St Peter’s College
Middle Common Room
Freshers’ Guide
2021-2022
Welcome!
Welcome to the Middle Common Room of St Peter’s College! When accepted into St Peter’s, you automatically become a member of the Middle Common Room (MCR). ‘MCR’ means two things. First, as the name suggests, the MCR is a room in College. Secondly – and more importantly – the MCR is the society of around 250 postgrad 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.

The MCR organises events for each week of term. These include afternoon teas, group study sessions, boardgame nights, film screenings, exchange dinners with other colleges, and BOPs (Oxford speak for a party). Outside of term time, there are more informal get-togethers for the postgrads who stay here. The MCR – through the MCR Committee – is also the chief mechanism through which postgrad 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.

Settling into Oxford takes time, especially for the large number of students we have coming from around the world. To help with this process, you will be invited to a range of events during Freshers’ Week (also known in Oxford as ‘0th Week’ - pronounced ‘noughth week’). These may be hosted by the University, the College, the MCR, and your department. Some are more informative, others purely social.

This year, Freshers’ Week may look a little different to previous years, with a mixture of online and in-person events. We would strongly encourage you to come along to as much as you can, although it can be an intense week (particularly if you’re also dealing with the challenges of moving to a new country/city), so do look after yourself!
If you can attend Freshers’ Week in person, it’s best to arrive in Oxford by at least the beginning of **week 0, Sunday 3rd October**. More details about Freshers’ Week will be sent out by email closer to the start of term time.

One of the greatest strengths of St Peter’s is its lively and supportive graduate population. Whether at formal dinner, in a lecture from a fellow MCR member or over a coffee, we always end up having a lot of fun. We hope that you are looking forward to becoming a part of our community – we are certainly looking forward to meeting you!

Welcome, from all of us on the MCR committee!

Niamh Fearon
President
St Peter’s MCR
Basics

This section outlines 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

If you have been allocated a College room, make sure you let Charlie Kisiel, our Accommodation Manager (accommodation@spc.ox.ac.uk), know when you intend to arrive; he will make sure that your College accommodation is ready and waiting.

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, London City or Luton Airport if landing in London. Regular coaches run direct to Oxford from all four airports (for Gatwick and Heathrow timetables and online booking see [www.oxfordbus.co.uk](http://www.oxfordbus.co.uk) – the bus is called “The Airline” – and for both Stansted and Luton see [www.nationalexpress.com](http://www.nationalexpress.com)). Cheaper return fares for limited periods are available. From London City Airport you can get the tube to Paddington and come via train too.

Buses run more frequently from Gatwick and Heathrow than from Stansted or Luton, although Stansted or Luton may save you money. You should stay on the bus until it arrives at the Oxford bus station at ‘Gloucester Green’, which is the final stop.
Once you get off the bus, make your way to Gloucester Green itself. It’s the square behind the shops that immediately face the bus station and is used as a market on several days of the week. If it’s full of stalls, make your way right around the outside, passing the Old Fire Station and the Falafel Stand, or alternatively, simply walk across the square and take the first right onto George Street. Standing on George Street with the Odeon Cinema on your right, you will see a coffee shop across the road called ‘George Street Social’, which is on the corner of George Street and New Inn Hall Street. Pass ‘George Street Social' 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 forest green wooden doors. You’ll now be in the Porters Lodge.

*walking direction from Gloucester Green to St Peter’s College*

The city
On arriving in Oxford, it’s wise to purchase a map or print one out beforehand. All the bookshops in the city centre – Blackwell's,
Waterstones, W. H. Smith – sell the Oxford ‘A to Z’ and smaller street maps. Two key areas just outside the city centre are Cowley Road in East Oxford, and Jericho in North Oxford. Both Cowley and Jericho are lively and colourful areas with pubs, clubs, restaurants, live music venues, and cinemas. Both areas are full of student housing and student lettings and are also where most student nightlife can be found.

**Accommodation**

If you don’t have college accommodation, and are still looking, it’s worth contacting our Accommodation Manager, in case any rooms become available.

