Freshers’ Guide
Middle Common Room
St. Peter’s College
2017/2018
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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 (or really a couple of rooms) in College. Secondly – and more importantly – the MCR is the society of between 150 and 200 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 (or a lot) more fun than your faculty.

The MCR organises events for each week of term. These include Guest Nights, wine tastings, film screenings, cocktail nights, exchange dinners with other colleges and BOPs (Oxford speak for a party). Outside of term time, there are more informal get-togethers for the graduates who stay 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 around the world. 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 the beginning of 0th week, Sunday 1st October. There will be 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 Programme, which will be available in the MCR, so that you know where to be and when.
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 pint at the pub, 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!

Isuru Jamie Leonard Remco
President Vice President Treasurer Social Secretary

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BASIC
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
Unlike some universities, we’re not very fussy about this. If you have been allocated a College room, make sure you let Hilary Sudbury, our Accommodation Manager (hilary.sudbury@spc.ox.ac.uk) know when you intend to arrive; she 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 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 (only of interest if you have further journeys planned within the relevant period).

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 has a set of automatic glass doors. You’ll now be in the Porters Lodge, also known simply as ‘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. If you return to the main quad and walk past the front of the Chapel (where your Graduate induction talk will be held), you will see the facade of the dining hall, Hannington Hall: it is the building with steps leading up to it, directly across a small quad from a modern glass stairwell. If you carry on down the ramp to the next little quad 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.

**THE CITY**
On arriving in Oxford, it’s wise to purchase a map or print one up beforehand. All the bookshops in the city centre – Blackwells, Waterstones, W H Smith – sell the Oxford ‘A to Z’ and smaller street maps. Familiarising yourself with the main streets, areas, pubs, and, perhaps, libraries, is essential. Two key areas outside the city centre are the Cowley Road, in East Oxford, a lively and colourful area with pubs, clubs, restaurants, live music venues, and a cinema, and Jericho in North Oxford. Jericho, which is based around Walton Street, is rather more up-market than the Cowley Road. Both areas are full of student housing and student lettings.

**Security**
99% of the time, Oxford is a very safe city. Unless you’ve never lived in a city, there will be few surprises of the unpleasant variety. However, there are a few security risks of which you should be aware. First, student accommodation is sometimes a target for thieves. Student houses are quite easy to recognize – normally by the state of the garden and the number of bikes lying around. Short of taking up gardening, your best security response is to ensure that all outside doors are locked at all times and that windows are secured when no-one is home or when everyone is in bed. Although you are provided with insurance from college if you are living in college accommodation, please remember that leaving open windows or doors can void any claim, especially if your room is on the ground floor. It is also wise to keep the door to your room locked at all times. Second, although there is no reason to be paranoid, there are risks to your person when travelling around the city. During the daytime the biggest risk is from pickpockets. Be sure to keep your valuables safe and secure. There are also some strange people wandering around Oxford late at night. If you are walking around at this time, we suggest it is safer to travel with other friends or catch a taxi. **Please report any security concerns you have.** Even the smallest thing (for example, seeing suspicious people wandering around the college) may be important. Please contact:

- The Porters in College (they may refer you to someone else in College
to make a report and may suggest you contact the Police) AND also
• A member of the MCR Committee.

This may all sound very grave, but please, don’t have nightmares – in general, Oxford is a great and very safe 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 the city is 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 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 and a few second-hand bikes, mainly £200 plus - with excellent coffee at the Handle Bar Cafe upstairs.

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 and University Security Services sell these at a discount. Even so, avoid leaving bikes on the street overnight (especially on weekends) where they are likely to be vandalized. At College, bicycles can be stored in an area outside the Chavasse building, accessed from New Inn Hall Street via a salto fob. You will need a St. Peter’s sticker (available at the Lodge) in order 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. The only drawback is that many university buildings are not close to bus stops.

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. 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!

If you wish to venture out to a bigger city, London is just under two hours away by bus. There are two bus lines charging £14 for a same-day return student 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 railcard, but you can 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 weekdays 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 a lot of paperwork is 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 the Academic Office (graduates@spc.ox.ac.uk) explaining that you need a bank letter (addressed to the bank you choose), or visit their offices at College (the Porter’s will point you in the direction of the Academic Office) and they will have it ready as soon as 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 enquire 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 traveller’s cheques with you to use until the account is opened. Cash cards and ATM cards from other countries normally 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 Student Finance Officer, Katie Pullen-Rowland (Katie.pullen-rowland@spc.ox.ac.uk).

