Welcome

Hello Freshers! Welcome to Cambridge and a very warm welcome from your MCR committee!

Congratulations on making your offers, and we hope that you are excited to be starting your course at the University of Cambridge. As part of the collegiate system of Cambridge, you are also now a part of what is—of course!—the best college in Cambridge. As a postgraduate Churchillian (student at Churchill College), you are an important member of the MCR (Middle Common Room) community. The MCR committee, a group of student volunteers, represents you at college and organises many social and academic events throughout the year. We aim to make your time at Cambridge as fun and engaging as possible. We host most of our events in the MCR room (yes, we have our own room) and our MCR bar, The Vicious Penguin (yes, we also have our own bar that we can stock with your alcoholic or non-alcoholic drink requests!).

The opportunities here in Cambridge are endless. You can develop your careers through various seminars and networking sessions, including dining with various Professors, Knights, Dames and even Nobel Laureates!. You can also just kick back and relax at garden parties, cocktail nights, or even the famed college balls once referred to by the Time Magazine as the best parties in the world. Whether your heart gets racing by playing some rugby or football, or by watching and partaking in debates, Cambridge has enough to offer all year round that you’ll never be bored. To make sure you don’t miss anything we organise, check out the event calendar on the Churchill MCR website and keep an eye out for the weekly Gazette sent straight to your Cambridge emails. If you use Facebook, find us and add yourself to the Churchill MCR Members group if you haven’t already done so. While most postgraduates’ academic lives are centred on their departments, your time with the Churchill MCR can be just as important for your social life and will no doubt be a part of what makes your time at Cambridge unforgettable. The MCR is always here for everyone and puts you together with brilliant people like yourself from over 60 different countries studying over 60 different subjects! We are quite an informal College (by Cambridge standards) and pride ourselves as a friendly, fun and welcoming community.

This Freshers’ Guide aims to help you settle in and get familiar with the college and the MCR, the city of Cambridge and the University. We appreciate that you’ve already been through a tremendous amount of paperwork and have been bombarded with a lot of new information already. Don’t let this intimidate you, you are not alone! There is a whole support network of tutors (and the ever wonderful Rebecca who I’m sure you’ve already been in contact with), College nurse, counsellor, your soon-to-be friends, College parents and of course, the MCR committee who are all here to help you! So please, if you have any concerns/questions about anything, do get in touch with us and we will get back to you with an answer or at least point you in the right direction.

I have no doubt that you will have a fantastic time at Churchill, meet some remarkable people, discussing and of course learning a wide variety of subjects, all while making some life-long friends. Your time here will whizz by so make the most of it!

Get ready, get excited and get involved with the Churchill MCR, because there is no other experience quite as amazing!

Looking forward to meeting you,
Malavika Nair
MCR President 2018–2019(On behalf of the MCR Committee 2018–2019)
# Contents

1 **Surviving the First Week**  
   1.1 Five things every graduate fresher should know ............................................. 3  
   1.2 MCR Freshers’ Survival Checklist ................................................................. 5

2 **In, Out and Around College** ................................................................. 6  
   2.1 Meet your committee ................................................................................. 6  
   2.2 Accommodation ......................................................................................... 9  
   2.3 Library ........................................................................................................ 9  
   2.4 Hall ............................................................................................................... 10  
   2.5 The Vicious Penguin .................................................................................. 11  
   2.6 The Buttery ................................................................................................. 11  
   2.7 MCR Sports ............................................................................................... 11

3 **Preparing for Cambridge** ........................................................................ 12  
   3.1 Academic and Legal Requirements ............................................................. 12  
   3.2 Packing ........................................................................................................ 12

4 **Finding things in Cambridge** .............................................................. 13  
   4.1 Arriving in Cambridge .............................................................................. 13  
   4.2 Nurseries and Schools .............................................................................. 14  
   4.3 Shopping in Cambridge ............................................................................ 14  
      4.3.1 Supermarkets ....................................................................................... 14  
      4.3.2 General ................................................................................................. 15  
      4.3.3 Stationery and books .......................................................................... 15  
      4.3.4 Electronics ......................................................................................... 16  
      4.3.5 Pharmacies and Opticians ................................................................. 16  
   4.4 Religious Institutions ................................................................................. 16  
   4.5 Movies and Theatre ................................................................................... 16  
   4.6 Student Welfare ......................................................................................... 17