Also see the University’s Accommodation Office, as they have rooms for postgrads ([https://gradaccommodation.admin.ox.ac.uk/](https://gradaccommodation.admin.ox.ac.uk/)). You should also check out the OxGradHousing ([https://www.facebook.com/groups/160632823948859/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/160632823948859/)) and Oxford Housing Group ([https://www.facebook.com/groups/328320754007175/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/328320754007175/)) Facebook groups, as people regularly share rental opportunities there. If you are looking at private rentals, please be careful of scams. It’s always a good idea to meet with the agent or landlord, either in person or in a video call, rather than just communicating by email. If possible, get a tour of the house before agreeing to anything (or ask someone else to inspect it on your behalf, if you’re not in Oxford).

**Transportation**

Cars are not really an option in central Oxford. Many streets are either closed to private motor vehicles or clogged with traffic. Parking is also very difficult, and it should be noted 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, the transport of choice in the city is the bicycle. You can buy a new bike on the cheap side for around £70 at the various cycle shops on Cowley Road and in North Oxford. Cycle King is a good place to start. Alternatively, there are second-hand bikes at the same shops, advertised around the city and online. Bike Zone, just around the corner from St Peter’s in St Michael’s Street, does repairs and sells new bikes which mainly cost upwards of £400. Be sure to check if they have any cheaper second-hand bikes on offer before buying an expensive one though! Also check out Broken Spoke, a bike co-operative who will help you out with repairs and occasionally run courses on cycling safety. Warlands on Botley Road is also another great cycle shop. Demand for second-hand bikes is high at the beginning of the academic year so get in early.

In terms of securely locking your bike you will need at least one D-lock and front wheel chain or cable. University Security Services sell these at a discount price. At College, bicycles can be stored in the bike lockup outside the Chavasse building, accessed from New Inn Hall Street via your student card. You will need to register your bike with College Porters and collect a St. Peter’s sticker (available at the Lodge) to store your bike here.

Buses are also a convenient way of getting around. Two bus companies serve the city and services are very frequent between key areas such as North Oxford, the city centre, Cowley and Headington.

There are also taxi cabs available. There are two types of taxis in Oxford: the classic 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 (ABC Radio Taxi Oxford 01865 242424, for example). DO
NOT get into any private cabs that DO NOT have the yellow sticker of registration from the Council. Uber operates in Oxford via the local 001 Taxis Oxford agency.

Oxford is a small city and if you are in the city centre, walking is usually the most sensible way of getting around!

If you wish to venture out to a bigger city, London is just under two hours away by bus. The Oxford Tube (https://www.oxfordtube.com/) charges £15 for a student return fare; your University Card ('Bod card’) serves as student ID. All coaches depart from Gloucester Green, but you can also get on/off on the High Street, on St Clement’s, near the start of Cowley Road, and various other stops. They run 24 hours a day, every 12 minutes during the day and every half hour at night (approximately). There is also a train service to London, which takes approximately 60 minutes, costing around £25 for adults or £17 for those with a 16-25 or 26-30 railcard, but you can also get return tickets for as little as £8 if you book in advance (www.nationalrail.co.uk).

IT

There are computer facilities available in College, located in the St Peter’s library. These are particularly useful for printing and copying, and you are provided with a certain amount of free printer credits per academic year. However, laptops are especially useful for using around Oxford libraries. For computer issues, either hardware or software, you will find the Oxford University IT Services (see http://www.it.ox.ac.uk) a convenient first port of call. It offers products and services at reasonable rates and has several computing labs that you are entitled to use. For any IT issues in college, see: https://www.spc.ox.ac.uk/it.

Internet access

When you are around any university building (including any College
buildings and accommodation), there is a university-wide WIFI network called ‘eduroam’ which you can access using your university IT details. You use your ‘spet ID’ followed by '@ox.ac.uk' (e.g. spetxxxx@ox.ac.uk) and the corresponding remote access password. You can register for your remote access password at the IT services registration page (register.it.ox.ac.uk). If you’re having problems, would like to use a wired internet connection, or have any other IT-related queries, email the IT Team who can deal with it swiftly.

All Oxford University students receive an email account and this is the prime route by which the University and the College communicate with you. Make sure to check it regularly! For details about your account see the university’s IT services.

**College**

**The Master**
Professor Judith Buchanan has been the Head of St Peter’s College since October 2019. Judith was previously the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of York and has also been a fellow at Worcester College, Oxford. She often invites MCR members to small gatherings either in the SCR (Senior Common Room) or at her residence in Canal House. If you get the chance, do take the time to introduce yourself.