**TELEPHONES**

There are two options for phone services in the UK: mobile phones and ‘landlines’.

**Mobile Phones**

For many students, a mobile phone is the best and often only option. Those coming from abroad will need a new phone in the UK, unless you have a phone that works in different regions 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). For students who have just arrived from overseas this can be really 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 12 months. If your course is only one year then you may only be in the 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 a 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 calls to other landlines (which tend to be cheap) and another rate for calling mobile phones or premium numbers (which is usually more expensive).

Using a landline for long-distance calls can be very expensive and so 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: don’t forget to read the small print!

**Computing**

If you come from a University that has endless rows of gleaming computers you might be surprised by Oxford, as the approach here is a little more modest. There are facilities available in College or your faculty or department, but it might require a little work to locate the ones that suit you. It is highly recommended 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 IT Services (see [http://www.it.ox.ac.uk](http://www.it.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 wifi as well as Ethernet access to the University system from your room. You can sign into the wifi using your remote-sign in (which is different from your Single-Sign on). In order to use the Ethernet access in your room you need to get it activated by the IT Office ([it-support@spc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:it-support@spc.ox.ac.uk)). Internet access around the
University (e.g. libraries and departments) is done via Ethernet access and/or wireless coverage.

Wireless internet is available on the main College site, Paradise Street accommodation and the MCR.

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 you current software or install new software before being allowed full access. A free anti-virus program called Sophos is available from the IT Services website (http://www.it.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 know 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 ‘Computing’.

When you are around any university building (accommodation included), there is a university-wide wi-fi 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)
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 have attempted a brief run-down of the key bits.

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, which incorporated the Arms of Bishop Chavasse and a device (the crossed keys of St. Peter) representing the church of St Peter-le-Bailey. 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 and student numbers, including post-graduates, have risen to nearly 500. 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 to 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 55 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, latterly as Controller of Radio 4. His biography is punctuated with the names of some pretty impressive institutions - Gonville and Caius College (Cambridge), Harvard, Capitol Hill, The International Press Institute and Centre for Contemporary British History, among others. 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 very pleasant and friendly, with a refined sense of humour, a real interest in meeting College members and a genuine love for the College. You will most definitely have a chance to chat to him at formal dinners as well as at Graduate seminars and other College events.

Mr Damazer “suffers the misfortunes of Tottenham Hotspur” and is keen on opera and gardening, as well as Italian painting. He lives in Canal House, just behind the College. He hosts College graduates and undergraduates for breakfasts and brunches throughout the year.

**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 (so called ‘pigeon’) post. 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 report the issue to the Porters’ Lodge so that it can
be fixed as soon as possible. If any issues in Paradise Street are not resolved quickly, contact your warden.

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 operating external doors and gates, and also for accessing areas restricted to College members only, such as the College library; you will be asked to pay a deposit.

**Regulations**

There are a number of regulations that are binding on all students including MCR members, issued under the title ‘Student Regulations’ (you’ll be given a copy on 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**

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, Castle Mill and a house on Abingdon Road.

Accommodation is cozy and comfortable, but not prestigious. All the rooms are en-suite and come with a single 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 or have issues with your room, you should contact the Accommodation Manager, Hilary Sudbury. 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 (for which you will need to buy a card at the Porters Lodge), an 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 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 £30 for a warm duvet and pillow) from local shops stocking all things domestic, e.g. Boswells, Primark, or Argos, which is very conveniently located in the immediate neighbour of St Peter’s.

UK electronics operate on 230 volts and use sockets different from those in continental Europe and North America (three prongs!), so you will need an adaptor.

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 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**

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 (currently a construction site, due to open in Autumn 2017) 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. 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. This patio 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 though the large wooden door leading directly to the bike racks, rather than taking it through the building.
**Welfare, Health, and Medical Emergencies**

St Peter’s has an extensive network of welfare officers that includes Jamie, (MCR Vice-President and your first student point of contact), the Senior and Junior Welfare Officers, and the Tutor for Welfare (Dr. Claire Williams). In addition, the Chaplain is available for pastoral and welfare advice. Jamie will run regular welfare drop in hours where you can have a chat or just a cup of tea and a biscuit! The Senior and Junior Welfare Officers will also have drop in times. Details of all these drop-in times are displayed in prominent places around college. Equally, feel free to approach any member of the welfare team at any time. They can always point you in the right direction. We will also be appointing a male and female welfare rep in Michaelmas Term so do apply if you’re interested in all things welfare!

