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Hello, and congratulations – you made it! Welcome to Balliol! You are now a Balliolite and a member of the most active and welcoming JCR in Oxford.

My name is Cealach, and I’m the JCR Vice-President. My role is to represent the JCR (the whole undergraduate community at Balliol) alongside the President, but I also get to organise your Freshers’ Week! This means working with our very dedicated JCR committee and the college to make sure that your first term gives you everything you need to kick-start your time at Balliol. It’s not hard to feel welcome and love it here - it really is an amazing place! Hopefully by the end of Freshers’ Week you’ll feel very welcome, have settled in and will have met lots of exciting new people. Remember there’ll be lots of us around should you have any questions or just want a chat!

This handbook is a basic introduction to all things Balliol, meant to give you an idea of what to expect when you arrive, and how to prepare. It has loads of useful information, but doesn’t aim to cover everything; you can find out more about the JCR by having a look at www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/freshers. For a less official idea of what it’s like to be a member of the JCR, check out the Balliol Blog (https://ballioljcr.wordpress.com) or our Instagram (@BalliolJCR), both of which are run by our Access and Admissions officers.

If you have ANY questions about Freshers’ Week, Balliol, or Oxford, you can contact me by email (cealach.mckeating@balliol.ox.ac.uk), or on Facebook (it’s super easy, I’m literally the only Cealach McKeating). Alternatively, you can always contact your general parents, your subject mentors, or the other members of the JCR committee by email. General parents and subject mentors are just second- and third-year students I’ll be emailing you about soon. Some useful email addresses for practical questions or issues are:

**Drs WHO (Wellbeing and Health Officers):**
meq.peytonjones@balliol.ox.ac.uk; jones.letten@balliol.ox.ac.uk

**LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/Questioning) Officers:**
rory.meryon@balliol.ox.ac.uk; ele.saltmarsh@balliol.ox.ac.uk

**Academic Affairs and Careers Officers:**
joseph.lee@balliol.ox.ac.uk; alberto.andrade@balliol.ox.ac.uk

**Ethnic Minorities Officers:**
hubert.au@balliol.ox.ac.uk; thitapa.haritaworn@balliol.ox.ac.uk

**International Students Officers:**
laura.bossino@balliol.ox.ac.uk; nicholas.halterman@balliol.ox.ac.uk

**Women’s Officers:**
rachael.ince-kitson@balliol.ox.ac.uk; daisy.cockean@balliol.ox.ac.uk

**Student Disabilities Officer:**
samuel.gibb@balliol.ox.ac.uk;

I can’t emphasise enough how friendly Balliol is, so if you have any questions don’t hesitate to get in touch. I contacted my general parents to panic about toiletries, no question is too small!

Throughout this guide, there will be some Oxford jargon and lingo but I’ll explain lots of it. Don’t worry, you’ll be confusing your friends and family back home in no time!

Cealach xo
Arrival

Monday 3rd October - Unless you’ve let college know otherwise, we’ll expect you to arrive between 10am and 4pm. If you really can’t be dropped off on Monday it is possible to come on Sunday after 2pm but please call Balliol (01865 277777) to let them know you’ll be coming early. I must stress though that it is much easier for you and the college if you come up on the Monday.

Getting to Oxford:
Traversing Oxford in a car is not easy, thanks to all the one-way systems. To get here by car, it is best to enter Oxford from the North (down the A4144). Even if you are coming from the South, it is still quicker to go round the ring-road or up the A34 and come in from the North, otherwise it will take you hours to drive through the city. On a map it may look like there are ways through the city, but these will all turn out to be bus-only routes or car-free cycle routes. There are also often roadworks on the ring-road, so leave extra time for travel!

When you arrive in Oxford, you’re aiming for the back gate on St Giles, not the front on Broad Street. Be careful putting Balliol into a Sat Nav because it will probably try to lead you to Broad Street.

Once you find your way down the A4144, stick on it all the way to the city centre. It eventually becomes St. Giles Street. Go down St. Giles until the road forks off to a bus lane to the left (opposite the Randolph Hotel). You can enter the bus lane without being fined to access the college. Only a few yards down this bus lane is Balliol’s black iron back gate. Unless you arrive very early there will probably be a queue. Pull in and wait behind the last car and marshals will instruct you from there. If you are not arriving on Monday 3rd then ring the bell and talk to the porters at the lodge.
Settling In:
When you get into Balliol someone will tell you where to park. You will get half an hour to unload your car; this may not seem long, but there will be plenty of people to help unload the car.