**Tutor for Graduates**
Prof. Marina Mackay is the college fellow responsible for all of us in the MCR. Her job is to coordinate all of the college advisors. If you need any support throughout your degree, and can’t contact your advisor for any reason, then the Tutor for Graduates is a really good person to talk to.

**College Office**
The team in the College Office can provide a first port of call if you’re
not sure about something. The key contacts for graduate students are Martin Brown, Deputy Registrar, and Catherine Whalley, College Registrar and they can be reached on college.office@spc.ox.ac.uk or found at the bottom of Besse Staircase. If you get ill and need an extension to a deadline for submitted work, then you can get help from Martin or Catherine to sort that out.

**College advisors**

You will be assigned a college advisor at St Peter’s. They are not your supervisor and may not be in the same field as you (although usually they’re in the same department). While your supervisor, tutors or lecturers are primarily concerned with your academic work, your advisor is here for you. They keep track of your progress in general, and you should be catching up with them briefly once a term. If you have any concerns about your progress, or are looking for some general advice, you should definitely speak with your advisor.

**College welfare**

Oxford is a wonderful place to study, but at times it can also be challenging. We’re really lucky at St Peter’s to have an incredible Dean for Welfare, Eleanor Tingle, as well as a team of Welfare Officers, the College Chaplain and a College Nurse. We also have Welfare Reps on the MCR committee who work closely with the college Welfare Team. Any of these people are regularly available for a chat or a cup of tea. For more information about welfare services, see https://www.spc.ox.ac.uk/welfare.
The Welfare Team organise termly dog visits from Scott the Dog (pictured left) and Labradors Lotti and Rue (right). There’s no better way to destress than a visit from these lovely four-legged friends, chatting to their owners and joining them on a quick walk around Oxford.

**Porters**

As well as being the people who 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 post. If you live in college accommodation and 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 report the issue to the Porters’ Lodge so that it can be fixed as soon as possible.

**Keys**
On your arrival, the Porters will give you your accommodation keys if you are being housed in College accommodation. If you are in Graduate Accommodation, then you will pick up your keys from the Graduate Accommodation Office located in the University office on Worcester Street. Check your arrival information emails for more specific details.

Your Bod Card for operating external doors and gates, and also for accessing areas restricted to College members only, such as the College library, will be available for collection (during office hours) from the College Office during registration.

**Regulations**
There are a number of regulations relevant to all students, including MCR members. These are outlined in the Student Administrative Handbook.

**College accommodation**
Some incoming graduate students are assigned a room in College accommodation. These rooms are not located at the main College site on New Inn Hall St, but are dotted around Oxford: there is Paradise Street, St Thomas Street, Castle Mill and Walton Street.

Accommodation is cosy and comfortable. All the rooms come with a bed, writing desk, a chair, and a wardrobe. It is enough for a start, but you might need to invest in some extra goodies.

If you have special needs requirements related to disability or have issues with your room, you should contact the Accommodation Manager, Charlie Kisiel. The accommodation office is welcoming and helpful and will do its best to provide everything you need. Once you sign for the room key (at 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, an iron, and other useful items.

Bedding will not be provided by the College. You can purchase reasonably cheap ones (you could get away with around £30 for a warm duvet and pillow) from local shops stocking all things domestic, e.g. Primark, Tesco.

UK electronics operate on 230 volts and use sockets different from those in continental Europe and North America (three pins!), so you will need a few adaptors if you’re an international student.

Fire safety is given high priority 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 latest 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 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 may also clean your room and bathroom regularly. This is often done in the morning so if you do not want to be disturbed you can leave your bin
outside your room to indicate this. The scouts will have a particular day assigned to clean your room so it’s a good idea to find out which day that is so that you don’t miss out on the regular cleaning.

**Paradise Street**

A number of first year Graduates are housed in Paradise Street, an off-site annex. 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, and 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).

All rooms and facilities are modern and purpose built. 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.

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.

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

A few graduate students will be living in another College annex, St
Thomas Street, which is quite similar to Paradise Street.

**Room bookings**
As a member of the MCR, you have the right to use many of the facilities of the college. This includes the ability to book rooms within the college. There are study rooms, function rooms, and a music rehearsal space. If you wish to use any of these, talk with the Porters.

