So what is it really like to live and study here in Oxford?

Let some of our current students tell you

Thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make the Alleynian Prospectus happen. Big thanks to all the UZA students who generously contributed their photos and time.

Thank you to the tutors who kindly participated in our interviews.

The publication is also available in digital format on our website.

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Food

Oxford Colleges have 'catered' accommodation, which means that they cook all the meals students need in a week and everyone can eat together in Hall. Eating in Hall is not compulsory, but you'll probably find you want to most of the time as it's a great chance to catch up with friends, the food is delicious and the portions are very generous!

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served on weekdays, our famous "brunch" at weekends. Options range from sandwiches, soup and a salad bar, to hot options including at least one very good quality vegetarian option. Snacks such as drinks, cookies, crisps, fruit and yoghurt are also available and even ice creams, which are a life saver in summer.

Housing College cook (and wash up!) saves students a lot of time and effort so they can focus on studying and having fun. At Unio students buy food on a "pay-as-you-go" basis, which means you're free to eat in town or prepare your own meal when you want to.

As well as having meals cooked for you every day, you can use the fridge in your room to keep drinks and snacks, so if you want to have a take-in and miss breakfast, you can always have it in your room. There are also common kitchens in each college about which the college which are open to undergraduates to use (we have a few keen bakers who like to make the most of the oven!)

For the vast majority of meals, you choose your own food from a huge range of options in the College's lovely, naturally lit kitchen. However, 3 times a week you have the option to go to Formal Hall, which is a second sitting held later than normal dinner, where you get dressed up and are served at the table. Students like going to formal hall when it is someone's birthday, as it's much cheaper than going to a restaurant - it's also a popular thing to take friends and family to when they visit.

Let's see what Unio's students have to say...

Hall food is varied, with our favourites returning maw and again (the sweet potato fries are SO GOOD), and the portions are really well sized so you'll never go hungry.

Cecilia, Philosophy and Psychology

Unio work on a pay-as-you-go basis which is incredibly useful, as it means that if you aren't feeling the menu or decide to go out with your friends at the last minute then it's flexible enough to do this. Also as a vegetarian, I find that there is usually a decent option and that the portions are always sufficient.

Megan, English

This is Pam. She looks after the catering so she's pretty much a VIP in College.

Christine Lamb
Foreign Correspondent
For the Sunday Times.
Accommodation

For most people moving away to university, a key concern is accommodation.

Uni has a fantastic reputation for the range and standard of facilities. We have a convenient location right on the High Street, with a second site in leafy north Oxford where second-year students tend to live all together.

Range of rooms

Oxford is the oldest university in the English-speaking world, with the first of its colleges established in the 13th century. So as you'd expect, it's built some pretty amazing buildings during its long history! But don't be intimidated by how grand some of them look – they're very cozy inside, and the students make themselves right at home.

College is extremely convenient and it's nice to live in close proximity to friends. It's also lovely to live in such a beautiful, characterful building. Keble, Earth Sciences

Most colleges accommodate their undergraduates in a range of buildings - some hundreds of years old and some brand new. Although the age, shape and size of rooms at Uni vary, all rooms come with great facilities that are the envy of other colleges.

Wherever it is in College, your room will be well-decorated, and most include a sink and fridge, chairs, and generous pinboards for sticking reading lists, photos and tickets for gigs! Most people share a shover and WC with four other people, but we have a number of en-suite rooms as well. The students enjoy the opportunity to live in quirky, historical and beautiful surroundings.

"The college rooms differ in size, but most of them are really nice! I was actually in what is apparently one of the smallest rooms for first year, but it was still lovely and felt more homely and cozy than some of the larger ones. A useful perk is that almost all of the rooms have a sink and a mirror, as well as a mini fridge." Lemnich, Medicine

"It is rare that you find a room that doesn't have an amazing view - whether of the High Street or the College's various tennis courts and gardens." Max, History

How is First Year accommodation arranged?

Upon arriving in College for your first year, you will already have been assigned a room. All first-year students are guaranteed College accommodation, so you don't have to worry about sorting any of that out. Some will be right in the heart of College, some overlooking Queen's College on the High Street, some in the modern Dashwood or Goodfellow buildings, but all are close to Main Quad.

Cost

Rent is reasonable; students are charged approximately £2,900 per 38-week term. If you're feeling concerned about money, turn to page 20. Although the shape, size and style of rooms vary, all accommodation at Uni costs the same.

"The cost of accommodation at Uni is very affordable! Everyone pays the same, meaning there is no room discrimination based on income, contributing to the college's inclusivity." Kasia, Chemistry

Making a home away from home

I decorate my room with...

"Fairy lights, cushions, posters on my notice board, filling up bookshelves with the Harry Potter series." Alpini, Maths and Computer Science

"Probably far too much! I decorate with pictures etc. to the extreme." Louise, History

"Anything that makes me smile in the door and think 'yes this is my space'!" Kary, PPE
Your FIRST WEEKS AT UNIV

COLLEGE PARENTS

The college family system is one of the many welfare practices in place, as well as just a bit of fun. Before you arrive at Uni, you will be assigned a family (at least two current University students from the year above you), who will help you settle in. Once you have had your exam results and your place at Uni has been confirmed, your college parents will write to you to introduce themselves and to give you some tips and advice about coming to Oxford.