Once the car is parked, come to the Old Common Room (OCR) which you’ll find in the passage in the top-left corner of the back quad. If you come on Sunday, go to the Porter’s Lodge in the front quad. Here you can sign out your key and a fob to access your staircase (make sure you remember which room and staircase you were assigned!)

Once you have unpacked, the afternoon is yours. Feel free to go for lunch with your parents, have a look around college with them or just concentrate on unpacking. By late afternoon you should come to the JCR. Cups of tea and coffee will be available, and this will be your first chance to meet fellow freshers and think of inventive new ways to ask “What’s your name and what subject do you do?” Members of committee and general parents will be hanging around, enjoying the free tea and coffee and waiting to meet you!

International Students:
Again, if you need to arrive before Monday you need to inform the college, who will try their best to accommodate your needs. If you’re flying into the UK it’s a good idea to get in touch with our International Students Reps who can recommend the most convenient way to get from the airport to Balliol. Laura Bossino: laura.bossino@balliol.ox.ac.uk; Nicky Halterman: nicholas.halterman@balliol.ox.ac.uk. As international students themselves, they can offer some really useful practical advice.
Stuff to bring with you

Firstly, if you forget to bring anything, it’s really not going to be the end of the world. There are loads of shops in Oxford. Tesco and Sainsburys are just outside Balliol, and a department store on Broad Street, Boswells, sells everything from bedding to extension leads. Here’s a list of things you’ll probably need at some point:

FOR SURVIVING IN A CLEAN FASHION
- Duvet, pillows, sheets
- Towels
- Soap, shampoo, toothbrush
- Other personal hygiene stuff
- Washing powder
- Washing up liquid

FOR CLOTHING YOURSELF
- Clothes
- Coat-hangers
- White shirt/blouse
- Smart dark suit
- Black shoes
- Hilarious costumes
- Sports kit

FOR YOUR ROOM
- Posters/wall-hangings*
- Cushions and other stuff to make your room nice...a potted plant perhaps?
- Some books
- Photos from home
- Extension leads/plug boards
- Speakers

FOR WORK
- Stationery
- A4 Paper
- Files/folders
- Relevant A-level notes (they just might be useful!)
- Laptop (if you have one)

FOR EATING AND DRINKING
- Kettle
- Mugs and glasses (it gets sad drinking everything from a mug)
- Coffee, tea, sugar, milk, biscuits (for your guests!)
- Cutlery and crockery

PLEASE DON’T BRING
- A frying pan
- A toaster
- A wok

MISCELLANEOUS
- Passport (really important!!!)
- Camera
- Passport photos (for various ID cards and membership cards you get given)
- Documents (passport, driving licence, NI Card, NHS registration card etc.)
- Bank details (a/c number, sort code...

WHAT WILL BE IN MY ROOM?
- Single bed
- Wardrobe
- Chest of drawers
- Desk
- Desk chair
- A notice board (maybe)

*Officially posters can only be attached to pin-boards
The JCR

Balliol JCR will play a huge part in your undergraduate life. It will provide you with a “world-class” restaurant (Pantry), great Entertainment (Entz), a bar for you to drink, play pool and dance to the jukebox in, and a laundry to wash your sweaty clothes afterwards.

Balliol JCR is one of the most active JCRs in the uni. It has by far the largest annual turnover, and is the only JCR to run its own bar and pantry, so you’re likely to spend a lot of time there. JCR stands for Junior Common Room, and is used to refer to both the institution that represents undergraduate members, and the room where they hang out. We encourage people to spend a lot of time in the JCR; at other colleges where the JCRs are less active, the JCR and bar tend to be deserted. At Balliol, there’s always someone around to chat to (or distract you from work!).

The day to day running of the JCR is dealt with by the Committee, who are students elected on the 6th Saturday of Michaelmas Term and serve for a year.

General Meetings (GMs) are held about four times a term and all Balliol undergraduates are welcome to attend and speak at them. This is the decision-making body for the JCR and is a forum which allows everybody’s views and opinions to be taken into account. The meetings are often the focus of lively and impassioned debate – our decisions have real effects on the college, the university, and sometimes even the world (usually at the Charities GM at the end of every term). There will be a GM at the end of Freshers’ week (and we will run a quick guide beforehand to show you what goes on).