You will be assigned a College Advisor when you arrive, usually an academic whom you may 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 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 (Kate Tempest) who keeps regular hours during term-time in Staircase IV room 3. Her hours are listed on her door and in the Porters Lodge.

If you wish to see a doctor, you can make an appointment at The Jericho Health Centre on Walton Street (opposite the Phoenix Picturehouse cinema), tel. 01865 311234, **provided you are registered** (see below). They provide St Peter’s students with complete and confidential health care. Doctors are available by appointment from 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday; there is also an evening and night service, accessible via the same telephone number.
MEDICAL REGISTRATION

It is essential that you register with the National Health Service, preferably through the Jericho Health Centre but otherwise through any other Oxford medical practice. 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. To register for the Jericho Health Centre please go to the following link: http://www.campusdoctor.co.uk/oxford/. Registration does not happen automatically - you must register at the start of the year. There will be an introductory talk by the College Doctors in Freshers' Week.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

If you ever need emergency treatment, the nearest Accident and Emergency department is at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Headington, a bit out from the City Centre. There is a frequent bus service, or you can go by cab. In a life threatening emergency 999 is the UK 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 (e.g. 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 in 0th Week. Depending on your financial arrangements the bill varies, but it will generally include rent (if you are in College accommodation), and College and University tuition fees. All Charges must be paid by the end of week 2 of each term, including your Tuition and College Fees. Some Graduate Students may not receive their Tuition invoice in 0th week but
will have two weeks from the invoice date to pay.

Please be aware of these deadlines as failure to pay your battels by the corresponding dates will attract surcharges. The Student Finance Officer, Katie Pullen-Rowland, can answer any queries about fees and charges.

**Meals**

St Peter's College dining hall has experienced many positive changes in the past few years which have all amounted to a very decent standard of food catering and one that is envied by other Oxford Colleges (and makes us very popular for exchange dinners!). 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 Formal Hall dinners, served twice a week. Those dinners represent the essential Oxford experience – candlelight, served food, smart clothes, and plenty of wine (brought in with you). You have to be in Hall by 7.30pm, when Grace is said and you can no longer enter. Every Tuesday, graduate students are invited to dine with the Fellows at High Table. You may attend pre-dinner drinks at around 7pm in the Senior Common Room (SCR, the Fellows’ and Tutors’ equivalent of the MCR). You have the opportunity to do this twice a term. 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 – trainers and jeans are definitely best avoided!

There are extra meals on special occasions, such as Guest Nights, Christmas Dinner, Burns Night, and others. Guest Nights are organised once a term by the MCR. Even better than a formal hall, they showcase the best the College has to offer, with a champagne reception, a lovely 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. As the name suggests, you can invite guests and show them the high life, MCR-style. Guest Night will cost you and your guest £15 and £20 respectively and is booked and charged through Upay. This is an internet-based charging system for which you will need to set up an internet account (www.upaychilli.com) that you 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 you will not be able to eat in the dining hall. Food is charged on a pay-per-item basis and the prices are reasonable. Lunch will cost £3.00-£4.00 on average and dinner can total up to £5, depending on whether you like desserts. Formal halls currently cost £7.75 and you can bring in guests for £10.25 each. 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 vegetarians and non-vegetarians. Any extra dietary requirements should be communicated to the catering office (catering@spc.ox.ac.uk) and will most likely be included in the menu. Hall times are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Breakfast</th>
<th>Brunch</th>
<th>Lunch</th>
<th>Dinner*</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon-Fri</td>
<td>8.00-9.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12.00-1.30</td>
<td>5.30-7.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat/Sun</td>
<td>11-12.30</td>
<td></td>
<td>6-7.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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. The catering manager, Colin Purvis, will e-mail out weekly menus at the beginning of the week.

Outside of term time (or when you feel you need a break from Hall food) you might consider cooking for yourself. There are kitchens in college accommodation. Food shopping is convenient wherever you are. The two largest supermarkets are Sainsburys and Tesco. Sainsburys is located on St. Ebbes St (follow New Inn Hall Street south to Bonn Square. For those in East Oxford, there is a large Tesco 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 (we have a small kitchen), 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.

