



Somerville College



The Surviving Oxford Handbook 2026

Welcome to Somerville! We are Hollie, Isaac, Vybhavi and Thomas we are your Fresher's Reps for 2026.

This is an up-to-date guide to get you familiar with some key aspects of college and university life. Other resources, such as the Somerville Welfare Booklet, will be given to you upon arrival or closer to the start of term. We hope you find it useful! **The whole document looks long but you don't need to read it from start to finish, there's a button on the left that opens up an outline which allows you to click through the different sections.**

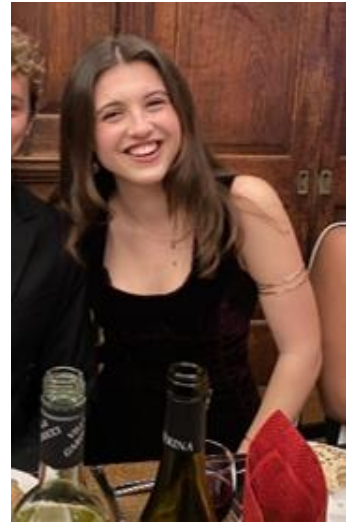
We will be posting updates, information, and schedules on our Instagram page, [@somervillefreshers26](#). If you have any questions (anything at all), we have a link for a Q&A form, which can be found [here](#). Responses to your questions will be posted anonymously on our Instagram. You can also drop us an email at jcr.freshers@some.ox.ac.uk!

You **do not** have to buy any club/ event tickets for fresher's week! You will be sent fresher's week packs to buy shortly (drinking and non-drinking). These packs are the best way to have a good week as everyone you'll be getting to know from college will be attending the same events.

An interactive map of Oxford can be found at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/visitors/map> for information about colleges, libraries, bars, restaurants etc.

Meet your Fresher's Reps!

- ★ Hey everyone, I'm Hollie, a second year studying English and I'll be your Fresher's Reps President this year. Congratulations on your place at Somerville! We've planned a really exciting fresher's week for you guys, which will hopefully ease you into university life and show you just how fun Oxford can be (I promise it's not all work) and the fact Somerville is the best college. I can often be found playing pool and having a chat in the college bar, or cheffing up some food in the small yet mighty accommodation kitchens (check out what my friends and I managed to chef up in first year on insta [@vaughancookoff](#)). Looking forward to meeting you all!



- ★ Hey! I'm Isaac, a second year Biologist and I'll be one of your fresher's reps this year. Congratulations on your offer! We all can't wait to welcome everyone to the Somerville community :). When I'm not rotting in a library I've found trying out the societies in Oxford really rewarding. I love surfing and diving and basically all things outdoors. If you have any questions or concerns please reach out - we are more than happy to help. Enjoy your summers and we'll see you in October!



★ Hi everyone, my name is Vybhavi and I study law! We're all really looking forward to welcoming you to Oxford and making sure you have the best fresher's week ever! We know it can be a difficult time as well and that's why we want you to know that we're here for you for anything. So please reach out with any queries at all. I really like playing badminton (you should all join Somerville baddies and check out the instagram [@somervillebaddiez](#)) and going on walks around Oxford. Somerville is a great community and the best college so get excited!!!



★ Hi I'm Thomas, a second year biologist and one of your fresher's reps this year. Some of my favourite activities in Oxford are sprints training at Iffley road or visiting all the weird and wonderful libraries around the city. We are all here to make sure you guys have a smooth and fun transition into Oxford life so don't hesitate to get in touch with any questions you have.



Welcome from your JCR President

Hi everyone! I'm Anish (he/him), a second-year PPE student, and I'll be serving as your JCR President this academic year. First of all, HUGE congrats on your offer, and welcome to Somerville, which is (in my not-at-all biased opinion) the best college in Oxford! You've worked incredibly hard to get here, and I hope you're excited for everything the next few years will bring.

Oxford can feel daunting before you arrive, but I hope that you'll quickly discover what makes Somerville such a special place: our welcoming and supportive community. Somerville is truly a place where anyone – regardless of their background or perspective on life – will find members of this community that will cheer on your every high and care for you in all of your lows. Before long, I hope it will feel like your home away from home. I know it does for me.

A little bit about me beyond the JCR: when I'm not studying or doing JCR things, I'm either running, working on the *Somervillian*, planning a trip, or spending time in Terrace (our cafe/bar). I'm also a digicam warrior and never go anywhere without taking photos. More generally, I'm always up for good food, a drink, a walk around Oxford, or an excuse to explore somewhere new. Fun fact, I've been to basically all of the Bodleian libraries in Oxford!

As JCR President, my role is to lead the undergraduate student body and represent your interests within the college. Together the JCR committee organises welfare initiatives and social events – everything from film showings to karaoke nights to our BOPs (big open/organised parties) – while also advocating for issues that matter to students. We work closely with college staff to improve student life, ensure your views are heard, and make Somerville as inclusive, responsive, and enjoyable a place to live and study as possible. I highly encourage you to get involved in some way with the JCR. We hold Open Meetings once every two weeks, where you can raise concerns, suggest new ideas, or help shape the direction of the JCR. There's also free pizza, which, admittedly, was my reason for going the first time. Whether there is something



you think could be done better, a new idea for something we're not doing, or if you simply have feedback about college life, I hope you'll get involved.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions before you arrive or at any point during the year. Whether you want advice about Oxford, college life, academics, or just need someone to point you in the right direction, I'm always happy to chat. I'm often around college, whether in Terrace, the library, or just walking around, so feel free to stop me and talk. Or, you're welcome to either email me at anish.vedantham@some.ox.ac.uk or DM me on Instagram ([@anishvedantham](https://www.instagram.com/anishvedantham))

In the meantime, I'd encourage you to follow the JCR Instagram, [@somervillecollegejcr](https://www.instagram.com/somervillecollegejcr), (run by yours truly) – and the Freshers' Instagram, [@somervillefreshers26](https://www.instagram.com/somervillefreshers26), to keep up with events and announcements over the summer. Once again, congratulations! I can't wait to welcome you to Somerville very shortly.

Up the Ville!!,
Anish

Junior Common Room (JCR)

- ★ The 'JCR' refers to both the undergraduate student council, and the common room itself.
- ★ The JCR (room) (shown on the right) has gaming consoles, various board games, comfy sofas, and a table football table. It is a great space for chilling with friends and many college society events are often held in the JCR.
- ★ The JCR (committee) represents all Somerville undergraduates. As Freshers, you automatically become full members of the JCR. This enables you to stand for committee elections, propose motions, and attend JCR meetings (which usually have free pizza!)
 - JCR meetings are an opportunity for you to debate and decide on what actions are in the best interest of the student body.



The JCR Committee

- JCR meetings take place every other **Sunday evening** in the **Flora Anderson Hall (FAH)**. Importantly, you can only have your say and vote on motions if you're present in the meeting! They're really casual and free pizza is provided so we really encourage you to come along and be a part of it.
 - Motions can be about any aspect of college life, from supporting new/existing clubs, to getting funding from the JCR budget.
- The JCR also has a Committee of Officers who have specific responsibilities for things like academia, the environment, welfare, and supporting different minority groups. Officers are elected every year, which gives you the opportunity to nominate yourself and join our team.
- Follow the Somerville College JCR Instagram page [@somervillecollegejcr](https://www.instagram.com/somervillecollegejcr)
- **More information and a guide to writing motions can be found here:**
<https://jcr.some.ox.ac.uk/jcr-governance/>
- If you have any questions, please feel free to **get in touch** with Anish Vedantham (President, anish.vedantham@some.ox.ac.uk), or Grace Rogers (Vice-President, grace.rogers@some.ox.ac.uk).

