



Tour with an undergraduate student - video transcript

<https://www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/visit-us/virtual-tour>

[We see the outside the main college site on Broad Street. The door to the College and into Porters' Lodge is open. Yusuf walks out of the door and begins to speak]

>> YUSUF BEN-TARIFITE, THIRD-YEAR MEDICAL STUDENT: Hello and welcome to Balliol College! My name is Yusuf and I'm a third-year medical student, and today I'll be giving you a tour around Balliol College and be giving you an insight into what being a student at Balliol is like.

[We see the wider Broad Street location, busy with shops and tourists.]

>> YUSUF: We're standing outside the main entrance on Broad Street and as you can see we're at the very heart of Oxford, which means no matter what you study all your lectures and practicals are really close by.

[We see the Bodleian Library from inside the quad, including the statue of William Herbert, 3rd Earl of Pembroke]

>> YUSUF: Just across the road you've got the Bodleian Library, which is my go-to library and one of the most famous libraries in the whole of the UK.

[We see the Oxford High Street, busy with shops and supermarkets]

>> YUSUF: We're at the centre of one of the main shopping areas, which means it's nice and convenient to grab a coffee from Costa or to stock up on food. Some people like to walk but others prefer to cycle.

[Yusuf stands inside the Porters' Lodge. Behind him the porters are going about their daily business]

>> YUSUF: Here is the Porters' Lodge, where you can come in and collect your post.

[Two Porters, Alan and Nick, stand out in front of their desk, smiling warmly]

>> YUSUF: All the Porters are super-friendly and you can go to them for any help or just for a friendly chit-chat.

[Yusef walks down the ramp whilst speaking]

>> YUSUF: We've recently had a new ramp installed, which means that we're accessible for any students with any mobility issues. Here is the Front Quad, where there are rooms for finalists as well as tutors' offices.

[We see the entire quad, including the historic buildings of Balliol's main site. There's a well-kept lawn and lots of flowers]

>> YUSUF: As you can see, the outdoor spaces are stunning and the gardeners work hard to maintain it.

[Yusuf stands outside the archway into the Library Passage]

Let's head upstairs and I'll show you the College Library.

[Yusuf turns and walks into the passageway. Turning left he heads up a small staircase, which spirals round to the right as he climbs until he reaches a door]

{Yusuf is now standing in the Library. Behind him a student is working at a desk in front of a stained-glass window overlooking the Front Quad.}

>> YUSUF: Welcome to the Old Library.

[The camera focuses on a student working quietly by the window]

>> YUSUF: As you can see there are individual study spaces and I really like them because I usually get distracted when working with friends, so I can just focus and get my work done.

[Yusuf is now standing in the Reading Room, with the various bookcases and study tables behind him]

>> YUSUF: We are now in the Reading Room and it has a different layout.

[We see the Reading Room more clearly, including the vaulted ceilings, the artwork, and intricate windows]

>> YUSUF: Some students prefer to work in groups around the larger tables and it's nice to have the option of studying in either room.

[The vast numbers of books and some artwork that is in the room are displayed]

>> YUSUF: Whichever course you're studying, the College Library has all the main textbooks for your course, so you don't need to buy any books whatsoever. If there's a book that you require that the College doesn't have they can buy it for you.

[Two students are studying together at a desk]

>> YUSUF: When you start here, the Librarians run workshops to help you use the Library as well as for study skills and research. They run numerous events throughout the year, including squash and biscuits, ghost stories and quizzes, all with a big turnout.

[We see the Chapel tower from outside, and then a sign on the Chapel door which shows the rainbow flag and reads 'Balliol Chapel. Everyone welcome. Yes. Really.']

>> YUSUF: Balliol is a very diverse and inclusive community where everybody is welcome.

[Yusuf stands inside the Chapel, with pews and stained-glass windows behind him.]

>> YUSUF: No matter your background or interest, you'll be able to meet like-minded people and you'll be able to make lifelong friends and memories here at Balliol.

[The interior of the Hall is shown, with wooden tables, lamps and stained-glass windows at the end of the building. Yusuf walks along the aisle between tables whilst speaking]

>> YUSUF: We're now in the Hall. The Hall serves lunch and dinner every single day. The food is of good quality and very cheap, with a range of vegetarian and vegan options suited to everyone. Meals here are a great opportunity to socialise and catch up with friends. We have formal dinners once a week and you can invite friends from other colleges to join you. The great thing about Hall here is that it's informal you don't have to wear a gown, and so you can just enjoy the experience.

[The Buttery is shown: a café/bar area with pictures of historical Balliol sporting events on the walls. As Yusuf speaks, the camera moves to close-ups of the two photographs, one black and white, another more recent.]