Your JCR Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Treasurer</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>Secretary</th>
<th>The Lindsay (Bar Manager)</th>
<th>Affiliations</th>
<th>Drs Who (Wellbeing and Health Officers)</th>
<th>Student Disabilities</th>
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<td>Ethnic Minorities</td>
<td>Foodies</td>
<td>Entz</td>
<td>Charities</td>
<td>Environment &amp; Ethics</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Web &amp; Computing</td>
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Pantry

Pantry - an institution without parallel the world over. Sometimes called ‘panters’ (no one is quite sure how they feel about that) it is our own little café, serving up hearty sustenance to the people of Balliol. Standing proudly in the JCR it acts as a focal point for the college, providing a meeting and moaning point for those doomed to gam lectures; a refuelling stop for damp and exhausted rowers; and a suitably sympathetic recovery environment for those who truly did themselves proud the night before.

Owned and staffed by students, the food ranges from quality chilli and stir-fry nights to the traditionally student-friendly options, ideal for curing a hangover or helping you through an essay crisis. Prices are very cheap, and you can set up an unlimited tab on your bod card (university ID card), which goes on to your Battels for the next term. Also, look out for Late Night Pantry, and Formal Pantry twice a year: the most exclusive dining experience in the whole of Oxford, once attended by HRH Queen Elizabeth II (maybe).

Responsibility for its wellbeing lies in the hands of the Foodies.

Lindsay Bar

The Lindsay Bar is located in the heart of Balliol. A throwback to a bygone age when all Oxford college bars were owned and operated by students, the bar is run by annually elected members of Balliol JCR. We think this works. At a time when many college bars are unused, we are proud to be thriving.

Balliol Bar offers more than just cheap pints and great atmosphere. We stock a shockingly well priced range of premium spirits and plenty of non-alcoholic alternatives. Our Open Mic nights attract talent from Balliol and beyond and on Tuesdays we host quite possibly the cheapest shot night in the country: Crazy Tuesdays, when a shot costs 75p.

The Bar Team
JCR Life

The TV Room Life outside of the library dictates the need for TV - which is where the TV Room comes in. Newly transformed to the most cushy of lounges and done up with a layer of paint, it’s pretty cozy. We pile in here to communally watch ‘Game of Thrones’, ‘Made in Chelsea’ etc. We have Sky, a DVD player, and a Playstation 3. Lockers and sports equipment live here.

The Gym/The Lindsay Room Although it has the same name as the bar, the rowing machines, free-weights and bikes aim to get rid of an emerging beer belly. You have to pay a small members’ fee and be inducted during Freshers’ Week, but once inducted, you can sign the key out from the Lodge at any time before 10.30pm.

Washing Machines The JCR provides washing machines, tumble driers and irons in the basement of staircase 21. You can book up to two washing slots per day through the JCR website (http://www.ballioljcr.org/laundry).

Storage Rooms Two rooms at the bottom of Staircase 12, primarily for overseas students to leave stuff over the holidays, but where you can put all your empty suitcases during term time. Sign the key out from the Lodge. The International Students Officers are in charge of overseeing these.

Out and About in Oxford

Food
A bucket list of places to visit in your Balliol years:

□ Gloucester Green Market - Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, Gloucester Green hosts food stalls from Nepal to Italy. Around £5 for lunch
□ The Covered Market - Relatively expensive for regular lunch, but it has good salad bars and pasta places
□ Mortons, Jimbobs and the Alternative Tuck Shop - If you fancy a sandwich or panini, these are all great options
□ GBK - A great burger place, the sweet potato fries are a must
□ Pierre Victoire, Quod, Jamie’s Italian - For when your parents visit and want to feed you up

Pubs, Bars and Coffee

PUBS

□ Turf Tavern - Out of Balliol, turn left. Has brilliant food and a nice selection of pints
□ The King’s Arms (KA) - Also left of Balliol, a great place for a pint
□ Eagle & Child - Out the back of Balliol, bit of an old-man vibe
BARS
- The Duke of Cambridge and Raoul’s are great cocktail places, very pricey but both have happy hours.

COFFEE
- Turl Street Kitchen
- Missing Bean
- The Bicycle Café

Clubbing

A club AND a grill?! Wahoo is famous for its **Friday** nights - chart-y, R&B, pop

Basically a corridor, serving up pop hits every **Thursday** (and Monday if you’re feeling Brookes nights)

A **Wednesday** night classic still known as Park End despite two attempts at rebranding

Your alternative on a **Wednesday**, The Cellar is home to Oxford’s alternative music scene all week round

A post-crazy **Tuesday** must.
Classic nights include Beyoncé and Taylor Swift

Oxford’s queer club, best on a **Tuesday** after Oxford’s LGBTQ+ society drinks. **Friday** and **Saturday** are also great. Aim for the triple...