Meet your JCR Committee!

President Anish Vedantham	Vice-President Grace Rogers	Secretary Alex Cooper
Treasurer Zoë McGuire	Freshers Reps Hollie Brown, Isaac Dutson, Vybhavi Singu, Thomas Wasserman	Welfare Officers Eliza Hamid and Ismail Rahman
Academic Affairs Officer Hannah Clayton	ENTZ Sophia Alexiou, Will Grunstein, Madeleine Hall	Ethnic Minorities' Officers Apaar Agarwal and Disha Shetty

	and Oliver Masters	
Domestic Officer Tom Boyd	LGBTQ+ Officers Cara Bacigalupo-Cookman and Alan Thomas	Women's Officer Hollie Brown
International Student's Officer Matilde Baiesi	Class Officer Bee Barrett	Disabilities Officer Sophie Stewart
Environment & Ethics Officers Lara Hague and Laura Lynch	Terrace Officer Anna Crowther	Access and Admissions Officer Livia Demetriou Erdal
Sports Officer Rohan George	Arts Officers Ava Goddard and Beau Goding	Returning Students Officer Poj Tanavongchinda
Keeper of the Slinky Eva Murphy	Suspended Student's Officer E-Shen Low	Charities Officer Eliza Spooner

Accommodation

In your first year, you will all live in the same main buildings on the college site (mostly in Vaughan, Penrose and Darbishire). These are assigned at random, and they all cost the same. They are only a minute or two away from each other, and you will most likely make friends across multiple buildings.

All first year accommodation buildings have broadly similar facilities so **don't worry too much about where you'll be living!** College tends to be very receptive to accessibility needs, so do get in touch with the academic office as soon as possible to inform them of

any potential individual considerations so they can try to make arrangements such as with accessible bathrooms, for allergies, etc.

All rooms will be fully furnished and College will supply two pillows and a duvet (including pillow and mattress protectors) so you **only** need to bring your own sheets and pillow/duvet covers. It might be useful to bring an extra lamp as you only get one on your desk and an extension cable.

Scouts (aka. the cleaners)

- Your scouts clean your room every other week, you will have a notice on the pinboard in your room indicating what day you can expect them to come.
- This involves vacuuming your room and wiping down surfaces such as your desk and sink if you have one.
- Do keep your room generally tidy or scouts may refuse to clean your room and if the state of your room is bad enough, they can report back to a dean (see below).
- Your scout may also report back about unauthorised items in your room so make sure that you do not have anything that could potentially get you in trouble.
 - A list of things that you are not allowed in your room is given as part of the tenancy agreement you will sign but generally things like fire hazards (e.g. candles) or kitchen appliances (e.g. coffee machine) are not permitted.
- Your scouts empty your bins daily so remember to leave the bins outside your door every morning.
 - **TIP:** Make sure to always have your room key on you, because your scout will lock your door when they leave (it's part of protocol). If you do get locked out, you'll just have to pop over to the Porters' Lodge and ask for a spare key but easier to save yourself the hassle!
 - **TIP:** Be nice to your scouts! This may just sound like general etiquette but lots of people become very friendly with their scouts who tend to not change throughout the year.

Deans

- The College Dean and the Student Welfare Advisors are here to keep things in order, but they are all very friendly faces.

- **Part of their job of looking out for your welfare is to make sure that the buildings are quiet after 11pm.**
 - Noise, however generated, which is a nuisance to others, may be a matter for complaint and disciplinary action. Anyone upset by noise should complain to the noisemaker or the Porters' Lodge in the first instance, and only finally to the Junior Deans if necessary.

Laundry

- Each building has a laundry room with washing machines, tumble dryers, ironing facilities and drying racks. You do have to pay to use the machines (they accept card/contactless payment).
 - A wash is £2.60
 - A tumble-dry is £1.60
- Sometimes the machines are all taken, but you can place finished laundry that hasn't been removed into an allocated basket marked with the machine number so that you can use the machine.

Kitchens

- Every building has kitchens, all of which will contain microwaves, induction hobs, kettles, sinks, and fridges. Penrose and Darbshire have freezers in their kitchens, and Vaughan has access to a freezer located in the JCR's kitchenette (which is in the same building although a bit complicated to walk to). Many of the kitchens (especially in Vaughan) are quite small, so bear that in mind when thinking about what you might want to cook. Although don't let this put you off cooking - we've loved cooking in the Vaughan kitchens this year as you can see on instagram [@vaughancookoff](https://www.instagram.com/vaughancookoff). Penrose and Darbshire have ovens, Vaughan does not but you can simply go to a kitchen in another building to use one. **You can do as much or as little cooking as you like, food is also provided in the college's hall - see the section on food for more info!**
 - Fridge, and especially freezer space is quite limited, so you won't be able to fit a massive amount in them. You might want to **bring a sharpie or other marker pen to mark your food/drink** and make sure nobody accidentally uses it.
 - You might want to keep some of your (non-perishable) cooking stuff in your room to save space in the smaller kitchens.

- **Make sure you wash up everything you use promptly! You have to share your kitchen with other people - do not leave lots of dirty utensils around!**

Other

- Park has a music room with pianos and a drum kit. It is decently large so could accommodate maybe 4-5 people playing instruments there.
 - You can book the room for up to two hours at a time, the instructions can be found [here](#). You will then have to go and collect the keys from the Porters' lodge.
 - Don't forget to be considerate of your booking times and remember to return the key so that other people can access it when you're done!
- You'll need to register especially to have access to the piano -- if you get in touch with the Music Society, you can be added to the register.

Vaughan

"If you live in Vaughan, you don't have to look at Vaughan"

~ the unofficial college motto

★ **TIP:** Get to be good friends with your neighbours, or bring earplugs! The walls are quite thin from room to room.

- Vaughan is completely for first years! It has three floors of 20 rooms.
 - There are two bathrooms on each floor
 - Each has two toilets and two showers, separated by cubicles, and are cleaned every day. Middle floor even has a bathtub (use at your own risk...!)
 - These bathrooms are all gender-neutral, except one female only bathroom on the middle floor.
- The rooms have built-in sinks, and most have full-length mirrors on the wardrobe doors
 - There is a kitchen at either end of each floor - one is smaller with a kettle, toaster, microwave and 2 fridges, and the other is larger with additional shelf space. Both have functional hobs too!
 - You can't fit many people in the kitchen (unless you want a kind of vertical Twister game). If you want to cook as a group, you could go to a different floor or building (although probably ask somebody who lives in that building first!).

- It's a very social building! It doesn't take long to get to know most of the people living there, and you can often just hang out in the corridors.
- The Terrace café/bar is part of the same building, meaning that you can grab a coffee, cake or panini without even bothering to wear shoes -- ideal for an essay crisis. The sofas are also very comfy if you just want to chill or watch their TV. Alcohol is also served and there is a pool table which is free to use!
 - **TIP:** You are not allowed to bring your own food or drink into Terrace, and doing so may result in a bar ban. (They do keep an eye out for this and will confront you about it!)
- The Vaughan accommodation sits above the JCR, which holds a variety of entertainment facilities such as TV, games consoles, table football, card games etc. (more on this in the JCR section!)



Penrose

- ★ **TIP:** Get to be good friends with your neighbours, or bring earplugs! The walls are quite thin from room to room.
- A pretty and relatively quiet building which is also exclusively for first years, except for a few tutors.
- There is a lift which serves the three main floors, however it was out of service a lot last year unfortunately so don't rely on it!
- *Many **but not all** of the rooms have sinks.*
- There are about 40 rooms in total, with 3 floors and two 'attics'.

