



Oriel College
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

MCR Freshers' Guide 2024



Welcome to Oriel!

Dear freshers,

On behalf of the entire Oriel MCR Committee I want to say welcome to our home. How exciting a period you have ahead of you, coming to Oxford, to Oriel, starting a new degree, taking on new adventures!

We are here to orient you and help you find your way around town, or at least Oriel if you already have lived in Oxford. To help you ease in during Oth or Freshers' Week of Michaelmas 2024, we have prepared this short and simple guide to give you more detailed information about the Freshers' Week events, so you don't miss out on the fantastic things we have prepared for you during this week, as well as some basic guidance on finding your way around and settling in on your arrival.

There is much more information available on our website (<http://www.orielmcr.org/>) so please do go take a look to find guidance on College facilities, local shops, cafés, printing systems, meal booking system, gyms, laundry services and many other useful things. Also, do not hesitate to ask any of us, we are here to help. In this guide you will find our names, roles, photos and contact details, so please do reach out for whatever kind of questions you might have.

Best of luck settling into Oriel and congratulations!

Diego Ramirez A.
MCR President.

1 Freshers' Week Highlights

- **Welcome to Oriel Reception:** This is the formal opening of our Freshers' Week, an opportunity to meet with all the new graduate students at Oriel in the College's Dining Hall, which due to refurbishments being carried on will not be used ordinarily during this year. This is a fantastic way of starting your Oriel experience, in our 400 year-old Hall. The reception will consist of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks and canapés. You will receive an invitation for this event and will need to RSVP in time. **Sunday 6th October, 19:30 in the Hall.**
- **Tour of Oxford:** I will take you around the centre of Oxford, showing some of the most interesting spots, coffee-shops, college sites, libraries, and other interesting things you might struggle to find easily on your own. **Monday 7th October, 14:00-15:00, meet in the Porters' Lodge.**
- **College Parents' Dinner:** As part of your integration into Oriel, we have assigned each one of you some senior graduate students from a related field, who will be your 'College Parents' and will help you settle in and find your way around town and Oriel. This is the first encounter with your College Parents, as well as with other freshers from similar subjects to yours. **Monday 7th October, 18:00-20:30, location to be defined by your College Parents.**
- **Meet the Provost:** Lord Neil Mendoza is the Provost ('Master') of Oriel, who leads and represents the College and will receive you formally into it in your admissions ceremony. The Provost, together with his wife Amelia, plays a role in the day-to-day life of Oriel as a family and this is a great opportunity to sit with him in the MCR for a casual chat. I really recommend you take this great opportunity to meet more personally and casually with Neil. **Thursday 10th October, 10:00-11:30 in the MCR main room.**
- **Oriel Freshers' Fair:** This is the main freshers' event of the week, which combines graduate and undergraduate students in the Hall to learn about the many different societies and clubs around which interests such as debate, politics, music, sports, games, film, theatre, philosophy, reading and many more are organised in College. It is a great way of having all these different groups in one room and be able to ask questions and get to know some of the members to see what you would like to take part in during the year. **Wednesday 9th October, 11:00-12:00 in the Hall.**
- **Chocolate Tasting and Cocktail Making Events:** Anna, our lovely Vice-President has prepared for you a delicious chocolate tasting in the MCR, and our fabulous Bar Manager, Rhienna, has prepared this as a good way to get to know our MCR Bar (for those who by then haven't yet explored it). **Thursday 10th October, 16:00 and 20:00, respectively, meet in the MCR.**
- **Scavenger Hunt:** Our social secretary, Thomas, will lead you around many of Oxford's historic buildings, exploring and discovering many fascinating pubs, inns, public houses, and many other places where you will be able to enjoy some form of liquid refreshment, as well as food, hopefully still an enjoyable expression of the English weather. **Saturday 12th October, 15:00, meet in the MCR or join along the way. Locations will be updated on the WhatsApp group.**

- **Choral Evensong:** Oriel Chapel is beautiful space that plays a central role in college life. We have a beautiful (and very competitive) choir which sing Choral Evensong, Sung Eucharist and Compline every week during term, in candle-light, and the services are attended by many of our members, as well as fellows, undergraduates and external visitors. It is a very special space, whether you share the Christian faith or not, to take a moment for reflection and peace. Rob, our chaplain, leads the services and puts together an interesting line-up of preachers for the different services. I encourage you to come to this initial service of the year and experience this on your own. **Sunday, 13th October, 18:00, Oriel College Chapel.**

- **First ‘Formal Hall’ and ‘Second Desserts’:** As you might be aware, formal hall plays a role in our community-building experience. Oriel is the college that offers the most formal dinners a week, Sunday through Friday. This is a great opportunity to meet new people and bring guests whilst immersing yourselves in one of our most characteristic experiences. Remember to have a look at the dress code guidelines on our website and please note that Wednesdays and Sundays the dress code is more formal than other days. After Formal we will be waiting for you with Second Desserts in the MCR to conclude Freshers’ Week in a chill and convivial setting.