5 **Other useful miscellania** ...................................................................... 17  
   5.1 The Academic Year ................................................................................... 17  
   5.2 Receiving Post ............................................................................................ 18  
   5.3 Cycling in Cambridge ............................................................................... 18  
   5.4 Accommodation around Cambridge for visiting families ....................... 19  
   5.5 Trips and travelling ..................................................................................... 20  
   5.6 Transportation FAQ .................................................................................... 22  
   5.7 Cambridge-isms ........................................................................................ 25  
   5.8 Useful links ................................................................................................ 29
1 Surviving the First Week

1.1 Five things every graduate fresher should know

1. People/things to see immediately upon reaching Churchill

- Rebecca Sawalmeh: To be found in the Tutor for Advanced Students (TAS) office in the hallway of the main college building on the right as you enter college. She can deal with accommodation requests, information packs, letters to start a bank account, and any problems/questions you may have. (email: TAS@chu.cam.ac.uk)

- The Porters: Residing in the Porters’ lodge at the front of college, you need to check in with them upon arrival. ‘Porters’ is the Cambridge term for describing the people in charge of looking after security, first aid and the first port of call for general enquiries. If you ask them to carry your bags for you, be warned that you may have a very long few years ahead of you! They can also sell you phone cards and stamps and assist with questions about mail. If you have shipped boxes to Churchill prior to your arrival, they will have them.

- A doctor: You need to register with your local GP as soon as you get settled into Cambridge, and as a student you are entitled to free NHS treatment (covered by the NHS Surcharge with your visa for internationals) if required. There are several in town to register with, the closest being the one at 1 Huntingdon Road, although you don’t need to settle for this one if you feel it is not for you.

- Other MCR members: Once you are settled in, come by the ‘Sandy Ashmore’ MCR room, located to your left at the top of the stairs in the main building. Come along if you would like to meet people, have a question, need to find food late at night, or are feeling lost and lonely. There will be free tea, coffee, and hot chocolate offered on some days.

- Churchill College Marketplace (http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk/market/): Have a browse through our own Churchill marketplace for some cheap/free preloved bikes, gowns, electronics, household items, etc! If you need something, often posting on the Facebook group will also get you some quick responses!

2. Where do I get..?

- A bike: There are a number of bike shops in town, along Mill Road, Cherry Hinton Road, on Jesus Lane and on Hills Road (Action Bikes). Station cycles (Corn Exchange Street) is a favourite and check out the Churchill College Marketplace (http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk/market/) for second hand (sometimes brand new) bikes. Mike the Bikeman can be found selling second hand bikes in Market Square. Kingsway cycles, they have reasonably priced second hand bikes. A decent bike should cost £100–150 with lights, mud guards, etc. A good second hand bike should cost around £50–£70. Facebook groups, Amazon and Gumtree (http://www.gumtree.com) are also good options to buy bikes online. There is a bike repair service operated by college during term as well as bike repair services avialble all year round in the market in the centre of town. Be sure to register your bike at the Porters’ lodge.

- Groceries: Sainsbury’s in town is the most popular: walk straight down Bridge Street and keep going, and you’ll find it on your right just opposite Sidney Sussex College.
Other options include the big Tesco and Asda, located on Newmarket road, but this may be a bit far out for an initial venture. There is also an Aldi, Iceland and Co-op along Histon Road. Market square has several fresh fruit and vegetable stalls, selling local produce. There is also a Sainsbury’s superstore now off at Eddington. You can access this by just walking all the way down the footpath coming off the end of Churchill Road by the Pepperpots and the Wolfson flats.

- Things for your room: Near Grafton Centre, there is a store called Argos which sells pretty much anything you may need at very reasonable prices. There is now an Argos nearer to Churchill at Eddington by the Sainsbury’s superstore. They also do home deliveries if you order from their website at [www.argos.com](http://www.argos.com). Just down the street from the Grafton Centre Argos, you can get some cheap clothes from Primark, which may be particularly useful if you’re waiting for your things to arrive from home. For higher quality items, the Grand Arcade, the Grafton Centre, John Lewis, or Marks & Spencer are some of the other options around Cambridge. Or if you’re feeling adventurous, London is 50 minutes away by train.