- There are 3 bathrooms per floor (but one in each attic) which each have a toilet, sink and shower.
 - There is a 2nd floor bathtub if you're that kind of person!
- Every floor has one decent-sized kitchen with an oven, hobs, fridges, a freezer, two sinks and storage space.
 - Although Penrose may have larger kitchens than Vaughan, this doesn't mean it sees better cooking... check out [@penrosecookoff](#) for evidence
- ★ **TIP:** The Penrose kitchens are often an ideal size for people using them to buy communal food/milk/spices to share with the other users (although you are under absolutely no obligation to!)



Darbshire (a.k.a. “darbs”)

- ★ **TIP:** Get to be good friends with your neighbours, or bring earplugs! The walls are a bit thin between rooms and the corridor (although thicker than Vaughan!). That being said, the building is located very close to the Porters' Lodge and so noise after 11pm tends to be sorted out much faster.
- The building has 40 rooms (mostly located on the middle and top floors) and will be occupied predominantly by first years!
- The building has a friendly vibe, as well as good size windows giving lovely views of the very pretty Darbshire Quad.
- The rooms are some of the bigger first year rooms available - they are usually spacious, with a wardrobe, chest of draws, desk, bed (and some have a fireplace!).

- Unfortunately, there are no sinks in any of the rooms (although they aren't too far away from the kitchens, washrooms or bathrooms)
- There are two kitchens on the middle floor, which have access to a microwave, kettle, toaster, fridge, freezer, oven and hobs. There are also two “kitchenettes” which have a microwave, kettle, toaster, and fridge - but no ovens (so people who want to cook a lot tend to use the bigger ones)
- There are lots of toilets/shower rooms dotted around the building, and even a bath!
- There are washing machines, dryers, irons, and ironing boards located in a room on the ground floor



Matriculation

Matriculation is a ceremony to officially ‘swear you in’ as a member of the university and lasts about 10 minutes. The Vice-Chancellor speaks in Latin for a short time and that’s about it.

- It is usually held on the **Saturday of 1st Week** at the Sheldonian Theatre, in the centre of town
- Somerville freshers will go together, with each college having a different time slot.
- We start the day with a big class photograph with all the freshers!
- You’ll have to wear your subfusc outfit and gown – exact details are provided on the University website, although we’ve summarised it below.



- Subfusc is also worn during formal examinations. Although not at Somerville, some colleges also require you to wear a gown for formal dinners.
- **TIP:** You can get your gown earlier if you like, in person or online, but there will also be a scheduled time to buy them as a group during freshers' week: **don't panic!**
- Usually, you have to buy the gown, a ribbon/tie, and a mortarboard (they will usually be sold together as a package deal, the staff in the shops selling them are very knowledgeable as they give thousands of students their gowns). You don't wear the mortarboard, but you do have to carry it on you (no idea why, but it can be handy to use it as a bag!).
 - On the right is an example of the commoner's gown, ribbon, and mortar board set (although you can choose between a mortar board or soft cap, the mortar board is the far more popular option)
 - You can choose between a black ribbon, black bow-tie, or white bow-tie.
 - The majority of people will wear a commoner's gown, however, if you are a choir or organ "scholar" you will be able to purchase a scholar's gown, which is also worn for choir/organ performances.
- **Items to bring from home:**
 - Plain white collared shirt
 - Dark trousers or skirt (black tights must be worn with a skirt)
 - Dark suit jacket (optional, but frequently worn by men).
 - Smart black shoes
- Subfusc is gender-neutral, meaning that you can wear either a skirt or trousers, and ribbon or bow-tie, regardless of gender.
- After the ceremony, many people take photos around the classic Oxford sights and it's quite common to go punting from the Magdalen Bridge if the weather's nice, or do a pub crawl and visit Christ Church Meadows or Uni Parks, but it's up to you.
- ★ **TIP:** Don't get stressed out by all of the formalities - matriculation is basically just an opportunity to look smart and take some nice photos!





Studying at Oxford

- You may feel daunted when faced by a massive reading list before you have even arrived but it is nothing to stress about! There will always be someone who has read more than you, but there will always be someone who has read less than you (unless you've read nothing, then you might be tied).
- Skimming and efficient reading is an invaluable skill that you will get better and better at!
- Uni is very different from school in that it is designed to provide study space. It can be fun exploring and trying to find out where you work best - there are libraries and group study rooms, cafes, the Terrace, parks and outside space and of course, you've always got your room. Everyone works differently, some will be found late at night in the library whilst others are early risers, so try to find your own balance and what works best for you (***don't forget sleep and rest - term is very busy but please remember to take care of yourself!***).
- If you're like most humans and can fall behind in simple organisation from time to time, it is definitely worth figuring out a filing system for tutorial/class/lecture/reading notes, whether this is in a folder for handwritten notes or a memory stick or online files - something that can help you find them when you go back to them later. It is also helpful noting down reference details for any book, essay or article you read for future reference in your own essays (you may be able to re-use it in a different assignment). You'll thank yourself when it's time for exams!

- Remember, studying at university is likely very different to any format you will have encountered before - lectures, tutorials, labs, classes, reading, writing, essays, and problem sheets will all feel quite new. Try not to be too overwhelmed by the amount of content - you are not expected to be an expert on everything your degree covers, so don't stress about trying to get down every single detail!
- Some of your tutors will also recommend that you occasionally study together and share notes. You're not in competition with each other. Everyone's there to learn and you'll learn more by working together rather than against each other. However, don't feel that you have to study in a group if that's not how you work best!
 - **For many subjects it's also worth talking to your college parents and others in the year above, especially if there's not many of you doing the same subject (they will likely have had the same or very similar tutorials/essays/problem sheets!)**
- Library tip: Try not to hog all of the books, it won't make you popular. If you have taken out all of the books on the topic you guys are covering that week, it might be worth letting the others in your subject know so that they can borrow books from you and vice versa. This is where ***group chats for your subject will come in handy - make one with the other freshers in college soon after you arrive!***
- Everyone has heard of the dreaded 'essay (or problem sheet) crisis' - some of you will be thinking 'yep that's me' and some of you will be thinking 'nah I'm organised and can get it done'. If you avoid an essay crisis in all your years here I'd be impressed but if you don't **it is truly nothing to worry about. It happens to most people** and there is so much help available (not least from the friends you will make)! 24-hour libraries (like the Somerville one!) do come in handy for something! (Make sure you give yourself breaks and catch up on sleep ASAP if you do have to pull an intense night of work).
- Personal Advice:
 - If for whatever reason you don't manage to do your reading, or can't finish an essay/problem set in one week, **please don't worry**. You will not get kicked out if you don't hand in an essay on time. If you really can't complete an essay or problem sheet, get a plan or just a couple of bullet points together, and go to your tutorial with a few ideas. Your tutors can also grant you deadline extensions in mitigating circumstances.
 - ***Be honest with your tutors if you have struggled for whatever reason - they are humans too!***

The Academic Affairs and Careers Officer handles academic concerns for the JCR, such as unmarked collections (mock exams) papers, study spaces in the library, and the scholarship and grant funding awarded by the college. They can advocate for students about any academic matters, for example if you need accommodations on an exam, or if you have a more general complaint to be raised with the college. They will also promote the careers events and opportunities available to JCR students, and put out termly feedback forms to be passed on to the college. You can contact them at jcr.academic.affairs@some.ox.ac.uk.

