

Somerville JCR & MCR

Welfare HAND BOOK

2016-2017

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With very, very many thanks to the JCR of Christ Church, who provided much of the inspiration for this booklet and also some of the content!

The JCR Welfare Reps

Hey everyone! This is Calum and Teresa, a third year Medicine and second year English student. We're your JCR Welfare Officers! We've had an amazing time at Somerville so far and want to make sure everyone can have the best experience possible.

Somerville is known as being a very friendly and welcoming college. We embrace a diverse student body of people of all genders, ethnic groups, nationalities religions, sexual orientations and ability statuses.

Supporting wellbeing includes providing you with fantastic welfare events like welfare teas and wine and cheese nights! These are perfect excuses to pull yourself away from the library, take a break and meet people, and a chance to get to know the JCR welfare team and peer supporters.

We're also here to give you sexual health supplies you need including condoms, lube, chlamydia tests and pregnancy tests. To get these, just fill in the confidential online form linked in the "description" section of the JCR noticeboard group on Facebook – a group which you should all join to keep in the loop about everything happening in college! This year, we are going to have a massive push for raising awareness about mental and sexual

health. We will be distributing leaflets, making posts on Facebook about key issues and hopefully getting a few speakers in – watch this space!

One of our most important roles is to listen if you need to talk about anything that is on your mind. Along with the rest of the peer support team, we've undertaken 30 hours of training in peer support skills. Talking about problems is really important as they are always harder to deal with if you feel alone. Whether the problem is big or small we are here to offer non-judgemental support and listening rather than advice, and act as a first point of contact as we can refer you to any other service you might need, including the nurse, junior deans and university counselling service.

We hope that you'll settle in nicely and have a great time here! If there's anything you want to ask about or talk about, drop one of us an email at calum.mcintyre@some.ox.ac.uk or teresa.rendell@some.ox.ac.uk.

Best,



Calum and Teresa

The JCR President



Hi! I'm **Alex Crichton-Miller**, I study History and French and I'm your JCR President for 2016/17. This basically means that, together with the Committee, I help make sure that Somerville student voices are heard both by College and by the University as a whole. If you have any questions about college life or anything at all, feel free to drop me a message either on Facebook or at jcr.president@some.ox.ac.uk. No seriously, do. Alternatively, you'll hopefully spot me around college (fingers crossed they use a flattering pic for this) so please stop me for a chat can't wait to meet you all!

A note from your MCR Welfare Reps

The **MCR Welfare reps** would like to welcome you to the College welfare booklet! We'd like to start by saying that the Somerville MCR takes its responsibilities for student welfare seriously, and we're always keen to provide any support we can. You're welcome to talk to us about any problem - big or small - at any time, and we'll do everything in our power to help.

To get in touch, don't hesitate to email mcr.welfare@some.ox.ac.uk, or come talk to one of the MCR Welfare reps.

The Welfare Reps

The College Welfare Team

All of the College welfare team, and the JCR representatives, work within our Policy on Confidentiality and the Circulation of Welfare Information, so you don't need to worry about anything you tell us being disclosed to anyone else. You will have received a copy of this when you began your course. Alternatively, you can find it here: www.some.ox.ac.uk/about-somerville/freedom-of-information/policies-procedures-2/ see here: (<http://blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/mcr/committee/>).

Anything you say will be held in strict confidence. The booklet also covers the wide range of support on offer, both inside and outside of college.

Where shall I start with introducing our fab college welfare team?! There are many people here at Somerville whose job it is to ensure our students are as healthy and happy as they can be. I'm the **Academic Registrar** for the college. Amongst other things, one of my roles is to co-ordinate welfare support for all of our students. I've been working here at Somerville for almost seven years so have helped students with all sorts of problems. While I'm not an expert on every possible welfare concern you might have, I will definitely know someone who is! Please feel free to stop by my office, House 4, if you need a confidential chat about anything. And be assured that seeking help is always the start of sorting out an issue, never a sign of weakness. We all need a bit of support and help along the way sometimes, particularly adjusting to life at Oxford and the pressures it brings! It's also worth noting that the majority of our students go through their studies at Oxford without any interaction with the Welfare team, because they don't have any concerns. But keep us in mind just in case you do!

Jo Ockwell

jo.ockwell@some.ox.ac.uk 01865 270525

Our **college nurse** is Lynn Cross. She's in college every day during term-time, in Darbshire 16. You don't need to make an appointment. Just turn up at the times she's available and she'll see you. Lynn has been a nurse and worked in health care for over 30 years. She can help confidentially *as a first point of contact about anything*, not just health care. The college provides a nurse led clinic, providing many services on site for students, linked with Jericho Health Centre (less than a five minute walk from college), where our **college doctors**, Dr Helen Steel and Dr Evelyn Sanderson are based. Lynn is able to book students into doctor's appointments at the student clinics at the Jericho Health Centre on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Just see Lynn and she'll book a doctor's

appointments for you. If you need to see a doctor but can't see Lynn to book an appointment during the student clinics, just call 01865 429993 anytime between 08:30-18:00 to book an appointment at another time.

The Senior Tutor, Dr Steve Rayner, oversees welfare provision in college. He holds regular 'Open Door' office hours when students can stop by to discuss anything that is bothering them. His office is based on the 1st floor in House, next to the Principal's.

senior.tutor@some.ox.ac.uk 01865 270629

The Junior Deans oversee non-academic student discipline, and provide welfare support to students outside of office hours. They live in College, and one of them is on call every evening, night and weekend during full term. They are available to provide guidance and support to students in crisis.

Deans.office@some.ox.ac.uk

The College Doctors or your GP

Jericho Health Centre, Walton Street, Oxford, OX2 6NW

GPs are able to help with mental health problems as well as physical health issues using a variety of approaches. Appointments can be available on the day for urgent matters although are usually within 48 hours. If you feel that you need to be seen urgently, please make this clear when making an appointment. It can feel daunting to visit a Doctor for support. If you would feel more comfortable, you can bring someone that you trust along with you for support. All the Doctors will do their best to be understanding of your problem and make you feel comfortable but you can request another appointment with a different Doctor if you want to.

Lynn Cross is available to all students each day during term time in Darbshire 16. Her office hours are posted on her door and will also be sent to you by email. You can also contact Lynn by email at lynn.cross@some.ox.ac.uk. Lynn operates under complete confidentiality and is a great first point of contact for anyone who would like to get support for a mental health problem as she has a lot of knowledge about the types of support available outside college such as the GP and the Counselling Service.

JCR or MCR Welfare Reps (see pages 3 & 4)

JCR or MCR Peer Supporters

<http://blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/jcr/peer-support/> peersupport@some.ox.ac.uk

Somerville college peer supporters make up the main body of the JCR welfare team. Their goal is to ensure that no one in college feels isolated in their time of need. They have all completed a 30-hour peer support training scheme, helping to equip them with the skills to support YOU! Any problems that you want to share, no matter how large or small, can be directed to any member of the team via peersupport@some.ox.ac.uk. Alternatively, feel free to talk to any of them in person. And remember, anything that you tell them is treated confidentially within the college's policy on confidentiality (see page 4)!

In an emergency:

Call 999 for the
Emergency Services

Call the Porters' Lodge
01865 270600

Go to A&E at the
John Radcliffe Hospital,
Headley Way, Oxford, OX3 9DU

Where to go for Physical and Mental Health Support

It can be scary to experience a physical or mental health problem while at university, particularly as you are away from the familiar environment and support networks of home. However, you are not alone! We all get ill sometimes and many people experience a mental health problem at some point. There are many avenues of support available, within and outside the University and you will always be treated with respect and confidentiality.

The Counselling Service

www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling or email counselling@admin.ox.ac.uk, 3 Worcester Street, 01865 270300

The Counselling Service provides free and confidential support to students in line with the Ethical Framework for Good Practice produced by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. It can be accessed a lot faster than NHS counselling. Typically, the first appointment will be within 2 weeks. Counselling Service staff are professionally trained and widely experienced in helping students with a range of problems - from specific mental health problems to stress to difficulties in relationships with others. They offer individual and group sessions as well as workshops which are designed to help you build skills to cope with the demands of university. Topics change every term and have included mindfulness, perfectionism and overcoming panic. Their website also includes a section of useful resources on topics including sleep, stress management, healthy eating and time management. The podcasts, in the 'Supportive resources' section, are a really great place to find help and perspective!

Your Personal Tutor

You will receive an email during your first week telling you who your personal tutor is. Although it can feel daunting to talk about health problems with your tutor, they are usually very helpful and understanding.

The OUSU Student Advice Service

www.ousu.org/advice/student-advice-service or email advice@ousu.ox.ac.uk, 2 Worcester Street, 01865 288466.

The Student Advice Service is an advice, information, and advocacy service run by a full-time Manager, and two part-time Advisors. They are happy to listen and advise you on any matter.

For more information...

Students Minds (www.studentminds.org.uk)

Mind (www.mind.org.uk)

Mind Your Head (<http://mindyourheadoxford.org/>)

Bridewell Organic Gardens www.bridewellorganicgardens.co.uk

Where to go anonymously

Nightline

Skype: oxfordnightline, 01865 270270 or drop into the Nightline Centre at 16 Wellington Square.