**College sports**
St Peter’s has a wide variety of sports on offer, in which we play against teams from other colleges. This ranges from the quite intense (rowing) to the just-for-fun (punting). Details will be given during Freshers’ Week about how to get involved with college sports. There are also university teams which can be much more competitive.

**The Middle Common Room**

The MCR is normally open to members 24 hours a day and people go there to read, work, make a cup of tea or coffee (both of which are free), chat with friends, take a well-earned break from work, or wait for
the dining hall to open for dinner. It is in the South-West corner of the College site, beneath the Music Room. As an MCR member you are free to make use of the MCR and its facilities. However, if you want to organise something with more than 5 people, please make sure that you email the MCR Committee beforehand, inform the Junior Deans and the Porters. It is essential that all three parties are aware of events happening in the MCR. The committee maintain a calendar of events (both those for all members and private functions), so make sure to check this!

**Facilities**

The MCR has stylish sofas, speakers, a TV, a kitchen with oven, fridge freezer, dishwasher, and microwave, and shared desk space.

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 such a way that the scouts (cleaners) 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 and will disappear quickly! Food that is out of date is liable to be thrown in the bin. Moreover, if the MCR is repeatedly found in a messy state, it will be locked up by College, which would be pretty rubbish.

At the back of the MCR you will notice several 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.

Next to the lockers you can find the MCR welfare cupboard. This
contains a food security box which is stocked full of non-perishable food and can be used by any member of the College on an anonymous basis. This cupboard is also where we keep sanitary products and sexual health products such as condoms, dental dams and pregnancy tests.

**Online facilities**

The MCR has an ever-growing online presence, check out all of our social platforms below!

- **Facebook** – Join our Facebook group, search for *St Peter's College MCR 2021-2022*.

- **Mailing list** - Weekly updates about activities happening during term time will always be sent out in an email so do not fret if you are not so social media savvy!

- **Instagram** - Follow [@stpetersmcr.unlocked](https://www.instagram.com/stpetersmcr.unlocked) for photos and stories of what we got up to this year.

After a year full of online events we’re fully prepared to deliver some MCR online events if needed this coming academic year, though we are hoping for as many in-person events as possible!

**The MCR committee**

The MCR Committee oversees running the MCR. The MCR Committee currently consists of five members of the MCR: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and two Social Secretaries. All executive posts are elected in Trinity term (summer term), apart from the Secretary. We also elect several ‘reps’ (representatives), including an access and outreach rep, charities rep, sports rep, library rep, male and female welfare reps, sustainability rep, BAME rep and LGBTQ+ rep, all of whom are traditionally freshers, and all of whom are elected in Michaelmas
Term. If you think you would be interested in running for any of these positions, get in touch with the President for more information.

President: Niamh Fearon  
*Her job:* Chair meetings, coordinate the activities of the MCR and represent the MCR to the college

*Background:* Niamh is from Liverpool and has made a new home from home at St Peter’s which has strong Scouse roots. She studied for an MPhys in Physics with Astrophysics at the University of Manchester and has now turned her hand to a DPhil in Particle Physics, searching for elusive dark matter particles. Be sure to find Niamh for a chat at MCR events or in and around various pubs in town watching the football at the weekend - though maybe best not to ask how Everton are doing this season! Did you see that ludicrous display last night?

Vice-President: Vassi Sharlandjieva  
*Her job:* Take care of the MCR welfare, keep in the loop about Student Union’s Student Council meetings, make you tea in the MCR

*Background:* Vassi spent her childhood in Bulgaria watching too much *Animal Planet*, which took her from an international school in Romania to studying Biology in Vancouver, Canada. At Oxford, she's usually in the lab working on cancer biology for her DPhil in Genomic Medicine and Statistics. You can join her in trying out different coffee shops, browsing bookstores, and cycling around Oxfordshire. She’ll always be
down for a chat about life over tea in the MCR.

**Treasurer: Dan Hunt**  
*His job:* Tracking the MCR finances, writing the annual financial report, keeping the MCR out of the red

*Background:* Dan grew up near to Rotherham, South Yorkshire, and travelled south to the University of Birmingham in search of nicer weather. Getting a Master’s in Particle Physics and Cosmology in the process (and the illustrious “Big Name in Physics” award), he’s since travelled even further south to sunny Oxford to study for a DPhil in Particle Physics, (also) searching for elusive dark matter particles. Having spent the past 15 months indoors mostly, you’ll likely find Dan attending formals, socials, and the many pubs in and around Oxford. He welcomes any suggestions you may have on events, MCR improvements, or fundraising, so feel free to say hello if you see him!

