in 'The Lodge' (each College has a Lodge as their main entrance).



After you've checked in with 'The Porters', do take a short tour of the College. If you walk to the College Bar, to the left there is one of Peter's prettiest buildings, Staircase Four. Straight ahead and just to the left of Staircase Four lies the Dorfman centre. This is an excellent modern conference facility, which is where Geoffrey Nicholls, the Tutor for Graduates, will probably hold a welcome event for you. If you return to the main quad and walk past the front of the chapel, you will see the facade of the dining hall (the building with steps leading up to it), directly across another little quad from the modern, glass stairwell. If you carry on down the steps to the next little quad (which doubles as a rather lumpy croquet pitch), the two-storey building in the right hand corner is called the Pastry School (no longer serving pastry). Its upper floor is the college music room, and the ground floor is the MCR. You can enter though the double doors in front, or go around to the right hand side.



Hello there!

This is all very grave, but please, don't have nightmares – in general, Oxford is a great place to live.



TRANSPORTATION

Cars are not really an option in Oxford. Many streets are either closed to private motor vehicles or clogged with traffic. Parking is also very difficult and there is no parking provided for students on either the main College site or at any of its accommodation blocks. As you may be aware from having seen any depiction of Oxford, anywhere, ever, the transport of choice in Oxford is therefore the bicycle. You can buy a new bike on the cheap side for around £100 at the various cycle shops on Cowley Road and in North Oxford. Alternatively, there are second-hand cycles at the same shops, advertised on posters or at the weekly second-hand bike market at the Oxford Union (just behind Peter's, in Bonn Square).

Demand for second-hand bikes is high at the beginning of the academic year so get in early. Bikes not locked will be stolen. Even those with locks may get stolen by industrious thieves, so it is worth holding off on the fancier models and saving your money on something a little cheaper. D-locks are the lock of choice. Even so, avoid leaving bikes on the street overnight (especially on weekends) where they are likely to be vandalized. At college bicycles can either be stored in a limited area in college, or in an area just off the road outside the Chavasse building. This is accessible via swipe card. You will need a St. Peter's sticker (available at the lodge) in order to store your bike at these locations. In order to make it safe for you to cycle in Oxford, there will be a bike safety course in Freshers' Week in College. Buses are also a convenient way of getting around. Two bus companies serve the city, making service very frequent. The only drawback is that many university buildings are not close to bus stops. Then again, Oxford isn't that big, so stop complaining.



Then there are taxi cabs. There are two types of taxis in Oxford: the characteristic Hackney or Black cabs and private taxis (or minicabs). Black cabs can be found at taxi stands. The closest stand to College is at Gloucester Green. The private taxis are regular cars that are registered with the Oxford City Council and can be booked by telephone (01865 242424, for example). **DO NOT** get into any private cabs that DO NOT have the yellow sticker of registration from the Council. Private cabs are also not supposed to solicit for rides on the street – you must call for a pick-up instead. You should keep in mind that Oxford is a fairly small city (around 150,000 inhabitants) and if you are in the city centre, walking is usually the most sensible way of getting around. So don't be lazy. If you wish to venture out to a bigger city, London is 100 minutes away by bus. There are two bus lines charging £13 for a same-day return student fare (your bod card serves as student i.d.). These both depart from Gloucester Green, but you can also get on/off on the High Street, and on St Clement's, near the start of Cowley Road. They run 24 hours a day, every 12 minutes during the day, every half hour at night (approximately). There is also a train service to London, which takes approximately 50 minutes, costing around £19 for adults or £13 for those with a youth railcard but you could also get return tickets for as little as £8 if you book in advance (www.nationalrail.co.uk). Unfortunately train services are only available until around midnight on weekday and around 01.00 on weekends.



BANKS

The main banks in Oxford are HSBC, NatWest, Lloyds, Royal Bank of Scotland, Barclays and the Co-operative Bank. All are conveniently located in the city centre. Opening an account can be a challenge since there is a lot of paperwork needed. All banks will ask you for a letter from the college proving that you are officially studying at Oxford. The Deputy Registrar, Martin Brown, will be able to provide you with that. Either e-mail them explaining

that you need a bank letter (addressed to the bank you choose), or visit their offices at college and they will have it ready the soonest possible for you.

It is very helpful if you have a document from your current bank that ensures that you (or your family) already have active accounts. Usually two identification documents are requested so make sure you bring both your passport and ID\driving license. Other documents may be required, so you are best advised to check with the bank first. While there, you should also inquire about your qualifications for a student account and whether you may benefit from it. Do shop around, since different banks offer different services.

If any of the aforementioned banks operate in your home country it may be worth enquiring about how to open an account in the UK prior to leaving home or check their web pages. Make sure to bring cash and traveler's cheques with you to use until the account is opened. Cash cards and ATM cards from other countries always work, but often charge very high rates for using foreign cash points. In any case, a back-up plan is always good. If you're still having difficulties, the MCR Committee is always willing to help you out, as is the Director of Finance, Melinda Mattu melinda.mattu@spc.ox.ac.uk.



TELEPHONES

There are two options for phone services: mobile phones and 'landlines'.

Mobile Phones

For many students a mobile phone is the best and often only option. For those coming from abroad you will need a new phone in the UK, unless you have a phone that works in different regions. And even then the call costs can be very high so getting a new phone in the UK might be a cheaper option. There are two different set ups:

- pay-as-you-go – where you purchase the phone (a basic model can be bought for as little as £30) and then prepay for your calls and text messages and top up as and when you need to, or
- pay monthly contract plans – where you pay a set monthly amount for a fixed term (typically 12 months or longer).