Living in College

- **Storage facilities** - during term time, most people keep all their belongings in their rooms/kitchens. At the end of term, all students can request storage space for over the vac. International students, along with Scottish, Irish and Islands students (that is, everywhere that is not comfortably reached by car or train), get priority, meaning you get to sign up about 10 days before everyone else, and after this period anyone else can sign up on a first come first served basis.
 - International/Scottish/Irish students get to keep four cardboard boxes (there is a specific size of box allowed) and one suitcase in the storage space but if you speak to the Lodge you can sometimes leave other random items (like a whiteboard for example!).
 - If you need to exceed these dimensions or store items that are not allowed (such as musical instruments), it is always worth asking around! Quite a few students you will come to know will stay in Oxford over the vacs, second and third years may live in houses etc.
 - For everyone else, the same applies but with only 2 boxes (this is sometimes extended to up to 4 depending on space available).
 - Signing up for storage is best done on the day, as there are lots of people who will need storage. It will take about 5 minutes and I've never heard of international students not getting storage, but it's worth being on it just in case.
- For registration and just in general, for the whole time you're living in college throughout your degree) your **address** will simply be **Somerville College, Woodstock Road,**

Oxford, OX2 6HD. All mail goes to the porters' lodge (plodge) - envelopes go in your pigeonhole (a small shelf specific to you) and the porters keep your parcels until you come and pick them up. **Doesn't matter what accommodation you're in - we all have the same address.** However, do keep in mind that **your legal address when doing important stuff aka boring legal documents (as, for example, signing up for a bank account) will still be your home address** - but you should have no problems identifying which one is which, it is usually indicated very clearly.

- Be friendly to the porters and they will be friendly to you! They really are lovely and the college just wouldn't function without them. They are often the first point of contact if you need help with something in College.
- **Wifi** - you'll have a couple of options for which wifi to set up at the beginning of the year. ***Make sure you sign up for Eduroam if you want to get wifi in lots of university buildings across Oxford*** (it is also used in other universities around the world, so when you travel outside of Oxford you may find you have much more wifi than before!). There are some other networks you can sign up to like The Cloud or Connexion which are *useful as backups in case there is a problem with Eduroam*). When you arrive you will get more information on how to set up wifi and your email address etc from IT and if you need any help at all, the IT desk is willing to help with anything you may need (big or small) and can be found in Park (the building to the opposite Penrose next to Flora Anderson Hall).
 - **Don't stream or download anything illegal as they'll ban you from the wifi temporarily or permanently**
- The **Terrace** is a great place if you need a library break or just somewhere to go and chill and play pool - staff are lovely and they do great snacks as well as hot drinks/soft drinks/alcohol.
 - Each college also has their own college cocktail and mocktail. Make sure to try out our very own Somerville slammer or Somerville sunset.
- **Make the most of the grass!** Somerville is one of the only colleges in Oxford where you can walk and sit on the quad! So if you come out of a tute and the sun is shining, just sit down. Read a book, just chill. Alternatively, get rid of all that excess and built-up energy with a game of frisbee or a picnic on the quad (hall does take-out - bring a reusable container)!
 - Quad is most used in Trinity (third) term so it's worth bringing a blanket of some sort for then if you're planning on sunbathing

- Last year, quad was closed off for all of Michaelmas and most of Hilary because of poor grass conditions and wet weather
- You won't know which accommodation building you'll be in until you get there, so don't worry or second guess - all accommodation has its perks and if it's a couple of weeks in and you feel like you'd be happier in different accommodation, let someone in college know! Teresa Walsh is the housekeeper and is lovely – quite a few people swapped rooms last year.
- Somerville is one of the few colleges where you'll be able to live in on-site College owned accommodation for the duration of your degree (whether that's 3 or 4 years). This might seem weird compared to other Unis, but given that it can be twice as expensive to 'live out', and competition for housing in Oxford is so intense, this is a massive bonus! Plus being on site means you have easy access to the 24/7 library as well as Terrace and Hall.
- You can sign up to UniDays and StudentBeans for free for student discounts at lots of shops around Oxford, and online!
- **Also make sure you sign up for a FREE Tesco Clubcard to get discounts on your shopping.**

What do you need to bring?

- Clothes (obvs).
 - Don't forget to bring your smart clothes for subfusc
 - You may also need formal clothes for dinners, balls, and galas which will be organised by various societies and colleges throughout the year. Most of these events will be black tie, so we recommend bringing either a suit or suitable dress depending on preference.
- Toiletries
- A laundry bag/basket
 - You will most likely have to go up and down stairs to get to the laundry rooms, so it's worth bringing something sturdy to transport your laundry in
 - Also remember to bring laundry detergent
- Bedding - sheet, duvet cover, pillow cases
 - All of the beds are singles

- You will have two pillows and one single duvet provided, as well as a mattress cover and pillow covers
- Decoration - photos, posters, drawing pins for the notice board, bunting, plants, battery powered fairy lights, extra pillows and blankets
 - **TIP:** Candles are not permitted, due to the risk of a naked flame
 - You'll be living in your room for a while, and you might often have your friends in there so try to make it as nice as possible!
 - Be on the lookout for plant and poster sales during Freshers Week, when you can also pick up some great decor
 - Blankets can be very cosy and make your room look nice, and can also be useful if you have anybody stay over in your room
- You don't have to bring a bike but it can be handy for last minute lecture runs, sports (Iffley Sports centre and the boathouse are a fair way away) and if you are planning on going around Oxford quite a bit.
 - If you do bring one you must also bring a good bike lock
 - In Oxford there are many places where you can buy second hand bikes really cheap as well as online and at the Union when you arrive (you will be given information about this when you arrive).
 - You can also find friends and other students who can lend bikes or sell you their old bikes.
 - It's illegal to cycle without lights (front and back) at night
 - Bikes need to be 'registered' with College which just means that you'll be able to use the college bike racks (there is a bike cull once a year where unapproved bikes are removed and actually resold).
- There are drying facilities (tumble dryers and clothes horses) but it is very handy to bring your own clothes airer for your room.
- Bop costumes are always a hodgepodge of random things so make sure you bring a few to put together something for those Bop nights! The wackier the better.
 - Bops are basically fancy dress parties with 50p "bop juice" (basically homemade punch), held in college
 - The first bop will have the theme "S for Somerville", so try to bring a fancy dress costume for a character or object starting with the letter 'S'.
 - In Michaelmas term, there will also be a Halloween bop and a Christmas (Oxmas) bop.

- Reusable water bottle
- Gym kit / exercise wear
- Cutlery
- Pots and pans
 - If you plan to cook (not everyone will do much cooking), be warned that the kitchens are of variable size and quality.
 - I would suggest just bringing some basic things (saucepan, frying pan, knife, chopping board) and getting more later on if you need.
- Towels
- Stationery
 - Things like marker pens and post-it-notes can be useful for leaving notes in shared spaces like kitchens/bathrooms. Some people like to put post-it-notes on their doors in Fresher's week (and well beyond) to tell their neighbours they can knock and say hi!
 - STEM subjects will also require specific calculator models, but you will be emailed about this closer to the start of term!
- ID/Passport - some departments pay students for doing outreach work, but for this to happen you need a passport! Not a bad idea to bring a copy of a DBS check if you have one.
- *Extension leads* - plug sockets can be in really weird places as some of the buildings are quite old
- **TIP:** This list isn't exhaustive and there's probably different things that are essential to some of you (e.g. sports gear, musical instruments, books etc.).
 - If you do accidentally forget something important, you can probably buy it in Oxford, have it posted to you, or in the worst-case scenario you'll likely only have to go without it for just over two months as the terms are very short.
 - Don't worry too much about feeling like you're bringing too much/little, everyone brings different amounts of stuff.