3. Where to get information on the MCR

- MCR Email lists: There are two major MCR email lists. The addresses of most Freshers have been added automatically by the MCR computing officer. There will be a list in the MCR room of all the newly added addresses. Please check if you’ve been added or you may miss announcements! If you have not been added, please contact mcr-webmaster@chu.cam.ac.uk or any other MCR committee member.

- During Freshers’ week, a list of all the daily activities will be posted on the MCR website at [http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk/calendar/](http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk/calendar/).

- Each evening during Freshers’ week, members of the MCR will meet at ~18:15 to have dinner in hall: come along to socialise!

- Useful information can be found at the MCR website: [http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk/](http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk/)

- Spouses and partners of Freshers are welcome and encouraged to attend all MCR planned events. In addition, spouses and partners of Freshers are welcome to contact the Families’ Representatives at mcr-families@chu.cam.ac.uk

- You can contact any MCR committee member anonymously too, see the bottom of the MCR committee page [http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk/mcrcommittee/](http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk/mcrcommittee/).

- How to get a bank account, mobile phone, etc. (relevant to overseas students)
  - After choosing a bank (Barclays, Lloyds Bank, NatWest, HSBC, etc.), you’ll need a letter from college to confirm your address. You can get this from Rebecca Sawalme. Then you’ll need to go to the bank where you’ll probably have to make an appointment to return another day to set up an account, so plan ahead. If you’re lucky and go before the undergraduates turn up, you may be able to walk in and get an account that day.
  - For a contract mobile phone, you’ll need evidence of an address and bank account. So, after you have your bank account, take a copy of your bank statement with your address on it to your chosen store and you should be able to get a phone. Alternatively, it may be easier to get a pay-as-you-go phone. Giffgaff (online), The Carphone Warehouse, EE, Vodafone, Phones4U and a number of other such stores are all within easy reach of each other near Market Square.
1.2 MCR Freshers’ Survival Checklist

TAS Office - Rebecca Sawalmeh
Contact: tas@chu.cam.ac.uk, 01223 336157
Reasons you may need to visit the TAS Office include:

• Non-EU students must register their Points Based Immigration details, and sign in every term.

• Obtain Proof of Address. Letter should include your name, length and title of your course.

For any information this is a good first point of contact.

Student Accounts Office
Opening Hours: 9am–12:30pm; 1:30pm–5:00pm

• Let them know you’ve arrived, and collect your University card.

• If you are here with a partner, arrange a student account card for them.

• Ask any questions you may have about payment of fees.

Computing Office
Opening Hours: 8am–1pm; 2am–4.30pm

• Forms to fill in are available in your welcome packs.

• Return form to set up college account and internet access in room.

• Collect University Computing Service passwords at https://jackdaw.cam.ac.uk/signup/

Porter’s Lodge
Open 24 hours; Tel: 01223 3 (36000)

• Collect your room key if living in college.

• Find your pigeonhole and check your mail.

• Get a registration number for bikes and car stickers.

• Can provide first aid if needed, and often the first port for general college related inquiries.

Setting Up a Bank Account - Barclays, Natwest, Lloyds TSB, HSBC
Location: City Centre - Mainly around Market Square and Sidney Street
Common Opening Hours: 9am- 5pm, 9am- 12 noon on Saturdays, Closed on Sundays
You will need:

• Proof of Identity: Passport for International Students, Driver’s License

• Proof of Address: Letter from Rebecca

• Proof of Enrolment: University Acceptance Letter
Middle Combination Room (MCR)
Location: MCR (See College Map)
The hub of all MCR Activities! Show up for Freshers' Week activities (see draft schedule attached, confirmed schedule and online form registering interest will be emailed to you by September). Ensure you have been added to the MCR mailing list mcr-webmaster@chu.cam.ac.uk

Dining Hall and Buttery
Dining hall serves lunch from 12:15 to 13:45 everyday and dinner from 17:45 to 19:15. On Saturdays continental breakfast is also served in the dining hall from 07:30 to 09:00. The buttery is open during term from 07:30 to 23:00 Mon-Sat and 14:00 to 23:00 on Sundays.

Out of term, cooked breakfast is served from 07:30 to 09:00 in the hall, and the buttery opening times are subject to change (usually opens after 18:00, closed on Sundays). Catering operates all year round, except for the weeks around Christmas–New Year when there is a full shut down.