There are many mobile phone shops around the city centre, especially on Cornmarket Street, so shop around. The contract based plans will often be attractive because the handset will be cheaper (and sometimes free), however phone companies will require you to have a credit record. For students who have just arrived from overseas this can very be frustrating – so it may be easier to go for the pay-as-you-go option. You should also bear in mind that the pay monthly plans often tie you in for a minimum number of months, which is normally at least 12months. If your course is only one year then you may only be in UK for 9 months

Landlines

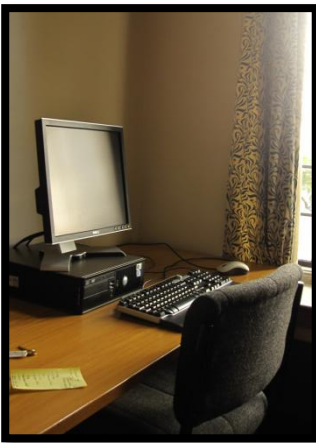
There are no landlines in College bedrooms, and students are not permitted to get one installed. If you're living in private house rather than college accommodation then a landline phone is an option. Different service providers have different tariffs and options, most of which can often be bundled with internet provision. Most landlines require a BT telephone line for which you'll need to pay line rental on top of the cost of the calls, this is also needed for most types of internet access outside of college accommodation. Most of the options are based on a £/min rate for other landlines (which tends to be cheap) and another rate for calling mobile phones or premium numbers (which tends to be more expensive).



Using a landline for long-distance calls can be very expensive, it is usually better to buy long-distance/international telephone cards. You can get these from newsagents and the post office. The per-minute rates for your call destination country are usually displayed on posters in the store window. You can also use these cards for local calls. When comparing prices, beware of connection charges and surcharges on calls from mobile phones and pay phones. You should read the fine print on the posters carefully.

COMPUTING

If you come from a University that has endless rows of gleaming computers you might be surprised by Oxford. The approach here is a little more modest. There are facilities available (in particular see the section on *'The Computer Room'*, or your faculty or department), but it might require a little work to locate facilities that suit you. It is useful (but is not necessary) to own a PC or a laptop. Laptops, in particular, are useful for using around Oxford libraries. For computer issues, either hardware or software, you will find the Oxford University Computing Service (at 13 Banbury Road, see www.oucs.ox.ac.uk) a convenient first port of call. It offers products and services at reasonable rates, and also has several computing labs that you are entitled to use.



INTERNET ACCESS

If you're living in college accommodation (e.g. Paradise Street) you will have Ethernet access to the University system from your room. If your laptop/computer does not have an Ethernet port then you'll need to buy an Ethernet card in order to access the internet from your room. Internet access around the University (e.g. libraries and departments) is done via Ethernet access and/or wireless coverage. The Ethernet access ports are compatible with those in continental Europe and North America.

Wireless internet is available on the main college site, Paradise Street accommodation and the MCR which also has 2 desktop computers for MCR members to use.

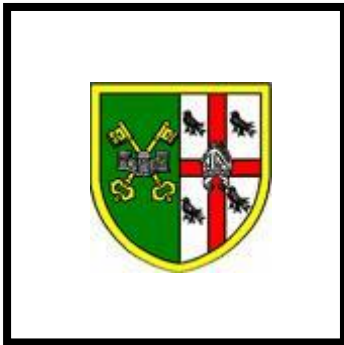
In order to connect to the college network you need to jump through certain hoops, which include downloading a program which determines the state of your anti-virus software. If your anti-virus software is not up to date then you'll be given a certain amount of time to update your current software or install new software before being allowed full access. A free anti-virus program called Sophos is available from the OUCS website (www.oucs.ox.ac.uk). This process can be quite frustrating and it tends to take longer than it should for students to get the internet up and running in their rooms. If this is the case and you're having problems email the IT Officer (it-support@spc.ox.ac.uk) for help and one of the MCR committee members so that we now you're having problems and can help to get it dealt with swiftly.

If you are living in private accommodation you will need to organise internet access yourself. The most common option is broadband via the telephone line using a modem. This requires a BT phone line for which line rental will have to be paid. Many internet service providers (ISPs) bundle internet with landline services which can make things cheaper. There are other options that do not require a telephone line such as cable internet, but this is dependent on whether your area has cable access. It's worth researching different options as different ISPs provide different speeds and some have a monthly download limit.

All Oxford University students receive an email account. For details about your account see the section on *'The Computer Room'*.

COLLEGE

A BIT OF HISTORY...



Founded as St Peter's Hall in 1929 to widen access to the University, St Peter's became a full college of the University in 1961. For those of you interested in a bit of College history, we made an attempt to compile the key moments in half a page.

The College was founded by Bishop Francis James Chavasse (1846-1928), and his son Christopher Maude Chavasse (1884-1962), later Bishop of Rochester, who became the first Master. The original aim was to provide a low-cost Oxford education for promising students of limited means and thus, in 1929 St Peter's Hall was born with 40(!) students. In the same year the Hall was granted its Coat of Arms incorporating the Arms of Bishop Chavasse and a device representing the church of St Peter-le-Bailey. Motor-car manufacturer and philanthropist William Morris (Lord Nuffield) played an instrumental role in College history by saving St Peter's Hall from certain closure during the financial crisis of the '30s. His portrait as a benefactor surveys the College Dining Hall (charming man in red gown). In 1961, with 250 students, the grant of a Royal Charter to "The Master, Fellows and Scholars of the College of St Peter-le-Bailey" completed the process to full collegiate status.