"It was really nice having someone at Uni waiting for me to arrive, ready to explain the ins and outs of college life." Cecilia, Philosophy and Psychology

WELCOME WEEK

All incoming first years come up to College a week before they start their studies for a ‘Welcome Week’. There’s a chance to meet your tutors and get to know other students in your year before work gets really started. You have plenty to keep you busy: Freshers’ Fair, various induction to things like the library and the gym, meetings with your subject tutors, and a massive range of social activities put on by the JCR (current students). You may also have to do some preparatory work for the first week of the Term.

"I found maths week challenging and fun. It was a great opportunity to have a look ahead to what is coming up in my course and how the modules at school can be applied to my degree." Sanskrishi, Medicine

MATHS WEEK

During maths week, Biomedical Sciences, Chemistry, Computer Science, Earth Sciences, Engineering, Mathematics (and joint schools), Medicine, or Physics at Oxford, you'll be invited to come to College a week before Welcome Week for a pre-Term Maths course.

It might sound a bit daunting, but you'll find it's a great advantage when term starts and you are already revised a lot of the material you will need later on. Even better, Maths Week is free: tuition, accommodation in college, and food are all provided with no charge.

Maths Week helps you to consolidate the maths skills needed for your subjects, helping you to make a strong start to the work in your first term at Oxford. As well as revisiting key mathematical concepts that you may have covered in the past at school, you will be learning how to apply these concepts to your chosen subject at university level.

Maths Week can be a bit intense after the long summer break, but be assured it's not all work and no play: the second year students put on a series of social events for Maths Week participants during the week, making sure you have the opportunity to settle into all aspects of College life.

Oxford has some unique words for everyday things...

Across

3. The ceremony by which you become a member of the University.
4. Both the place you eat and the meal you eat.
7. Sit down meal served every evening (proper Saturday). Be assumed - Uni has the longest grace for any Oxford college - read in Latin by a Scholar.
8. Each student has their own pigeon hole in the college mail room.
12. Intercollegiate sports, drama competitions are called this.
13. Summer term.
14. The head of the college.
16. The academic dress of Oxford. You'll need to wear this for exams and formal hall. You get to wear a flappy gown and smart dress.
18. Spring Term.

Down

1. Autumn Term.
2. Entrance to the college.
5. The three-month vacation in the summer.
6. A proper thank before formal meals. Nice tradition but you don't have to take part!
9. College bill. Includes rent on your room, plus an assortment of other costs such as food. Paid at the start of each term.
10. Place where you get food. Uni's food is excellent and cheap - we're especially famous for our brunches at the weekends when everything from souffles and fruit to bacon rolls in salmon bagels are on offer.
12. The best college in Oxford (sarc, we couldn't resist).
15. The abbreviation that refers to our actual common room bar also the student body in college.
17. Big Open Party. When they turn the lights on in the bar and play loud cheesy music, with people dressed in ‘interesting’ costumes. Very good fun.

Jargon Buster Crossword

About those FUNNY GOWNS...

Ahem, yea, about those.

We only really wear them to sit our exams. What's more interesting is the cornation flowers we wear. They have a special meaning here at the University as they signify how far through your exams you are. White is for the first exam, pink for those inbetween and red for your final exam. Friends and tutors supply you with the flowers as a supportive gesture as you head off to the exam hall!
Learning at Oxford

GETTING STUCK INTO YOUR COURSE

After Welcome Week, it's time for your course to begin. Your week shapes up really tightly on what course you're doing. No matter what your subject, you'll spend your first weeks getting to grips with your workload then you'll hold yourself personally, and getting used to taking full ownership of your studies. Don't worry too much about this before you arrive, though it's really all down to time management.

After a couple of weeks of trying different things, you'll settle into a routine that works for you, and enable you to have lots of enjoyable experiences as well as studying.

Arts & HUMANITIES

Typically an Oxford student studying a humanities subject seems to have an uncharted timetabled, but that doesn't mean you have to do a lot of arts learning at Oxford is done independently, so time management is a good skill to pick up, but once you've got the hang of it there is plenty of time to relax and get involved in societies.

You will usually be set one or two essays a week, and it's up to you to look at the suggested books, go to the library and decide which ones look useful. It's incredibly rewarding to be able to really study the things you find interesting and to discuss them with tutors and other students every week, in a setting where you are actually encouraged to put your opinion across - as long as you can back it up! The tutors are very enthusiastic about their subjects and at the cutting edge of research; you might even find their work on your reading list!

SCIENCES

The first thing you'll notice about doing science at Oxford is that you seem to have much more on your timetable than an arts student.

True you will probably have 9 lectures, a couple of days a week where you might be in labs all day and two or three tutorials a week, but for many science students this means you can sometimes be done by 5pm (and you'll be less likely to face the dreaded 'essay crisis'!)

You will usually be set problem sheets, which are questions to be answered for tutorials; you discuss these in your tutorial with the tutor and other students as well as discussing the wider topic beyond each problem sheet.

The tutors are at the forefront of research and are really passionate about their subject. Rest assured, you're being taught by some of the best minds out there. This is supplemented by lectures and more practical work in the University's very well equipped labs in the Science Park Area (about 10 minutes' walk from College). It's a fantastic opportunity to get to grips with the theory and to test out the practical side too!

