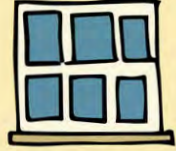
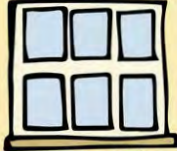
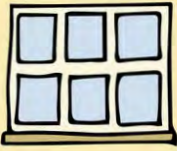
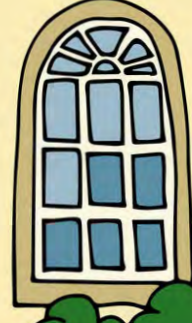
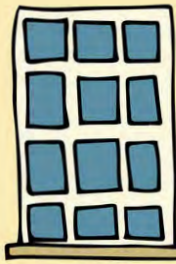
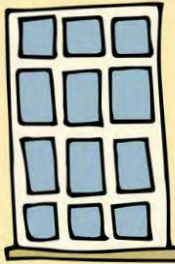
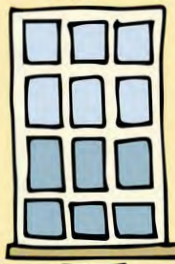
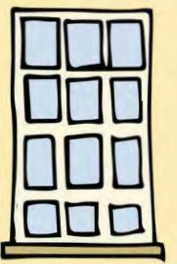
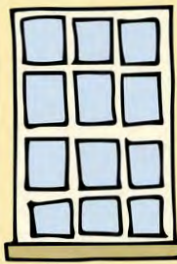


St Peter's College



Oxford



Alternative
Prospectus

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Welcome!

Hello, welcome, and congratulations for stumbling across the St Peter's College Alternative Prospectus. I imagine that your perception of an Oxford college up to this point may be a bit dependent on Harry Potter - but not all of Oxford feels as intimidating as this. St Peter's, in particular, is an example of Oxford college that's less old and traditional. St Peter's (SPC or Peter's for short) is centrally located, right next to shops and libraries, has a thriving bar that students from other colleges attempt to crash every weekend, and is both friendly and progressive.

The goal of this prospectus is not to give you information about the application process, accommodation, or the subjects we offer – you can find this on the St Peter's website – but instead to give a real insight into what life at St Peter's is like, written by students for students. Having this information should help you make an informed decision when thinking about applying.

Hopefully, we can demystify our college by giving you a look into what makes day-to-day life fun and enjoyable. This looks different for everyone, but the welcoming atmosphere of Peter's truly is a place for all, regardless of background, ethnicity, sexuality, schooling, anything.

Tour around College

To give you a feel for Peter's, I will take you on a virtual tour. If you get the opportunity, try and visit in person, such as on an Open Day - but I'll try my best to give you a feel for the place. I would also recommend looking through our Instagram page (@spc_oxford) for a day to day insight into life at SPC. Before telling you about Peter's itself, it's worth appreciating its central location. It's just next to the Westgate shopping centre, and is seconds away from the High Street and Cornmarket Street.

This means that you are never far from any shop or cafe for a coffee (and/or procrastination break) - it is also super near to other colleges, bars and clubs, and the main libraries. The bus station is literally next door, and the train station a five minute walk away.

Porters' Lodge -



Step through the magic, dark green door and you will be greeted with the Porters' Lodge, which we tend to shorten to 'Plodge'. On your left you will see a wall of letterbox looking shelves - each student has one and it's where packages you order get delivered to. It's also quite common to find little notes from your friends here. The main feature of Plodge, however, is our Porters - they keep a kindly eye on everyone coming in and out, and are always a friendly face. They are also there if you need any emergency help or access to welfare, both day and night.

Linton Quad and Library -

Walk out of Plodge and you're greeted with a beautiful lawn in our first 'quad', known as 'Linton Quad'. A 'quad' is basically a patch of grass. If you learn one thing from this prospectus, it will be that Oxford loves a weird word for a normal-ish concept. In this quad you are guaranteed to bump into someone you know and stand there for a good ten minutes catching up. When you're in Linton Quad, you have the College Library tucked away on your right, offices and student accommodation directly in front of you, and the Chapel to your left.