Nightline is an anonymous, confidential listening and information service run by students for students. It's open from 8.00pm until 8.00am every day from 0th-9th week. There are always two people in the office, one male and one female, who take hundreds of calls every year from Oxford students who need some external, impartial support. You can share any problem with someone who has been specially trained in sensitive listening and support and who has an understanding of what it is like to live and study in Oxford.

Samaritans

jo@samaritans.org, 08457 909090

The Samaritans is an anonymous, confidential listening service which is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You can share any problem with someone who has been specially trained in sensitive listening and support, who will provide a space for you to talk through your problem and explore your options.

How to Support a Friend

Students normally talk first to their friends when they're having a hard time. Here are some tips for supporting a friend:

Have the conversation

Don't be afraid to start the conversation about your friend's difficulties. Pick a private place where you will both be relaxed and a time when you're both free. *Listen actively* and try explaining your friend's problems back to them to check that you understand. *Ask open questions* such as "What was that like?" and "How did it feel when..." but avoid "why" questions as they can sound aggressive. *Avoid giving advice* as this can make them feel trapped.

Respect your friend's confidentiality. The exception is if they are in danger of hurting themselves or others – then it is important to tell a member of the welfare team or a healthcare professional.

Understand your friend's mental health problems

People with mental health problems often have experiences or behaviours that are difficult for others to understand. You can help overcome this by learning about your friend's mental health problems on sites such as NHS Choices or Mind. Appreciate that unhealthy behaviours such as drug or alcohol abuse, self-harming or eating disorders can be your friend's way of *coping with other problems*.

Know where to get more help

For further help, your friend can talk to our peer supporters (contact details on pages 7 and 8) or the university counselling service. If your friend has a mental health problem, they can also speak to a GP who can help them get treatment.

If they are contemplating committing suicide imminently – i.e. they have a clear suicide plan and the means to carry it out, even if they say they won't – do not leave them alone at any point. Call 999 or escort them to A and E and remove anything dangerous from their vicinity, such as pills, knives, razors, scissors and cords of any sort. If your friend has suicidal thoughts but no clear plan, encourage them to talk to, a counsellor, a GP, the Samaritans helpline (116 123) or CALM helpline for young men (0800 58 58 58 from 5pm-midnight).

If you are contemplating suicide, you can also seek help from these resources. If your friend starts to profess irrational beliefs (delusions) and/or hallucinate, they may have a condition called psychosis. If this happens, make sure they see a doctor soon as they could hurt themselves and early intervention is important.

Take care of yourself

It's important to maintain boundaries. Help your friend find other supporters if they are depending too much on you or want to talk about topics you aren't comfortable discussing. If you are worrying about them, you can talk about it to someone you trust, protecting your friend's confidentiality by maintaining their anonymity and speaking to someone who doesn't know the friend.

Further Information

<http://www.studentminds.org.uk/look-after-your-mate.html>

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/mentalhealth/Pages/Mentalhealthhome.aspx>

<http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/mental-health-a-z/>

Safe Sex is...

Safe sex means *becoming informed* about the risks of sex so that you can avoid putting yourself or your partner at risk of unwanted pregnancies (for heterosexual pairings) or STIs.

To help you start getting informed about how to practice safe sex, we've made a 5-step guide...

1. Being Informed

Safe sex starts with *getting informed by doing your own research on topics relevant to your own sexual health*. This is important because sexual health risks are different for different genders, sexualities, races and local areas. We recommend using the NHS Choices website as a starting point at: <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Sexualhealthtopics/>.

2. Using Contraception

Most people having heterosexual sex need to use contraception if they don't want the biologically female partner to become pregnant. Biological females should read up on the 15 different types of contraception and discuss the decision with their GP to make an informed choice.

The **(male) condom** is 98% effective with perfect use but only 82% effective with typical use as people often use or store them incorrectly. The condom is the only contraceptive method which also protects against STIs. You can order condoms from the link on the JCR Noticeboard – for free!

The **combined pill and progesterone-only pill** are also highly effective with perfect use (99%), but

much less effective with typical use (91%) as people often fail to follow the instructions. It can be prescribed by your GP.

Long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) is contraception which is administered by a doctor or nurse and then works for a long time. LARC is by far the most effective in terms of actual use. Types of LARC include the **contraceptive implant, contraceptive injection, IUS and IUD**. These can be prescribed by your GP.

To get the maximum efficacy of contraception, it must be used *consistently and correctly every time you have vaginal or anal intercourse*. You can increase the efficacy further by using **dual protection** – a condom plus one other form of contraception.

The Family Planning Association (FPA) has a fantastic, thorough guide to contraception: <http://www.fpa.org.uk/help-and-advice/contraception-help>

3. Using Protection against STIs

A **sexually transmitted infection/disease (STI/STD)** is an infection transmitted by exchange of body fluids such as semen, physical contact with another person's genitals or even skin-to-skin contact. They are very common among young people – over half of the 435,000 STIs diagnosed in heterosexuals in England in 2015 occurred in 16-24 year olds. STIs can cause anything from mild itches to permanent disability and even death.

However, most STIs are easily preventable by using protection. This means using condoms and/or dental dams during sex where body fluids could be exchanged which includes oral, anal and vaginal sex. Even if you are on another form of contraception, you and your partner will need to use protection until you have both tested negative for STIs. Many people do not like using condoms or dental dams for oral sex; in this case, you may consider avoiding oral sex with partners who have not been tested for STIs.

4. Testing Regularly for STIs

You should get tested for common STIs every time you change sexual partner or at least once a year– even if you are having safe sex. This is because STIs often do not cause obvious symptoms. You may want to test more frequently if you are in a *high risk* group such as **men who have sex with men** (see FAQs). Additionally, you should test after taking part in unsafe sexual activity or if you experience symptoms of an STI. You should also encourage any regular partners to get tested.

The sexual health clinic in Oxford is at the Churchill Hospital on the Old Road in Headington, OX3 7LE. To arrange an appointment, call the clinic at **01865 231231** between 8.30am and 6pm (4pm on Friday). Drop-in sessions are also available from 11.15am to 15.15pm Monday to Friday (starting later at 12.15 on Wednesday) and from 9am to 12 noon Saturday. You can also get chlamydia self-test kits free from the JCR by filling in the online sexual health supplies form on the JCR noticeboard description.

For information about what to expect from your sexual health appointment, check out the NHS Choices guide at <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/STIs/Pages/VisitinganSTIclinic.aspx>.

5. Managing your Risk

All sexual activity carries some level risk. Further steps you can take to reduce your and your partner's risk include:

- Making plans for keeping sex safe in advance if you are going to drink alcohol

- Reducing your number of sexual partners

- Asking your partners to be exclusive with you (not have sex with anyone else)

- Avoiding higher-risk sexual activities, such as anal sex

- Avoiding physical sexual activity altogether

Of course, not everyone will want to take all of these steps. Getting educated can help you make informed decisions and manage your risk.

What do I do after an unsafe sexual encounter?

After a sexual encounter where protection failed or was not used, it is important to either take a chlamydia test or go to a sexual health clinic to get tested for both chlamydia and gonorrhoea. However, if you are in a high risk group such as gay and bisexual men, you should get a full test at a sexual health clinic. If there is a risk you may have been exposed to HIV, you should contact sexual health services or go to A and E as soon as possible to access post-exposure prophylaxis, a treatment which can greatly reduce your risk of contracting HIV.

If you are a biological female who had an unsafe heterosexual encounter without contraception or where contraception failed, you can take the morning after pill or have an IUD inserted to prevent pregnancy occurring.

How do I get the morning after pill?

The morning after pill can prevent pregnancy from occurring after an unsafe encounter. *It is more effective the sooner it is taken and must be taken within 72 or 120 hours of the sexual encounter* (depending on the brand).

The morning after pill can be prescribed by Somerville College nurse (Lynn Cross) or a GP or alternatively purchased from a pharmacy. The Boot's pharmacy on Cornmarket Street and the Woodstock Road Chemist are part of a scheme to offer it free to under 21s. The JCR can reimburse you if you keep the receipt.

There is a myth that the morning after pill works by preventing the fertilised egg from implanting but the evidence available suggests this does not occur. While scientists cannot be 100% sure of all the effects, the evidence available suggests it delays ovulation, just like the regular pill.

How do you put on a condom?

We recommend this fantastic guide by planned parenthood: <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/birth-control/condom/how-to-put-a-condom-on>

Is safe sex the same for LGBTQ+ people?

LGBTQ+ people have different safe sex needs from heterosexuals. In particular, gay and bisexual men (often called men who have sex with men or MSM in healthcare) have much higher incidences

of HIV and other STIs than other groups. MSM make up only a few percent of the male population yet represented 72% of gonorrhoea, 88% of syphilis and 69% of HIV cases diagnosed in males in England in 2015.

NHS Choices has good LGBTQ+ health information at <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/LGBhealth/Pages/Gayandlesbianhealth.aspx>.

GUM (Genitourinary Medicine) Clinics, *www.sexualhealthoxfordshire.nhs.uk*

Harrison Department, Churchill Hospital, Old Road, Headington, OX3 7LE. (See page 12 for info).

Rectory Centre, Rectory Road, Oxford, OX4 1BU. *See website for drop in clinic opening times.*

The Oxfordshire Sexual Health Clinics offer confidential walk-in clinics and other useful sexual health services. They provide emergency contraception, testing and treatment for STIs and advice on safe sex. They can also provide contraception fitting and pregnancy/termination advice.