Social Life

- You will never be short of things to do in Oxford and around Somerville! Here is a brief guide to what you might like to do, but the list goes on.

- There are loads of great pubs and bars in and around Jericho (the part of Oxford that Somerville is located in) e.g. The Jericho Tavern, Jude the Obscure, the Victoria, Oxo (£4 cocktails Mon-Thurs!)
 - Quite a few do pub Quizzes! (there's one at Jude the Obscure every Monday)
- Balls are always an amazing experience unique to Oxford and are great fun with a group of friends. Look out for balls run by societies - often (relatively!) cheap and you don't have to be a member! Pack a suit or ball gown if you are thinking of attending one (however, there usually aren't many happening in your first term, Trinity (third) term has most of them so probably don't worry about this until 2027). Also don't feel like you have to go to every (or any!) ball, the prices are often extortionate and there are other ways to have fancy fun!
- Formals at Somerville are really lovely as they are more chill than at other colleges. No subfusc! It can be a cute thing to do for birthdays or for showing family/ home friends a slice of Oxford. Really good value for money as well as it's £14.50 (£18.60 for guests) for a waiter-served three-course meal!
 - You can book them online via the Somerville meal booking system
 - There will be a formal in freshers week with all students in your year as well as all of your tutors present - make sure to sign up for that (college should send a form around)(there will probably be free wine)
- Nightlife:
 - There are a decent amount of options for nightclubs in Oxford, with Bridge, Plush and Bullingdon (Bully) being the main ones, as well as several other bars and other venues for nights out
 - Reggaeton is a Somerville favourite night-out and is held every Friday at the Oxford Retreat and is free entry!
 - If you're worried about what wardrobe to bring for going out, generally, clubbing attire is very laid-back in Oxford - jeans and a nice top is a common choice, and no heels! Cloakrooms generally cost between £1-2 pounds and are also useful for keeping your student card (aka "bodcard") and other valuables safe
 - Often people go to Plush (which is Oxford's main explicitly LGBTQ+ club) on a Tuesday, or Bridge on a Thursday.
 - If you forget to book a ticket for a big night out or want to sell an unwanted one last minute, people often sell tickets on whatsapp groupchats. You can easily be added to these once at Oxford

- **Don't bother buying any of the club night tickets you see floating around for fresher's week - tickets can be bought via the college freshers packs in Freshers Week so you all go to the same events.**
- In addition to clubbing, lots of societies will host events in the evenings (alcoholic and non-alcoholic), including bar crawls, so keep an eye out for societies you are interested in and the socials they might be hosting.
- Some colleges host BOPs more often and it is sometimes possible to go along to these (tends to be easier if you have a friend at that college).
- Lastly, we should mention that while it is uncommon, cases of spiking unfortunately do sometimes occur in Oxford clubs. When in a club, please be careful with what you drink and make sure to keep an eye on your friends. If you are especially concerned about this, **please get in contact with any of us** in the fresher's team, any of the welfare officers or the college's peer supporters. You may want to consider purchasing an anti-spiking drink cover. We will be covering safety around drinking in a talk when you arrive (and if you want to help yourself feel safer before coming there are a lot of anti-spiking resources you can research online - take a look at <https://www.drinksafe.uk/pages/advice-and-support> if you think this would help you). Oxford is a relatively very safe place to be a student, but it's good to keep aware of any potential risks.
- There are also LOTS of really nice cafes around so go out and explore! There are many options even within a five minute walk - G&Ds (AMAZING ice cream, brownies and bagels), Opera, Gail's, Taylors, The Wine Cafe, Common Ground (a relaxed working space)...There's even a board game cafe called Thirsty Meebles, though you'll have to book.
- **Crew dates** are usually very entertaining and a great way to meet people. They're generally held between two sports teams and involve lots of curry and drinking games (you can still participate with non-alcoholic beverages)!
- **Instagram is the main way to find out what is going on in and around college.** You will always be able to find pretty much every event, society and group on Instagram.
- Get involved and get to know people in other colleges by going on some of the university-organised trips!
 - **Varsity trip** (joint Oxford and Cambridge ski trip) is great fun and relatively cheap for skiing (you don't actually have to be able to ski)
 - There have also been **surfing trips** in summer and loads more.

- And finally ... **BOPS**. A bop is basically a big college fancy dress party, with a different theme every time. There are usually 3 bops in Michaelmas, 2 in Hilary, and 1 final one in Trinity. They are organised by our Entz team, cost less than a fiver to get in, and you are able to sample the (very alcoholic and cheap) delights that are “bop juices” (there are also non-alcoholic options available).
 - Due to certain regulations, bops held in the college’s Flora Anderson Hall (FAH) must end at midnight. We would therefore encourage everyone to show up fairly soon after they start to maximise bop time! (Some people go clubbing after.)
 - The information about each bop will be circulated to everyone by the Entz team in advance, so you will have time to prepare your costume before bop night. Your first freshers bop will have the theme “S for Somerville” - so prepare to dress as anything you like that starts with the letter “S”!
 - **Be sure to follow Somerville Entz on Instagram [@somerville.entz](#) !!**

Societies

- **It is always better to sign up for too much than too little** - it is easy to unsubscribe from a society mailing list! So make the most of the freshers' fairs (where societies will have their own stalls to advertise themselves - we will all visit together during a scheduled slot in freshers week) and try something new or keep up something you’ve already been doing!
 - Make sure you sign up with your uni email address though!! It’s hell to unsubscribe on other email platforms
 - Also try to find instagram pages of societies you are interested in, as some will use this much more than email!
- There are hundreds of societies in Oxford so **it is almost impossible not to find something you are interested in!** If there is something in particular, however, **you can always start your own society!**
 - Do remember that you may not always be able to do everything on offer, no matter how amazing it looks - there are only so many hours in a week and so many societies. So try out as many as you can in your first few weeks, but remember you don’t need to over-commit yourself to too many different things in the long-term (and you can always get involved in different societies later on in your degree)

- Some societies are more famous and well-known than others - the “Oxford Union” holds debates and speaker events and membership grants you access to their library and exclusive events. The joining fee is quite hefty (£200+!), but if you are keen to get involved and go to a lot of events then the money is worth it, as you can pay for a lifetime membership (£357).
 - You can also pay in instalments if the £200+ membership is too much of a stretch in Freshers’ Week, and if you receive a full government maintenance loan, it is severely discounted (about half price). There should be no pressure to become a member though and **many other societies have speaker events too!**
- For those of you who enjoy social games Somerville has its very own “Deception Society”. Mafia, Werewolf, Resistance, Avalon, Poker, and more...
- For those who love the arts there is OUFF, the university film-making society, OUDS, the drama society, and OUPS, the poetry society.
- There are usually loads of drama productions of varying size being put on each term, some uni-wide and others within college (including the freshers-only drama “cuppers” competition in first term!). Even if you have no experience, there are plenty of opportunities to get involved!
- The **music scene in Oxford is generally brilliant** and there is something for everyone. Somerville has a music room available for booking (in Park building), with a baby grand piano (you’ll need to email Paul Francis to get permission to use it, but it’s worth it), and other pianos around college. And don’t forget the Somerville Orchestra!
- **Don’t be afraid to audition!** It can seem a lot tougher here because a lot of people will be just as good as you but it is worth trying your best and when you do succeed it will be an amazing experience meeting new people and getting to do something you love.
- Most subjects have their own societies that host speaker events, workshops and social events. Often these are sponsored by companies, so watch out for cheese and wine networking or open bar pub quiz.
- Sport societies:
 - Sports societies in Oxford can be split into college-based and university-based.
 - College-based sports are funded by the JCR and are meant for students in a particular college, while university-based sports are funded by the university and meant for students regardless of their college.
 - Do note that you may still need to pay for membership be it for college-based or university-based societies, so do check with the relevant society.

