

The Transition to University – Oxford Freshers

Starting University can be an exciting time but it can also bring some challenges. Adjusting to a new way of life, making new friends, finding your way around, learning new terminology and settling into a new study routine can all take time.

Freshers may have particular ideas or expectations about University life & Oxford, which may or may not be accurate. Keeping an open mind can be helpful. 'There are two ways to be happy: improve your reality, or lower your expectations.'

Expect and prepare yourself for some frustrations, disappointments and things going wrong, as they always will in life. Learn the skills and resilience to manage these situations and try to take them in your stride rather than letting them overwhelm you.

Getting to know new people and building new relationships is a natural and often slow process which can't be speeded up. Freshers often worry about the development of new friendships but try to be patient and don't worry if you haven't found your friendship group within the first few months. Be open and be yourself, you don't need to try too hard. Missing friends and family back home is completely normal and you may feel homesick from time to time. It takes time to adjust to living independently for the first time.

It's good to have an activity to enjoy outside your College and subject, so make new contacts and friends through shared activities such as sport, socialising or other interests. There are many clubs and societies within the University, you should be able to find something that suits your interests. Most clubs welcome students of all abilities and it is a good opportunity to try things for the first time. At the start of the academic year many new people will be joining too.

Remember they didn't make a mistake. You do deserve to be here. You are not an Oxford imposter. There is a thing called 'the imposter syndrome' that people can suffer from – not only students but tutors too. Even some professors apparently fear that their lectures will be interrupted by someone telling them they are a fraud and they need to leave. Give yourself time and allow yourself to belong and tell yourself, as much as you need to, the selection process was robust and you are perfectly good enough.

St Peter's support

The friendly SPC Welfare Team are always available to chat to students about welfare matters, however big or small. Don't hesitate to contact any one of us, you can find our details here:

<https://www.spc.ox.ac.uk/welfare>

Useful links exploring issues relating to moving to University

https://www.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxford/field/field_document/Transitions%20and%20Expectations.pdf

<https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/guide-freshers>

https://www.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxford/field/field_document/Expectation%2C%20Transitions%20and%20Overcoming%20Imposter%20Syndrome.pdf

https://www.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxford/field/field_document/11%20freshers%20tips.pdf

https://www.studentminds.org.uk/uploads/3/7/8/4/3784584/180813_transitions_interactive.pdf

Oxford University Glossary of Terms

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation/history/oxford-glossary?wssl=1>