The St Peter's Library is a hidden gem. Each college has a library, but there's something about ours that feels so homely and comfortable. It has three floors, and many of the books you may need for your degree. Crucially, it's open 24/7, so you can work whatever hours suit you. Something about sitting on a table with a few of your friends, gossiping rather than actually writing the essay that is due the next day, among the tall ceilings and thousands of books brings me so much joy. Oxford has so many beautiful libraries that are definitely worth visiting - especially if you have got to the point where you can no longer avoid procrastinating - but Peter's Library is one of my favourite parts of college.

Hall and Chavasse -

On the opposite side of Linton, as I mentioned, there is the College Chapel. Another beautiful building from which you can hear regular choir rehearsals, services and concerts. It is also regularly booked out for shows, meetings and talks. Occasionally (and I'm assuming, rarely) weddings too - seeing a bride and groom walk through college last year was a stand out moment for me, I can't lie.

Round the corner from the College Chapel and you come across the Dining Hall. The Dining Hall is a good option for a cheap meat-based, vegetarian or vegan meal, whether you live on-site as a First-Year or you've spent the afternoon in the library as a second-year and want to eat before heading home. Twice a week, you can pay a little more to dress up fancy and have 'Formal Hall'. Formal Hall is a really nice treat, especially at Christmas, when it's decorated with pretty lights and Christmas trees as term is ending.

Just outside Hall is more Chavasse Quad with more student accommodation - New Building for First-Years and some Third-Year accommodation, with our famously eccentric platform beds! You will notice, however, that I have used the word 'quad' again. This second beautiful lawn comes into its own in summer as you can sit on it, sunbathe (or get sunburnt), read (or not), and play games. This quad is a really nice social space in summer where it stays light in the evenings and is warm enough to sit outside and chat for hours.



JCR and Accommodation -



Back into Linton through the JCR tunnel. The JCR, opposite the first-year accommodation Matthews Building, is our common room. The term 'JCR' in Oxford language actually refers to two different things - the second of which I will explain in the next section - but here it is a physical room and a social space. It has a vending machine, seating, a TV, pool and football tables. It also links to the JCR kitchen which is accessible to all Peter's students.



Next to the JCR, surrounded by more accommodation, offices for college staff like the Dean for Welfare, and Mulberry Quad, is the infamous College Bar. The SPC Bar is genuinely the best of all Oxford college bars. I have so much to say about the bar that I will leave it to a later section, but it definitely lives up to its reputation.



That's it for our basic tour of St Peter's. As I said before, I would recommend visiting in person if you can on an Open Day or looking on our Youtube channel for a better feel for the place and its homely environment.

JCR Profiles -

So, the term 'JCR' refers to two things in Oxford language. It refers to the physical space of the common room, and the undergraduate body of St Peter's. We both have and are a JCR at the same time. This might sound confusing, but somehow it makes sense in practise. In order to represent the JCR, we have a JCR committee. This is a committee of mainly Second-Year students who are elected, each with a specific role, who represent different groups in college and raise any issues with the wider college community. For example, we have a LGBTQ+ Rep, several Welfare Reps, an Alumni Rep and three BAME Reps. I've included some profiles of members of the current JCR committee (2021 - 2022) so you can hear from some SPC students and understand their role on the JCR a lot better.

The committee is really important because it means that there is constantly a bridge of communication between St Peter's staff and students. Since there are roles that cover pretty much every aspect of college life, problems are very quickly addressed and any concerns you may have can be voiced. For example, our LGBTQ+ Rep provides support and helps facilitate a sense of community for LGBTQ+ students at Peter's, whilst attending Equality and Diversity Meetings and running LGBTQ+ events. It is also super fun to run for and hold a position for yourself, particularly if you are passionate about something or wish to create change.

Safaa, BAME Rep



Hi guys! I'm Safaa (she/her), I study Philosophy and French and I am one of your BAME Reps. As a BAME Rep my role is to make sure Peter's is a welcoming place for everyone and to help minority students feel like they always have someone to turn to at Oxford. I know first-hand about the challenges faced by BAME students, so I'm here to provide a friendly face around college and am always up for a chat (generally up for anything that means I can procrastinate work). My favourite thing about Peter's is that you can genuinely go and chat to anyone, everyone here is so friendly it's just overall great vibes. I know that starting university, especially Oxford, can sometimes seem really daunting. P.S - none of us are as put together as we look.