- College level sport tends to be a more accessible level compared to university-level sport where you will be playing/competing against other universities.
- Most sports have a 'cuppers' tournament where you play against other colleges.
- Some colleges combine together to form teams, this could be because they share the same training grounds or the sports are a bit smaller/more niche and require people from another college to form full teams.
- Somerville has many teams, societies and opportunities for the sporty people, like football, badminton and rowing! There are also loads of university teams you can try out for (including weird and wonderful sports such as underwater hockey or quidditch!).
- Most college-based sports have their own Facebook group, which serves as the main platform for recruitment and dissemination of information. Go to the fresher's fair to explore the range of sports available and feel free to contact the sport's officer (rohan.george@some.ox.ac.uk) if you have any questions.
- Gyms: There are two options available – the college gym and the commercial gyms in the centre of town.
 - The **Somerville gym is 24-hour and is located at the bottom of Vaughan** (really handy being so close and giving you really no excuse not to go)! Membership is free, but you have to book and attend a short introduction session before being allowed to use the gym (keep a lookout for the email regarding the introduction session). The college gym is fairly basic (perfect for your average gym-goers), so those who are particularly into fitness tend to opt for a paid membership at commercial gyms.
 - The gym, as of this year, also has women-only hours: Sundays - Wednesdays 6-8
 - For **commercial gyms**, there is a Pure Gym and a Buzz Gym (about 10/15 min walk from college) which is open 24/7 and offers great classes.
- Loads of university sports teams will have freshers' sessions at the start of term and you can usually train with them for free for a bit before deciding if it's the right sport for you and paying your membership. Definitely try as many as you think you might be interested in as it's a great way to make friends from other years and colleges.
- You can hire squash courts (usually) for £4 for 40 mins up at Ferry Road Leisure Centre, but it's fairly laid back so you can pretty much stay in there until someone kicks you out.

- During Freshers week lots of the college sports clubs will hold taster sessions. Go to as many as you can. Lots of them offer free food.
- Joining college sport is a great way to meet people in college and from other years. They also usually host really fun socials, sometimes with other college sports teams (crewdates), sometimes just in the pub.
- There are also loads of international or national societies that you are welcome to join even if you're not from there! From the Oxford International Society, the Balkan Society to the more famous French and German societies, there's something for everyone.

Other Things to do in Oxford

- Port Meadow (we are the closest college to the meadow! There is a society that organises for groups to swim in the river Thames together year-round!), Uni Parks (about five minutes from College), Christ Church Meadows, Botanical Gardens (free with Bod card) - all great outdoor places to clear your head.
- **It's also free with your Bod card to get into all the other colleges**, so definitely try and have a look around (would recommend Magdalen deer park). Some colleges are a bit more picky than others however and having a friend at that college is another good way to get to visit.
- You can walk for a long way along the towpath (on the other side of the river to Christ Church meadows).
- There is a great walk to the Victoria Arms (probably want to do it in early October, or maybe wait for better weather) but if you need to relax it takes about 40 mins and there's a pub at the end for a nice drink.
- Cinemas - there's an Odeon, Curzon in Westgate, and one in Jericho called the Phoenix Picturehouse which often shows quirky and interesting films, very retro and very cool. Also join E4 Slackers Club (it's free), and you get to go see a film at the Picturehouse once a month for free, no strings attached.
 - Somerville Film Club also does some free film screenings and the films are usually very good
- There are lots of very cute charity shops near Somerville and in Oxford, which are great for impulse buys/retail therapy on a student budget (as well as supporting great causes!)

- There's a nice small park literally a 1 minute walk away in Wellington Square - a great place to take a break if you don't have much time and a great picnic spot for a cheeky cafe take-away.

Libraries

- The Somerville Library is the best college library in Oxford! (not biased at all). Open 24/7, there will ALWAYS be someone else in there, no matter what time (although when it's late there will always be a secluded spot somewhere if you don't want anybody to witness your essay crisis!).
- Our library is particularly great for Classics, English and History books. However, if they don't have a book you need, e-mail library@some.ox.ac.uk, pick up one of the forms in reception or fill in a form online from the Somerville website. They might be able to buy the book for you within a week!
- You can take out as many books as you need and keep them until the end of term. Holiday loans are also great and very useful!
- Don't forget there is also a group study room, printers and computers for general use.
- The Classics room in Somerville library is great for late night, no-disruptions work, while the window seat on the first floor is great for chill reading days!
- There is a weekly group study space available in Park 6 with snacks provided, where you can talk to your co-studiers
- You can use most of the university's libraries in Oxford, even ones for subjects you don't study (your bod card should let you in).
- However, you are not allowed into college libraries in other colleges - although if you make friends outside Somerville then they might be able to sneak you in!
- The Bodleian - Rad Cam, Gladstone Link, and other reading rooms. (The wifi can be very patchy depending on where you are!). These libraries are slightly busier but are stunning.
- Other libraries include the Schwarzman Humanities Library (right next door!) Art and Archaeology Library, the Taylorian (about 5 minutes' walk), the Social Sciences library



(aka SSL, a bit further away but if you want a nice walk it's a good place to go) and the Law faculty library. Feel free to explore and find even more!

- You can get a huge amount of all the books and articles you need on SOLO, the university's online library, for free and without even having to leave your room. The library inductions will teach you how to use it during Freshers' Week. SOLO allows you to both locate physical books as well as read them online.

Food and drink

Eating in College

- Day-to-day, you'll have the option to eat in Hall (the canteen in college), which you pay for with your bod card which can be topped up online on EPOS. You'll be given your bod card on your first day, pre-topped up with £100, which is added to the card every term.
 - Hall is quite good value for money, and exact prices can be checked on EPOS or on the menus posted on the walls in the canteen area.
- Hall serves three meals a day at set times, except on weekends when they serve only brunch (great value) and dinner.
- Everything can also be served to you in a takeaway box if you need! A 20p charge for these disposable boxes is being discussed to minimise the waste created by takeaway (especially in Trinity when everyone wants to eat on Quad) so please bring a reusable container with you when possible! (They will serve you in pretty much any container, or even your own plate/ bowl).
- Hall is also a really nice social thing to do, especially at the start of term when you can get to know more people
 - There is a vegetarian, vegan and gluten free option available every day
 - There is also a salad bar every day except Sundays.
 - Usually breakfast is served from 8:00-9:00, lunch 12:30-13:30, and dinner 18:00-19:00
 - When there is a formal that evening, dinner is usually takeaway only and runs from 18:00-18:30 so try not to get caught out by this!
 - The main part of a meal at lunch/dinner should cost £3.49 with two sides available usually at 87p each. (so just over £5 for a pretty big meal, or around £4.50 for a smaller one - this is pretty decent value compared to other colleges)

- Hall is pretty good with **allergies and dietary preferences**, and you can always talk to them or the JCR Domestic Officer if you've had problems. If you have an allergy you can also apply to college to have your own fridge in your room (which can also be very useful seeing as shared fridge space is usually limited).
 - ***You can register your allergies or preferences online on EPOS***
- **Formal dinner** is held on alternating Tuesdays and Friday evenings, and can be booked on EPOS. Here, you can book for yourself and a maximum of 2 guests. Formal dinner is a nice opportunity to dress up and enjoy good food, especially if you can organise swaps with friends from other colleges.
- **It's perfectly possible to cook for yourself if that's what you prefer - it's also very fun (and often very affordable!) to do with friends.** Each building has different cooking facilities, but you should be able to cook most basic meals in all buildings, and you can always pop into Park (home to college's largest kitchen) for an extended cooking sesh (provided you clean up after yourself!).
- Terrace is also open most of the time with cafe food during the day (and as a bar in the evening), it's located by Vaughan and is a nice cafe spot if you can't be bothered to leave college.
 - **TIP:** You are not allowed to bring your own food or drink into Terrace, and doing so may result in a bar ban.