Chlamydia Testing Scheme (*www.ocsp.org.uk*)

Sends a test kit discreetly to you if you would rather not go to a clinic or via the JCR.

Emergency contraception available from any pharmacy (free for 21 and under)

And last of all... Sex without consent is sexual assault.

How to report a sexual assault

First and most importantly, make sure you talk to someone, when or if you feel ready to. Remember that you have done absolutely nothing wrong! Whatever you are feeling is completely normal. Your friends, family, the Peer Supporters, College Welfare Team, Counselling Service, GP and the sexual assault/harassment dedicated services are all there to support you! We also have trained First Responders to sexual assault in college, and they will be best equipped to support, help and advise you. The whole Welfare team are there to listen in a safe, non-judgemental way, and anything discussed will remain completely confidential. They will also be able to find resources and help you decide how to proceed if you decide to.

If you choose to report an assault there are many options open to you. You can report to the police (999/101/Thames Valley Police, St. Aldates - [01865 841 148](tel:01865841148)), but this may be a little daunting. You can instead or also contact a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), a government service providing support to survivors of rape or sexual assault, such as interviews, examinations, counselling and advice on making an informed decision about what you want to do next, regardless of whether you report the offence to the police or not. The centres are in Swindon, Slough or Bletchley, but the college will provide a taxi directly there paid for by the college. Just ask the Porters' Lodge (you can also take a friend or someone from the Welfare Team with you).

The local SARCC (Sexual Assault and Rape Crisis Centre) is hugely supportive and can take you through your options clearly. They can also help supporters of survivors of sexual assault. Your local SARCC can also collect evidence should you chose to speak to the police later. The local SARCC is staffed by women and is therefore only open to women. For male survivors of sexual assault you can get in touch with Survivors UK via their website <https://www.survivorsuk.org/> and for LGBTQ+ survivors you can speak to Pandora's Project www.pandys.org/lgbtsurvivors.html

Male / Female Welfare Reps – (see pages 3 and 4.)

College Nurse, Lynn Cross, Darbshire 16 – (see pages 5 and 6.)

Oxford Sexual Abuse & Rape Crisis Centre(OSARCC)

(www.oxfordrapecrisis.net)

OSARCC provides free, confidential advice for survivors of sexual assault, rape, domestic abuse and harassment. They also run a telephone helpline and email support service, available on their website.

It Happens Here (ithappenshere@ousus.ox.ac.uk)

This is a campaign which raises awareness about sexual assault and rape in the University. The co-chairs are contactable via the above email address.

The OUSU Student Advice Service and the Counselling service (see page 7)

Where to go for advice about harassment

Harassment is any unwanted behaviour that is unacceptable to the recipient of the behaviour and has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the recipient. Behaviour that may be acceptable to one person, may be offensive and intimidating to another.

Types of Harassment

Harassment related to a protected characteristic. Unwanted offensive behaviour by a person towards another based on an individual's age, disability, gender or gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or beliefs, or sexual orientation.

Sexual Harassment.

Unwanted offensive behaviour of one person towards another of a sexual nature. Examples might include making provocative suggestions, unnecessary physical contact, jokes of a sexual nature, suggestions of sexual contact.

Bullying.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour of one person towards another. Examples of bullying might include making threats, spreading rumours, physical or verbal abuse, or deliberate exclusion of an individual from a social group.

Stalking.

Stalking is unwanted obsessive or persistent behaviour of one person towards another. The unwanted behaviour may be in person, or via another means such as email or contact via social media. Behaviour that may seem normal can cause distress to a victim if it is persistent, for example, repeated messaging on social media.

Where to go in College

If you believe that you have been, or are, experiencing harassment you can contact a member of the College's Advisory Committee on Harassment. The College's Advisory Committee consists of six members: two members elected by Governing Body (one male, one female, at least

one being a member of Governing Body); two members (one male, one female) of the Middle Common Room Committee; and two members (one male, one female) of the Junior Common Room Committee. You can find the college's harassment policy at <http://www.some.ox.ac.uk/about-somerville/freedom-of-information/policies-procedures-2/>

The Dean or Senior Tutor will provide the contact details of the Harassment Advisors.

Where to go outside of College, but within the University

University Harassment Line

(email - harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk or 01865 270760)

If you would like to speak to a trained harassment advisor who is not a member of your college you can contact the harassment line. The Advisors are members of the University Harassment Advisory Network. (www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice/advisornetwork/)

University Policy on dealing with harassment

(www.some.ox.ac.uk/about-somerville/freedom-of-information/policies-procedures-2)

University Procedure for dealing with harassment

(www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/harassment?wssl=1)

Where to go outside of the College and University

Citizens Advice

www.citizensadvice.org.uk, 95 St Aldates, OXFORD, Oxfordshire, OX1 1DA, 03444 111 444.

Support Line

www.supportline.org.uk, 01708 765200.

Support Line is a confidential telephone helpline offering emotional support to any individual on any issue, including advice and support on stalking and harassment. Look up 'Stalking and Harassment' from the list of issues they can help with.

If you've been the victim of a criminal offence.....

It rarely happens, but if you're unfortunate and become the victim of, or witness to crime there is help and support out there for you.

Thames Valley Police

Non-emergency number 101, www.thamesvalley.police.uk/

If you have been the victim of a crime but you don't want the police to be involved you can talk about it to any members of the welfare team in college, the JCR or MCR welfare reps or one of the Peer Supporters. We promise to listen without judging and won't pressure you to report it to the police if you aren't ready to, or never want to.

Where to go for advice on issues relating to gender equality

If you feel that you've experienced discrimination because of your gender or just need some advice about gender equality, there are loads of sources of support out there.....

Support in college

Speak to one of the JCR or MCR Welfare Reps (see pages 3 and 4), or any member of the college welfare team (see page 5).

Support in the University

WomCam (Women's Campaign)

<https://womcamoxford.wordpress.com/>

WomCam (Women's Campaign) is a 'feminist society that organises events, raises awareness of issues and creates a platform for feminist discussion'.

OUSU Vice-President for Welfare & Equal Opportunities

vpweo@ousu.ox.ac.uk

OUSU Vice-President for Women

vpwomen@ousu.ox.ac.uk

OUSU Women's Campaign Officer

womensofficer@ousu.ox.ac.uk

Nightline

01865 270270

External support

Oxford Women's Counselling Centre

www.oxwcc.co.uk

Resources for Women

Oxford Women Self Care for Freshers

www.facebook.com/groups/owscfreshersgroup

A note from the JCR Women's Officer



Hi everyone! I'm **Rani Govender**, a second year historian and your Women's Officer for this year. As an officer with a welfare role, I'm always free to talk to about any worries you have, whether they be to do with problems you are having to do with gender (perhaps facing sexual harassment or discrimination in or outside of college), or anything else you want to talk over. Please do send me an email (rani.govender@some.ox.ac.uk) or come and find me to have a chat to nothing is too small and everything is kept confidential. If you are looking for guidance on other

sources of support you can access I can help you find the most suitable options too. An important way of dealing with issues of gender equality is through talking about problems and thinking of ways of how is best to tackle them, so every term I'll be holding informal discussions which are open to everyone. Whether leading the discussion or just coming along to listen, I would love to have a wide range of genders involved, so please get in touch if you want to find out more. See you around!

Women's things.... The Sanitary Product Scheme

The Ideas Behind It

For the first time this year the JCR is very excited to run a scheme which gives free sanitary products to Somerville JCR students. Sanitary products are an absolute necessity and therefore an unwanted cost to those of us who have periods. As well as taking away this expense, the scheme hopes to be another form of welfare support offered at Somerville. Periods can have negative health implications both physically and mentally, and in providing access to sanitary products we hope to alleviate some of these troubles. Furthermore, in providing sanitary products we are emphasising that periods are normal, natural, and certainly not taboo. While some people can find it difficult to talk about periods, it is important that any stigma is removed. Not only will this allow those who have periods to feel more comfortable when getting the products, but it also means some may feel more at ease if they need to discuss their period and related problems with others, in both formal and informal settings.

How It Is Going to Work

There will be normal pads and super pads, with the same options available for tampons (regular and super). We will provide menstrual cups (also known as mooncups), which some use as an alternative to pads/tampons. While it is a smaller group of students that use these products, we aim to cater to all needs and so as far as possible they will be available. There will be two main ways that students will be able to access the sanitary products. Twice a term there will be a 'tampon mountain', where all the products will be available for people to come and take what they need. We hope this will help promote discussion and understanding among those who have periods. There will also be the pidge system; you can place orders through a form (the link is on the JCR noticeboard) and I will deliver them weekly into people's pigeon holes. Only I will know the names of the people who have used this system and this information will be confidential. Of course, if anyone has any ideas, suggestions or queries about this then I would be happy to hear from you, so please do not hesitate to get in touch!

Rani

Where to go for....LGBTQ+ advice and resources

LGBTQIAP+ (LGBTQ+) stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and Pansexual. They are descriptive terms chosen by people to describe or define their sexuality or gender identity. However, there are people who perceive these descriptors as constraining and opt not to use them. There are also other sexualities/gender identities not in the acronym; these can be found in the glossary on pages 32-35 and on the LGBTQ+ page of the JCR website.

There is a strong and welcoming LGBTQIAP+ presence in Somerville willing to provide advice, company and help to any who may need it.

