



Welcome to Oriel!

Hi freshers! Congratulations on your results and we can't wait to meet you all. I'm Hunor (he/him), your JCR (Junior Common Room) President. If you're not yet familiar, the Oriel JCR is the collective student body of all undergraduate Oriel students, which now includes you! The committee will be running most student-led events in college during fresher's week, and some later in term, so have a look at the timetable which you should receive soon. I will give a more comprehensive introduction once you arrive, but in the meantime, here is some excellent advice from some of our JCR Committee members about starting:

A Message from Elias

Hi everyone! I'm Elias, this year's JCR Equalities and Access Officer. My role is all about making sure everyone feels welcome and supported at Oriel. Diversity and equality are core values here at Oriel, and I'm here to ensure college is a safe space for all students.

I'll of course be here to help you with anything you need, so feel free to reach out if you require any support. Beyond student welfare, I am responsible for coordinating events with the other Equalities officers like multicultural, women's and LGBTQ formals, supporting awareness events such as for disabilities and consent and more relaxed activities like multicultural takeaways and worldwide movie nights

Starting at Oxford can be very intimidating, and one way to help with this transition is the college family system, which provides a network for academic and welfare support throughout your time here. You'll be assigned "college parents", second-year students studying the same subject, who will help guide and mentor you as you settle in. Hopefully you will have already heard from them and started to get to know them a bit before arriving.

College parents are great for friendly advice, especially for questions you might not want to ask your tutors! They will understand you very well, having been in your shoes just last year, and can offer honest guidance with no sugarcoating. However, college parents are only one facet of welfare support at Oriel, which you will learn more about once you arrive.

To help match you with the best college parents for you, I've added a form to help us pair you with someone you're likely to click with: <https://forms.gle/pgdYBfNXzCBGKdGt6>

Looking forward to meeting you all soon!

A Message from Jesse

Howdy! I'm Jesse (he/him), and I'll be your Oriel JCR Class Officer. That means that I represent anyone who's a working-class, state educated, or first-generation university student, so if any of that pertains to you, do know I got you! I know coming to Oxford can be daunting for anyone (and as I've learned through conversation, almost everyone!). I'm here to make sure that everyone feels welcome and included in the JCR, regardless of where they come from or what their social background is.

I'll introduce myself again in fresher's week, but if you have any questions or concerns about class-related issues in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will do my best to help!

A Message from Hannah

Hi! I'm Hannah (she/her), the LGBTQ+ Officer for the JCR. My role is mainly to support LGBTQ+ students, organise fun queer events, and help make Oriel a welcoming environment and safe space for everyone. As a member of the JCR, you will be able to access the gender expression fund if you need it, a £40 reimbursement for gender affirming items like binders, packers, tucking tape, and other items which might be helpful - just get in touch with me to enquire!

If you need any advice, support, information or just a chat, I am very happy to help you as best I can, confidentially. I'll also make you aware of queer events in and out of college so you can get in touch with the LGBTQ+ scene in Oxford. Last year, I organised an LGBTQ+ Formal which was very well-attended and featured a speech from a queer alumnus - the previous LGBTQ+ Officer established this event which will hopefully become annual! Finally, I'll be hosting an LGBTQ+ drinks event in Freshers' week, with music, socialising and both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. I met a lot of my friends at last year's Freshers' LGBTQ+ Drinks, so I highly recommend coming along! Enjoy Freshers' week and I can't wait to meet you all!

Some key things to note:

Arriving in Oxford

We assume most of you will arrive by car and getting (forcing) parents/guardians/friends to help carry your stuff to your new room. If this is the case, drive to Oriel Square - directly outside college - during your designated morning or afternoon arrival window, which will be sent to you later. There is a 45-minute time limit on parking to ensure everyone has time to arrive. Lots of us will be on hand to greet, direct, and help you move in; please ask us any questions during the process, we are here to help! To get your parking permit, go into the Porter's Lodge (helpers will be there to show you in) and ask one of the porters.

However, if arriving by car, **you CANNOT drive along the High Street between King Edward Street and Merton Street during the day**. This is a bus gate, and you will be fined. The easiest way to get around this if you are coming from Magdalen Bridge/Headington/Cowley direction into town is to go along the High Street and turn down Merton Street, which leads directly into Oriel Square. To access Oriel Square from the Westgate Shopping Centre/Botley end of town, you can drive along the High Street then turn down King Edward Street. Just be careful not to drive on the High Street between Merton Street and King Edward Street.

Once your parking slot time is up, you will need to move your vehicle to make space for others. There are a few spaces on King Edward Street and Merton Street, which are pay and display, and more around Oxford (for instance in the Westgate Shopping Centre parking lot, which has worked well in the past). The Park & Ride service around Oxford also runs very often and efficiently.

If you are arriving by train, the station is a 15–20-minute walk, but there are also buses which run from the station to the High Street.