Since then, with the support of alumni and generous benefactors, the story has been one of growth and expansion. Women were admitted for the first time in 1979. Student numbers, including post-graduates, have risen to over 400.

The College comprises an interesting set of buildings of diverse architectural style, some of which are much older than the college itself. The Dining Hall dates back from 1832 and used to be known as Hannington Hall (named after Bishop James Hannington whose stained glass portrait overlooks the dining area from above High Table). The College chapel was originally the Church of St Peter-le-Bailey, built in 1874. The newer buildings have been partially or wholly funded by benefactors.

St Peter's has now been an established and thriving College of the University for 50 years. It occupies a site that for 600 years has been a home to students, a continuation of the medieval Halls that preceded it.



THE MASTER

Mark Damazer became Head of St Peter's College in October 2010. For more than 25 years he was at the BBC ending as Controller of Radio 4. His biography contains key words such as Gonville and Caius College (Cambridge), Harvard, Capitol Hill, The International Press Institute and Centre for Contemporary British History. This list clearly does not do justice to his career achievements, but rather than skimming through his biography while trying to find out how you get the keys to your room, we recommend you meet him personally. He is a very pleasant person with a refined sense of humour and genuine interest in meeting college members. You will most definitely have a chance to chat to him at formal dinners as well as at Graduate seminars or other college events.

Mr Damazer "suffers the misfortunes of Tottenham Hotspur" and is keen on opera, gardening as well as Italian painting. He lives in Canal House, just behind the college. He hosts college graduates and undergraduates for the now traditional Sunday brunch.

PORTERS

As well as being the people to help you 'sign in', the Porters are very helpful and will often be your first 'port' of call when you have a query. Through the Porters you can book guest accommodation, get keys for the music room and mail letters and internal university (so called 'pigeon') post. In particular, Porters are very helpful on accommodation issues. If there is an issue that they cannot deal with, they will likely refer you to Jean Wright, (the Home Bursar), David Launchbury (the Accommodation Officer) or Gareth Hathaway (Maintenance engineer). If you have any maintenance problems in your room (problems with the shower, pipes backing up, cracks in the walls, etc) or find a problem in the MCR, please go to the Porters and note the problem in the 'Maintenance Logbook', that is present in every building, **immediately** so that it can be fixed as soon as possible! If they don't get sorted soon enough, you should contact your warden. If things still don't get sorted, you can email Jean Wright directly to ask when the job is expected to be finished by the maintenance team.



The Porters are also a bottomless source of knowledge about all things relating to the College, and indeed about many of the mysteries of the universe. So if you have any queries at all, just ask. They will be happy to help. The Lodge is open 24 hours a day.

KEYS

On your arrival, the Porters will give you your accommodation keys (if you are being housed in College accommodation) and a blue Salto key (for access to areas restricted to college members only, such as the College library) for which you will be asked to pay a deposit.



REGULATIONS

There are a number of regulations that are binding on members of the MCR, issued under the title 'Regulations for Junior Members'; you'll be sent a copy of them before your arrival. As these regulations make clear, ignorance of any of these regulations is itself an infringement of them, so get studying. The Dean and Junior Dean enforce the regulations. If you become aware of any infringement of these regulations, the Junior Dean should be contacted in the first instance (junior.dean@spc.ox.ac.uk).

ACCOMMODATION

The majority of the incoming graduate students are assigned a room in college accommodation. College accommodation does not mean the college site, but rather an annexe owned by the college in the immediate vicinity, less than 5 min walk from the main site. There are three of these, of which one, Paradise Street, has been allocated to graduates.

Accommodation is cosy, comfortable, but not prestigious. All the rooms are en suite and come with a bed, writing desk, a chair and a wardrobe. It is enough for a start, but you will probably need to get yourself extra goodies, depending on your lifestyle.

If you have special needs that need accommodation or have issues with your room, you should contact the Accommodation Officer, David Launchbury = david.launchbury@spc.ox.ac.uk . The accommodation office is welcoming and helpful and will do its best to provide everything you need. Once you sign for the room key (the porters lodge), the room becomes yours and yours only. It may not be sub-let.

You will share a kitchen, which comes with some basic pots and pans, dishes and utensils. Your new home will also have a washer and dryer for clothes (which you will need to buy a card for at the porter's Lodge, iron and other useful items.





Bedding will not be provided by the College. There is no point in bringing your duvet and pillow from home especially if you are travelling by plane; they are bulky and will take up precious space. You can purchase reasonably cheap ones (you could get away with around £20 for a warm duvet and pillow) from local shops stocking all things domestic. We recommend Boswells, Primark or Argos, which is the immediate neighbour of St Peter's, and a good friend in need.

UK electronics are particular. They operate on 230 volts and use sockets different from those in continental Europe and North America, so you will need an adaptor.

Fire safety is taken very seriously in the UK, in colleges in particular. The Dean and his officers enforce strict regulations and any fire-related offences are taken seriously. This means no smoking, no lighting of candles/incense, and no open heat sources (e.g. hotplates), etc. All the buildings in college are built to the last fire-safety guidelines, so you will be safe, but caution should still be exercised. A fire safety induction course is run in every annexe and the attendance is mandatory.