Hello from the JCR LGBTQ+ Officer



Hello! I'm **Kate Asquith**, a second year English student and I'm your LGBTQ+ rep this year. My role is to make sure LGBTQ+ students feel welcome and free to express themselves at Somerville without fear of intolerance or abuse. Our college is one of the most progressive and friendly so I'm here to support you in any welfare issues relating to sexuality or gender as well as representing the LGBTQ+ community within the JCR. I'll also be organising fun activities and educational events around college to promote a safe space for LGBTQ+ students to enjoy themselves and meet new people, and I'll keep you informed about the university wide LGBTQ soc events too!

I'm always available for a chat, so come find me around college or send me an email at katharine.asquith@some.ox.ac.uk if you like!

Sources of support

JCR LGBTQ+ Officer and JCR or MCR Welfare Officers

(see pages 3 & 4)

JCR Peer Supporters

www.blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/jcr/peer-support/ peersupport@some.ox.ac.uk

There are also 'Rainbow Peers', a group of peer supporters who identify as LGBTQ+ who can support people from their own or other colleges www.facebook.com/rainbowpeers/

College Nurse, Lynn Cross, Darbishire 16,

lynn.cross@some.ox.ac.uk

Oxford University LGBTQ Society

www.oulgbtsoc.org.uk

The society runs LGBTQ+ events including club nights and chilled out brunches across the Oxford colleges. Its committee also includes asexual, bisexual/pansexual and trans welfare reps, alongside its women's/men's welfare reps.

OUSU Vice-President Welfare & Equal Opportunities

vpweo@jousu.ox.ac.uk

OUSU Student Advice Service

www.ousu.org/advice/student-advice-service 01865288466

University Counselling Service

www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling

Oxford Friend LGBT+ Helpline

www.oxfordfriend.co.uk

This local volunteer-run organisation offers counselling for Oxford's LGBT+ community.

Oxford Nightline

www.oxfordnightline.org

A confidential advice service, open from 8pm to 8am during term time.

National LGBTQ+ mental health support

Mind UK

www.mind.org.uk

Switchboard LGBT+ Helpline

www.switchboard.lgbt

Stonewall Healthy Lives

www.healthyives.stonewall.org.uk/for-patients/your-health/mental-health.aspx

The Metro Centre

www.metrocentreonline.org

Welcome from the JCR International Officer



Hi there! I am **Leanne Chu**, your international officer. Somerville is a really vibrant and friendly place. I look forward to welcoming you on the first night of your arrival with PIZZA! It'll be a nice night for international students to mingle and have a look around. To help you settle in real quick and hasslefree, refer to the international students' guide <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/international?wssl=1>. It covers the most important stuff you might want to sort out asap, such as what to bring (and what not), visas, how to open bank accounts, transport to and from Oxford, etc. I'll be around if you want to ask

anything, and you can always rely on your college parents. There are also some country/region based societies across uni. Check them out and meet friends from home. And right here in college, we'll be having international themed welfare-teas, be sure to go to those for the free food! There'll also be a few international movie nights and celebrations of major festivals. Oh, and if you have any requests, be it food, movies, or anything else really, give me a shout out and I'll try to make it happen. Can't wait to see you all! (kwan.chu@some.ox.ac.uk)



Where to go foradvice for International Students

JCR or MCR International Officers

blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/jcr/ blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/mcr/

OUSU Vice-President for Graduates

<http://ousu.org/advice/life-welfare/internationalstudents/vpgraduates@ousu.ox.ac.uk>

The OUSU V-P for Graduates represents international students' interests to the University.

OUSU International Students' Campaign

<http://ousu.org/get-involved/campaigns/international/iscchair@ousu.ox.ac.uk>.

The OUSU International Students' Campaign runs events to bring international students together. They can also advise on any issues particularly faced by international students.

Oxford University Student Information and Immigration Team

student.information@admin.ox.ac.uk or student.immigration@admin.ox.ac.uk

The Student Information and Immigration Team offer help and advice to all students. They are experts at advising on visa issues, working whilst in the UK on a student visa, travelling abroad whilst in the UK on a visa, as well as offering advice on police registration. And just a word on bank accounts: there will be plenty of time to open one. You can easily sort it out after you have arrived!

Where to go for....advice on issues of ethnicity and faith

If you have any ethnicity or faith based concerns or generally want to chat about anything to do with these issues then feel free to come and speak to the JCR Ethnic Minorities Rep (see below). If you are looking to get involved in any cultural societies during your time at Oxford then a list of these can be found by selecting cultural/national at www.ousu.org/freshersfair/clubs-societies

You could also join CRAE (Campaign for Racial Awareness and Equality), which is open to everyone regardless of ethnicity or faith. CRAE meets once a week and it's a really great space to discuss concerns and thoughts about race and work out how to make Oxford as inclusive as possible.

The JCR Ethnic Minorities Rep.

The JCR Ethnic Minorities Rep will be appointed shortly after the beginning of the 2016/17 academic year. The person appointed will email an introduction to all students when they are appointed. The Ethnic Minorities Rep works towards addressing and improving the low proportion of BME students at the university. Examples of activities organised by Ethnic Minorities Reps in the past include a multicultural fashion show and a discussion on cultural appropriation vs. appreciation.

Other resources.....

OUSU Anti-Racism Officer

bme@ousu.ox.ac.uk

OUSU Student Advice Service

www.ousu.org/advice/student-advice-service

Oxford Black Students Union

www.facebook.com/groups/822794731107681

Campaign for Racial Awareness and Equality

www.facebook.com/OxfordCRAE

Equality and Diversity

www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/

OUSU Vice President for Welfare and Equal Opportunities

zpweo@ousu.ox.ac.uk

JCR Peer Supporters

www.blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/jcr/peer-support/

There are also 'Peers of Colour', a group of BME peer supporters who can support people from their own or other colleges

www.facebook.com/oxunipoc/

Where to go for..... help and advice on disability

Sources of Support

Jo Ockwell, Academic Registrar and Disability Coordinator

jo.ockwell@some.ox.ac.uk, 01865 270525, House 4, Somerville.

The most obvious person to talk to about disability is the college's Academic Registrar and Disability Co-ordinator, Jo Ockwell. Jo can offer advice about disability support and reasonable adjustments. She can also put you in contact with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS), who are the experts in supporting students with disability.

Disability Advisory Service (DAS)

www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/das email at disability@admin.ox.ac.uk 01865 280459, 3 Worcester Street, Oxford, OX1 2BX.

The DAS offers support and advice for students with disabilities, including offering learning support,

mental health advice, support for those with sensory and mobility impairments, health conditions, and autistic spectrum conditions. The DAS may be able to help you apply for funding, such as the Disabled Student Allowance, which might cover costs for specialist equipment. Their website provides a wealth of information.

JCR Disabilities Officer

(see below)

OUSU Vice-President for Welfare & Equal Opportunities

vpweo@osus.ox.ac.uk

OSDC (Oxford Students' Disabled Community)

www.facebook.com/groups/oudsc

This is a Facebook group that is focused on helping people with disabilities with life in Oxford. The members of the group are very friendly, and are happy to answer most questions.

The JCR Disabilities Officer



Hi, I'm **Courtney Marsden** and I study Law. I'm the Disabilities Officer for the JCR and I'm extremely passionate about raising awareness of disabilities in college. There is a wide range of support available for students with disabilities throughout Oxford, but it can be overwhelming to access the resources, especially because they are available at both college and departmental level. I hope that I can lend advice and a helping hand to anyone who needs it; be it organising Disabled Students Allowance, organising appropriate accommodation or informing your tutors of any help you may need. I know disabilities is an extremely broad term, and each person has different requirements, but I hope that with support from me, the college and the university as a whole, you will be able to enjoy the incredible resources that the university has to make your studies and general wellbeing flourish. (Courtney.marsden@some.ox.ac.uk)

Where to go for.... Help with work worries

It can be intimidating coming to Oxford with the ideas of expectations of a heavy workload. Be assured that your workload will be manageable and you will still be able to have a social life and sleep! If you are struggling, it is important to speak to **your Tutor**, the **Academic Registrar**, or the **Senior Tutor**. If you have underlying health or personal problems that are affecting your ability to satisfy your academic commitments, they need to know about it! It's the only way they can help.

A note from the JCR Academic Affairs Rep



Hi! My name is **Gaia Shen**, I'm a second year Law student and the JCR's Academic Affairs Officer. Life at Somerville is a great rollercoaster, there are always so many amazing opportunities and activities to take part in and often managing the academic aspect of our lives can turn out to be stressful. My role as Academic Affairs Officer is to ensure that you get as much support and guidance as needed in order to be on top of your studies and that your views and concerns are well represented in front of tutors and College. My role includes running regular academic feedback surveys and session, gathering your concerns and communicating them back to College and University, attending various meetings to ensure that your voices are heard. I'm also the person to go to for chasing up late Collections or any business regarding the Somerville Library. In general, if you are in the middle of an essay crisis and you need some advice or you just want to complain all about your tutor and coursework, hit me up at wenyi.shen@some.ox.ac.uk.

Other useful places to find support.....

The Undergraduate Handbook

(you will have been given a hard copy of this when you arrived at Somerville)

<http://www.some.ox.ac.uk/about-somerville/freedom-of-information/policies-procedures-2/>

Information about the academic expectations and disciplinary procedures in college.