Sophie, Access and Outreach Rep

Hey everyone! I'm Sophie (she/her) and I study Theology and Religion. I am the Access and Outreach Rep and the cringey voice behind this Alternative Prospectus. I promise I'm funnier in person, or I like to think I am. As Access Rep, my job is to work with prospective students and make it clear that anyone can apply here, regardless of their background. This ranges from running the Humans of SPC (@humansofspc) Instagram, to running interview workshops for Year 13 students, to touring potential applicants around college and running summer schools. I also work closely with the Socio-Economic rep to support state school and low-income students at Peter's. My favourite thing about Peter's is definitely the people - having a small, friendly community is so reassuring when you're in a place that at first feels intimidating. I also love the College Bar and library, and can be found at either throughout the week, but realistically in the bar when I should be in the library!



(Yes, it can get confusing that we are both called Sophie!)

Sophie, Disabilities Rep

Hi! I'm Sophie (she/her), I'm an Economics and Management student and I am also the Disabilities Rep for the college! Being Disabilities Rep means people come to me for help in coping with a disability at St. Peter's. It ranges from applying for government funding, talking to tutors about extensions and allowances in tutorials, or helping people get the testing they need for diagnoses. The attitude towards disabilities in Oxford is really positive. People are often open to conversations about struggles and ways make their days a bit easier, and the support from college and friends has been overwhelming. At Peter's, we also have a really supportive network of Peer Supporters and Welfare Officers, employed by the college, any of whom are always there to listen or help with problems - academic or otherwise!

I've also recently undergone training to be a part of the first Oxford Disability Peer Supporters team, which aims to provide that same level of support but with a disability focus. I know how hard it can be to face academic work and struggle with a disability, which at times feels isolating as friends may not be able to relate to your personal struggles. I've felt so at home in asking friends and college for help for this, and I'm hoping with the new disabilities peer support this will grow.



College Bar -



Spend one second in the city of Oxford and you're bound to hear whispers of the legacy of the St Peter's Bar. I would be lying if I said that it didn't live up to its reputation - so much so, that I've decided to write a whole section about it.

The bar is open every day of the week except Sunday, from 8pm onwards. The walls are covered with old group photos and St Peter's road signs, and there's always good music playing - Arctic Monkeys and Blossoms feature regularly. Comfy seats around the sides of the bar make it perfect for a quiet Tuesday night catch up with friends, but it's a lot louder on a Wednesday or Friday with cheap drinks that are great before a night out. When I say drinks are cheap, they are cheap and it makes going anywhere else in Oxford seem so expensive in comparison!



Each Oxford college has a signature drink, and ours is known as the 'Crosskey'. This costs £6, and has 5 or 6 shots of alcohol with a mixer and comes in a range of lethal flavours, such as mango, summer fruits, orange, and apple. There are also the typical drinks you'd find at any pub.



Though it is a space in college for drinking alcohol, you can easily go to the bar if you don't drink or don't fancy drinking that night and still have a great time talking to everyone because it functions as such a good social space.

The bar embodies the friendliness of life at St Peter's because you know everyone there and it is student run. Both the position of Bar Manager and Bar Treasurer are held by Second-Year students, and you can train to work on the bar for extra money during term time. Having this fun and entirely student run space makes it feel both welcoming and safe. Rosie Crawford, who went to Peter's and runs a YouTube channel that documented her experience at Oxford, was Bar Treasurer in her second year and wrote, 'In my second-year I became the Bar's Treasurer, giving me some proper managerial experience and a position on the JCR Committee to add to my CV. This provided me with a stable income throughout term time during my degree, helping me to afford rent and social events'.

Bops!

As the bar functions as such a social space, it is also where bops are hosted as well as the JCR. The Oxford term 'bop' - to add to your dictionary of unnecessarily complicated Oxford language - stands for 'big organised party' (I really don't know why we can't just use the word 'party' like everyone else in the world, but here we are) for everyone in college. These always have a theme - realistically, this means raiding your friend's wardrobe an hour before the bop starts to find something that vaguely fits the theme, just to abandon the defining parts of your costume halfway through the night. They are hosted both in college and out of college, sometimes joint with other colleges. I find that bops really solidify the sense of the college community, particularly the somewhat cult-like way in which they end, with everyone singing 'Angels' by Robbie Williams. Again, I don't know why we do this or if mentioning Robbie Williams would actually convince anyone to apply to St Peter's but I thought it was worth a mention. Some of my best memories this term have been from bops.