The thought of moving up to studying at University might be daunting. Here are some reflections from Unio's students on how well they managed the transition from school.

What would you say are the main differences between school and university study?

"Especially since I study a humanities subject, 95% of my work is self-study, in a library. There is a lot less rigid structure then at school but that means you structure your own day. The deadlines mean there is still a fixed pattern to your week."

Lizzie History

"There is a lot more independence thinking at university. Answers aren't just handed to you; you should be prepared to work to find things you might not know."

Rapita, Maths and Computer Science

"I would say that university study is an inverse way of learning compared to school. At school, your teachers start by telling you the information and then you collect it for an assessment. At university, you are given an essay question; you research it and bring your thoughts to your tutor at the end of the week. The tutorial is a discussion of the information you have found independently rather than a spoon feeding of information. The essay is a method of learning, not merely a method of assessing. I prefer this approach even though it was a shock to start with."

Megan, English

"There's almost nothing prescribed here - you can read and write what you want and not really have to worry about jumping through hoops."

Tom, PPE

What about your relationship with your tutors?

"My tutors are very welcoming and will always be willing to answer questions or requests for specific reading lists. One of my tutors even brings tea and biscuits to our classes! The tutors will sometimes seem intimidating when they are intentionally pushing you, but this always results in better work in the long term."

Megan, English

"The tutors are incredibly interested and very interesting. So long as you are interested and participate in the tutorials they don't really mind if you don't understand and tend to do a really great job of explaining things."

Aparajita, PPE

"They really care about our progress and welfare. I know that if I was ever having trouble completing work I could talk to them about it."

Hannah, Ancient Near Eastern Studies

Preferred place to study?

Unio has two libraries so there's plenty of choice of where to study with atmospheres to suit most tastes. Choose between the traditional old library, with plenty of cozy corners (and cushions), the shiny new library (finished 2017), or one of the group study rooms. That's if you don't fancy one of the countless libraries across the university (there are over 100 in total), or wouldn't prefer to work in your room, in a café, or outside on a warm day.

"I work mostly in libraries. I really like exploring all the different libraries around the whole of Oxford for a bit of a change of scene."

Kitty, PPE

"Maybe I'm a traditionalist, but nothing beats the upstairs of the old library in Unio. It's beautiful and inspiring and every Oxford-y. Plus, if you sit in the right seat there, the statues seem to look appropriately at you when you get distracted!"

Tom, PPE

"Personally I like studying in my room where I have all my textbooks and notes readily available plus food and cups of tea when needed."

Rebecca, Medicine

What is your favourite thing about learning at Oxford?

"The tutorial system allows you to ask experts questions that textbooks just don't have the answers to."

Maninder, Computer Science and Philosophy

"The tutorials are one of the best things about Oxford! You get to meet people from different backgrounds and perspectives and it's a really good way of learning."
TUTORIALS

As well as doing lots of reading, attending lectures, classes and (depending on what course you do) labs, students have tutorials at least once per week. The tutorial system is what makes Oxford and Cambridge Universities really special, and is at the heart of the intensive style of learning that these two universities offer. Oxford students refer to their tutorials as ‘tutes’, and Cambridge calls tutorials ‘supervisions’, but the idea behind them is the same.

A tutorial is where you sit down with one of your tutors for about an hour, with one or two other people doing the same course (your tutors’ ‘partners’), to talk about what you have been learning that week. It’s an amazing chance to ask your burning questions, get lots of attention from your tutor and make sure you really understand the material and develop your learning.

Let’s hear what Unisx students have to say about tutorials...

How did you feel before your first tute? What was it like, and how did you feel afterwards?

“Before my first tute I was so nervous and felt like I could never know enough, but it was nowhere near as scary as I thought it would be. My tutor was really friendly and was genuinely interested in what we had to say but also helped guide us to think about other things. I left feeling way happier and like I had learned a lot.”

Eleanor, PPE

Tutors are an opportunity to learn from the full attention of an expert in the subject you are studying.

Each tutorial is the culmination of all the self-driven study you have done in the previous week; reading, attending lectures and classes, reflecting on what you have learned, and writing essays or tackling problem sheets. The idea of doing all this work and then talking about it with experts can be daunting for new students, but you’ll soon get used to it and see it as a great opportunity to learn, and not just as a test. You will get lots of feedback on (and sometimes a mark for) the work you prepare for tutorials, but it doesn’t “count” towards your degree— and you don’t get a mark for your performance in the tutorial either. That means you can be honest when you don’t understand something, and get the most from your tutorial experience.

Tutorials are interactive, and give you a chance to ask questions in a relaxed small-group setting.

“IT was a completely original experience. My tutor had a (brilliant) habit of letting me make a point, in (what I thought was) its entirety, and then saying ‘Go on, finish that thought.’ It forced me to think further in a way that I’d never done before, which was very refreshing, but also pretty exhausting.”

Tom, PPE

“I really enjoyed my first tute, it made me feel much more comfortable in Oxford because it was essentially a chat with my tutor about the work that I had done on a topic that I really enjoyed.”

Hanninder, Computer Science and Philosophy

What role do tutes play in your education at Oxford?

“Tutors consolidate and clarify the information I have explored independently, and often provide a different outlook or application. If I struggle with a question on a problem sheet, I can be sure to leave a tute understanding it.”