OUSU Student Advice Service

www.ousu.org/advice/student-advice-service

University of Oxford website

www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic

Useful links to study guidance, examination and assessment information and policies.

University Regulations

www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/regulations

Complaints and Appeals Procedure

www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/appeals

OUSU Vice-President for Access & Academic Affairs

access@ousu.org

Where to go for help with accommodation issues (living in or out).

Living in College and The Room Ballot

About 85% of undergraduates at Somerville live in college at any given time. First years are guaranteed a college room and normally live in the Vaughan, Penrose or Darbshire buildings. The remaining rooms are allocated by the JCR Room Ballot. This is a ballot among the second, third and fourth years for rooms in Park, DHQ, ROQ, Wolfson, Holtby, Hostel/House, Darbshire and Walton Street. Within the next couple of years we hope to be able to accommodate all of our undergraduate students for the duration of their studies. Until then, a small number of non-first years and non-finalists have to live-out. Find more information here:

<http://blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/jcr/accomodation/>

If you have any maintenance issues with your room you can request our maintenance team to fix it via the Maintenance Request Form: <http://www.some.ox.ac.uk/intranet/maintenance-request/>.

[1] One of the team will see you within the timescale you specify. For other accommodation issues contact the Housekeeping Manager, Mrs Teresa Walsh on Teresa.walsh@some.ox.ac.uk or senior.scouts@some.ox.ac.uk.

Living out

Living out can be anxiety inducing for even the most confident of students, but many find it a confidence building, positive experience. Most undergraduates secure private rented accommodation via a property management company such as North Oxford Property Services (www.nops.co.uk/). Often they find somewhere close to college so benefit from the proximity to college but also the independence of living out. It's also a good idea to chat to current second years about their experiences living out.

Who lives in and out can sometimes change as people who were supposed to live in opt to live out with their friends instead. So, sometimes people drop out of a house group that was about to sign for a house. This can make the remaining people in the group very anxious, but these situations are normally easy to resolve if you don't delay. There are lots of people who don't find a group to live with early on, whether in Somerville or in other colleges.

For graduates the most common place to start looking for accommodation is the Graduate Accommodation Office (www.admin.ox.ac.uk/accommodation/).

The JCR Domestic Officer



Hi, I'm **Rob Kirk**, a 3rd year Maths and Computer scientist, and I'm living in Wolfson this year (the building just above the Flora Anderson Hall). As Domestic officer I have 3 main jobs: firstly, I manage the camp bed, so if you have a friend visiting who'll need a bed to sleep on, just message me in advance and I'll let you have the camp bed for a few nights, depending on how long your friend is staying. Secondly, I represent any domestic needs of students to the college. So if you have

any questions about how anything in college works, or you want to ask something of college but don't know who to contact, just chat to me. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I run the room ballot, which decides whether you'll live in or out in 2nd year, and where you'll be living in 3rd (and 4th) year. For 1st years this happens in 6th or 7th week of Michaelmas term, so may be sooner than you expect, but there's no need to worry. There'll be more information about that, and living out in general, coming your way via emails. (robert.kirk@some.ox.ac.uk)

Where to go for help with drugs and/or alcohol

Recreational drugs affect the brain and are taken for pleasure, often socially. This includes nicotine, alcohol and street drugs like cannabis. New drugs which mimic the effects of older drugs are constantly appearing. Previously known as "legal highs" as they evaded legislation which criminalised sale, purchase and possession of older drugs, the Psychoactive Substances Act (May 2016) made all psychoactive substances, including new recreational drugs, illegal by default. Misusing drugs is dangerous and it's important to be aware of the effects.

Cannabis

Cannabis is a plant recreationally smoked, eaten or drunk.

Effects:

Cannabis makes you feel relaxed and happy. However, you can also experience lethargy, anxiety, paranoia, even psychosis (delusions and hallucinations).

Effects on health:

Cannabis has been linked with mental health problems like schizophrenia. When smoked (particularly with tobacco) it can lead to asthma, heart disease and lung cancer. Frequent use can also negatively affect concentration and fertility.

Cocaine

All forms of cocaine are powerful stimulants. It is snorted as a powder or injected.

Effects:

Cocaine makes you feel energised and happy for short time periods. Comedowns (feeling depressed or unwell) often follow cocaine consumption.

Effects on health:

Cocaine can be fatal if you overstimulate your heart and nervous system, which can lead to a heart attack. If you have previous or ongoing mental health issues it can increase them or the risk of their recurrence.

All forms of Cocaine are highly addictive.

Ecstasy (MDMA)

Ecstasy is a psychedelic stimulant, taken as a pill or as a powder dabbed onto gums or snorted.

Effects:

Ecstasy makes you feel alert, affectionate, chatty, and often enhances your sensory experiences. It can also cause anxiety, confusion, paranoia and psychosis.

Effects on health:

Ecstasy can cause overheating, dehydration, or water retention, all of which can be life threatening. Long term of frequent consumption of ecstasy has been linked to mental health problems like anxiety, depression and memory-loss.

High doses can be fatal. Ecstasy can be addictive.

Speed

Speed is a stimulant, usually an off-white or pink powder snorted, dabbed onto gums or swallowed in paper. It is the name for amphetamine-based drugs.

Effects:

Speed makes you feel alert, confident, energised, and can reduce appetite. It can also cause agitation, aggression, confusion, paranoia and psychosis. Heavy usage can also cause depression and lethargy for extended time periods.

Effects on health:

Speed can cause dangerously high blood pressure, potentially causing a heart attack. Risk is increased when mixing speed with alcohol.

Speed can be highly addictive.

Smoking

Nicotine is addictive. The effects of nicotine, tar, carbon monoxide, and the other harmful substances in tobacco can lead to various health conditions. Smoking causes 96,000 deaths in the UK per year – far more than alcohol, illicit drugs, obesity and road accidents combined. Not smoking is the biggest improvement you can make to your health. Speaking to and getting support from your GP makes you 4 times more likely to quit. Smoking is not allowed in College. Further information and support:

<https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree>

Alcohol

Though legal and socially acceptable, alcohol can cause serious short and long term harm. Alcohol intake is measured in units. The NHS recommends not to exceed 14 units of alcohol a week (or if you do, to do so across 3 or more days), and to have a few days a week without alcohol. There is about 1 unit (10 ml of pure alcohol) in half a pint of lager, and a single measure of spirits. A glass of wine contains 1.5 units. This varies depending on the drink's "alcohol by volume" (ABV).

Alcohol misuse risks:

Short Term

These risks result from reduced inhibition and awareness of surroundings:

- accidents and injuries
- being the instigator or victim of violence
- unprotected sex
- loss of possessions
- alcohol poisoning

Long Term

These risks seriously impact physical and mental health as well as social and personal well-being:

- alcoholism
- heart and liver disease
- liver, bowel and mouth cancer
- pancreatitis
- anxiety, depression, insomnia, and hallucinations

Signs you, or someone else, may be misusing alcohol:

You

- feel you should cut down your drinking
- feel guilty about your drinking
- drink in the mornings or alone
- notice other people have commented on your drinking

They

- regularly exceed recommended amounts of alcohol
- cannot remember events from the previous night because of alcohol
- fail to keep commitments because of being drunk or hung over

Worried about yourself or anyone else?

Alcohol Concern

www.alcoholconcern.org.uk 0203 815 8920

Alcoholics Anonymous

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/ 0800 9177 650

NHS Alcohol Support

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/Alcoholsupport.aspx

Where to go for help with drugs and / or alcohol continued....

Recreational Drugs

Heart or blood pressure conditions make these drugs more dangerous. Snorting any drug in powder form damages nose cartilage. Injecting any drug damages veins and body tissue, and increases risk of overdose. By sharing needles you risk contracting HIV and hepatitis.

The main risk when taking illegal drugs is that you cannot know exactly what you're taking or their risks. If you have consumed these substances and experience their negative effects go to a doctor (don't worry about being in trouble, doctor – patient confidentiality protects you).

For further information and support:

NHS DRUGS OVERVIEW

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/drugs/Pages/Drugsoverview.aspx

FRANK: A-Z of Drugs

www.talktofrank.com/drugs-a-z

JCR Peer Supporters

www.blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/jcr/peer-support/

University Counselling Service

www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling

How to...

...request alternative arrangements

For a learning disability, the best thing to do is to make an appointment with the Disability Advisory Service. For physical or mental health disabilities, a letter from the college doctor detailing which arrangements are needed will suffice. This will need to be sent to Jo Ockwell, jo.ockwell@some.ox.ac.uk, who has been advising students about alternative arrangements for years! More details are available here: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/arrangements?wssl=1

...request factors affecting performance for exams

Many different things can be taken into account as a factor affecting your performance in examinations, although most often it is illness. You should speak to Jo Ockwell, jo.ockwell@some.ox.ac.uk, about this. She will advise you on what you need do. Also, see: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance?wssl=1

...get assessed for a new disability

Contact the Disability Advisory Service (DAS) (01865 2804591 disability@admin.ox.ac.uk directly or through Jo Ockwell. DAS will be happy to arrange a meeting or a study needs assessment. For mental or physical health, see the college doctor. Don't be discouraged if one doctor dismisses your concerns - make sure to ask to see another doctor or bring a friend along. Additional medical evidence from other professionals to provide context or background also helps!