College houses are serviced by cleaning staff (known in Oxford as 'scouts'). Scouts will clean kitchens and common areas but it is not their duty to do the washing up – that's your responsibility! They will also empty your bin every weekday as well as clean your room and bathroom once a week. This is all done in the morning so if you do not want to be disturbed by scouts coming in, you can leave your bin outside your room. This way, they will empty your bin and not enter your room. Please note that the scouts will have a particular day assigned to clean your room; if you leave the bin out on that day, your room will not be cleaned that week so it's a good idea to find out which day that is.



Paradise Street

The majority of first year Graduates are housed in Paradise Street, an off-site annex. This is the first year graduates have lived here, and it is significantly nicer than the previous Graduate block Cambridge Terrace (ask current graduates about it for some interesting stories).

It's a short walk from the main College site and not too hard to find. On leaving the lodge turn right down New Inn Hall Street, at the end turn right again walking past the Westgate shopping centre and Bonn Square. On reaching Castle Street turn left and head down the road towards the Castle Tavern (a pub). Take the right immediately before the Castle Tavern, this is Paradise Street. The building itself is a few hundred meters down the road on the right hand side (opposite a block of flats called Swan Court).

The building is only a few years old meaning all rooms and facilities are modern and purpose built (once again ask other MCR members about Cambridge Terrace). The majority of the rooms are of the same size and layout (with a few exceptions), and several have small balconies. All the rooms are en suite with showers that have received only words of praise from previous inhabitants.

There is a main kitchen on the ground floor with ovens, hobs, two large fridges and a large freezer. There are also smaller kitchenettes on each floor with small fridges and cupboards. All the kitchen areas have kettles, toasters and microwaves. The main kitchen is off from the Common room, which is a large room with dining tables, sofas and a TV. This area is for residents to socialise with each other, hang out and relax. The common room leads through to a patio area outside with benches. This patio area outside the common room is the only area within the Paradise complex where smoking is permitted (smoking inside the building or in other outside areas, including balconies, is against College rules).

There is a bike lock up area within the complex, just remember to take your bike through the large wooden door leading directly to the bike racks rather than taking it through the building.

We would like to emphasise the series of improvements made to Paradise Street accommodation facilities throughout this summer. The ground floor kitchen is being refurbished to provide additional cupboard space and more cooking facilities. In addition to this, there will be two new kitchens with ovens and seating areas upstairs. Tables and chairs will be put into the new kitchens. I am also trying to get new carpet for all the bedrooms in Paradise Street as the carpet is worn out.

WELFARE HEALTH AND MEDICAL EMERGENCIES



St Peter's has an extensive network of welfare officers that includes the MCR Vice-President, the Junior Welfare Officer, and the Tutor for Welfare (Mark Moloney). There is also a trained panel of peer supporters in college. They are generally undergraduates who have undergone a peer support training program. They are people you can talk to when you need to discuss both minor and major problems. The peer support team is displayed in the lodge: they run "surgeries" at set times but feel free to approach them informally at any time. They can always point you in the right direction. You will also be assigned a College Advisor when you arrive, usually an academic whom you may also contact if you need help of any kind. Along with the Tutor for Graduates, your College Advisor is your first port of call for any problems or queries relating to the interactions between your College and your faculty or department, including problems with your supervisor or administrative problems, so it is well worth getting to know them when you first get to St Peter's.

For medical issues, there is a College Nurse who keeps regular hours during term-time in Staircase IV room 3. Her hours are listed on her door or in the Porters' Lodge. Alternatively, you can contact Dr Judith Bogdanor at The Jericho Health Centre on Walton Street (just past the Phoenix Cinema on the same side of the street) or by phone, 01865 311234. They provide St Peter's students with complete and confidential health care. It is essential that you register with the National Health Service through the Jericho Health Centre or during the Fresher's Week in College. You will then be assigned a GP (General Practitioner – everyone in the UK has a GP as his/her initial medical consultant). For those of you who may be registered with GPs elsewhere in the country it is very important to change this so that you are registered in Oxford. Usually registration forms are either sent out by mail before arrival or handed out during Freshers' Week. **Registration does not happen automatically** – you need to fill in these forms. A doctor is available by appointment from 8.30 am to 5.30 pm Mondays to Fridays, and also evenings and nights for emergencies.

If you ever need emergency treatment, the nearest Accident and Emergency ward is at the John Radcliffe Hospital, a bit out from the city centre. There is a frequent bus service there, or you can go by cab. Alternatively, in a life threatening emergency **999 is the emergency service telephone number**. This is also the number for **fire and police** emergency dispatch.

MAIL

While you are here you will have a 'pigeon' hole at College where you will receive both internal (University-wide) and external mail. The address is: St Peter's College, New Inn Hall Street, Oxford, OX1 2DL. If you are living in College accommodation this will be your address for official purposes, including receipt of mail, even if you are in an annexe away from the main site (eg. Paradise Street). Internal mail can be sent for free by the Porters – often a convenient way to contact your faculty or to chase up a less than computer-savvy supervisor.



PAYING BILLS

Your bills ('battels' in Oxford speak) will be sent to you by email from the Finance Department. Depending on your financial arrangements the bill varies, but it will generally include rent, if you are in College accommodation, College and University tuition fees. Tuition fees must be paid by the end of week 1 of Michaelmas term (15 October 2010). Other charges must be paid by the end of week 2 of each term. Please be aware of these deadlines as failure to pay your battels by the corresponding dates will attract surcharges. The Finance Officer, Mrs Melinda Mattu (melinda.mattu@spc.ox.ac.uk) can answer any queries about fees and charges.