Eating Out of College

- The best places to go in town are in Cowley (a bit far, but if you bring a bike it opens up a lot of food options, from Moroccan to really good Thai and everything in between) or, when it's on, Gloucester Green market offers a really super choice of world foods and is pretty close. The Covered Market is also a nice place to eat in.
- The two main Chinese supermarkets in Oxford are located near the railway station, and they are well-attended by the Sino-British population of Oxford, while for most other food (e.g. Greek cheese), the shops in Cowley are the best place to shop.
- Jericho is also home to many lovely restaurants and cafes!
- **TIP:** Some restaurants like Itsu make their food half price shortly before they close! Supermarkets often do this too to get rid of food that needs to be cleared (the co-op in Jericho on the right from college's back gate has loads of reduced price ready meals on Sunday afternoons).

- Download the app 'TooGoodToGo' to get discounts on food from restaurants/cafés nearby!

Being a minority in Oxford and Somerville

The following section contains introductions from our LGBTQ+, Ethnic Minorities, Women's, Class, and Disabilities Officers. All of our officers can also largely be found on instagram or the Somerville JCR Website. If you have any concerns, they'd be happy to chat, so send them an email or message if you have any queries!

Being female in Oxford and Somerville

Hi everyone!

I'm Hollie (she/her), a second-year English student, and I will be your w*men's officer next year. I love cooking, a pub trip, a games night (preferably featuring catan or scrabble) and a good old natter about anything and everything.

My role will be supporting the wellbeing of w*men (w*men meaning women and gender minorities) -whether that be academic, social or personal wellbeing - organising some fun events, and promoting a really friendly and supportive network of w*men in Somerville.



It's also my role to run Somerville's Feminist Society. This will include organising the wear it pink formal, wine and chat evenings, cinema trips, pub/ college bar crawls, and hopefully some larger events alongside the other former-women's colleges! I basically have free-rein on what to make of this role (within reason of course), so please don't hesitate to contact me with any ideas.

You are joining such a warm and welcoming college, so I promise it won't be long until Oxford and Somerville will feel like home. Somerville has such a great tradition of

celebrating and championing w*men: in fact, we are the only dining hall in Oxford and Cambridge to only feature portraits of women on the wall. I'm really excited to meet you all so we can build upon, and expand, a strong (and fun) community, keeping w*men at the heart of Somerville.

If you ever have any ideas, concerns, or just need someone to talk to, please don't hesitate to email me at hollie.brown@some.ox.ac.uk or shoot me a message on instagram [@x.holliebrown](https://www.instagram.com/x.holliebrown) . I'm here to listen and support you in any way I can. I hope you have a fantastic start to your term, and I look forward to meeting many of you at upcoming events!!

Being LGBTQ+ in Oxford and Somerville



Hi, I'm Cara (she/her), and I'm one of the two LGBTQ+ officers this year! I'm a second year studying classical archaeology and ancient history (CAAH) and I love watching films and arts + crafts! My instagram is [@c.baci](https://www.instagram.com/c.baci) and my number is 07716146626, feel free to reach out!



Hi, I'm Alan (he/him)! I'm in my second year studying Ancient and Modern History, and I'm one of the LGBTQ+ Officers this year. Outside of University, I love to make art and write stories :)

Both of us are GDPR trained – that means that any data information about yourself that you give us remains entirely confidential.

Together we work to put on all the queer events, manage the Gender Expression Fund and are a point of contact to represent the wider Somerville queer community. If you want to stay updated with our events be sure to follow us on Instagram

[@somerville.lgbtq.](#)

In terms of upcoming events we run occasional Tuesdays pres in college, where we provide free snacks and drinks at Somerville before attending a larger Tuesdays event which generally ends in Oxford's resident gay club Plush. Additionally we have an upcoming queer formal planned (more details to come), and our Michalemas term card will be found on our Instagram (be excited!)

Our Gender Expression Fund is also available to all students looking to buy gender affirming items (such as binders, packers etc.) and help with legal processes like name and ID changes. The link to apply is found in our Instagram bio - where you will need to fill in your bank details and send us the receipt so we may reimburse you. If you have any questions about the process or queries on item eligibility just message us and let us know!

As LGBTQ+ officers, we are also here to represent the queer community in Somerville. If you have any concerns or anything you need help with, we're here for you. We are also always looking for new ideas on ways we can provide for the community so if you think of anything or just want to chat feel free to send us a message!

Being an ethnic minority in Oxford and Somerville



Hi, I'm Disha, I'm a second year PPEist and one of your ethnic minorities officers! I love music, art and tesco meal deals, and I'm part of the choir here at Somerville.

The transition to university can feel really daunting as a BAME student, which is why Apaar and I are here if you have any concerns. Somerville has been one of the most welcoming and safe communities I have experienced as a person of colour, and I want to make sure that all incoming students have the same fantastic experiences that I have had.

Please feel free to chat to me at any time about entering Oxford, my role as BAME officer, or any other concerns linked to being a BAME student. You can find us at [@somerville_bame](https://www.instagram.com/somerville_bame) on instagram!



Hello everyone!

I am Apaar (he/him), a second-year Engineering student from India, and one of the minor ethnicities officers. I love listening to music and love to play the piano. Somerville has made me feel at home in this new country and has helped me get comfortable with the different cultures the world has to provide.

Feel free to contact Disha or me if you have any questions regarding life at Oxford, what to bring and what not to bring, the types of events, any concerns you might have, a general conversation or literally anything. Do follow us on Instagram

and join the whatsapp group! You can contact us from either of those places!! Wishing you all a wonderful year ahead. Up the Ville (UTV)!

Disability Support at Oxford and Somerville



Hi, I'm Sophie (she/her), a third-year German student, and I'm the current disabilities' officer. My role is essentially to advocate for disabled students to the college, especially during the room ballot (our system for choosing rooms in college for your next year. This occurs in the second term) if people have specific access needs. If you ever have any disability-related concerns, feel free to come and talk to me. I can act as an additional channel through which these concerns can be communicated to the college.

I also manage the JCR prescription fund, which allows all members of the JCR to be reimbursed up to £40 a year for prescriptions. The link to the form will be sent to you at the start of the academic year, so keep an eye out for that and remember to submit any prescriptions you want reimbursed.

I run welfare events each term, which are open to everyone (not just those who have disabilities) and are a safe space – come for a chat, or just for the snacks. It is also my role to encourage accessibility of other events held in college. Let me know if you ever find an event inaccessible, and I'll see what I can do!

If you're a disabled student about to begin your studies here, I really recommend letting Somerville's Welfare Officer (Jo Ockwell) know about your disability and any access requirements or additional help you may need. I also suggest registering with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS), which allows you to get a Student Support Plan that is shared (with your consent) with your tutors so they know how they can best support you. Depending on your needs, this may give you extra time or breaks in exams, extended library loans, and/or specific accommodation. My Student Support Plan, among other things, has given me access to lecture recordings (which, annoyingly, are not available to everyone in the modern languages faculty), so it's really important that you get one so that you have access to everything you need to do your degree to the best of your ability!