...get help with finances

Your first stop should be to see the College Accountant, Elaine Boorman, elaine.boorman@some.ox.ac.uk, 01865 270636. Elaine can advise on all money related issues. Oxford is very lucky in having a wide array of financial help available. Information can be found here: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding>

...get a referral to the Counselling Service

Contact the Counselling Service in person by calling 01865 270300 or by emailing counselling@admin.ox.ac.uk. More info is here: www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling?wssl=1

If you're nervous or not sure, you can speak to the Peer Supporters, Welfare Team, Jo Ockwell, Nurse, GP or your Personal Tutor for confidential listening and help getting in touch.

...report discrimination of any kind

If you feel that you have been the victim of discrimination of any kind by a member of the college you can report this to the Dean at deans.office@some.ox.ac.uk. If the discrimination occurred outside of college you can contact the University's Equality and Diversity Unit for advice. Details are at <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/>

...make a complaint about a tutor

The Senior Tutor is the main person to approach should you have a complaint about a tutor. Alternatively, there are a number of other people you can approach, such as Jo Ockwell, your Personal Tutor, or another tutor you trust. Feel free to bring a friend with you! The Welfare Team and Peer Supporters would be happy to help you with this or do it anonymously on your behalf if necessary. For out-of-college complaints, you can contact your department's Director of Undergraduate Studies, or in more serious matters the Proctors; www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints?wssl=1 The most important thing is to remember that you won't be penalised or discriminated against for making a complaint, and all complaints will be treated with confidentiality.

....suspend status

The first step if you are considering suspending status (or rustivating, as is the commonly used term) is to chat to your friends and family, but also your tutors. You can also talk to Peer Supporters, Welfare Reps, your GP, the College Nurse, our the Counselling Service, or anyone you can confide in or feel comfortable talking to! Remember that this is a big decision, and there are other options available. Jo Ockwell is an expert on suspending status so she's the best person to discuss it with in college. More info can be found here: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/undergraduate/status?wssl=1

Myths Debunked

'Freshers' week is the best time of everyone's life

Whilst some people love Freshers' Week, others find it a very stressful, anxiety-filled experience. When you talk to your friends a year later, you may well find that even some of those who were raving about how great their Freshers' Week was will admit that it wasn't really all that! No one likes to admit that they're struggling, but in reality the first week at university is a scary time for most people! Remember when you see your friends' fun-filled freshers' photos on Facebook that Facebook shows you the best snapshots from others' lives. Try your hardest to make the most of it and enjoy yourself, but don't be discouraged if you don't seem to be enjoying it as much as everyone else! Not enjoying Freshers' Week doesn't mean you won't enjoy Oxford!

The friends you make (or don't make) in Freshers' week will be your friends for the rest of your time at University / the rest of your life

The friends you make in your first week here won't necessarily be the friends you will have forever, just as those you met on the first day at primary/secondary school/sixth form probably aren't! Even if you don't find someone to click with straightaway, remember that there are so many people you haven't had the chance to meet, nor are nights out or big events necessarily the best places to meet the people you'll really click with. You'll meet people throughout your time that you didn't even catch sight of during Freshers' Week, and your subject, sports and societies are a great chance to meet new people - give it time!

You need to drink / go out every night in order to fit in / be socially accepted

There are a lot of people at Oxford who don't drink for a number of reasons or don't enjoy clubbing. There are plenty of great non-drinking, non-clubbing events organised in Freshers' Week. Don't be afraid to have a night off, even if you do drink. Freshers' Week can be exhausting! And if you don't drink, don't be discouraged from going on one of the club nights!

Tutors are scary and don't care about your well-being

Most tutors are normal, compassionate, understanding humans. Don't be afraid to talk to them about any difficulties you are experiencing.

No mark means a bad mark

Different tutors have different approaches to tutorial work. It's also worth speaking to your tutor if you have concerns about the way they are marking your work, as they may change their marking scheme, or at least explain it.

Criticism means you're doing badly

Tutorials are designed to challenge you, and your tutors only criticise you to help you improve. There is no point for you to come into a tutorial and be told how great your essay is for an hour! Don't jump to conclusions: if your tutors are concerned about how you are doing, they will clearly tell you, and if you're worried then ask!

You can never miss a deadline

If you fail to submit an essay for an unavoidable reason, then explain the reason to your tutor. The default is often that if you fail to submit an essay then it won't be marked and you may not be permitted to attend the tutorial. However, if you submitted it late due to unavoidable reasons outside of your control your tutors should be sympathetic.

If you see a Welfare Rep, Peer Supporter, the College Nurse, or a Counsellor your friends, family or tutors in college will find out.

Confidentiality is a key part of all these people's roles. Except in the case of emergency where there is threat of harm to you or others, everyone is bound by confidentiality and can only encourage you to disclose. The Counselling Service is completely separate from the college, and cannot disclose any information to them. Similarly, the Doctors and Nurse are separate from all academic matters, and again bound by confidentiality. Peer Supporters undergo substantial training including confidentiality - they are not even permitted to say they have spoken to you. For more details on the college confidentiality policy, see:

<http://www.some.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/PP-Policy-on-Confidentiality-and-Sharing-of-Welfare-Information-May-2015.pdf>

If you see a Welfare Rep, Peer Supporter, the College Nurse, or a Counsellor they will judge you.

Judgement-free listening is a key part of these roles. Putting views, opinions, culture and experiences aside is part of their training, so please don't be put off!

Counselling Service waiting times are really long

The Counselling Service endeavours to see people within 2 weeks at the most (unless you apply at the end of term), and much quicker in non-busy times! This is much quicker than any NHS waiting time to see someone. If you've been waiting for over 2 weeks, please contact the Counselling Service or ask one of the Welfare Team to do so on your behalf!

Doctors won't take you seriously if you come with a mental health problem

Most doctors are aware of mental health and will take you seriously, helping you get the help you need. If you feel a doctor hasn't taken you seriously, please don't be discouraged and persist with a different doctor, or take a friend /peer supporter along for support.

Everyone has mental health problems at Oxford

While Oxford is a stressful environment, most people learn to cope with the stresses and have a healthy, balanced lifestyle. If you struggle to cope on your own, there is a lot of support available from your friends, your tutors, the college welfare team and the health service.

You're the only one struggling

Most people have times at Oxford where they are stressed or feel they can't manage. In such short terms with high-pressured environments, it's only natural to feel this way.

If you're struggling you are definitely not the only one - please share your worries with someone if you feel you can!

People will see you as weak or differently if you experience mental health difficulty

Oxford is also one of the most open places to speak about mental health, which may contribute to the misconception above. Some people are outspoken about their problems, and others keep them quiet, but everyone is treated the same here - you should never be discriminated against on the basis of your mental health and wellbeing by the University or the community. A significant percentage of people experience mental health problems in the space of a year and even more are never formally diagnosed, have previously experienced difficulty, or know someone who has experienced difficulty. Mental health problems are becoming more and more recognised as legitimate illnesses, and most people are understanding about them, having had either direct or indirect experience themselves.

You'll be forced to rusticate if you experience difficulty

No one can force you to rusticate, except in the case of not being able to maintain a level of good academic standing. If you ever feel pressured or forced unfairly, make sure to speak to someone about it. Colleges tend to be extremely accommodating of difficulties, and will only suggest suspending your studies if they think this is in your best interests. If you don't want to suspend your studies and can keep up with your academic work, there are no grounds for you to voluntarily rusticate, and college will help!

Glossary

Disclaimer

We are certainly not able to speak on behalf of all those who identify with or have experience of the terms we have described below and as such, if anyone wishes to contribute or alter definitions provided in this booklet, please email the relevant rep or anyone on the Welfare team! We're working very hard to provide representation to all JCR members and would be more than grateful for additional input.

[Based on definitions originally compiled by members of Christ Church College JCR – 2015/16]

Mental Health

Confidentiality - a set of rules or a promise that limits access or places restrictions on certain types of information. For Mental Health and Welfare teams, this means that information cannot be passed on, except in the case where there is immediate danger to the individual or others

Counsellor - a person trained to give guidance on personal or psychological problems

Mental Disability - a mental or behavioural pattern that causes suffering or a poor ability to function in ordinary life, where it has a long-term effect on your normal day-to-day activity, e.g. depression, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, schizophrenia

Mental Health - the state of someone's psychological and emotional wellbeing

Mental Health Difficulty/Problem - a pre-diagnosed psychiatric condition for which a person may, or may not, be receiving medical or psychological treatment, e.g. anxiety, depression, eating disorders

Peer Support - people providing knowledge, experience, emotional, social or practical help to each other

Psychiatrist - a doctor specialising in the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness

Psychologist - an expert or specialist in psychology. A clinical psychologist is someone who specialises in diagnosing and treating mental illness (but is not a doctor)

Psychotherapist - a person who uses the techniques of psychology or psychiatry to treat mental and emotional disorders, including psychoanalysis, cognitive behavioural therapies etc.

Rustication - to temporarily suspend your studies, for welfare or health reasons.

Self Care - looking after yourself in a healthy way, whether it's brushing your teeth, taking medicine when you have a cold, doing exercise or making a cup of tea

Self Harm - (also known as self injury or self-mutilation). The act of deliberately causing harm to oneself either by causing a physical injury, putting oneself in dangerous situations and/or self neglect. This isn't *necessarily* synonymous or a precursor to *feeling* suicidal.