Kate, Chemistry

“You need to prepare a piece of work for each one.”

Your college tutors may host classes for you in addition to tutorials like this one on Old English.

Tutors are an opportunity to learn from the full attention of an expert in the subject you are studying.

“Tutorials are the primary way in which we learn at Oxford and involve discussing the week’s work with another student and your tutor for around an hour. They offer the perfect opportunity to ask questions if there was anything you haven’t understood or need clarifying, and improve your self-confidence and ability to debate along the way.”

Rob, Law

“I have 3 tutorials a fortnight, and for each one I’m expected to have prepared an essay. One of my tutors prefers me to talk through my essay and offers specific feedback, whereas the other prefers to have a general discussion about another question. The tutorials tend to tie into one another so my essays get progressively better as the term goes on!”

Kate, Classics

Tell us about your best ever tute

“My favourite tutorial was my first ever tutorial! We met our tutor at the Natural History Museum and wandered around discussing the specimens he’d asked us to look at beforehand.”

Kelsey, Earth Sciences

“My favourite tutorial so far focused on perception and how we see the world. It involved a lot of confusion as me and my tutorial partner tried to get our heads around the subject matter, but it was just such a fascinating concept and I came out of the tutorial absolutely buzzing with ideas and passion for my subject.”

Rebecca, Experimental Psychology

“My favourite tutorial was definitely my hardest tutorial. My tutor kept pushing me in the tute asking ‘why’ after almost every statement, but it was through this that I started to piece together my essay into something more cohesive and started to grasp the concepts. The next week my essay was vastly improved because of the changes I made to my essay writing in that I hour tutorial.”

Megan, English

In the sciences, tutorials will often be exploring what you have learned in lectures that week.

You will have done plenty of self-driven study in preparation for each tutorial.
1. The Eagle and Child
A lovely old pub, where JRR Tolkien and CS Lewis liked to hang out.

2. The Covered Market
Filled with cute independent shops, cafes and an amazing cake shop – has a real “old-worldly” feel.

3. Plush Lounge
Oxford’s LGBTQ club.

4. Punching
Pushing yourself along the river with a pole. Better than it sounds.

5. Botanical Gardens
Free entry for university students – bring your lunch on a nice day.

6. Pie Minister
Fresh homemade pie and mash.

7. Edamame
Amazing home cooked Japanese food.

8. Park End Nightclub
Oxford’s biggest nightclub with plenty of student nights.

9. The Handle Bar Cafe
A bike shop and cafe in one!

10. The Alternative Tuck Shop
Perfect for hungry Uni! scientists – it’s on the way to the Science Park!

11. Freud
Former church transformed into a cocktail bar - great music and atmosphere.

12. Hardy’s Original Sweet Shop
A traditional sweet shop right opposite Uni – perfect for when you need a sugar rush.

13. The Mission Burrito Bar
The best quick eat in Oxford Cheap and tasty burritos to eat in or take away.

14. The House
Cocktail bar hiding away Blue Floor St. Uni students get a discount!

15. Ice Rink
Only around fifteen minutes walk.

16. Moo-Moo’s
Milkshake and smoothie bar.

17. Pitt Rivers Museum
See the shrunken heads!

18. Ultimate Picture Palace
First UK cinema to have sound. (Jume St.)

19. Ahmed’s Kebab Van
There is one man we turn to in our darkest hour. That man is Ahmed.

20. The Old Fire Station
Theatre and art exhibition hub with a hostel.

21. University Parks
Great for walks/runs. Tennis courts and beautiful trees.

22. Gloucester Green Market
Traditional open air market with a great atmosphere and great dumplings!

23. The Cellar
Best alternative club night – DNB, Dubstep, Folk, Electro, Indie...

24. The Turf Tavern
A popular haunt of Uni! students.

25. Olives
Just opposite Uni! Amazing French & Italian deli food.

26. The King’s Arms
Popular student pub, affectionately named the “KA”.

27. Jericho Tavern
Pub and music venue with lots of small bands.

28. Phoenix Picture House
Tiny cinema with a bar and showing obscure films.

29. Port Meadow
For walks amongst the cows. (Just on Monday.)

30. The Missing Bean
The best cup of coffee this side of town? You decide.

31. Turf Street Kitchen
Independent local foodie spot with volunteering hub upstairs.

32. G&D’s
One of three ice cream cafés in Oxford by the same name. They get customers to vote on new flavour ideas.

33. Jericho Coffee Traders
One of all the many independent coffee shops in Oxford. Beans roasted in Oxford by a friendly New Zealander.
MEET OUR TUTORS

We interview the interviewers.

Qualities you look for in applicants/students?

KM: Curiosity, zeal, ambition, comfort, diversity, and above all work ethic.

NY: Enthusiasm for the subject, scientific curiosity, and an ability to think analytically.

TM: We look for many different qualities and good applicants/students often have different balances between them. Some of the key ones (apart from course paper track record and predicted grades in appropriate subjects) include enthusiasm, motivation and competitiveness. In Earth Sciences we use skills from maths and all the core sciences to understand how our own and other planets work, and the ability to make connections between subjects in this way is certainly something we look for.

What will you wear in interviews?