You should wear a graduate commoners gown, a mortar board or soft-cap, and your preferred items from the following list:

1. One of:
   - Dark suit with dark socks, or
   - Dark skirt with black tights or stockings, or
   - Dark trousers with dark socks

2. Dark coat if required
3. Black Shoes
4. Plain white collared shirt or blouse
5. White bow tie, black bow tie, black full length tie, or black ribbon.

You may already own most of these items (suits, socks, shoes etc.): 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 in Oxford. Be prepared for some fairly steep prices – a new gown and mortar board may easily cost you in excess of £30: limited second-hand stock may be available. The staff in the specialist 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 are Walters, and The Varsity Shop, which do specials for new students. You may otherwise 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. It involves a procession from College to
the Sheldonian Theatre, during which 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 speaking in Latin and a short speech from the Vice-Chancellor (the person carrying a big, silver stick) welcoming you to Oxford. It’s a traditional ceremony and you will certainly feel very “Oxford” after it’s over. There are a limited number of gowns for loan in the Lodge – 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 with a “sleek, modern” design worthy of the trendiest nightspots, it boasts stylish sofas, speakers, a kitchen with oven, fridge freezer, dishwasher, and microwave, and a comfy television room with a brand new high definition TV, DVD, digibox, VCR- and a Wii! The MCR also has regular deliveries of the Guardian, Economist, National Geographic, and International New York Times – to name a few.

The MCR’s facilities are open to members 24 hours a day and people go there to read, make a cup of tea or coffee (which are both free), 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!). Within the kitchen there is a closet called The Honesty Cupboard behind the kitchen door that contains beer, for you to help yourselves. There is a chart on the cupboard door and you are expected to sign out every drink that you take - please do, or else the MCR committee will be forced to close down this cupboard after Michaelmas term. You will be charged a (very) 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 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. 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.

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 such a way 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 and will disappear quickly! 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, which would be pretty rubbish.

**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. There is also a Wii and no shortage of people who are game for Mario Kart, or to watch any of the exciting selection of DVDs. 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 currently consists of four members of the MCR: President, Vice President, Treasurer and a Social Secretary. All executive posts bar Secretary are elected in Trinity term (spring term). The Secretary is elected in Michaelmas term (autumn term). The Secretary is usually a freshers: 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 a charities rep, sports rep, OUSU Rep, library rep, and male and female welfare reps, all of whom are traditionally freshers, and all of whom are elected in Michaelmas Term.

**President – Isuru Goonatilake**

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

*Background:* Born and raised in Vienna, Isuru is a third year DPhil student in Mathematical Biology, specifically focused on Antibiotic Resistance. In his spare time, he can be usually found either on Reddit or Netflix and ranting about how much more fun London is, but not really meaning it. Having been promoted from his previous role as Social Secretary, he is really excited to welcome new Peterites to the MCR. Feel free to drop by to his room in Staircase IV if you have any questions, concerns, ideas or simply want to have a cup of tea and chat.
**Vice President – Jamie Green**

*The Job:* overseeing welfare issues, helping out the president when he needs it, attending meetings, and sharing other responsibilities with the rest of the committee.

*Background:* Jamie is a DPhil student, focusing on the literature of South Tyrol in northern Italy. In his spare time, he loves all kinds of sport, especially football and cricket, and is a long suffering supporter of Aston Villa. Jamie’s also hoping to set up a university wheelchair basketball team so watch this space! Originally from North Yorkshire, you can usually find Jamie somewhere around college attempting to distract himself from Aston Villa’s latest desperately disappointing result by looking at cute animal pictures. Jamie’s always happy to have a chat about anything and everything so do feel free to find him around college!

**Treasurer- Leonard Hasenclever**

*His job:* keeping track of the MCR accounts, writing the annual financial report, running the honesty cupboard.

*Background:* Leonard is a third year DPhil student in statistics and machine learning. Originally from Germany he has spent the last 6 years studying in the UK. He enjoys traveling and reading, and has a particular fondness for coffee! He looks forward to many exchange dinners and a busy MCR programme with all incoming Peterites.
Social Secretary – Remco Geervliet

His job: drawing up an exciting social schedule for each term, running all social events, organising Guest Night and Exchange Dinners, pouring lots of champagne!

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).

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 (General Meetings) where you can bring things up in a formal environment. If you would like to propose 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. There is also lots of free pizza at these meetings!

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 should contact you (hopefully) before you arrive in 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!