What to bring

Alongside the essentials, here are some things we recommend bringing with you if you wish:

- You will be given a duvet, pillow, and mattress topper, but some choose to bring their own. You will need to bring your own bedding; we recommend 2 sets. You will also have a desk lamp in your room, and one near/on your bedside table.
- The scouts will clean your room once a week and empty the bins regularly, but we recommend bringing some anti-bacterial wipes or some other cleaning products if you like to keep extra tidy. As candles and incense are not allowed, a reed diffuser can add a nice touch, and keep things smelling clean, too.
- Laundry bin, detergent, stain remover. The college uses the Circuit laundry system for washing machine and dryer facilities (like many other university accommodation). This uses the **Circuit Go** app, but cash top-up cards are also available in the laundry rooms that you can sort when you get here.
- You are allowed to keep a toaster, kettle, and mini fridge in your room (all electronics will be PAT tested). While you don't need these as they are available in the kitchens, they are quite handy. There is a small annual fee for keeping a fridge in your room, but many find it worth it, and it can stay in your room during the vacs, unlike the rest of your belongings.
- Towels, bathmat, toiletry organiser, hand soap, and sometimes extra toilet roll can be handy (though bathrooms will have toilet paper)
- Try to keep kitchenware minimal as, unless you're an avid chef, you're unlikely to use it all. Basic seasonings are also helpful but can easily be bought when you arrive in Oxford. You can store some cookware in the kitchens during term, but the space is often limited so keep this in mind.
- Don't forget **sub-fusc**! This is the formal wear which is obligatory for matriculation and exams. For freshers this would be the undergraduate commoner's gown. Here's a link to the details of what you will need from the university: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/dress>. There are a couple of shops around Oxford which sell them (Shepherd and Woodward, Walters of Oxford, Ede and Ravenscroft). Some also sell them in packs with a gown, headwear, and neckwear package for a combined price so have a look in different places before buying. You can also buy them second hand, just make sure it's the right gown (undergraduate ones are shorter than postgraduate), for instance on Facebook marketplace.
- Decorations for your room - you will have a pin board but cannot add any fixtures/blu-tack to the walls beyond the board (not even command hooks). Pictures from home, fairy lights, posters, blankets etc all help to make your room feel much more like your own, just remember pins for the board.
- First aid bits, painkillers, cold care – there's a high chance (unfortunately) you will get the famous Freshers' Flu and it's not the most fun, so best to prepare in advance.
- Fancy/silly dress: College BOPs (Big Organised Parties) have themes, and some students get very creative with their outfits, so bring some items to dress up with. There are also a couple of charity shops nearby for last minute costumes so please don't spend much money on these (most costumes are thrown together with silly items people have). Keep an eye out on the JCR Entz (entertainments) Instagram @oriel.entz for the bop themes this term!
- Other: extension cords, hangers, maybe an iron (though we have a communal one), mugs and glasses, a KeepCup or other reusable coffee container (you can buy these round Oxford – they're the only thing allowed if you want to take any drink other than water into a library), water bottle, kitchen roll, tupperware, swimwear (especially if you want to row), clothes horse/dryer, portable charger, board games (though we do have some), plants, speaker, bottle opener,

passport/ID and other important docs, formal wear, clubbing trainers if that's your kind of thing, scissors, blankets.

Useful tips

- Freshers' Week is very hectic and social but can be overwhelming. We are doing our best to ensure that there are a range of activities (both involving alcohol and not, you don't need to feel any pressure to drink, it's perfectly fine not to!). Although a lot of effort has gone into planning, and we would love to have as many of you there as possible, make sure to take a quiet night for yourself if you need.
- Moving in can be very difficult for some people and this is completely normal. Let one of the helpers know if you need help adjusting to the new environment, and make sure you take the time you need to let yourself settle in. Not attending every single event in Freshers' Week will not prevent you from making friends.
- During the first few days of Freshers' Week, you will generally be allowed to eat in hall without having booked in advance, but it is good to get into the habit of booking ahead, and during Freshers it is a great way of meeting and chatting to people. You will get more info about the meal booking process later.
- Try to throw yourself into Freshers' Week – it can be exhausting, but you will meet so many new people and start to figure out who your friends might be. Not everyone meets their closest friends during the week, so don't stress if you don't feel like you've found your group yet – most people are eager to just get out there and chat to as many people as possible, so it can feel chaotic! The events are designed to let you meet people and see the various things Oxford has to offer, and one of the best things about Oriel is the small(ish) year groups, meaning you will chat to most of your year within the week.
- Do approach your tutors (via email) if you are unsure about what is expected of you in terms of work. They really are here to help and are lovely people who don't expect you to know what you're doing early on!
- Please take a note of the **welfare support** available in college, and don't be scared to use them if you need to. It is perfectly normal to have imposter syndrome or to find the move to university overwhelming, but there are plenty of students/staff/welfare deans who are trained to support you.

On a final note, please join the **Oriel JCR Facebook and Instagram!** We know Oxford is old-fashioned, but Facebook really is useful, and it's the main space for Oriel students to make posts/announcements about events happening around college. The **Facebook page** is "**Oriel College JCR**" and **Instagram** is **@oriel_jcr** and **@oriel.entz**. The JCR website is orieljcr.org.

Otherwise, if you have any questions or queries, you can email one of us!

Hunor (*JCR President*)

Elias (*Equalities and Access Officer*)

Jesse (*Class Officer*)

Hannah (*LGBTQ+ Officer*)

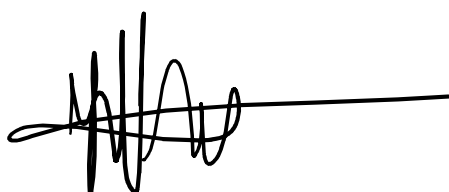
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Best Wishes,



Hunor Veres
Oriel JCR President