**Social Secretary #1: Catherine Fan**  
*Her job:* To make you want to go to socials :)

*Background:* Cat grew up in both east and west coasts of Canada. At first, she thought she was going to be a professional ballerina, hence why she spent a whole year dancing in New York. Somehow, she ended up in the UK doing an MSci in Cell Biology at University College London. She is currently studying for a DPhil in Condensed Matter Physics, where she is
focusing on the nanofabrication of nucleic acids to create structural biology tags. Feel free to chat with Cat anytime about research projects, poutine, or whatever else you may find fun! Having had an awesome SPC MCR experience during her first and second year, Cat hopes to work hard with her counterpart Katie to deliver an equally entertaining time with you all!

Social Secretary #2: Katie Fapp
Her Job: Work with Cat to bring you the best of Oxford’s social life!

Background: Katie is a history DPhil who hails from the deserts of Arizona. Because of this, despite spending almost three years in the UK, she is still not used to the rain. She first arrived in Oxford for her MSt in U.S. history, which she is now studying at the DPhil level, focusing on the women’s suffrage movement. Feel free to pick her brain for fun facts about Oxford! When she's not reading or organizing social events for the MCR, Katie enjoys watching movies or partaking in the great Oxford pasttimes of punting or grabbing a pint with friends at a pub.

Immediate Past President: Josh Bamford
His job: Ensure a sense of continuity in the ever-changing MCR committee, offering a helping hand when needed!
Background: Josh comes from a small Australian city between the desert and the ocean, where he was raised by two biologists, along with a collection of dogs, parrots, finches, tortoises, chickens, ducks, snakes, lizards, one brother, and a couple of impressively large catfish. He left his jobs as an opera singer and circus instructor (rarely at the same time) in Australia to do a Master’s in Jyväskylä, Finland, followed by a brief stint as a research assistant in Austria, which was altogether lovely. He has now found himself at Oxford, doing a DPhil at the Institute of Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology, investigating the social functions of music and dance. If you catch him singing to himself around St Peter’s, feel free to join in.

MCR meetings
There are regular meetings of the MCR every term (General Meetings) where you can bring things up in a formal environment. If you would like to propose something for one of these meetings, don’t forget that a proposal must be sent to the President at least 24 hours in advance. General Meetings may be run either in-person or online. We are always available for informal chats between meetings as well. If we can run meetings in-person, expect lots of free pizza!

If you have any questions about the MCR, St Peter’s College or the University, please contact us. If you have anything you would like to be done differently in the MCR, please contact us.

College parents
It may sound a little odd, but every fresher is assigned a College parent. College parents are older postgrads who are doing a subject at least
vaguely related to yours, whose job it is to help you settle in. They should contact you (hopefully) before you arrive in Oxford and will be one of the first people you meet here!

**Freshers’ week**

Freshers’ Week normally kicks off MCR Events at St Peter’s the week before the academic term starts (Week 0). Due to COVID-19 regulations, Freshers’ Week may see some changes. Do not fret! We will still hold a plethora of virtual events, as well as in-person events for those who are able to come. If you arrive in Oxford before Week 0, there will still be some survivors from last year’s MCR who are more than happy to introduce themselves! The aim of Freshers’ Week is to introduce you to St Peter’s, Oxford, and your fellow College members. A more detailed schedule of our events will be available prior to the start of the week.

**Social activities**

St Peter’s MCR prides itself on being a fun and social common room. The social calendar of previous years has been composed of the events below, and to the extent that is legally possible, we’ll try our best to preserve it! However, social events will be run in line with government and university health recommendations. Your social secretaries will be working double time to make sure that even in these strange circumstances you will have a robust social experience during your time at Oxford!

**Formal Halls**

Formal Halls are an important part of the MCR bonding process. They are an excellent excuse to have a good meal with friends from College, your course or lab. The food is usually of a very high standard. Water is provided, but otherwise you bring your own drinks. You book for Formal Hall
on Upay, and can usually invite up to 3 guests (they don’t need to be members of the college or university). Formals are usually every Tuesday and Thursday during term. College members are required to wear academic gowns at formals, but guests are exempt from this. Other than that, the dress code is formal but not as fancy as black-tie. Feel free to ask a member of committee if you’re not sure!