MEALS

St Peter's college hall has experienced many positive changes in the past few years which all amounted to a very decent standard of food catering and one that is envied by other Oxford colleges. During term time, the hall serves three meals a day during the week (breakfast, lunch and dinner) and two on weekends (brunch and dinner). On top of that come two Formal Hall dinners every week, served on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Those represent the essential Oxford experience - candlelight, served food, smart dresses with and plenty of wine. Graduates meet in the MCR before going to Formal Hall. You have to be in Hall by 7.30, when the grace is said and you can no longer enter. Thursday's Formal Hall is the best in terms of food, and the MCR provides wine to go with it. Every Tuesday, graduate students are invited to dine with the fellows at the High table, where they take their dinner. You may attend pre-dinner drinks around 7pm in the Senior Common Room (SCR, the fellows and tutors equivalent of the MCR). People are expected to dress up for formal halls – a blouse and dress pants or nice skirt for the girls and usually a suit for the guys. You must wear your gown and it will be frowned upon if wear trainers and jeans.



There are extra meals organised, such as Guest nights, Christmas Dinner, Burn's night and others. Once a term, the MCR organises what is known as a 'Guest Night' – even better than a formal hall, these showcase the best the college has to offer, with a champagne reception, a superior 3 course meal and black-tie dress code, followed by a party in the MCR, all for less than the cost of an average meal out in Oxford. Guest Night is the main social event of the term, with a commemorative photo taken at each Michaelmas (autumn) Guest Night. As the name suggests, you can invite guests, and show them the highlife, MCR-style. Guest Night will cost you and your guests around £15-£18 and is booked and charged through Upay (see below).

An internet-based charging system has been put in place in the past few years. You will set up an internet account with Upay.co.uk that you will top up from a bank account. The Upay server is linked to your Bod card which then holds your credit. You'll swipe that card to pay for food in the hall. It is essential to register within Upay, with the links provided by the college, otherwise it might be difficult for you to attend most of the dining events in college. The food is charged on a pay-per-item basis and the prices are reasonable. An average price of lunch will be £2.50-£3.0 and dinner can total up to £4, depending on whether you like deserts (those are expensive). Formal halls currently cost £6 and you can bring in guests for around the same. Formal halls and all other extra dinners are booked through Upay a few days in advance.



The hall provides several meat and vegetarian mains for lunch and dinner, while breakfast comes in continental form, and caters to both. Any extra dietary requirements should be communicated and will most likely be included in the menu. Hall times are listed below:

	Breakfast	Brunch	Lunch	Dinner*
Monday-Friday	7.30-8.30	-	12.00-1.30	5.30-7.00
Saturday	-	11.30-1.00	-	5.30-7.00
Sunday	-	11.30-12.30	-	5.30-7.00

*on Formal Hall evenings, Tuesdays and Thursdays, normal dinner is between 5.30 pm and 6.30 pm. Formal Dinner starts at 7.30 pm prompt.



Hall times may change through the year and are always advertised via email to each member of the college. The Managing Chef, Colin Purvis, will e-mail out weekly menus at the beginning of the week. You will also be able to find the menus on the college website, under Catering (you will need to sign in to do this).

Outside term time (or when you feel you need a break from Hall food) you might consider cooking for yourself. Your college accommodation has access to a main kitchen and several smaller kitchenettes. Food shopping is convenient wherever you are. The two largest supermarkets are Sainsburys and Tesco. Sainsburys is close to St Peter's in the Westgate Shopping Centre (follow New Inn Hall Street south to Bonn Square – Westgate Shopping Centre is opposite). For those in East Oxford, there is a giant Tesco's on Cowley Road. Oxford is not particularly cheap for food shopping (although the gourmets amongst you will be pleased with the deli selections in the Covered Market). This has meant that graduates usually find, in term time, that college meals are cheap, convenient, and a good way of meeting up with fellow MCR members. Cooking in the MCR is also possible, and welcomed at any time.

ACADEMIC DRESS

Oxford is very keen on dressing up. Full academic dress is known as 'sub fusc'. It's both confusing and boring, but you'll have to wear it at some point. It involves:

- For men: white bow tie, white shirt, dark suit (dark blue and grey OK, but not brown), black socks and shoes. (For a visual representation, Ramin is demonstrating full academic dress for blokes on the left-hand side).
- For women: white blouse, black ribbon, black trousers or skirt and black stockings and shoes. (Or is providing us with a fine example of female academic dress for graduate students on the lower left-hand side)
- For both: gown and mortar board (square, flat cap) or optionally for women, a soft cap. Most of these items (suits, socks, shoes etc) you may already have. Bring them with you. As a graduate, your graduate gown from your previous university (if you have one) is acceptable. If you do not have any/all of these items you will need to buy them from traders in Oxford. Be prepared for some fairly steep prices – a new gown and mortar board may easily cost you in excess of £55. Limited secondhand stock may be available. The staff in the shops will probably be much more knowledgeable than you about the ridiculous complexities of this system, so don't be afraid to ask. The best places to buy all this stuff is probably Ede and Ravenscroft or Shepherd and Woodward, pretentious shops on the High Street. Otherwise you may decide to rent or borrow the items. You will need 'sub fusc' for at least three university occasions: matriculation, examinations, and graduation. The college will send you information about matriculation, the ceremony at which you officially enter the university as a full-time student. You will be expected to show up at the dining hall and the Dean of Degrees will call your name. You will then process over to the Sheldonian Theatre. On this procession you will be photographed by approximately 9,623 tourists. Inside the Sheldonian you'll sit with all the other new students and listen to people in funny robes speak in Latin and a short speech from the Vice-Chancellor (the person



carrying a big, silver stick) welcoming to you to Oxford. It's a traditional ceremony and you will certainly feel very "Oxford" after it's over. And, of course, we will have a party for you in the MCR. There are a limited number of gowns for hire in the Lodge and the MCR – very useful if you've forgotten yours for Formal or High Table. It's not necessary to wear the full regalia for these meals, though – simply put a gown (it doesn't really matter which type) over some nice smart clothes.