Somerville is a truly welcoming and friendly college. I hope you're looking forward to studying here, and feel free to contact me (jcr.disability@some.ox.ac.uk or

sophie.stewart@some.ox.ac.uk) if you have any questions about being a disabled student at Oxford or Somerville.

Some useful links:

The Student Union Disabilities Campaign (DisCam) which supports and advocates for students with disabilities at Oxford:

<https://www.oxfordsu.org/organisation/10507/>

Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/OxfordDisabilities>

The Disabilities Advisory Service (DAS) website:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability>

More info about the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA):

<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa>

Being working class in Oxford and Somerville



Hi, I'm Bee, a second year classicist and your class officer for this year! I love music, history and arts/ crafts. I'm really excited to make some changes with this role and make everyone feel welcome!

I've put together an **'Affording Oxford'** booklet about how to budget, cheap places to have fun and how much things generally cost. Hopefully this will be helpful to you guys!

Somerville is a wonderful college and community but it can be intimidating coming to Oxford, especially from a working class background so please feel free to reach out with any questions, worries or complaints and attend any of the class events that I'll be planning! My email is charlotte.barret@some.ox.ac.uk and instagram is [@the.planetmarz](https://www.instagram.com/the.planetmarz)

International Student's Guide

Our International Student's Officer has written a comprehensive guide for all things regarding moving and living in Oxford as an international student - which you can find [here!](#)

Hi, I am Matilde (she/her), your International Officer. I am from Bologna (Italy) and I am a second year reading Classics. I love drawing, exercising, fashion, movies, techno (and all music in general). I have a cat and a bunny, which I miss dearly during term. I am also college married to Eva (Keeper of the Slinky) and Cara (our LGBTQ+ Officer)!

My role is not only to organise events in Freshers' week and all year round (e.g. themed formals, walks, movie nights) but to be a friendly face on campus. I will be in Somerville from the first of October!

I have made a group chat for international freshers. If you would like to be added and are okay with your number being shared with other incoming students, please feel free to send me a text on whatsapp: **+44 7925 190804** or on instagram: [@matildebaiesi](#)

You can also join the group chat directly via link:

https://chat.whatsapp.com/F9nfUhighQt8wEFdMcu3jJ?mode=gi_t

No worries if you are not comfortable with that, I will still make sure no one misses out on important info!

Last, do not hesitate to reach out with any questions, no matter how silly they might seem to you.



Faith

Both Oxford and Somerville provide many places for you to explore and practise your faith. The Somerville chapel is non-denominational (unique in Oxford!), so the Sunday evening services vary their focus on different religions and often on non-religious themes. The Somerville choir also sing during this service so it's a great chance to hear them (they are really good! Check them out on instagram [@somervillechoir](#)) and learn more about different religions or hear from a range of really amazing speakers. You can find out more

about the chapel from Arzhia, the Chapel Director, who's really lovely! The chapel can also be booked out by groups or individuals for various uses during the week (email chapel.office@some.ox.ac.uk).

There are a variety of different societies for most major religions, including:

- The Oxford University Islamic Society (ISoc), website: www.ouisoc.org
- The Oxford University Jewish Society (JSoc), website: www.ojc-online.org/oxford-jsoc.html
- The Oxford University Hindu Society, website: <https://oxfordhindusociety.co.uk>
- The Oxford Inter-Collegiate Christian Society, website: <https://www.oiccu.org>

For other faiths, it's worth looking around the University Freshers' Fair during Freshers' Week, as there should be stalls representing most major religions.

Social Media

Instagram is the main place for communications about events, societies, college life, etc. here at Somerville.

We will be posting the majority of our communications on our Instagram page, [@somervillefreshers26](https://www.instagram.com/somervillefreshers26). We highly recommend that you follow our account to stay updated with events and communications both before and during Fresher's Week.

Note: during term time, Instagram and Whatsapp are the main apps used for communications so it would be worthwhile downloading both if you haven't already

You do not have to join any of the following Facebook groups. Please note Facebook is beginning to be used less and less, however, you may find them useful nonetheless

Groups within Somerville:

Somerville JCR Noticeboard

Formerly used to keep up to date on current events. We typically use Whatsapp more, but the occasional message is still posted.

https://www.facebook.com/groups/171029169650768/?multi_permaLinks=1820651894688479¬if_id=1531067815401595¬if_t=group_activity

Somerville Ticket Marketplace

People use this to sell/buy tickets.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/208730709470583/>

Somerville Sports:

A group for all things sporty at Somerville.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/337406739981560/>

Somerville LGBTQ+:

This is a private Facebook group so only members can see who has joined.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/469824723205784/>

Groups and pages across the University:

Oxford ACS (African-Caribbean Society) -

<https://www.facebook.com/OxACS/>

Oxford University Islamic Society (ISOC) group -

<https://www.facebook.com/ouisoc/>

Oxford University Jewish Society (JSOC) group -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/OxfordJsoc/>

Oxford University Hindu Society (HUMSOC) group -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2202237652/>

Oxford Inter-collegiate Christian Union (OICCU) group -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/600228057001826/>

<https://www.facebook.com/oiccu/>

Musicians @ Oxford

A group for musicians - often adverts looking for musicians to fill in at gigs/selling of instruments etc.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/321601574633502/>

Singers in Oxford

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/singersinoxford/?ref=gysj>

Oxford SU Class Act Campaign

A group that supports students are working class, low income, state comp educated, first generation, estranged students, or care leavers.

<https://www.facebook.com/oxfordsuclassact>

Oxford University LGBTQ+ Society

<https://www.facebook.com/OULGBTQ/>

Oxford International Society

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/378355355966860/>

Students of Oxford Swap (Shop)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1620358991582177/>

Staying Safe in Oxford

Oxford is generally a safe city, but we want to make sure that you are aware of key sources of support should any issues arise. The **student welfare advisors** live in college, and can listen, provide guidance and support if you're experiencing difficulties such as personal problems, poor mental health, or other welfare/wellbeing matters. They can be contacted by calling **07805 784964** between 7pm and 7am Monday to Thursday, and from 7pm Friday to 7am Monday, during term time. For non-urgent matters, they can be contacted via email: student.welfare.advisors@some.ox.ac.uk.

In the past, there have been (thankfully few) cases of men following women who were walking by themselves back from clubs around the Somerville area. Please try to walk back to college in groups whenever possible in order to stay as safe as possible. We also recommend that you make sure your phone has enough charge and is always on you when you're out at night.

In general, if you are out in Oxford and are concerned for your safety, then please find the nearest College and report the incident at their Lodge. The Porters there will be able to arrange safe transport back to your residence. You can also ring the Somerville Lodge number to help arrange a taxi if it is an emergency (**01865 270600**).

However, if you are seriously concerned for your health or safety, do not hesitate to contact the emergency services:

In the UK, the number for the police, fire and ambulance services is **999**. The emergency services can also be contacted in non-emergency situations, using **111**.

During Fresher's Week, there will be designated **Somerville Helpers** to guide you to and from college on our clubbing nights. If at any point you feel unwell or unsafe, the Helpers will be there to help you get home safely. There will also be welfare teas directly following nights out, hosted by our **JCR Welfare Officers**. If you have concerns after a night out, or you feel that your safety concerns are not being addressed, do not hesitate to get in contact with the Women's Officer or Welfare Officers, or other members of the JCR team who can provide help.