- **Graduate Freshers’ Admission Ceremony:** One of the most symbolic moments of your welcome to Oriel, which is the only college to have such an event. You will be officially admitted to Oriel by the Provost at the University Church of St. Mary, where you will sign your name on the Provosts’ Book, on top of the tomb of Adam the Brome, Oriel’s principal benefactor, and will then become full members of the College. **Saturday 12th October. Meet the Dean of Degrees in Third Quad at 11:30, where you will be briefed and then process across the High to the University Church for a 11:45 ceremony.**

- **‘Welcome Event for Black Students’ (at University College):** An opportunity for black students from these neighbouring colleges to meet other black students: Univ, Christ Church, Corpus, Merton, Oriel and Pembroke. The purpose of this event is to offer black students, who may be in a small minority in their own college, to find a quick and easy way at the start of their time in Oxford of meeting black students from other colleges. The event will be hosted by Baroness Valerie Amos, master of Univ, on **Tuesday 15th October, between 17:00 and 18:30 in the Master’s Lodgings at University College.**

- **College Advisers and Tutor for Graduates Drinks:** This is a great opportunity mid-way through the term to meet with your College Advisor and catch up with them in a more relaxed setting, with drinks and nibbles, and share a bit more about your progress, projects and interests. You will receive an invitation for this event and will need to RSVP. **Thursday 7th November, between 18:00 and 19:00 in the Hall.**

- **University Matriculation Ceremony:** Students of the University must go through the matriculation ceremony, in which the Vice-Chancellor officially confers upon you the status of students of it, all in latin. If you cannot attend in person, you can so so *in absentia*. Please refer to <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/matriculation>. **Saturday 19th October. More information will be sent through email closer to the date.**

***Events marked in yellow are mandatory; the ones in green are really unique and/or very helpful, don’t miss them!**

2 Your MCR Committee



The President

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The Vice-President

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The Secretary

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Welfare Officer

Ethan Nylen
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MCR Manager

Pawel Puczkarski

3 Know your College

Oriel is first and foremost about people. We are lucky to have incredibly kind and capable people that run the college, and who are always willing to give you a hand. It is really helpful to get to know them and also great to know many of the people that are making things work for you, so you can thank them for their work when you see them, from the Provost to the Scouts, Porters, Kitchen Team, Front of House Team, Deans, the Chaplain and so many more. Here you find a list of only some of them which might come in handy on your first days:



The Provost

Lord Neil Mendoza

The Provost is the head of the college and, as such, he is focused on successfully preserving, protecting and enhancing college life.



The Tutor for Graduates

Dr. Paul Yowell

He holds the position of Tutor for Graduates, and has general oversight of all those reading for graduate degrees, from admissions to graduation. Graduate students are welcome to contact him at: tutor.graduates@oriel.ox.ac.uk.



The Chaplain

Rev. Dr. Robert Wainwright

He supports the well-being of all Oriel members. He is particularly responsible for the spiritual life of the community. He is always happy to listen and talk about any matter in complete confidence.



The Senior Dean

Mrs. Juliane Kerkhecker

Juliane and the 'Dean Team' are responsible for many of the College's welfare provisions, as well as upholding discipline in College and ensuring a pleasant living and working environment for all students.



The Academic Registrar:

Joseph Cole

Joe is the College's Disability, Equality and Diversity contact, and is the right person to contact for help regarding any kind of mental health issues, special needs requests. He can always point you in the right direction if you're unsure who to contact.

The Deans

Caitlin and Marta, the Welfare Deans, and Tishan and Miles, the Junior Deans, work with Julianne in her duties as Senior Dean. They are here to help you and have weekly Deans Hours. You can also request an individual appointment with them at: welfare@oriel.ox.ac.uk (Marta and Caitlin) and deans@oriel.ox.ac.uk (Tishan and Miles). Please also note that you can get in touch with the Deans 24/7 through the Porters' Lodge, were you to need them at any given time.



Caitlin Ashcroft



Tishan Wellalagodage



Marta Bielinska



Miles Weatherseed



The Porters:

The Porters are the visible smile of Oriel for all visitors, but for you they not only be your friends, but you will find in them support and guidance all along your way through Oriel. They work literally day and night to keep the College a safe space. They will welcome when you arrive, can help you contact the right people when ill, receive all parcels and mail delivered to you in College, and many many more duties. It is truly hard to describe how essential they are to Oriel and your experience here and how arduous their job is. Please be especially kind and thankful to them, and get to know them well!



The Hall Team:

Asefay, our Senior Butler, together with Julian, the Deputy Butler, and all the rest of the team give life to our Hall and help create the welcoming and convivial atmosphere you will experience. They take care not only of the meals, but of catering and organising events, wine and whisky tastings and many other really fun events along the year. We're always deeply thankful for their fantastic work!