High Table
On some Tuesdays (in weeks 1, 3, 5 and 7 of term), eight members of the MCR are 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 traditional 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 you can sign up via Upay. Wine is also provided with each course, if you wish to take it.

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; it starts off with a champagne reception, followed by a formal black-tie dinner and always ends up as a big party in the MCR. Don’t miss out on Guest Nights. The food is even nicer than formal hall – showcasing the very best that the College can offer at a very reasonable rate (especially for Oxford!) – and it is the one chance during term for the whole MCR to fill the Hall.

BOPs
BOPs are a mainstay of Oxford student life. It is a little-known fact that BOP stands for Big Open Party, but most people will just call them BOPs. The MCR usually has a number organised each term and will let
you know of any upcoming in other Colleges. There is almost guaranteed to be a BOP somewhere every weekend of term. BOPs are a great opportunity to mingle with MCR members in a relaxed fashion.

Balls
St Peter’s runs a biennial ball. Graduates often also get together to attend Balls at other Colleges too.

St Peter’s Bar
The Bar at St. Peter’s is famously the best college bar with the notorious Cross Key’s specialty drink. It’s a place where usually the MCR and JCR can mingle and have a grand time!

Graduate seminars
Graduate seminars occur throughout term time. Although this event sounds more ‘serious’, don’t let this deceive you into thinking it is any less fun. Wine (and juice) is always provided to stimulate the intellect, and we always have a great time listening to MCR members who are doing interesting courses and occasionally guest speakers from the outside world. We will be having some speedy 5-minute rounds this year where graduates need to describe their work in a short time frame.

(Cr)afternoon teas
Our weekend afternoon tea events are the perfect way to wind down after a busy week of work. You get to enjoy a classic British tradition, while crafting or just chatting away with your fellow graduates. Good food and a chill playlist are always guaranteed.

Other events
The traditional garden party usually held in June is always a good excuse to stuff yourself with wholesome food. Also, look forward to wine tastings, boardgame nights, Burns night and many, many more events.

The MCR also loves to host an Oxmas Dinner at the end of Michaelmas term in the College hall. This is a night where we all celebrate the end of first term, pull a few Christmas crackers and have a dance to some holiday classics.
The MCR will send out email updates on events to the MCR mail list. For the most up-to-date information, join our Facebook group which will be active from early September onwards. If you look up St Peter’s College MCR 2021-2022, we should pop up in your search. Impromptu events may pop up during the term, so keep your eye on your emails and Facebook. We also have an Instagram account @stpetersmcr.unlocked, give us a follow for a feel of what the MCR gets up to on a regular basis. 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 these events early!

**Academic dress**

Full academic regalia is worn by students and academics on formal occasions, including matriculation, examinations and graduation. It is made up of sub fusc (dark suit, skirt or trousers, a white shirt or blouse and a white or black bow tie, black full-length tie or black ribbon), worn with a black gown and a mortar board. The name sub fusc derives from the Latin sub fuscus, meaning dark brown, and is often used to mean the full academic dress. Most postgrads will wear the Advanced Students
Gown, which is slightly longer than the undergrad gown. Some people will tell you that you must carry the mortar board but not wear it, however there are no official rules on this. It is considered polite to take the mortar board off when indoors, though. The official guidelines can be found here: https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/dress.

You can buy the gown and mortar board from multiple shops such as: Varsity Shop, Walters, Shepherd and Woodward, Ede and Ravenscroft, or the University Shop. Do shop around, as the prices may vary, and some shops will offer special deals. You can also sometimes find second-hand gowns online.

You have to wear the gown at formal hall in St Peter’s college as well, so it’s a good investment. You can wear anything vaguely formal underneath the gown at formal dinners; full sub fusc is only for special occasions. The MCR committee is always available to provide fashion advice if you need help!

