



Welcome to
Somerville!

Table of contents

2	Welcome from the Principal
3	Our History of Sanctuary
4	Get Ready to come to Somerville
5	Arriving at Somerville
5	After you get here: <i>1. Apply for a bank account</i> <i>2. Register with a doctor</i> <i>3. Complete Academic registration</i>
8	Social Dates for your diary
9	Accessing University IT
9	College Contacts
10-11	Glossary
12	Student Discount Cards
12	Recycling
12	Groceries
13	Transport and Getting Around





Welcome from the Principal



We are delighted to welcome you to the Somerville College. As new members of the Somerville

community, you are joining an international group of scholars who are discovering and sharing knowledge.

This guide is intended to introduce you to our community, to help prepare before you arrive and to thrive once you are here.

Until then, please feel free to write to our Graduate Officer, Sapphire, with any questions. I look forward to welcoming you soon!

With warmest wishes,

Jan
Principal, Somerville College

Our History of Sanctuary

Somerville College has a fundamental commitment to supporting sanctuary-seeking students and academics that dates back to the 1930s. More recently, our commitment to sanctuary has been renewed by our 2021 accreditation as one of the UK's first University Colleges of Sanctuary, alongside Mansfield College.

To rebuild a life following the trauma of displacement requires a lifeline. Building on our long tradition of inclusivity paired with academic excellence, Somerville is determined to extend that lifeline by making our college a place of welcome, safety and inclusion and through the establishment of Sanctuary Scholarships that will offer the brightest students a pathway to Oxford.

Somerville is proud to have established the new Sanctuary Scholarships as part of our efforts to provide a guaranteed pathway to Oxford for bright students from a sanctuary-seeking background.

*To read more about our Sanctuary scholars, visit
<https://www.some.ox.ac.uk/about/sanctuary/>*



Above: Somerville was recognised as a University College of Sanctuary by the City of Sanctuary scheme in 2021

Left: Jan Royall joined by the inaugural sanctuary scholar, Dr Marwa Biala (2019, MSc Immunology), and fellow sanctuary scholar Asif Salarzai (2021, History)

Get ready to come to Somerville

Once you have been accepted on a course at Somerville, you will need to/can apply for a visa to study in the UK.

The documents you need to make the application are:

- Passport
- University letter of acceptance
- Confirmation of accommodation
- Funding arrangements

Victoria Wilson, Scholarships and Funding Officer who will forward to you the relevant documents to show in order to apply for your visa. Email Victoria at: scholarships.funding.officer@some.ox.ac.uk

Before you depart, check that you have all the correct documents to travel to the UK with you (not in checked luggage) ready to present to customs ie. Confirmation of offer, accommodation, funding letter etc.

Find out more about the UK student visa including how to apply at <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>



Arriving at Somerville

You will arrive at Somerville via the lodge and be welcomed by one of our friendly lodge porters like Aga here. They will help you find your room and get your bearings in Somerville. The Academic office will already have made contact with you to inform you of your accommodation and time of your induction meeting, but if you have any concerns about this please email [Saphire Richards](mailto:Saphire.Richards@grad.tutorial.officer@some.ox.ac.uk) at grad.tutorial.officer@some.ox.ac.uk



*Somerville Porter and
Deputy Lodge Manager,
Aga Rza*

After you get here

There's a few things we advise you to sort out as soon as you're settled in to your room. We'll go through them in turn:

1. Get a UK bank account
2. Register with a doctor
3. Complete your university academic registration



1. Apply for a bank account

You will need a bank account so that Somerville can deposit your grant/funds and for you to be able to make payments for your rent (don't worry - your grant will cover all your costs). HSBC International offer a bank account especially for international students which previous scholars have found helpful, but there are other options too which you can compare.

To apply for a UK bank account, you need:

- An in-date passport
- A valid visa
- A bank statement from your home bank, from the last three months
- Proof of address in the UK or abroad (check with bank)
- Student ID or an acceptance letter from Somerville

The Oxford University Welcome Service's helpful guide to this process can be found at <https://welcome.ox.ac.uk/opening-a-bank-account>.