MCR

WHAT IS THE MCR?

The MCR is a room located on the ground floor of a building called the Pastry School, in the South- West corner of the College site. Recently refurbished and freshly re-painted with a "sleek, modern" design worthy of the trendiest nightspots, it boasts stylish sofas, a three-piece modern painting, a brand-new set of speakers, a kitchen with oven, fridge freezer, microwave and nespresso machine, and a comfy television room with a TV, DVD, digibox and VCR. The Herald Tribune, The Times and The Guardian are delivered to the MCR every day, the Economist, Newsweek and Time are delivered weekly, and National Geographic, Le Monde, Private Eye, the New Statesman and the New Scientist monthly or bimonthly.

People go to the MCR to read, make a cup of tea or coffee, chat with friends, take a well-earned break from work, sing, dance, roll around on the floor, or wait for the dining hall to open for dinner (some crazy fools actually work in there, too!). The MCR's facilities are open to members 24 hours a day, but if you're there in the early morning or late at night, you may have to unlock it, and we ask that you lock up when you leave. Within the kitchen there is a closet called The Honesty Cupboard, behind the kitchen door. Inside there is beer and wine. There is a list on the shelf and you are expected to sign out every drink that you take from The Honesty Cupboard. Please sign out what you drink or else the MCR committee will be forced to close down this cupboard after Michaelmas term. You will be charged a modest amount for the drinks you sign out, in the form of a bill from the Treasurer at the end of each term. If drinks are running out, please inform the MCR committee, or else you and the other MCR members will be left with no cheap drinks to have when you please.

As an MCR member you are free to make use of it and its facilities. However, if you want to organise something with more than 5 people, please write it down on the dedicated sheet outside the TV room. This will help us all when organising, say cooking events with friends. Also please be aware of the events in the Social Calendar scheduled to take place in the MCR. Home legs of Exchange dinners will take place in the MCR and it's really unpleasant if someone starts frying onions just before. On days when Guest Night is taking place all furniture will be removed from the MCR in order to make room for the after dinner party. Of course, you will be reminded of this closer to the date.

The MCR is a common room and it must be kept clean and ordered by all the MCR members. It is everyone's responsibility to leave things in a way such that the scouts can properly clean the room. This is particularly applicable to the kitchen and the fridge, where all food must be labelled with your name; anything unlabelled is common. Food that is out of date is liable to be thrown to the bin. Moreover, if the MCR is repeatedly found in a messy state, it will be locked up by college and we don't want that...do we?



The TV room

The TV room is a mecca for the indolent. The conversation is always sparkling, The Simpsons is always on, and our exciting digibox allows us to browse shopping channels, travel shows, and racy pop videos. If you want to make sure no one else is using the TV room when you want to watch a particular programme, just sign your name and the programme time on the sheet outside the door. If you want to gather here with external friends just send an email to the President. There is a bulletin board outside the TV room. Here, people post announcements, notices and such like. This is also where signup sheets for some MCR events, can be found. Inside the TV room and just outside the MCR you will notice a number of lockers. These are available on a first-come-first-served basis, and go pretty quickly, so grab one and put a padlock on it if you think it will come in handy. Before you put a lock on, please give the Treasurer the locker number so that we can keep track of who's using the lockers. Please let the Treasurer know as soon as you no longer need your locker as the demand for lockers, especially the ones inside the MCR, is high.

THE MCR COMMITTEE

In charge of running the MCR is the MCR Committee. They were elected last year, so as a new member you're stuck with them – but we're sure you'll love us! The MCR Committee consists of five members of the MCR: President, Vice-President, Social Secretary, Treasurer and Secretary. All posts bar Secretary are elected in Trinity term (spring term). The Secretary is elected in Michaelmas term (autumn term). The Secretary is usually a fresher. If you think you could be interested in running for Secretary, get in touch with the President for more information. We also elect several 'reps' (representatives), including an IT rep, 4th years' rep, DPhil rep, international students rep, welfare rep, Oxford Union rep, etc, all of whom are traditionally freshers, and all of whom are elected in Michaelmas Term.



President – Andrew Elliott

His job: overseeing MCR affairs, liaising with College, chairing meetings of the Committee and General Meetings of MCR Members.

Background: Andrew came all the way from Newcastle to do his Mathematics undergraduate degree at Imperial College London. Having successfully finished that, he embarked last year on a 4-year Systems Biology DPhil. Andrew lives in Staircase Four in the back quad of Peter's. If you have any questions about the MCR, college, or Oxford in general, feel free to ask Andrew and he'll do his best to help

Contact: Mobile - 07891574751



Vice-president – Andrea Szöllössi

Her job: ensuring the welfare of MCR members and filling in for the president. Andrea is Andrew's next door neighbour in Staircase Four.

Background: Of Romanian and Hungarian descent (some German in there too), Andrea started her graduate degree in Chemical Biology two years ago and is now going to be around for another 4 as she is starting the same program Andrew is doing. Andrea loves research and would go into the lab at odd hours. You will most probably find her in the MCR having coffee at least three times a day or you might bump into her at gigs (she claims to be the no.1 fan of the Oxford band Message to Bears)

Contact: Mobile – 07831380460



Treasurer –Marina Demetriades

Her job: keeping the MCR accounts and stocking the Honesty Cupboard. Marina lives in Castle Mill University accommodation, just behind the train station. Questions regarding money, College tuition and Honesty Cupboard can be directed to her.