The Librarians:

Hannah, the Librarian, along with Fiona, Felicity, Louise and Morgan take the best care of our cozy and very accommodating library. They are super friendly and always help you find the resources that you need for your projects/essays, or, if they don't have them, to get those books or other resources for you. You can contact them at:

library@oriel.ox.ac.uk

Go pay them a visit and take their tour of the library! (You will thank me later)



The Kitchen team:

Maurice, our Head Chef, and all his team work incessantly to produce the delicious food that you will be able to have three times a day and especially in formals. They are an incredibly enthusiastic and friendly team working most of the time behind the scenes but essential to the experience you will have of the College.



The Housekeeping Team ('Scouts'):

The Scouts are in charge of keeping the building, including our common spaces, as well as your rooms, clean and tidy. You will see them every day around College, keeping everything in perfect condition for you to enjoy these beautiful spaces. Be thankful to them by cleaning after yourself and being tidy, that will make their job much easier and they will really appreciate it ;)

4 Useful Tips & Links

- **Mental Health/Safety:** settling into a new city is an exciting process, especially when you start a new adventure, but it can also get very busy and stressful sometimes and you might find yourselves struggling to cope with some things. There are plenty of mental health resources to help you deal with emotions, difficulties or even if for whatever reason you don't feel safe, physically or psychologically. If ever you find yourself in need of help, we can recommend you try any of these resources:
 - College Deans: at Oriel we have two Junior Deans and two Welfare Deans, who have different roles, but are all more than happy to help and are here to help you navigate the general difficulties of Oxford but also to sort out specific issues you might be facing. They have 'Deans Hours' every week during term, which will be advised at the beginning of each term, or you can contact them directly at their emails (see above) to ask for a meeting.
 - Porters: porters of colleges, be it Oriel or any other, are there to help you at any time. The 'Green Button' Scheme: if ever you feel unsafe anywhere in Oxford, you can go to any College's Porters' Lodge and they will welcome you and take care of you until you are safe.
 - Nightline: they are a volunteer-based service that work 8pm - 8am every night and are available on the phone number 01865 270270 (you can find this number on the back of your BodCard). They offer support over the phone as well as a Get Home Safe service—if you are nervous or uneasy walking home alone, you can give them a call and they'll chat to you all the way home.

- Samaritans: they offer a 24/7 suicide and crisis prevention service, on the phone or face-to-face. Their volunteers are especially trained to help you in times of crisis, or in case someone close to you is in such a situation and you need the tools to help them. You can reach them day or night and free of charge at 116 123, or on through their website: <https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/>.
- **MCR Rooms:** The MCR rooms (main room and study room) are open to its members 24/7. In them you will find comfortable space to work or relax for a moment. There are always coffee, tea, biscuits, newspapers and sometimes some special treats. You can also bring a limited number of guests into the MCR, who will always be under your responsibility. After using any of the MCR facilities, cutlery, crockery, etc., **you must** leave everything clean and tidy, also, **none of these elements** can be taken outside the MCR room.
- **Booking into Hall:** To book your meals, as well as to see the menu and check your current Battels, visit: <https://meals.oriel.ox.ac.uk/>
- **Printing:** There are several printing stations around the Main, Island and Rectory Road Sites. You can print in any of them using your Oriel user or your BodCard and the print charges will be added to your Battels. In order to upload a document to the system, visit: <https://print.oriel.ox.ac.uk>
- **Battels & Financial Support:** 'Battels' are your termly bill from College, which can include rent, drinks, dining bills from Hall, MCR Membership fees, etc. You receive 4 of these per year: one at the start of each term and a final one at the end of Trinity term. You can check your battels here: <https://battels.oriel.ox.ac.uk/>
- For all College funding information, please visit this website: <https://www.oriel.ox.ac.uk/study-with-us/postgraduates/postgraduate-funding-and-grants/>. As well, you can always visit our Graduate Officer in Staircase 5 to ask for guidance and advice in this regard. The Graduate Officer is also in charge of, e.g., Graduate Studies Office forms and general administrative queries for graduates.
- **Settling-in and Living in Oxford:** We have a dedicated section of our MCR website with many tips and directions on how to get a lot of the stuff you will need when arriving (bikes, furniture, clothing, medicine, food, etc.), as well as recommendations for cafés, bookshops, gyms, sports, parks and other things of interest that might take you a while to find on your own. Go have a look: http://www.orielmcr.org/?page_id=963
- **MCR Communications:** The majority of official MCR communications will be sent out through email, but more specific information will be shared over our WhatsApp channels (<https://chat.whatsapp.com/G1wHsEIUDaxHbyhS7gzZRx>) or our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/DJ5iijPnUtQiLP97/?mibextid=K35XfP>).