**Help/support**

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 most issues in college, ask the Porters in the first instance. If they don’t have the answer, they will surely know someone who does. Also remember your College Advisor, the Dean for Welfare and the Tutor for Graduates. You can also always turn to anyone on the MCR committee. 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 help with financial management.
# Oxford glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Battels</td>
<td>The charges made to a member of a college (student or Fellow) for accommodation, meals, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bod Card</td>
<td>Also known as ‘University Card’. This is your student ID, and it also acts as your access card to College and University Libraries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodleian Library</td>
<td>Also known as ‘the Bod’. The largest of the University’s many libraries. It is named after Sir Thomas Bodley.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>(abbrev. Classification) the level of award of a degree (e.g. 2:1 or Upper Second).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Keys</td>
<td>St Peter’s College symbol and best College drink in Oxford.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPhil</td>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy. The PhD is known as the DPhil in Oxford.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellows</td>
<td>In colleges, the senior members of college who, together with the college head, constitute the governing body of the college. Colleges may also have other categories of fellow, such as honorary or emeritus fellows, who are not members of the governing body. There are also research fellowships of various kinds in the University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Hall</td>
<td>A traditional meal held in college. Depending on the college, formal attire and/or gowns may be worn, and guests from outside the college may be invited. This happens every Tuesday and Thursday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Table</td>
<td>The table in a college dining hall, often on a dais, at which the Head of House and Fellows dine. Guests may sometimes be invited to High Table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michaelmas Term</td>
<td>The first term of the academic year which begins in October and ends in December (c.f. Hilary, Trinity).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilary Term</td>
<td>The second of the academic year’s three terms, running from January to mid-March (c.f. Michaelmas, Trinity).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity Term</td>
<td>Summer term (c.f. Hilary, Michaelmas).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCR (Junior Common Room)</td>
<td>In addition to being the formal undergraduate student organization of a college, the Junior Common Room is the hub of undergraduate social activity. A physical location in a college for student recreation. (c.f. MCR and SCR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCR (Middle Common Room)</td>
<td>The self-governing body and social centre for graduate students in a college. Fourth year students are also granted MCR membership. The MCR is also a room located in the college. Also known as the GCR at other colleges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matriculation</td>
<td>Matriculation confers membership of the University on those students who are enrolled at the University of Oxford and following a degree-level course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxbridge</td>
<td>Oxford and Cambridge Universities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxmas</td>
<td>Christmas at Oxford. This starts exactly one month before Christmas Day, on the 25th of November so we can celebrate holidays of all faiths together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigeon Post</td>
<td>Nickname for the University Messenger Service, the free internal mail system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLO</td>
<td>Oxford’s online library catalogue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub fusc</td>
<td>Academic dress worn to Matriculation, examinations and graduation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Useful contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Office</td>
<td>Martin Brown</td>
<td><a href="mailto:martin.brown@spc.ox.ac.uk">martin.brown@spc.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutor for Graduates</td>
<td>Prof. Marina Mackay</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tutorforgraduates@spc.ox.ac.uk">tutorforgraduates@spc.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Registrar</td>
<td>Catherine Whalley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:catherine.whalley@spc.ox.ac.uk">catherine.whalley@spc.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Welfare</td>
<td>Eleanor Tingle</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eleanor.tingle@spc.ox.ac.uk">eleanor.tingle@spc.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare Officers</td>
<td>Emmanuelle Dankwa</td>
<td><a href="mailto:emmanuelle.dankwa@spc.ox.ac.uk">emmanuelle.dankwa@spc.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Babar Suleman</td>
<td><a href="mailto:muhammad.suleman@rsa.ox.ac.uk">muhammad.suleman@rsa.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation Manager</td>
<td>Charlie Kisiel</td>
<td><a href="mailto:accommodation@spc.ox.ac.uk">accommodation@spc.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porters Lodge</td>
<td>Paul Irons</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lodge@spc.ox.ac.uk">lodge@spc.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Prof. Judith Buchanan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:judith.buchanan@spc.ox.ac.uk">judith.buchanan@spc.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursar</td>
<td>Doug Shaw</td>
<td><a href="mailto:doug.shaw@spc.ox.ac.uk">doug.shaw@spc.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Bursar</td>
<td>Kevin Melbourne</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kevin.melbourne@spc.ox.ac.uk">kevin.melbourne@spc.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Finance Officer</td>
<td>Katie Pullen-Rowland</td>
<td><a href="mailto:katie.pullen-rowland@spc.ox.ac.uk">katie.pullen-rowland@spc.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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