TM: My usual work attire is fairly casual especially when on field work! For interviews I usually try to be a little smarter as I know many of the candidates will be — not field gear or jeans but nothing too formal either.

NY: I’ll try to look somewhat presentable.

KM: Very likely jeans.

An ideal essay/problem sheet is...?

KM: There is no ideal essay, we can always improve. But an essay of high quality should always have a deep analytical dimension bridging theory and empirical facts in a systematic, structured and well-informed way.

NY: One that shows a genuine interest in the topic and an attempt to engage with the question to explain the student’s own perspective, concisely.

TM: I think it balances consolidating knowledge with developing clear presentation skills and making you think for yourself. All 3 of these elements should be there from day 1 but the balance between them evolves as you advance through the course. One of my favourite parts of the course here is the 4th year independent research project where the students get to undertake an original piece of research, and find out something new about the world. I have seen so many students catch the research bug during this end and it really is wonderful to watch!

Subject/Speciality

Nick Young

Psychology and neuroscience. I specialise in brain imaging studies of memory and attention.

Education

Jack Hunt School and then King’s School for my A-levels. I was actually an undergraduate here at Unisys, and was happy to return here as a tutor 10 years after graduating.

Hobbies

I do battle with the slugs in my vegetable garden.

Karolina Milosevic

Subject/Speciality

I am fellow and associate professor in International Relations. I specialise in International Political Economy and International Cooperation in Institutions. My current book project is on the unintended emergence of a ‘global constitution’.

Education

I grew up in Gdansk (Poland) andClausthal-Zellerfeld (Germany) where I completed high school. I then studied Political Science in Bonn (Germany) and Warwick (UK) and got my Master in Public Administration from Konstanz University (Germany). I studied for my PhD in International Relations at University of Bern (Switzerland).

Hobbies

Cycling, enjoying the outdoors, cooking for and with friends.

Why should students apply to Unisys ahead of other colleges?

TM: I advise students to come and visit Oxford before applying if at all possible as often people just get a gut feeling about which college is for them. Personally I think that Unisys has numerous strong selling points. In general I think that it is a very supportive college for students both in terms of the resources and environment that it provides. In physical sciences I think that maths streak just before students formally start their degree is a great opportunity and something that my students really value in terms of easing their entry into university life both academically and socially. In terms of Earth Sciences, we have a truly excellent community here in Unisys spanning fellows, graduate students and undergraduates. We get together at events through the year both in college and within the department and I think that we all get a lot out of these interactions whatever career stage we’re at.

KM: Our students will give you a better answer to this question than me, but here are two obvious reasons why I think we beat the others.

1) Because Unisys has extraordinarily dedicated tutors.

2) Because our students are a very engaged community of intellectuality, hard work, and diverse social, educational and national background. Applicant students will find at Unisys an environment where they will certainly feel welcomed and accepted.

NY: Unisys is a very progressive and forward-looking place that puts a lot of effort into thinking how we can do better. This makes it a great place in which to live and work — very stimulating and friendly.

Tamsin Nother

Subject/Speciality

I studied Natural Sciences specializing in Chemistry at the University of Cambridge and then History and Philosophy of Science for a year.

Education

After a year working abroad in Germany and Belgium I returned to Cambridge and did a PhD in zoology in the Earth Sciences department.

Hobbies

I moved to Oxford in 2006 to take up a faculty position. Since then I have had 2 children and I don’t have a lot of free time but I try to get to the coast when I can and love being in or on the sea whenever possible!

Finally... dream dinner guests?

KM: I am frequently having my dream dinners — with my friends (who are often my colleagues).

NY: I’ll pick three psychologists. There are some scientists who, when you’re reading their work, make the process seem so clear and simple. David Marr is one of those people: he transformed the way we think about how the brain processes information. David Rumelhart, a cognitive psychologist, is another. The third, more personal, choice would be Alan Alda, who was the tutor at Oxford that inspired me most. At the dinner I’ll just plan to sit, listen, and learn.

TM: Tricky one and probably too many to name! Pioneering female scientists like Ada Lovelace, Marie Curie and Dorothy Hodgkin would certainly be in there but having dinner with Shakespeare or Alexander the Great would keep me well stocked in conversation with the other Unisys fellows at lunch for a while at least! Just finished ‘Dreams from My Father’ and Barack Obama would be fascinating to meet also as well as Angela Merkel whose experiences of living through reunification and making the transition from being a research scientist into front line politics must have been extraordinary. I’ll better stop now else I’ll go on forever!
It's not all work and no play here at Oxford. There is so much on offer outside of study that finding time to fit it all in is the challenge! But to quote ex-Unisite Stephen Hawking, 'Life would be tragic if it wasn't fun'.

**Societies**

There are hundreds of university-wide student societies at Oxford. You can choose from ultimate Frisbee, acapella singing, debating, comedy, even Quidditch! We could go on but you get the picture. If we don't have the society you're looking for then we can help you to set it up too.

**Music**

Unio has a high quality and fun choir. As well as weekly services in the chapel, they sing concerts, lead candlelit Christmas carol singing, and occasionally record albums and go on tour!

**Nightlife**

Oxford's nightlife caters for all tastes, from clubs playing mainstream, cheese, R&B and more, to stylish bars and traditional pubs.