Suicidal - feeling deeply unhappy or depressed, and likely to commit suicide. This is not the same as thinking about death or dying, and is considered an emergency.

Therapist - someone who treats physical, mental or behaviour problems with the aim of curing or rehabilitating

Welfare - the health, happiness, good fortune and wellbeing of a person or group

Wellbeing - the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy

Sexual Health, Sexual Assault, Gender Equality

Assault by Penetration - when a person intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person with a part of their body or anything else, without consent or reasonable belief that the other person consents.

Causing Sexual Activity Without Consent - when a person intentionally causes another person to engage in a sexual activity, without consent or reasonable belief that the other person consents. This is the legal equivalent to a charge of rape for a female offender.

Consent - a person consents if they agree by choice, and have the freedom and capacity to make that choice. Situations where consent may be compromised include the use of force or threats, being under the influence of drink or drugs, having a mental disability which renders a person unaware of what is occurring or incapable of giving consent, or being under the age of consent (16 in the UK).

Contraception - the deliberate use of artificial methods or other techniques to prevent pregnancy as a consequence of sexual intercourse, e.g. condoms, the contraceptive pill.

First Responder (to Sexual Assault) - the first person to whom a survivor of sexual assault discloses.

Gender Discrimination/Sexism - prejudice or discrimination based on a person's sex or gender

Gender Equality - the state in which access to rights or opportunities is unaffected by gender

GUM - Genito-Urinary Medicine

Rape - when a person intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person with their penis without consent or reasonable belief that the other person consents.

SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) - a centre providing services and support to victims of rape or sexual assault

SARCC (Sexual Assault and Rape Crisis Centre) - a centre providing services and support to victims of rape or sexual assault, for women and girls

Sexual Assault - when a person intentionally touches another person, where the touching is sexual, without consent or reasonable belief that the other person consents

STI/STD - Sexually Transmitted Infection/Disease

Disability

Ableism - discrimination in favour of able bodied people

Access Barriers - an obstruction that prevents people with disabilities from using standard facilities, equipment or resources

Accessible - a facility, activity or resource that can be used by someone, regardless of any disabilities they have

Adaptive Technology - a subset of assistive technology which is designed specifically for people with disabilities, and would not be used by those without disabilities

Alternative Examination Arrangements - examination arrangements which help students with a disability, for example extra reading time or use of a word processor (laptop)

Assistive Technology - an item, piece of technology or piece of equipment which can improve the functional capabilities of someone with disabilities, e.g. wheelchair

BSL - an abbreviation for British Sign Language

Cognitive Disability - a broad concept encompassing various intellectual or cognitive deficits where

a person has greater difficulty with one or more types of mental tasks than the average person, e.g. dementia, acquired brain injury, specific learning disabilities, intellectual disability

DAS (Disability Advisory Service) - a department of the university which helps with students who have a disability.

Developmental Disability - chronic condition due to mental/physical impairments. Can be detected early and persist through an individual's life, e.g. Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, Fragile X

Disability - A broad term that in general describes a difficulty or impairment that may be physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional, developmental or a combination of these. These can be congenital (present from birth) or acquired (occurring during a person's lifetime).

Disability Hate Crime - crimes that are targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice towards that person's disability

DSA (Disabled Students Allowance) - a grant that can be applied for, which helps with funding for support for disabled students

Emotional Disability - a disability that impacts a person's ability to effectively recognise, interpret, control or express fundamental emotions. Also includes behavioural disability

Invisible Disabilities - disabilities which are not immediately apparent, e.g. someone who is hard of hearing chooses not to use a hearing aid, someone with visual impairment wearing contact lenses, or someone with a cognitive impairment

Limited Mobility - mobility impairment, which could be caused by a number of factors

Mental Disability - a mental or behavioural pattern that causes suffering or a poor ability to function in ordinary life, where it has a long-term effect on your normal day-to-day activity, e.g. depression, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, schizophrenia

Mental Health Difficulty/Problem - a pre-diagnosed psychiatric condition for which a person may, or may not, be receiving medical or psychological treatment, e.g. anxiety, depression, eating disorders

Mentor - there are two types of mentor, a peer mentor and a DAS mentor. A peer mentor is a student in college who you can talk to. A DAS mentor is a member of the DAS who can help students with a variety of disabilities.

Physical Disability/Impairment - a limitation on a person's physical functioning, mobility, dexterity or stamina, e.g. loss of a limb, mobility impairment, visual impairment, hearing loss,

Reasonable Adjustment - an alteration which could be made to enable a disabled person to carry out work without being at a disadvantage

SEN(D) - Special Educational Needs (and Disability)

Sensory Disability/Impairment - sensory impairment where one or more of your senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste, special awareness) is no longer 'normal', e.g. visual impairment (including blindness) or hearing impairment (including being hard of hearing or deafness)



LGBTQIAP+

Coming out - a figure of speech used by the LGBTQIAP+ community to describe an individual's self-disclosure of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Choosing to 'come out' is solely the decision of an individual, who may or may not wish to reveal their sexuality or gender identity.

Erasure - the denial, dismissal or refusal to acknowledge the identities or sexualities of people. This can include heteronormativity and cissexism

Hate Crime/Incident - any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offense, which is perceived by an individual, to be motivated by prejudice or hatred towards someone because of their sexuality, gender or race. A hate incident may be verbal,

physical or a perceived threat

Outing - outing is the process of revealing someone's sexuality or gender identity without their consent. It is disrespectful to a person's self-determination to 'out' them without their knowledge and consent

Transitioning - a term used to describe the process of moving from one gender to another, sometimes through hormonal or surgical treatment. Transitioning does not require medical involvement, rather can just be the process of disclosing one's identity

Sexuality Glossary

Aromantic - an orientation which falls on the asexual spectrum and is characterised by feeling little or no romantic attraction to others. Where romantic people may have an emotional need to be with someone in a romantic relationship, aromantic people may be satisfied with friendships and non-romantic relationships

Asexual/ACE - an orientation generally characterised by not feeling sexual attraction or desire for partnered sexuality. Asexuality is distinct from celibacy, which is the deliberate abstention from sexual activity. Asexuality is reflective of the nature of sexuality as a spectrum, or sliding scale, and some asexuals therefore may have sex

Biphobia - prejudice, stereotyping, erasure or discrimination against people who identify as bisexual

Bisexual - a person whose primary sexual and affectional orientation is toward people of the same and other genders, or towards people regardless of their gender

Demiromantic - an orientation which falls on the asexuality spectrum, characterised by the need for a strong emotional bond with a person as a prerequisite for developing or experiencing romantic attraction to them

Demisexual - an orientation which falls on the asexual spectrum, characterised by the need for a strong emotional or romantic connection with a partner as a pre-requisite for experiencing sexual attraction towards them. Romantic preference, however, may correspond to a certain gender, i.e. a person may be both homoromantic and demisexual

Heteroromantic - a romantic orientation characterised by feeling romantic attraction to someone of an opposite gender

Heteronormativity - the assumption, made by individuals and institutionalised society, that everyone is heterosexual; that heterosexuality is default and superior to other sexualities

Heterosexuality - a sexual identity in which a person is sexually and romantically attracted to a person of an opposite gender, e.g. a man attracted to a woman

Homophobia - this is a wider term used to describe prejudice, stereotyping, erasure or discrimination against people who identify on the LGBTQIAP+ spectrum

Homoromantic - a romantic orientation characterised by feeling romantic attraction to someone of the same gender

Homosexuality - a sexual orientation characterised by feeling sexually and romantically attracted to a person of the same gender. This includes being gay (a man attracted to other men) and lesbian (a woman attracted to other women)

Panromantic - a romantic orientation characterised by romantic attraction to individuals of any gender

Pansexual/Omnisexual - terms used to describe people who have romantic, sexual or affectional desire towards a person of any gender

Queer - for some 'queer' acts as an umbrella term for all sexualities and gender

identities, or as a term for those who do not wish to give a label to their sexuality or gender identity. An individual who identifies with a label in the LGBTQ+ acronym may also use queer as a descriptor, whilst others only may exclusively use 'queer' to describe their sexuality or gender

"Use of the word 'queer' - the presence of this word within the LGBTQ+ community is contentious, due to its historically derogatory use as a slur. However, for many it is a reclaimed term which means that it can be used only by those who identify as 'queer' or LGBTQ+. Use of this word by people outside of the 'queer community' (i.e. heterosexual, cisgender) is offensive and appropriative."