**Freshers’ 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 1st 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. If you arrive in Oxford before 0th week, we will be having daily events from Friday 22nd September onwards! These 20+ events will range from Winesdays to movie nights and from dinners to cocktail nights, so there’s something for everyone.

The aim of Freshers’ Week is to introduce you to St Peter’s, Oxford, and your fellow College members. It 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.

**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 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 work on your dinner conversation skills, and you can sign up via Upay. It is also an opportunity to get better (and free) 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; it starts off with a champagne reception, followed by a formal black tie dinner, occasionally including a mildly inebriated speech from the President (if you throw food at him he’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 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** 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!), 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. BOPs often have a theme that participants take very seriously and dress accordingly. 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 is likely to be in Trinity Term 2019. 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 Turf Tavern, 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 MCR members who are doing interesting courses and occasionally guest speakers from the outside world.

Master’s Breakfasts and Brunch

The purpose of these occasions is to enable the Master to meet each member of the College individually; every new member is invited to attend at least once. These events are free to attend and are an excellent occasion to talk to the Master and to meet other College members in an informal environment.

Other events

The traditional garden party held in Trinity (spring) Term is always a good excuse to stuff yourself with wholesome food. Also, look forward to wine tastings, the dangerous Burns night and many, many more events. The MCR will also 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 search for MCR St Peter’s 2017-2018, we should pop up in your search. Impromptu events may pop up during the term, so keep your eye on the MCR notice board, your emails, and Facebook. 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 Hilary Sudbury, the Accommodation Manager. If you have accommodation queries before arriving, contact Hilary directly (contact details at the end). Also, please remember the College welfare advisors – the MCR Vice-President, the MCR welfare reps, the Senior and Junior Welfare Officers, 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 financial issues (paying of battles 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.
## Useful Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name and Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MCR President</td>
<td>Isuru Goonatilake (<a href="mailto:Isuru.goonatilake@spc.ox.ac.uk">Isuru.goonatilake@spc.ox.ac.uk</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Jamie Green (<a href="mailto:Jamie.green@spc.ox.ac.uk">Jamie.green@spc.ox.ac.uk</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Leonard Hasenclever (<a href="mailto:leonard.hasenclever@spc.ox.ac.uk">leonard.hasenclever@spc.ox.ac.uk</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Secretary</td>
<td>Remco Geervliet (<a href="mailto:Remco.geervliet@spc.ox.ac.uk">Remco.geervliet@spc.ox.ac.uk</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Deans</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Genevieve.martin@spc.ox.ac.uk">Genevieve.martin@spc.ox.ac.uk</a> tel. 78904 <a href="mailto:Matthew.reid@spc.ox.ac.uk">Matthew.reid@spc.ox.ac.uk</a> tel. 78951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porters Lodge</td>
<td>Paul Irons (<a href="mailto:lodge@spc.ox.ac.uk">lodge@spc.ox.ac.uk</a>) tel. 78900/78902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursar</td>
<td>James Graham – (6)14989 (secretary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Finance Officer</td>
<td>Katie Pullen-Rowland (<a href="mailto:katie.pullen-rowland@spc.ox.ac.uk">katie.pullen-rowland@spc.ox.ac.uk</a>) tel. 78936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Office</td>
<td>Martin Brown (<a href="mailto:martin.brown@spc.ox.ac.uk">martin.brown@spc.ox.ac.uk</a>) tel 78863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Registrar</td>
<td>Catherine Whalley (<a href="mailto:catherine.whalley@spc.ox.ac.uk">catherine.whalley@spc.ox.ac.uk</a>) tel. 78864 (from 4 Sept)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation Manager</td>
<td>Hilary Sudbury (<a href="mailto:Hilary.sudbury@spc.ox.ac.uk">Hilary.sudbury@spc.ox.ac.uk</a>) tel. (6)14983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutor for Graduates</td>
<td>Prof Mike Bonsall - (<a href="mailto:michael.bonsall@spc.ox.ac.uk">michael.bonsall@spc.ox.ac.uk</a>) tel.78916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT Office</td>
<td><a href="mailto:it-support@spc.ox.ac.uk">it-support@spc.ox.ac.uk</a> - tel. 78942</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 5-digit telephone numbers are university internal numbers. If you are phoning from the UK, use the prefix 01865 2 (or 01865 6 where (6) is indicated above). If you are phoning from abroad, use the prefix +44 1865 2 or 6.
- Email addresses for anyone in St Peter’s conclude with @spc.ox.ac.uk