There are different student nights throughout the week, giving you a chance to meet people from other colleges as well. Unio is lucky enough to have a cozy bar open six evenings a week, fully equipped with table-football, pool table, darts, quiz machine, TV and cheap drinks. The bar plays host to all sorts of student-organised events, from open mic nights to quizzes and College-wide parties, quaintly called 'bops'. Bops (parties involving fancy dress and cheesy tunes) take place three times a term and each bop has a different theme.

**Volunteering**

For those who want to help ensure that the most able people are getting into Oxford, we have the Ambassador scheme. This is one of Oxford's most active college-based access schemes: students visit schools and involve them to Uni, to encourage talented pupils and apply regardless of background or their schooling.

**Other fun stuff**

There are also many quieter activities to take part in, from chilling in the JCR with a cup of tea, to movie nights, charity events and the occasional 'Bake Off' competition!

**Oxfordly things**

The summer also provides opportunities for other famous, picturesque Oxford pastimes, such as punting on the River Cherwell and playing croquet.

**Sports**

With a large boathouse, tennis courts, indoor squash court, and football, rugby and cricket pitches, it's not a surprise that Unio has been well-equipped for sporting success, consistently doing well in intercollegiate competitions, commonly known as 'cuppers'.

Yet it isn't all serious; most people enjoy a leisurely splash on the river or friendly knock about on the College squash court; at some point. College sport is often just open to anyone who wants to turn up, and the emphasis is entirely on having fun and keeping fit rather than victory! (Although we are often victorious anyway). All Unio students have free membership of the University gym and swimming pool.
Oxford Sikh Society

The Oxford Sikh Society (OSS) is a student-run society that promotes the Sikh culture and way of life. It organizes events, seminars, and cultural activities to educate members about Sikhism. The society is open to all students, regardless of their religious background.

DanceSport

I am a member of the DanceSport team and we compete in competitions across the country and represent the university. It is a great opportunity to learn and improve my dancing skills.

Drama

I am performing in a Shakespeare play this year. It is a great opportunity to be involved in a creative activity and work with a great team.

Sikh Society Volunteering

Star Trek Society

I am a member of the Star Trek Society and we meet weekly to discuss and enjoy the latest episodes of the show. It is a great way to meet new people and explore the world of science fiction.

University Positive Investments

The University of Oxford has launched a new investment fund focused on sustainability and social impact. The fund aims to support companies that are working on solving some of the world's most pressing challenges.

First Gen Society

I am a member of the First Gen Society, which supports students who are the first in their family to attend university. The society provides resources and support to help students succeed in higher education.

Leicester

I am a member of the Leicester Students' Union and we are working hard to ensure that students have a voice in the decision-making process at the university.

Revolution

I am a member of the Revolution club and we organize events to promote social justice and equality on campus. It is a great opportunity to meet new people and make a difference in the community.

Apostolic, PPE

Volunteering

I am a volunteer at a local community center and it is a great way to give back to the community while gaining valuable experience.

Islam Society

Oxford has a strong presence of the Muslim community and it is a great opportunity to learn about Islamic culture and religion.

Nobel Prize in Literature

The Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to Anna Politkovskaya for her work on the war in Chechnya.

Unio Ball

The Unio Ball is an annual event held on campus and it is a great opportunity for students to socialize and have fun.

02 Academy

The 02 Academy is a popular music venue located in the city center. It hosts a variety of concerts and events throughout the year.

02 Academy 2

The 02 Academy 2 is a smaller venue located next to the main 02 Academy and it hosts a range of music and cultural events.

The Glass Room

The Glass Room is a popular bar located in the city center and it is a great place to relax and have a drink with friends.
COMMUNITY & Diversity

Sexuality

Whatever your concerns are when coming to Uni, sexuality should not be one of them. Whether you're comfortably out or very secretly curious and unsure, both Uni and Oxford offer wonderful opportunities to be yourself in a supportive, non-judgemental atmosphere. There are multiple voluntary student societies for LGBTQ+ students, which offer a great chance to get to know people from other colleges whether politically, geographically, or simply for fun. If you think you're interested in joining a club, there are LGBTQ+ clubs and gay club nights on a weekly basis too. At Uni we also have an elected student as our LGBTQ+ rep who is there if you have any concerns at all, and regularly holds social events (usually including free pizza!) in college, as well as setting up socials with other Colleges too.

Hello, my name is Neha and I am the current BME rep of the Union JCR.

I do a variety of things, from organising dinners for students of colour, to running a diversity workshop on Welcome Week. It's also my job to make sure the transition for the BME freshmen is as smooth as it can be. I have really enjoyed working with the JCR. In fact, I ran for the JCR president role (and won!), so I'll be very busy with that in my second year.

International Students

At Uni we have lots of international students from all over the world who are an active part of the student body. You'll find that being a very welcoming place for people of different cultures. Uni has students from around 50 different countries. We have college tutors as a friendly point of contact for any concerns you may have with college life. There's a designated International Student Rep at each college who is such a close community that you will always have someone to turn to. However small or large the problem, on a college-wide level there are international film nights, international food themed ‘formal halls’, the list goes on.

Here at Uni we recognise that international students may have some extra requirements. As an international student, you are the proud owner of organised storage space over the vacations, which means that you never have to take stuff home or throw it away.