Mobile Phones: Orange, Vodafone, T-Mobile, 3, Virgin, O2
Location: City Centre; Most shops close at 6pm
For a Pay as you Go phone, just show up and get it.
For a contract mobile phone; you will need:
- A bank account (approximately 2 weeks wait)
- Proof of Address (Letter from Rebecca)
- Proof of Identity: Passport for International Students, Driver’s License
- Bank Statement

Other Things to Do
- Ensure you can use your University card to pay for food in hall. Report issues to student accounts office.
- Register with local doctor. The closest GP to the college is at 1 Huntingdon Road.
- Visit your new department to notify them of your arrival and collect academic timetable.
- Sign matriculation form when you receive notice from Rebecca.
- Visit MCR website and read the Freshers’ Guide for other useful information. Thank Rebecca for all her hard work in organising your arrival!

2 In, Out and Around College
2.1 Meet your committee

The MCR Committee are in charge of organising and administrating everything that goes on within the MCR. The Committee’s tasks include planning Freshers’ Week, Guest Nights, the Christmas Party, and other social events, organising academic seminars and the Conference on Everything, running the Vicious Penguin Bar and representing the views of the MCR to College through various sub-committees.
President
Malavika Nair
Third Year PhD
Materials Science

General Secretary
Jack Hodkinson
Fourth Year PhD
Physics

Treasurer
Jannat Ijaz
Second Year PhD
Wellcome Sanger Institute

Welfare Officer (Women’s)
Marija Pajevic
Third Year PhD
Criminology

Welfare Officer (Men’s)
Janosz Dewberry
Fourth Year PhD
Astrophysics

Welfare Officer (Families’)
Bang Yong Ming
Fourth Year PhD
Institute for Manufacturing

Welfare Officer (LGBT+)
Max Veit
Fourth Year PhD
Engineering

Academic Officer
Savvas Gkatonas
Second Year PhD
Engineering

Computing Officer
Matt Leming
Third Year PhD
Psychiatry
2.2 Accommodation

As a first year, you are guaranteed accommodation at Churchill (unless you’ve been very late in accepting your offer). With the exception of a few outer hostels, all Churchill accommodation is located on either the main site, or a few minutes walk/cycle away. You’re encouraged to get involved in college life! The Wolfson Flats have been designed particularly with families and/or couples in mind. After your first year, the college runs a ballot system to determine who gets rooms; more details regarding this will be available nearer the time. While living in college housing, it’s a good idea to bookmark this site: http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/internal/maintenance/ since it can be used for online requests for carpentry, plumbing, and other such repairs, as well as for necessary housekeeping supplies.

2.3 Library

Churchill has two libraries: the Bevin Library on the top floor and the Bracken on the ground floor. The Bevin library aimed more at Arts and Humanities students, and the Bracken library aimed at the scientists. Both may be accessed any time of the day using your university card, all year round except during few events like Churchill Spring Ball. Books are borrowed using a self-service system, so please don’t abuse it! Most books can be borrowed for 2 weeks, and renewed online easily. If there is something in particular you would like and the library doesn’t have it, you can always get in touch with the librarian Annie Gleeson (librarian@chu.cam.ac.uk), and she may be able to get it for you.

The college libraries are designed to cater to undergraduate courses, but are by no means limited to this. As a postgraduate you are more likely to need the resources made available at your departmental library or the University library. Nevertheless, the libraries may still prove a useful hideaway when you need some peace and quiet, or a place to focus. In the Maisonneuve room of the Bevin library for instance, there are a number of rather comfy sofas, some of which are purported to be Churchill’s own! In the same building, Churchill also houses the Churchill Archives Centre, with its own dedicated library, open to all members of college. For the archivists among you, this may be an interesting place to nosey about.
2.4 Hall

Every Cambridge College has a dining hall, but Churchill’s is the largest. Going to ‘Hall’ is synonymous with the Cambridge experience: it is a place to discuss the latest scientific discoveries, debate the rise and fall of the markets or simply sit back with your friends and enjoy a meal. With the hectic lab schedules of most postgraduates, going to hall tends to fade into the background, as some like to cook at home. During Freshers’ week, it is a fantastic way to get to know others. On a daily basis, there is lunch and dinner, with brunches on Saturdays and Sunday roasts at Sunday lunchtime. There is also a reasonable salad bar on offer each day. At various points in the year, other pop-up stations selling ice creams, crêpes, a pasta or noodle bar may also feature so keep your eyes peeled out for those! A standard meal will cost ~£4.00.