Once you are settled you might like to make use of a mobile banking app or open other types of accounts like Monzo to help with budgeting as they have clever "pots" you can allocate your money to.

2. Register with a doctor

In the UK the NHS is the system that residents use to access both physical and mental healthcare services.

You can register for the NHS by visiting the Jericho Health Centre which is 2 minute walk from Somerville.

The Somerville College Nurse is also available to offer healthcare advice and holds consulting sessions at Somerville every day during term time.

Somerville has its own Welfare Officer, Jo Ockwell, and is there to help with all matters relating to welfare and disability.



***Our Welfare Officer,
Jo Ockwell***

3. Academic Registration

College registration takes place in 0th week which commences on 2nd October. The Academic Office will already have contacted you by email to notify you of a time and date to register*

As a graduate student at Somerville, you will be a member of the Middle Common Room (MCR). The MCR is both a physical room in the College (with very comfy chairs, art supplies, coffee machine, and much more!), as well as the collective term for the graduate student body. Your department will obviously be a big part of your life in Oxford but in your College you will get a unique opportunity to make friends outside of your course with people that you might not meet otherwise.

Shortly you will receive emails about upcoming fresher's week/social/welfare events.

We also have a 'Friends at Somerville' Scheme which seeks to match groups of new students with a current returning student at Somerville - a sort of family if you will! - so that they can meet each other. Returning Somervillians will be happy to informally answer any questions you might have and introduce you to the College once you arrive.

**Ask a member of the lodge team to help you find the room if you are not sure where to go. They are always there to help.*



Social dates for your diary

You will have many opportunities to meet other Sanctuary Scholars and college members at special events, including breakfasts and teas. The Principal also hosts regular breakfast socials where you can spend personal time with her and other college staff for support and wellbeing.

Here are some dates to put in your diary - there will be others to come!

2nd October 2023

Graduate Freshers Dinner

Week commencing 2nd October

MCR welcome and Academic induction programme

5th October 2023

Sanctuary Welcome Tea

Sanctuary Scholars Breakfast socials in the Principal's home:

24th October 2023

16th November 2023

9th January 2024

7th March 2024



Accessing University IT

The University's Single Sign-On (SSO) system means that you can use the same account details to log on to many different services. Your SSO details will let you authenticate to lots of systems (that is, prove you are you), as long as you have an account on that system. It is vital to register for your SSO number when you arrive. You will be automatically assigned an SSO number when you join. Some of the services you will need it for are:

- Your Somerville email
- To get your Bodleian Library card
- Booking onto the meal booking system
- Printing documents
- Accessing the internet

If you need a hand, you can contact our IT support desk at helpdesk@some.ox.ac.uk or call +44 (0)1865 270597.

