



## Student Support at Univ

**Nelli Chamings-Manley: Schools Liaison and Access Officer:** The fact that colleges in Oxford are quite small communities means that they are really well-suited to providing strong student support. At Univ we are really committed to providing the necessary academic support, welfare and wellbeing support and financial support to our students. We're keen that nothing gets in the way of students enjoying all aspects of their lives here in Oxford.

One way Univ is a supportive environment is through the academic support we are able to provide. Univ is a medium to large size college with between 110 and 120 students per year and cohorts of students per subject each year at Univ range from between three to four up to about nine to ten. These small cohorts of students mean that tutors are able to give a high level of attention and academic support to each of the students that they teach.

The College also employs a full-time disability and welfare advisor, those responsibilities include, for example, aiming to ensure that all students with specific learning disabilities have the necessary adjustments made to learn effectively.

**Connie, PPE, 2<sup>nd</sup> Year, Liverpool:** Univ has so much support available to students typically in the form of welfare officers who are employed by the College and also the undergraduate peer supporters and welfare team. We found out about all of these resources during our first Freshers' Week in which we had lots of meetings and events talking about the welfare that was available to us. As a result, I've always felt that Univ would be able to put things in place if I ever felt that I need some extra help.

In College we have a welfare officer team made up of the Chaplain, the Senior Tutor and the Disabilities and Support Advisor. These are all really great and we're able to go to them when we need them. We also have a College Counsellor and a College Nurse. So, if you're feeling down and you want to speak to somebody professional about it, you're able to do so.

Furthermore, we have our undergraduate welfare team including the welfare reps and the peer supporters. These are a great help and run welfare teas once a week along with a whole host of welfare events targeted at particular demographics for example women's and men's nights, also particular events about mental health and sexual wellbeing.

We also have a lot of support from our tutors. I know that when I've been struggling with things in the past, I've been able to go and speak to my tutors as you get to know them really well since you're engaged in a lot of small group teaching with them, you feel like if you need any help you'll be able to go and speak to them about any issues that are going on. And the workload isn't so scary when you've got everybody else in the same boat as you, your collegemates, your coursemates, able to support you and support each other through it. That's one of the best things about Univ, the way that the people are able to be so friendly with each other and help each other through the good times and the bad.

**Rebecca, Experimental Psychology, 3<sup>rd</sup> year:** Yeah, there is so much support available to students both at a College and a University level. So I was a welfare rep in my second year, part of my role was obviously to offer that support, be that in the role of sweet fairy or delivering cookies to people who needed a bit of a boost during their day to those harder conversations I had with students who were

going through a tough time. Also, part of my job was signposting people to other resources, like the peer supporters who were other students trained in active listening, to the College counsellor to the more University-wide level resources.

And I think like just like anything else, having social networks and social support is also really important. I've definitely relied on my friends more than once when I've been having a bit of a stressful time. You know, it happens to us all but between girly chats at earlier hours of the morning and ridiculous presents, which included an inflatable punching bag at some point and a lot of cups of tea, I've had a really enjoyable university experience.

**Freya, Classics, 1<sup>st</sup> year:** Disability support has been one of the things I really love most about my college. I was diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder and low mood when I was quite a lot younger and I decided to put it on my UCAS form not really expecting much but just as a way of informing the uni. Almost straight after receiving my offer from Oxford, I had an email from Amy Reed who is the welfare and disability advisor in Univ, providing me with lots of information and inviting me down for a day to Oxford for a chat with her and to learn more about what Univ can do to help people with disabilities, which was invaluable to me.

And she's been there ever since to help and advise. She's helped me get in contact with the disability advisory service who have arranged special exam arrangements for me and have given me access to extra support like a microphone to record my lectures. And my tutors have also been really understanding of how my disability can affect my studies.

**Nina, Physics, 1<sup>st</sup> year, Bulgaria:** This first year hasn't been quite fun for me as I dealt with some health issues. The thing about you know that I keep saying is that we have an incredible support system. I was back at home when I realized I have a problem and yes I had my family with me but there are no specialists and I was trying to recover on my own for quite a while. Afterwards when I got back to College after the long vacation I knew who to turn to, I was listened to and promptly connected with a doctor and special arrangements were made for me. Everybody who helped me went to great lengths to provide me with needed support, with the needed resources and means in order for me to start recovering and six months later I am still recovering greatly thanks to Univ's welfare support system.

**Lizzie, Medicine, 3<sup>rd</sup> year, Preston:** So there's a variety of ways the College can offer financial support and one of the ways in which I have been kind of supported financially while at Univ has been through a College-specific bursary and that has really helped me throughout my studies to play an active role in university life and being able to continue my studies without worrying too much about finances and my financial situation.

**Lewis, Biochemistry, 2<sup>nd</sup> year, Telford:** There's lots of financial support available through College, the biggest thing is probably the College Bursary, which you receive automatically if you're eligible. The book grant in first year also helped me out as I was able to buy some molymods to help me with an organic chemistry module. And in my second year I've been able to claim back some expenses from University-level support through the JCR Blues fund.

**Lizzie, Medicine, 3<sup>rd</sup> year, Preston:** Financial support is also available from College for academic purposes to do with your course. For me, I use that during my research project in my second year.

This is a compulsory part of my degree and I needed to complete some of my research outside the term dates so College was able to support me by subsidising my accommodation during that time.

**Nina, Physics, 1<sup>st</sup> year, Bulgaria:** Again, I can't stress enough that whatever you're going through in this College you know that there's a whole institution which works for you, a whole institution which is there to help you and support you and truly you will not be left to deal on your own with whatever you're going through.