Halloween bop!

World Book Day bop!



Extra-curriculars -

Despite the stereotype that every Oxford student spends all day working, this really isn't true - check out the Day in the Life profiles by students Dipto and Archie towards the end of the prospectus for an insight into the day to day. At Oxford, there are plenty of extra-curriculars to get involved with, both on a wider University level, and smaller ones at St Peter's, from sport, to arts, to writing, to music.

You don't have to be particularly amazing at something to join it, either. College sport, for example, is fun, low commitment, and a good opportunity for social events and meeting people across all year groups. If sport isn't your thing, you can contribute to the new St Peter's arts magazine, MiSC (@misc_spc on Instagram) - which publishes student artwork, poetry, personal essays, and photography. These are just two examples of extracurriculars you can take up outside of your degree. Hear from Beth, the President of St Peter's Music Society (2021-22) on the next page, for a little more detail about the amazing music scene at St Peter's, just one of the many extra-curriculars we have on offer.

Student Produced
Poetry anthology!



Costume for the College's
annual Garden Play!



Extra-curricular spotlight: Music -



Hi! My name is Fitz (she/they) I'm a second-year Music Student at St Peter's, and one of the co-convenors of the St Peter's College Music Society (SPCMS). This is one of the main ways to get involved in the music scene within the college, as we have weekly concerts every Thursday lunchtime where you can perform anything you like in front of the most supportive audience ever! If you would want to perform in one of these concerts, we have a concert specifically dedicated to allowing anyone, of any level, to perform anything you want! We recently had a very successful orchestral performance of Carnival of the Animals by Saint-Saens, as well as some incredible recitals given by singers and solo instrumentalists. All of these are filmed and put on the SPC YouTube channel for your parents and grandparents to watch you in action!

"The music life at St Peter's is a very busy one and you would be welcomed into it with open arms!" - Fitz

Another college-level music activity is joining the chapel choir, which sings Evensong regularly on

Thursdays and Sundays, with rehearsals beforehand. It is one of the best mixed-voice choirs in Oxford, regularly performing amazing music across the last 400 years. The choir itself is also very tight-knit, it's another smaller family you can become a part of here at St Peter's! If you're looking for somewhere to practise on your own, we have a practice room with a large piano which you can easily book out at the Porter's Lodge for as long as you need.



Memories and Stories -

You've heard a lot from me about life at St Peter's, and the different things you can get involved with. But now you can hear from some more students about their favourite memories of their time at Peter's.

Anna (she/her)

Hey, I'm Anna (she/her), I'm from Sheffield and I study Geography. In my first few weeks at Peter's, I played with the college orchestra as part of a student-led performance of Saint-Saëns' Carnival of the Animals (check it out on YouTube!). I'm not a great musician but as with everything else in college, the orchestra was inclusive to anyone keen to play, and I was made to feel completely welcome. Oxford has its fair share of ridiculously talented people, and Peter's is no exception. Once you get past the initial fear of not being good enough, sitting amongst and learning from such incredible musicians is an absolute treat. The performance was accompanied by poetry readings from Judith, our Master (a bit like a head teacher), so it felt like a broad collaboration of Peterites from across college. We performed in the beautiful Peter's chapel and were supported by friends, staff, and members of the public. This concert stands out as a highlight of my first term and I'm sure there will be one of many opportunities on offer during my time here. But more importantly for me, this experience embodied so much of what makes St Peter's special. There was a real sense of togetherness, community and warmth, all part of day-to-day life here.



Marcus (he/him)

Hi everyone! I'm Marcus (he/him), a first-year History student at St Peter's, originally from Hampshire. My favourite memory comes from the end of my first week at Oxford, an important rite of passage in your first term in Oxford - matriculation. This is a centuries-old Oxford tradition that's now essentially a formality. The day starts early, with everyone up and dressed in sub-fusc by 8:30.

Sub-fusc (another formal Oxford tradition) is short for 'sub fuscum' (Latin for dark brown, even though everything you wear is either black or white): either a dark suit and bow-tie, or a dark skirt/trousers with a black ribbon. And it's all with the piece de resistance - the gown and mortar board (a weird hat that's square on top). It's not like school uniform - you only wear it for formal occasions - matriculation and exams etc. At formal dinners (optional but very popular), you'll just wear your gown.