College Contacts



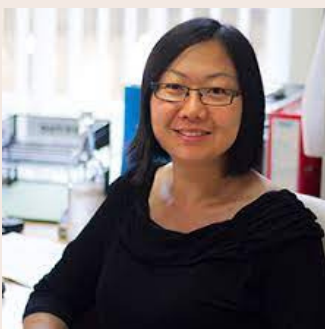
Jan Royall
Principal



Steve Rayner
Senior Tutor



Jo Ockwell
**Welfare
Officer**



Yan Li
Treasury



Abdur Razzak
IT Officer



**Saphire
Richards**
**Graduate &
Tutorial Officer**

Glossary

- Middle Common Room (MCR): This is for all Postgraduate students. Members have access to all common and graduate areas of College, all College and MCR events aimed at College Postgraduates, are able to vote in all MCR elections and meetings, and can stand for any position on the MCR Committee
- Junior Common Room (JCR): This is a student led committee that ensures that Somerville has a vibrant undergraduate community which welcomes everyone. See more information [here](#)
- Principal: Head of Somerville College. The name of this role varies from college to college around the University, with alternatives including warden, president, provost and dean.
- Senior Tutor: Oversees the college's academic activities
- Formal Hall: During term time special dinners are held in hall where students and staff have a three-course meal and tend to dress smartly (at most colleges this involves wearing gowns, but we like to be a bit less formal here at Somerville).
- Battels (pronounced in the same way as 'battles'): This is the Oxford term for your college financial account. Your meals, rent and other college-specific expenses are charged to your battels and your financial awards from college such as academic prizes are paid in to them.
- Lodge: The Porters' Lodge can be found at the entrance of any college. Our porters are the public face of the college. They hold the keys to any rooms you might need to book, sort post, monitor security, and ensure you feel safe and at home.
- Dean: The Decanal Team, consisting of several Junior Deans led by the Dean, handle non-academic disciplinary matters in the college, and additionally provide a 24/7 source of support to students.

- Michaelmas, Hilary and Trinity Terms: our three academic terms at Oxford are named after the christian feast days they were once tied to. Michaelmas runs from October-December, Hilary from January-March, and Trinity from April-June
- 0th Week and 9th week: Oxford's full terms (the period when tutorials and lectures take place) are 8 weeks long. The week before term is known as 0th week (said 'nought-th week'), and the week after is numbered as 9th week.
- Bop: This is a social music and dance event organised by your common room that takes place several times a term. Bops usually have a theme and an accompanying invitation to wear a suitable silly costume if you wish.
- SSO Number: The University's Single Sign-On (SSO) system means that you can use the same account details to log on to many different services. Every student and staff member at the University has a unique code, consisting of four letters followed by four numbers. For example, SOME0001.



Student Discount Card

Many UK shops, restaurants, museums, cinemas and more offer discounts for students. Sometimes this will simply mean showing your university card, but to access the full range of offers you will need to apply for a TOTUM card from the National Union of Students, which will let you get deals like 10% off your grocery shopping at the supermarket Co-Op. Don't forget to check for concessions or student discounts! You can also register for Student Beans and UniDays to get access to more offers.

Recycling

The UK takes recycling seriously and it is important to check your area and what the different recycling bins are for. Glass, paper, plastic that is recyclable, metal foil can all be recycled and if you are living outside of college then your accommodation will have a food waste bin (caddie) where any waste food can be placed in a green compostable bag which can be purchased from any supermarket. The Co-op general shopping bags also work for this.

Groceries

Oxford is full of small supermarkets, including several within a few minutes' walk of Somerville. The largest supermarket in the city centre is the Sainsbury's in the Westgate Shopping Centre.

Most UK supermarkets have free loyalty cards which offer discounts on purchases and all have apps that you can download to register. Supermarkets near Somerville with these cards are:

- Tesco who use the Tesco Club Card
- Co-op has a Club Card (this also offers 10% off all purchases with a student card)
- Sainsbury's, who use the Nectar Card.

Transport Information

Travelling to Oxford

The easiest way to reach Somerville from the airport is by coach. Both Heathrow and Gatwick airport have a good bus service located outside the departure terminal that takes you to Oxford's central bus station in Gloucester Green. Somerville is a 10 minute walk from there.

There are also rail links available, which are more expensive. Somerville is also fairly close to the train station, about a 15 minute walk.

Getting Around

Once you're here, there are many options for getting around:

Bicycle

This is a very popular way for students to travel around the city. There are various shops with fair priced new and second hand bicycles for sale. Cycle King offers a student discount and a free service with each bike.

Buses

There are frequent bus services covering much of the city here. If you intend to use the buses regularly, we recommend getting a SmartZone ticket as it might reduce your spending.

Rail

Oxford is well connected to the rest of the UK by rail, with regular direct trains to Birmingham, London, and Manchester. Rail travel here is relatively expensive, so we recommend buying a Railcard which gets you a 1/3 discount. They cost £30, but can save you a significant amount.

Coaches to London

Oxford has fantastic bus service to London, the Oxford Tube. It runs regular services 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. It goes from Oxford to Victoria with other stops in central London along the way. A return ticket for students costs only £16.

