

30 June 2023

Dear New Orielensis,

On behalf of the entire postgraduate body, it is with the greatest of pleasures that I welcome you to Oriel College and to our Middle Common Room (MCR).

I cannot stress enough just how lucky you are to have ended up here in Oriel's MCR, whether by your own selection or thanks to a stroke of good luck, i.e the University's ever-mysterious college-allocation system. Either way, the stars have aligned perfectly for you, and you are now on the cusp of joining one of the most thriving and supportive postgraduate communities here in Oxford, and we cannot wait for your arrival.

Here at Oriel, we are incredibly proud of our MCR, not only for its friendly, welcoming atmosphere and personality, but also for its physical space. In addition to being the representation of postgraduate and fourth-year undergraduate students and some associate members of the college, the MCR is also our own space within Oriel, located in the Island Site on Staircase 35. Our common room, and the study room on the floor above, are open 24 hours a day for the exclusive use of MCR members and their guests. Described by many as being "the nicest MCR in Oxford", the main MCR common room is a light and airy space overlooking the historic Oriel Square, with comfortable sofas, large paintings, free tea, coffee and biscuits, and an exceptionally well-stocked bar open several nights a week.

Another part of what makes our MCR such a friendly community can be indebted to its thriving social calendar. Every term is packed with marvelous events organised by members of our MCR committee, including but not limited to exchange dinners with other colleges, black-tie guest nights, afternoon tea every Wednesday, coffee houses, the ever-popular 'second desserts', and our of course our wonderful bar nights. We also host and attend very enjoyable exchange dinners with our two sister colleges, Trinity College Dublin and Clare College Cambridge, enabling MCR members to enjoy dinners outside the bounds of Oxfordshire (and indeed, England).

The MCR website (www.orielmcr.org) contains a wealth of useful information to help you through life in College and Oxford in general, from the meaning of 'sub-fusc', to the location of your pigeonhole. A number of quick links to College services, including the all-important meal booking system, can also be found here. Familiarising yourself with these things before your arrival will mean that you'll be ready to hit the ground running as soon as you arrive and be able to make the most of your time here. I would, as such, very much encourage you to have a good look through our website.

You will also see, on the "Executive Committee" page of the website, that a number of committee positions are still open; in fact, there are even more available than are currently displayed. There is no finer way to get engaged with MCR life than to join its committee, and we would love it if any of you wish to run for those positions.

Included in your Welcome Pack is a timetable for Freshers' Week. Our Social Team has planned a fantastic array of events to introduce you to College and the surrounding city. These events are an excellent opportunity to get to know everyone and learn about the MCR; indeed, many people describe the week as one of the greatest experiences of their time here in Oxford. We hope you enjoy all that Freshers' Week has to offer, and if at any point you feel lost or disorientated, please do reach out to one of us – we will be only too happy to help.

Furthermore, if you are going to arrive early (i.e. before Freshers' Week), do not worry! We have put together a special selection of events specifically for you up to two weeks before Freshers' Week, and the timetable for this can also be found in your Freshers' Pack under the title of "Early Arrivals Timetable".

To conclude this letter, I would like to emphasise again just how excited we are to welcome you to Oriel's MCR. Please also remember that it is very much OK and normal to feel anxious before moving to a country, city, university, or college. If this is the case for you, please rest assured that you're going to love it here, and that we are all here for you as your friends. If you would like to get in touch with me personally regarding anything at all, either information-based or even just to introduce yourself, please feel free to do so on my email: mcr.president@oriel.ox.ac.uk. I will eagerly await any correspondence.

I look forward to welcoming you to your new home within Oriel College very soon!

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ethan Taylor', written in a cursive style.

Ethan Taylor
MCR President 2023 - 2024