Being centrally located is an added bonus – Uni is right across from the High Street bus stop going to Headington, Cowley, and Oxford. There’s also pleasant bouquet of ales and pubs to enjoy all colleges are the chance to sleep in or enjoy your meals at college without having to worry about a limited menu. The student kitchen is fully equipped with everything you need. The College takes care of all your needs, so you can focus on enjoying your time at Oxford.

Student Support

Chances are most of your time here will be brilliant, but you'll get stuck into enjoying all that Oxford has to offer – academic and otherwise! But university isn’t necessarily plain sailing for everyone all of the time.

Welfare

Life at university can sometimes feel stressful, unexpected events can occur, and occasionally we all just feel a bit worse than usual. This will not stop you getting the most out of being here though as help is on hand if you need it.

University College is a fantastically supportive community, and many students quickly make friends, whom they can turn to if they need to. Sometimes though, you might think that if you were to speak to someone different, That's why we have our Welfare Officers, two students who have been elected specifically to help the transition to university life easier and to be a support throughout your time at Oxford.

There's also a team of trained student Peer Supporters. This student team is a brilliant link between you and College. Whether it's a quick chat over tea and doughnuts, or something more confidential, they are well-trained, good listeners, and on your side. They run regular welfare events, which are always well attended as they provide repairs of food and tea to get you through the term, and it's always a good chance to catch up with the rest of College!

Disabilities

Uni takes really seriously the different requirements of students with disabilities who apply and study here. Uni is made up largely of stone old buildings, but we do our very best to ensure easy access wherever your needs. The College even added some extra- die, disabled access bedrooms and kitchens when we renovated our new accommodation block. Our main common room was also built specifically with accessibility in mind. Other needs are also catered for in College, such as extra time in exams for students with specific learning difficulties. There is also help available through the central University’s Disability Advisory Service.

www.unicoxac.uk/live-at-unw/ disability-support

Most people have a great time at Uni, and find that they don't need to use these services at all – but they are there if you need them.

The student welfare reps and Peer Supporters can also help you decide who no German fax line need to approach the connections and advice College and University staff dealing with welfare or College or University. There are official College welfare officers for Welfare, from the College name, to people available for drop-in chats about anything from the smallest of concerns or the biggest of problems. There is no stigma attached to seeking welfare-based help and Uni anyone is free to use the services completely confidentially.

www.unicoxac.uk/live-at-unw/ welfare-support
Finance

Living away from home for the first time presents many new challenges, not least of all managing your money.

As a fresher, the last thing you want to be doing is spending time worrying about your overdraft and wondering whether you'll have enough money to see the term out. Don't worry; we try to make sure that this is never a problem at UNSW.

1. At UNSW, we also have an excellent range of Financial grants and awards to supplement the University's endowment.

2. A generous bank grant of $2,000 helps: students for their course, whilst the college library can also be accessed on a study basis for free.

3. There are also 7 additional funds to help students who find themselves in unexpected financial difficulties.

4. The University makes available numerous bursaries for students who are in receipt of free school meals. Details of this are available on our website: www.unsw.edu.au/funding.

5. We can also provide financial assistance for non-academic activities.

6. The College has a fund which provides grants to students who wish to undertake extra-curricular travel or do internships in the holidays. All they have to do is come up with a plan for what they wish to do and their academic advisor can help them.

7. The College also has a fund which provides grants to students who wish to undertake extra-curricular travel or do internships in the holidays. All they have to do is come up with a plan for what they wish to do and their academic advisor can help them.

8. The grant is allocated to students who have completed their course and who wish to go on to further study or research.

9. With so much help available, the experience in Oxford should be unforgettable, leaving you plenty of time to explore and enjoy the city and its attractions.

For the most up-to-date student funding information visit our dedicated website: http://www.unsw.edu.au/funding

Travel

Scholarships

In my second year I spent two weeks on an excavation site near Naples, Italy.

During this time, I learned an immense amount about archaeology and topography, both practically and in the classroom. My days were spent on the dig-site, and half my time working on the pottery we found. On the dig-site I was taught how to accurately draw sections of the building that had been uncovered by the careful use of pencil and measuring tape and I also learnt how to use a ruler correctly.

While there we discovered many pieces of pottery, a brooch, and an area that had been used for child burials. Back inside the accommodation I learnt how to mark pieces of pottery for recording by practising with ink and fountain pens and then creating the writing in real-time. I also learnt how to identify where different pieces of pottery had come from according to colour and texture, and how to determine what kind of items they had been part of. Originally, we also had the chance to see some pots and amphorae that had been fully restored through careful reconstruction.

While I was there I was also able to visit Pompeii, which was extremely exciting as I had never visited Pompeii or Italy before. This was very helpful for my Classics studies, as I was able to see many of the paintings and items that were in my "The Classics paper in real life. I was also able to visit the Villa Cimbrone and to go into the excavations of Pompeii for the evening. All of this was very enjoyable and helped further my interest in learning more about Ancient Rome.

Lucinda Rhodes

Prince Felix Youpau
Who became the occasion of Respiration.
Applying to Oxford

Applying to Oxford can seem like a daunting thing. Hear from our students as they look back at their experiences!

How did you feel applying to Oxford? Did you think you'd get in?

“Applying to Oxford was a difficult process. I didn’t think I was prepared for the interview, but I was interested in seeing how far I could go in the application process.”