Romantic Attraction - a sense of wanting to be involved romantically with a person. Feelings of sexual attraction are distinct and are not mutually inclusive of feelings of romantic attraction

Romantic Orientation - a description of the gender, genders (or lack thereof) which a person experiences romantic attraction towards

Sexual Attraction - a sense of wanting to engage in sexual activity with a person

Sexual Orientation - the gender, genders (or lack thereof) which a person experiences

Gender Glossary

Agender - an individual who identifies as without gender

Cisgender/Cissexual - words used to describe people who are not transgender, or transsexual. It is a simple opposite in prefix 'cis' to 'trans'

Cissexism - the assumption that gender corresponds to genitalia, leading to discrimination against and erasure of non-binary individuals

Gender - a social construct, refers to sociological boundaries and signifiers that define people as feminine, masculine or androgynous. Gender can be the appearance and presentation of a person's identity, but is unrelated to sex

Gender Binary - this is a common system of thought which refers to certain societal ideas that many people hold about gender and sex. The gender binary is not correct, however, as it presumes that only two genders exist and that a person can be only male or female. It implies that trans people do not exist, which is harmful and inaccurate

Gender Fluid - this term refers to the spectrum of gender identity and relates to a person who feels an overlap of, or indefinite lines between, their gender identity. Identifying with two or more genders (i.e. being bigender, or pangender). A gender fluid individual may alternatively possess no gender (i.e. being agender, non-gendered, genderless), or move naturally between genders and have a fluctuating gender identity,

Gender Identity - this describes the psychological recognition of oneself as being a member of a certain gender. Gender identity is self-determined and separate from anatomical sex, i.e. genitalia

Gender-neutral pronouns - these are used to avoid referring to someone as 'he/him' or 'she/her'. The most common gender-neutral pronouns are 'they/them', 'zie/zim' and 'ey/em'

Genderqueer - this refers to an identity taken on by people who feel that the substance and aspects of their gender exist outside of the binaries 'male' and 'female'

Intersex - a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit typical definitions of female or male

Pangender - this term may fall on the gender fluidity spectrum and describes the non-binary experience of an individual who may identify and move between multiple gender identities

Sexism - prejudice, stereotyping, erasure or discrimination against people, based on gender

Transgender - a person who identifies with a gender that does not correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth (AFAB = 'assigned female at birth', AMAB = 'assigned male at birth'). This includes trans men (an individual who was assigned female at birth but identifies as a man) and trans women (an individual who was assigned male at birth but identifies as a woman). Being trans is not necessarily identifying with the genders of 'man' or 'woman', given the diversity of gender identities; whereby someone may be gender fluid or agender.

Transphobia - prejudice, stereotyping, erasure or discrimination against people who identify outside the gender binary. It also includes institutionalised forms of discrimination, such as criminalisation, pathologisation, or stigmatisation of non-conforming gender identities and gender expressions

Ethnic and Religious

BME/BAME - Black and Minority Ethnic or Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic is the term used in the UK to describe people of non-white descent

ERM - Ethnic and Religious Minorities is the term used in the UK to describe people of non-white descent or non-Church of England descent

Hate Crime - crimes that are targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice towards that person: disability, race or ethnicity, religion or belief

Microaggressions - the everyday verbal and non-verbal slights or insults which communicate hostile messages that target people based solely upon the fact that they are a member of a marginalised group. Microaggressions are often found in jokes and are heavily linked to stereotypes

PoC - People of Colour is another term used to refer to people of non-white descent

Prejudice - an irrational bias against members of a particular racial, religious or social background

Privilege - an advantage or right that is exclusively available to a particular person or group of people

Racial Discrimination - treating someone in a negative way purely because they are a member of a specific race

Racism - our understanding of racism has progressed hugely and it is now commonly thought that racism is a combination of privilege (see above) and power (occupying a position of social/economic/political power). In essence, this means that someone can only be racist if they are both privileged and in a position of power and this new and modified social definition challenges the concept of reverse racism. This new definition is not universally agreed upon and so this progressive view can be supplemented with the current dictionary definition which is that racism is the belief that all members of each race possess characteristics, abilities or qualities specific to that race, especially so as to distinguish it as inferior or superior

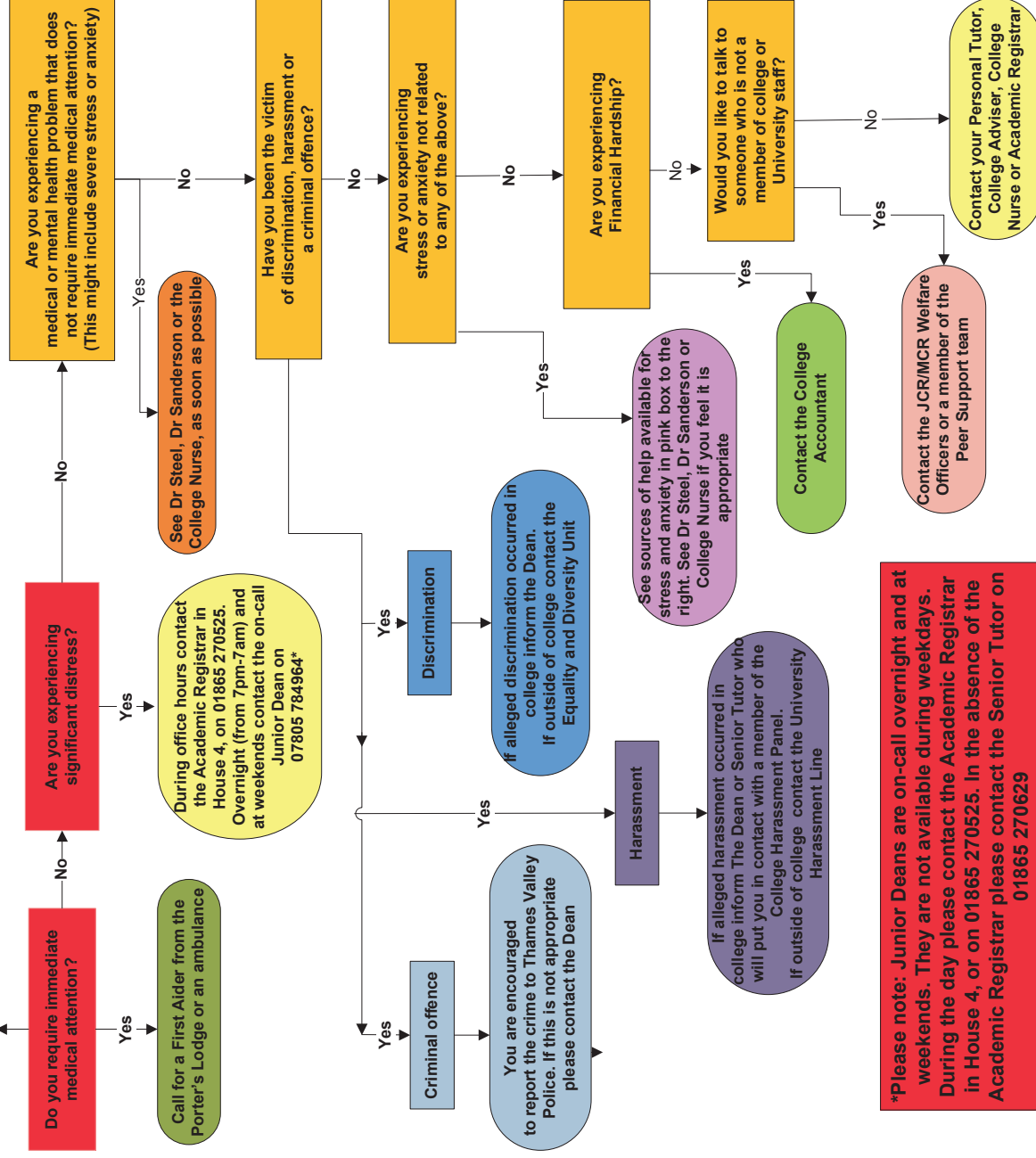
Religious Discrimination - treating someone differently because of their religion

Reverse Racism - When the racially dominant group in any given society are discriminated against. This term is now largely thought to be incorrect because of the new understanding that power is a crucial element in racism. This is, of course, not to say that the dominant racial group can't face racial intolerance but this is usually classed as prejudice, discrimination or stereotyping.

Stereotyping - The harmful belief that all members of a specific race, ethnicity, religion or social group possess specific, often pejorative characteristics or attributes.

Welfare Support – A Guide for Students

START



Porter's Lodge – 01865 270525

Dr Steel and Dr Sanderson, Jericho Health Centre, New Radcliffe House, Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6NW. Call 01865 429993 for appointments from 8:30-18:00 Monday to Friday or ask the college nurse to book an appointment for you
Lynn Cross (College Nurse) (Somerville - Darbshire 16)
See the notice on her door, or the email circulated to all students, for times Lynn will be available.

The Dean – deans.office@some.ox.ac.uk
Equality and Diversity unit –
http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop

The Dean – deans.office@some.ox.ac.uk
The Senior Tutor – senior.tutor@some.ox.ac.uk
University Harassment Line – 01865 270760 or
harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk

Thames Valley Police Non-Emergency Number - 101
The Dean – dean@some.ox.ac.uk

Help available for stress and anxiety
Student Counselling Service: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling>
OSUS Student Advice Service: ousu.org/advice/
student-advice-service
Somerville Peer Supporters: <http://blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/jcr/peer-support/>
peersupport@some.ox.ac.uk
Nightline: users.ox.ac.uk/~nightlin/

College Accountant – Elaine Boorman – 01865 270636
or elaine.boorman@some.ox.ac.uk

JCR Welfare Officers: <http://blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/jcr/jcr-2/committee/>
MCR Welfare Officers: <http://blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/mcr/committee/>
Peer Supporters: <http://blogs.some.ox.ac.uk/jcr/peer-support/>; peersupport@some.ox.ac.uk

All students are sent an email at the start of the academic year informing them of who their Personal Tutor or College Adviser is. If you aren't sure please ask the Academic Office, academic.office@some.ox.ac.uk
Lynn Cross (College Nurse) –
lynn.cross@some.ox.ac.uk
Jo Ockwell (Academic Registrar) –
jo.ockwell@some.ox.ac.uk or 01865 270525