Background: Marina is from Cyprus and she has started her DPhil in Organic Chemistry at Oxford in Michaelmas Term 2009. She used to practice ballet so she is now insanely good at playing Twister. She is a constant presence at MCR events taking place after 7 pm, always smiling and joyful.

Contact: marina.demetriades@spc.ox.ac.uk Mobile - 07900441908



Social Secretary – Melania Zauri

Her job: drawing up an exciting social schedule for each term, running all social events, making sure MCR members know the best Oxford life has to offer! Melania lives in private accommodation, in St Clement’s area Feel free to approach her with any sort of questions you might have; if she cannot answer them, she will direct you to someone more likely to do so.

Background: Melania is from Italy and she has started her DPhil in Clinical Medicine at Oxford in Michaelmas Term 2010. She enjoys cooking, listening to classic music and cycling in Oxford. She loves to take part in college events as a way to meet people and to learn about different background.

Contact: melania.zauri@spc.ox.ac.uk Mobile – 07733451082



Secretary – To be filled!

The job: writing minutes for MCR and Committee meetings, helping with producing written material for the Committee, generally ‘helping out’ (however much or little that might entail). Sounds amazing, doesn’t it!? I bet there are loads of you who want to be our new Secretary!! Right? . . .

If you have any questions about the MCR, St Peter’s College or the University, please contact us. If you have a problem with anything – from your accommodation to your course or to the name of the fourth (or even the fifth) Marx brother, please contact us. If you have anything you would like to be done differently in the MCR, please contact us. In general, please **contact us!**

There are regular meetings of the MCR every term (so-called General Meetings) where you can bring things up in a formal environment. If you would like to proposed something for one of these meetings, please note that a written proposal must be sent to the President (email is fine) at least 24 hours in advance. But we are always available for informal chats.

THE MCR COMPUTER ROOM

The computer room is located on the ground floor of Staircase 4 (it’s the pretty staircase located in Mulberry Quad, between the Dorfman Centre and the JCR). As you enter here the first doors on the right and left are both the computer rooms. Inside you will find computers which are all equipped with office software and internet tools, and access to the Oxford libraries platform and electronic resources. Like the library, the MCR Computer Room is open 24 hours a day. For use of any of these computers, you will need to get a password and a user name. Registration details will come from the IT Officer during



Freshers' Week. Around the same time you will receive a letter from the Oxford University Computing Service with details about how to activate and use your Oxford email account. Your email address will be something like firstname.lastname@spc.ox.ac.uk Please note that your user ID is NOT the same as your OSS number (both of which you'll receive soon, just to make things confusing). Your user ID will be 'spet' + four numbers. Your OSS (Online Student Services) number is just five numbers. Once the registration process is complete, you should automatically be added to the MCR mailing list. If however you find that you do not receive the MCR e-mails, please contact the IT Office to sort this out (you could e-mail them at IT-support@spc.ox.ac.uk but popping into the IT office often solves your problem faster). The Computer Room also has a printer and the photocopier is located in the library. You will receive more information about using the photocopier during the library induction in Freshers' Week). If you have any problems with these facilities let Martin Hoare, the IT officer, know either by email (IT-support@spc.ox.ac.uk) or via a bit of paper in the folder outside his room on the approach to the library. However, the MCR does have an amount of money allocated for printing and you can contact the MCR treasurer marina.demetriades@spc.ox.ac.uk to find out how much printing the MCR will subsidise.



COLLEGE PARENTS

Each and every one of you is going to be assigned a college parent. College parents are experienced, responsible graduates who are doing a subject at least vaguely related to yours, whose job it is to help you settle in. They will contact you (hopefully, if Melania pesters them enough) before you arrive to Oxford and will be one of the first people you meet here. College parenthood has become a tradition in College and you will soon come to realise that the whole MCR is related!

FRESHER'S WEEK

Freshers' Week kicks off MCR Events at St Peter's. It occurs in the week before the academic term starts (0th Week). Arrive by Sunday, 2nd October to avoid missing anything. We intend to hold an introductory event on this Sunday for you to meet the committee and the rest of the MCR. Do try to come to this event as hopefully it will explain a few aspects regarding the week ahead before it all hits you. Also you'll get to meet your fellow graduates and have a few (or many) drinks on the MCR.



The aim of Freshers' Week is to introduce you to St Peter's, Oxford and your fellow college members. Freshers' Week is also crammed with parties, ranging from mellow mingling to dancing on tables. Freshers' Week is a memorable experience, to say the least, so make sure you enjoy yourself as much as possible before work starts to pile up. A detailed schedule of Freshers' Week events will be available prior to the start of the week. It will both be posted on the MCR notice board and sent to your pigeonholes.

SOCIAL STUFF

Finally, something about fun. Believe it or not, 'fun' has broken out on several occasions in Oxford. Here are the best places to find it:

Formal Halls Mentioned above under 'Meals', Formal Halls are an important part of the MCR bonding process. They are an excellent excuse to have a good meal with wine accompanied by friends from college, your course or lab



High Table On Tuesdays, ten members of the MCR is invited to dine with the SCR (Senior Common Room, the tutors and professors affiliated to College. They are called 'Fellows'). This is a rare thing for the MCR as in most colleges (especially the very traditionalist ones) MCR members are not allowed to sit at High Table (High Table is where Fellows eat in Hall

which is basically a normal table placed some 20 cm higher than all the other 'common' tables) unless they are the personal guest of an SCR member. This is a good opportunity to get to know the Fellows and work on your dinner conversation skills. It is also an opportunity to get better wine.