Anyway, on matriculation morning, you'll have your photo taken individually (your grandparents will cherish it!) and as a whole year group. We then had (free!) matriculation brunch, followed by going to the Sheldonian Theatre for the main event. Here, the Vice-Chancellor (essentially head of the university), makes a brief speech that gives everyone formal membership of the university. After that it's essentially party mode: many students go punting (another Oxford tradition: being on a boat with someone pushing it along with a pole), prosecco in hand, or hit the city's pubs. The college bar (which you'll presumably have heard about) also did deals for those who had matriculated! It's worth mentioning at this point that drinking at any of these events is not compulsory - there are several non-drinkers in my cohort and they still have a great time! Overall, while the ceremony of matriculation seems a bit pointless, it's a great excuse for everyone to have a really fun time with their new friends! I particularly liked the atmosphere of matriculation, of all the freshers in Oxford dressed up, taking photos and having a great time!



Sophie (she/her)

I'm Sophie (she/her) and I'm a second-year Economics and Management student! One of my favourite memories was last summer in college. We have a green space outside of some of the accommodation blocks and everyone would go and sit on the grass to work and relax in the sun. I felt like such a part of the community and talked to people I hadn't seen in a while and it made me really enjoy everyday I spent in college. Another thing I love about Peter's are Formals. Formal Halls are more formal dining events where you can dress up a bit and enjoy some different food and chat with friends for a while. They soon became one of my favourite things to do in college and are reasonably cheap, with three food courses which makes them even more enjoyable. I have really found that the sense of community and willingness for people to help and support everyone else at St Peter's.

Darcy (she/her)

I'm Darcy (she/her), I'm in third-year and I study Theology and Philosophy. My favourite memory of St Peter's College was the last day of the college garden play. I was really grateful to have directed the college play with Ed and I remember very profoundly all of the actors coming onto the stage and bowing and everyone cheering for them in the Master's Garden. They had done an amazing performance after a really short rehearsal time - they smashed it, and did really really well. I remember really feeling a part of the college community at that point and feeling like we'd been able to create something really special even during lockdown.

Check out the next page for student Day In The Life profiles!

Patrick (he/him)

I'm Patrick (he/him), I'm in third-year and I study History and Politics. For this prospectus, I was asked to recall, for you, the reader, a particularly special memory of my life at college. I must confess that I've let you down - slightly. I racked my brains, and yet could not settle on one specific memory that encapsulated all I would like to say to someone like yourself, who was umming and ahing about whether or not to apply. Was it a match played for the college football team? Was it a formal dinner in Hall? Was it a conversation with a friend as you did your washing together, or walked back from a night out? No, no, no. On further reflection, I realised that my difficulties arose from the fact that the memory which really sticks in my mind as the one I want you to know about, was not tied to any one, specific event or date.

Rather, it was the memory of those moments, dotted across all three years of my time here at St. Peter's, where I realised that I felt at home. For many reasons, Oxford is a difficult place to get used to, especially if you came from a school or a family or a place where people just didn't really come here. Similarly, the college environment can feel odd, at first. However, once you get past a certain point, you'll have found your pals, found your hobby, found your ideas, found your seat in the college library, and will have done all of this without really thinking about it. No matter how hard it may be at first, there'll be a day when you stop, walking out of the college library at sunset, throwing snowballs at your mate on Christ Church Meadow, killing yourself laughing over some breakfast as the sunlight glides through the windows in Hall, when you stop and realise that you are at home. That sense of Oxford as a place you don't know and in which you shouldn't be will have gone without you seeing it leave. Come to St. Peter's, and my bet is that you'll have one of these moments about two days after you arrive.

'Oxford is a difficult Place to get used to.. however, once you get Past a certain Point.. you stop and realise that you are at home' - Patrick



15:30



Dipto

Hey everyone, I'm Dipto (he/him). I'm in second-year and I study Biochemistry. I'm also trained as a Peer Supporter. I didn't initially apply to St Peter's but was pooled here during interviews. Pooling is a part of the application process, and means that Oxford wants to give you a place but your offer comes from a college that is different to the one you applied for to begin with. Despite this, I have come to love this college and the community around it.