Kelsey, Earth Sciences

“I definitely did not think I would get into Oxford – very few people from my school had ever got in before and I felt totally unprepared for the application process.”

Eleanor, PPE

“The application process happened so quickly. I was convinced that I’d failed the interviews and that the dream was over. Luckily, I was wrong!”

Tom, PPE

“I never thought I’d get in in my wildest dreams. I was one of the very few people applying for my school, and I just thought I wouldn’t stand a chance against people who had been to schools that churned out Oxford students.”

Manfred, Computer Science and Philosophy

I was nervous about whether I had a place or not, so I was over the moon when I got my offer. I wish I’d realised a bit more during applications, and I think it’s important to get as much perspective as you can about university; somewhere that’s good for one person might not necessarily be the best place for you.”

Leannah, Medicine

What was it like coming for interviews and staying in College?

“Interviews were a great chance to actually see whether Oxford was the fit for me. I got to stay over at Uni and experience life in College for a few days. As daunting as it was, it was nice to socialise in the JCR and speak to other students that were in the same position.”

Manfred, Computer Science and Philosophy

“Exploring the Christmas market was a great way to calm my nerves before the interviews.”

Rebecca, Experimental Psychology

“It was one of the first times I really felt at home in an academic sense. When you know learning but your peers are often just not as interested in maths or history as you, it can be hard to fully enjoy school. To be around like-minded people (and to play Monopoly with them!) was awesome. Getting a chance to visit and stay in an Oxford college was amazing too, I’d never had something like that before.”

Rupesh, Maths and Computer Science

What helped you prepare for applying to Oxford?

“I did a lot of wider reading, which was vital in writing my personal statement because I hadn’t studied my subject at school. I also attended the UNIQ summer school which was a fantastic experience and gave me lots of help with knowing how to approach the interview and personal statement, as well as showing me what it would be like to study at the university.”

Hannah, Ancient Near Eastern Studies

“In preparation, I made sure that I researched widely around the areas I knew I was interested in my subject. This involved a lot of wider reading, but also finding public lectures at my local university to attend and talks from authors at bookshops or literary festivals. Oxford loves specificity and evidence for your passion, it is never enough to simply say you ‘like’ something, so I found this extra work very helpful when backing up more general statements in both my personal statement and my interview.”

Megan, English

“Before applying I made sure to read newspapers more frequently in order to keep up to date with current affairs, but more importantly to become more familiar with formal articles and arguments which I engaged with and picked apart.”

Rob, Law

What advice would you give to your 16 year old self now you are here at Oxford?

“Don’t try and read/do things because you think that’s what you’re supposed to do. Enjoy the road ahead – read the things you really want to read.”

Tom, PPE

“I stopped myself from becoming overwhelmed by taking everything one step at a time – applications are stressful enough without hounding myself more than you can.”

Leannah, Medicine

“I would tell my 16-year-old self to keep going, that it will still turn out OK in the end and that you are capable of so much more than you know!”

Katie, Classics

“Don’t stress too much – Oxford is here to help you learn!”

Katie, Classics

University College Oxford’s website especially for school and 6th form students.

Visit our website www.staircase12.org

Explore ways to stretch yourself academically beyond the school curriculum by checking out the Resources section - a gateway to lectures, podcasts, courses and more, all available for free online.

Get ideas for reading around your subject with our Online Reading Bank of book reviews from current Oxford students.

Watch interviews with our tutors to find out about different subjects at Oxford - and what they’re looking for in students.

Uni Opportunity Programme

As a College Uni wants to have as diverse a group of students as possible. To show our commitment to this, we have recently launched a programme that admits 10 extra students each year, all from disadvantaged backgrounds in the UK.

What’s more, these students get a really useful course before they arrive, to enable them hit the ground running in their first year. That’s meant to help them develop confidence and experiment with university-style learning methods before starting the degree for real.

We don’t have much room to discuss the ins and outs of this programme here – check out the College website for more details! Safe to say, we’re proud to be an inclusive College! www.unicox.ac.uk/learn-at-unico-opportunity-programme

Get a feel for student life in Oxford by browsing our student’s photo albums in our Uni Life section - or let them take you on a ‘stop-motion’ tour of our College!
UNIV IS THE Oldest COLLEGE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF Oxford.

OUR STORY BEGAN IN 1249 WHEN William OF Durham, A HIGH-POWERED THEOLOGY LECTURER WHO HAD RETIRED TO COUNTY Durham, LEFT IN HIS WILL 310 Marks (A LOT OF MONEY IN THOSE DAYS) FOR THE SUPPORT OF POOR SCHOLARS.

THE REST IS History!

Univ HAS ITS VERY OWN PET TORTOISE CALLED Percy (HINT: LOOK AT THE TOP OF THE PAGE!) HE’S CURRENTLY limbering up FOR THE ANNUAL tortoise RACE AGAINST OTHER COLLEGES.

Univ IS AMONGST THE largest COLLEGES IN TERMS OF POPULATION: 380+ undergraduates AND over 200 GRADUATE STUDENTS TOO!

THE MASTER AND Fellows OF THE COLLEGE OF THE Great Hall OF THE University OF oxford (OUR FULL NAME, BUT we JUST CALL IT UNIV!)