Guest Nights The next step up from Formal Halls, Guest Nights are the central social event of each term. MCR members are given the opportunity to invite guests to dine in college in what starts off as a champagne reception followed by a formal black tie dinner, occasionally evolves into a mildly inebriated speech from the President (if you throw food at her she'll probably shut up), and always ends up as a big, drunken party in the MCR. Don't miss out on Guest Nights. The food is superior to formal hall – showcasing the very best that the College can offer (not saying much!), at a very reasonable rate (especially for Oxford!) – and it is the one chance during term for the whole MCR to fill the Hall. A commemorative photo is taken by a professional type at the Michaelmas (autumn) Guest Night – a memory you can treasure forever!



BOPs For some unknown reason, parties in Oxford are still known as BOPs, as if it is still the 1950s, always in capital letters. Don't let that put you off. The MCR has a number organised each term (the Freshers' Week BOP is NOT to be missed!). BOPs are a great opportunity to mingle with MCR members in a relaxed fashion. BOPs often have a theme that participants take very seriously and dress accordingly (see left). If you're in the mood, you can also dance to a selection of choice tunes. As you may be aware, the sight of a dancing graduate is one of nature's finest spectacles.

Balls St Peter's runs a bi-annual ball. The next one will be Trinity (spring) Term 2013. Graduates often also get together to attend Balls at other Colleges. Some of these are very grand and exciting, and are held by many to be an essential part of the Oxford experience. For others, it's any old excuse to dress up in a posh frock and leap around a bouncy castle.

Pub Nights Once in a while your social sec will send round an e-mail inviting the whole MCR to the pub after a formal hall, giving directions. Oxford has a large variety of pubs, ranging from the Bear, which dates back to the 13th century, to the labyrinthine Turf, to the Gloucester Arms, home of heavy metal, bikers, and pickled eggs.

Graduate seminars MCR lectures occur throughout term time. Although this event sounds more 'serious', don't let this deceive you into thinking it is any less fun. Oh no. Wine (and juice) is always provided to stimulate the intellect, and we always have a great time listening to guest speakers from the outside world and sometimes MCR members who are doing interesting courses.

Master's Brunch Every Sunday of the term, Mr Damazer hosts a brunch in Canal House. The purpose of this brunch is that the Master gets to meet each member of the College individually and each new member is invited to attend. The event is free to attend and it is an excellent occasion to talk to the Master and to meet other college members in an informal environment.

Other events The traditional barbeque held in Trinity (spring) Term is always a good excuse to stuff yourself with wholesome food. Also, look forward to wine tastings, international dessert nights, the dangerous Burn's night and many, many more events. Melania will also tend to email updates on events to the MCR mail list. Impromptu events may pop up during the term, so keep your eye on the MCR notice board and your emails. Please note that for some events (including Guest night and formal hall) a limited number of places are available. To avoid disappointment, sign up for events early. Don't forget that the Porters are a great source of knowledge about College and beyond. See the section on 'Porters'.



HELP!

Help! I need somebody! Help! Not just anybody!



The MCR Committee members are always available to answer questions. If we don't know the answer, we will be able to point you in the direction of someone who does. For accommodation issues, ask the Porters in the first instance. They may refer you to Jean Wright, the Home Bursar. If you have accommodation queries before arriving, contact Jean Wright directly (contact details at the end). Also, please remember the College welfare advisors – the MCR Vice-President, the Junior Welfare Advisor, the Tutor for Welfare and your own assigned College Advisor. If you have a health issue see the section on 'Welfare, Health and Medical Emergencies'. For administrative issues (paying of battels etc) you should approach the bursary, in Besse Staircase. For financial issues (paying of battels etc) you should approach the Finance Office in Staircase III. The Student Finance Officer is always happy to see students who need financial management advice (melinda.mattu@spc.ox.ac.uk).

USEFUL CONTACTS

MCR Committee Members

President	Andrew Elliott – 07891574751
Vice-President	Andrea Szöllössi – 07831380460
Treasurer	Marina Demetriades – 07900441908
Social Secretary	Melania Zauri - 07733451082

College Welfare Officers

Tutor for Welfare	Mark Moloney – 78892
Senior Welfare Officer	Jennifer Thompson
Junior Welfare Officer	Matthew Thompson – 78944 or 07818895459
Jericho Health Centre	Dr. Bogdanor and partners –(9)311234

College Administration

Junior Dean	Jake Yorke – 78930 or 0777 553 2299
Assistant Junior Dean	Natasha Simonsen – 077 4897 8318
Porter's Lodge	Paul Irons – 78900/ 78902
Bursar	Richard Gordon – 78947
Student Finance Officer	Melinda Mattu – 78936
College Office	Martin Brown – 78863
College Registrar	Olivia Henley – 78864
Accommodation Manager	David Launchbury – 78872
Home Bursar	Jean Wright – 14989
Tutor for Graduates	Geoff Nicholls – 78938
IT Office	Martin Hoare and Matthew Brock – 78942

• 5-digit telephone numbers are university internal numbers. If you are phoning from the UK, use the prefix 01865 2. If you are phoning from abroad, use the prefix +44 1865 2.

• Email addresses for anyone in St Peter's conclude with @spc.ox.ac.uk