I currently live out of college, quite far down Iffley Road. This is in the Cowley area, about twenty minutes from college, which is where most St Peter's second-years choose to live out. Additional rooms are currently being built on site to enable the College to accommodate more Second Year students. Although the distance from here to college or my department, the New Biochemistry building, is a trek, the area is very quiet, and is quite close to a lot of amenities in Cowley.

Usually, my typical day is quite repetitive. This consists of a lot of lectures and practical work. I get up around 9am, check my emails, and do my lecture notes either online or in person at the Le Gros Clark Lecture Theatre. This depends on the time they are and if I have any meetings. After lectures, I usually get started on tute work, or go to my practical if it's in the lab. I do also have computer labs, which I normally do by myself at home because they are online.





15:30

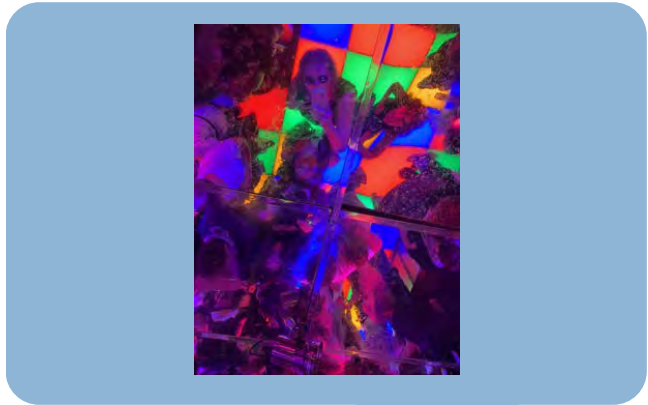


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Dipto

This runs me to about late afternoon to the evening. After this I either relax or wind down at home, or I chill with my housemates, drink, head to the college bar, and go clubbing. Check out the next page to see what Archie, a first-year student who studies Physics, gets up to in his day-to-day at St Peter's.





15:30



Archie

Hi, I'm Archie (he/him), I'm in first-year and I do Physics at St Peter's. I'm also the first-year Entz (entertainment) Representative. I would say that there isn't a true routine that I have, because there is a lot of variety in my days. For example, I have labs every Friday, which take up a whole day, and other days I do rowing so I have to wake up early.

On an average day, I usually wake up at around 10 and get myself ready. I then have a shower, get changed and eat a bowl of cereal in my room. As my lectures are recorded, I have the option to attend them in-person or watch them online. I prefer to watch them online, so I will begin by watching one lecture in my room before relocating to the library where I then watch around two more lectures before having a break. I then usually meet up with my friends to get lunch. This will be some bagels or sometimes a meal deal from Tesco. Our JCR (a common room for undergraduates) contains a kitchen with two hobs, microwaves, and a toaster so it is easy to prepare some food. On Tuesday and Thursday I have tutorials from 3:30 to 5:00 so after lunch I might revisit my problem sheet to prepare for my tutorial, then go to it. Any other day, I will try and sort out Entertainment for the college, such as club nights or themed nights in the bar.

Afterwards, I try to finish off any unfinished lectures before going to dinner in Hall with my friends. Afterwards we usually go to the JCR or bar to catch up and just generally chat. At St. Peter's it is nice as our bar is known across the University so it is easy to meet people from other colleges or just see your friends there from all years. Afterwards, I have the hard choice of whether to go out clubbing or going back to the library. More often than not, I make the wrong decision of the two.



Goodbye!

This brings us to the end of the Alternative Prospectus. If you've made it this far, congratulations. I hope we've managed to give you a better picture of what life is like at St Peter's. Please remember that there is a place for you here and, as you have heard from every student that's contributed, Peter's is defined by its warm and welcoming community. **This community wouldn't be what it is without every individual in it, regardless of where they come from, their background, their identity in any terms.** We are a diverse community and we love being that. To learn more about how to apply, please look at the St Peter's websites.

Our Instagram accounts are also a great way to see snippets of St Peter's life.

Check out:



@spc_oxford - Our main Instagram account



@spc_jcr - Student run, a good insight into life here

@spc_bar - Instagram account for the St Peter's bar

@humansofspc_oxford - Read about the journeys that students, staff, and alumni had to get to St Peter's and their experiences of Oxford

@spc_musicsoc @s.p.c.sport @misc_spc - Instagram accounts for music, sport, and arts extra-curriculars at St Peter's

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