>> YUSUF: This is the Buttery bar. It's a place where you can have a quiet drink, grab a snack and even read a book. You can see the history of the College sports teams on the walls, ranging from black-and-white photos to the present day. There are lots of student-run societies, including sports, music and drama, so no matter what you're interested in, there's something here for you.

[Yusuf speaks whilst walking through the JCR. Behind him two students are relaxing, talking and browsing a newspaper]

>> YUSUF: The JCR - which stands for Junior Common Room - is the social hub of the College. There are lots of social events hosted here, including parties, film nights, quizzes and welfare teas to enable students to relax and make friends easily. You can come in have a chat with friends, play table tennis, or even get some work done.

[Yusuf is in the TV room. In the background three students are watching a film and eating popcorn]

>> YUSUF: There's a separate TV room where you can watch your favourite programmes with friends or play computer games.

[Yusuf stands in front of the Pantry (a counter where food and drinks are served from). In the background two students are drinking tea and working quietly; a third is working behind the counter]

>> YUSUF: The pantry is a student-run café that serves breakfast, lunch and dinner, including paninis, wraps and toasties. Some students like to work here.

[Yusuf is now in the Lindsay Bar. In the background, students are enjoying a drink, working at the bar, and playing table football.]

>> YUSUF: Balliol is one of the few colleges that has a student-run bar. It is a relaxing environment to spend time with friends and the prices are significantly cheaper than the local pubs. As a result, students often meet up for drinks here before going out in the evenings.

[We see various shots of Balliol's outdoor spaces: the front and backquads, the Fellows' Garden, the Old Library and other historic buildings. Yusuf is then shown standing outside a doorway to one of the staircases which leads to student accommodation.]

>> YUSUF: All first-years live here on main site. First-years are grouped into particular staircases to ensure they're able to make friends easily. There are a range of rooms available, including ensuite, and we also have ground-floor rooms available for disabled access as well. The great thing about living in College is that you only pay for term time and not holidays, and that makes it significantly cheaper. Let's go and have a look inside one of the rooms.

[Yusuf uses his student card to open the door to the staircase. Upstairs, he knocks on a student door]

>> YUSUF: Hi Debbie, Can I come in? Thank you.

[Yusuf enters the student's room. We see with personal artwork on the wall, a desk with books and study resources, plush, red curtains, and an open window looking out into the back quad. There is also a sink with personal effects such as a toothbrush and face scrub etc]

>> YUSUF: All student rooms come with a bed, wardrobe, chest of drawers and sink, as well as a desk, so if libraries aren't your thing you can always work in your room. Most students tend to eat in Hall, but you've also got the option of using kitchen facilities and all students are allowed to have a small fridge in their room as well. Our rooms are cleaned on a daily basis and you've also got the laundry room, so you've got everything you need on main site.

[View looking down on the back quad. There are students on the lawn, eating, studying, or relaxing in the sun.]

>> YUSUF: Balliol is very informal and students are allowed to sit on the grass. You often see students taking their lunch outside or playing frisbee. Every year there is either a garden party or a ball and that takes place out here. We put marquees up and organise music - it's a real highlight of the year.

[Yusuf is now standing outside Balliol's new accommodation blocks at the Master's Field.

>> YUSUF: We're now at the Master's Field site, which is a five-minute walk from Broad Street. These flats have recently been built, which means that every student is guaranteed accommodation throughout their course.

[Yusuf is now inside the accommodation, walking along the corridor as he speaks. The walls are light blue and there are decorative lamps hanging from the ceiling. A kitchen is shown, with a large window allowing lots of natural light to enter the room. We also see a student working on a desk in his bedroom, with a large window overlooking the sports field]

>> YUSUF: These flats are made up of study bedrooms, kitchens as well as social spaces, so you get all the benefits of living in a shared house but cheaper. Additionally, these flats are opposite the University Club and are right next to our sports ground, which makes it very convenient.

[Yusuf stands in front of a corner of a student bedroom. Picture windows offer a view over the sports grounds. As he speaks we also see one of the ensuite bathrooms offered in this type of accommodation]

>> YUSUF: As you can see there's a great view and lots of natural light. Each room also comes with an en suite, which means you've got everything you need.

[We now see more shots of the historical main site, including the buildings, cherry-blossom trees and a pair of ducks]

>> YUSUF: What I like about Balliol is the mixture of old and new. It has a rich history, modern facilities as well as a welcoming community. We hope you've enjoyed the tour today. You can find further information on accommodation and admissions on the Balliol website.

[The following links are shown:

For more information on our courses, see

www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/courses

For more information about how to apply to Balliol, see

www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/admissions

To visit Balliol, see

www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/visit-balliol

to arrange a school visit, contact

outreach@balliol.ox.ac.uk

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