More importantly, formal halls are offered every Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays after the regular dinner service has closed in hall. Formal halls are a chance to get dressed up and have a three course meal with your friends at a reasonable price. Throughout the year, there will be a number of special occasions that will bring the entire MCR together for a formal, such as Matriculation dinner and Advanced Students’ dinner. In terms of dress code, most formals simply require you to wear a formal outfit: be it a suit and tie, a collared shirt and trousers/skirt, or an evening dress. Only special events (e.g. feasts and balls) are ‘Black tie’ which places stricter requirements of a dinner jacket (tuxedo) in place of a dinner suit, and a longer evening gown in place of shorter cocktail dresses. In terms of dining etiquette, the most important things are to wait until the Master or Fellow says grace (‘Benedictus Benedictat’) before sitting, to start with the cutlery on the outside, and to pass the Port to the left. You’ll pick up other things along the way, and if you aren’t sure what to do, don’t worry, most people just aren’t bothered. If you’re unlucky to be sitting next to someone too eccentric to care about this, just sit tight and this too shall pass...

Traditionally, it is a Cambridge custom to wear gowns at all formal occasions. This is not the case at Churchill, where gowns are only worn for the extremely formal events. For these events, the rarity of the dress code means that you will be informed about wearing gowns well ahead of
time. Nevertheless, gowns are an integral part of Cambridge culture, and you’re bound to encounter them at some point. The nature of the gown represents your level in the academic hierarchy. As undergraduates, each college has a distinct variation on the standard Cambridge undergraduate gown. As postgraduates, your gown is uniform across the University, but has marks to distinguish your last degree, as well as to identify those who had been Cambridge undergraduates. There are gowns in the MCR cupboard for you to sign out and borrow, in case you need one to go to another college’s formal.

2.5 The Vicious Penguin

No, Churchill does not house any strange or aggressive wildlife... The Vicious Penguin is the name of the MCR’s own student run bar! Serving cheap drinks most evenings, it is a good excuse to relax in the MCR after a hard day’s work. During Freshers’ week, the bar will run a number of training sessions for those of you who may want to help run it.

2.6 The Buttery

This is the name for the main bar downstairs, in the main Churchill building. The catering times are restricted to the undergraduate term times due to reduced demand during the vacations and the summer term. But when it is open, in addition to drinks (alcoholic, but also primarily coffees, smoothies and the usual bottled drinks), it serves a variety of snacks, and is also a great place for a cheap and quick bite to eat if you’re in the mood for pizzas, nachos, burgers, ready meals or sandwiches. Self-service breakfast is served here on a daily basis instead of up in Hall. You can also buy some daily groceries like milk and fruit from here if you haven’t had the chance to do your shopping in town.

2.7 MCR Sports

One of the joys of the Cambridge collegiate system is that no matter how good you are at a sport, if you enjoy it and/or would like to give it a go, you can without any pressure of expectation. Churchill is particularly lucky to have some of the best sports facilities in all of Cambridge, all on-site. Although run mainly by the JCR (undergraduates), MCR members can and do get involved with most college sports. In general, the ‘first’ level teams are reasonably serious, but beyond that everything goes. And if you want something really serious, you can always try out for university teams. Equally, you can pick up the Cambridge favourite, rowing. Seeing as this is Cambridge, no matter what level you row at, you’re likely to be pushed to the limit!

As chance would have it, there are also a number of MCR specific teams. The MCR football team, cricket team, and squash team are always on the lookout for people interested in getting involved. There will be a joint MCR/JCR sports and societies squash at the start of term which will give you an opportunity to sign up for anything that catches your fancy.

Lastly, Churchill also has a small gym for use by college members. You will need to attend an induction session in order to gain card access to the gym, and a series of these sessions will be organised during the first two or three weeks of the Michaelmas Term. An email will be sent out by the welfare officers for you to sign up to and it is highly encouraged to attend one of these sessions! However, if you miss the start of term you can arrange for a private induction by contacting the gym president or a trained inductor (a list will be made available at the beginning of term).
3 Preparing for Cambridge

In the middle of saying goodbye to all your family and old friends, packing may drop to the bottom of your priority list. To help you out, here are some of the items you just don’t want to forget. Much of this section is aimed more at international students who are less likely to be accustomed to British conditions, but everyone can feel free to use this as a guide.

3.1 Academic and Legal Requirements

- Offer letter from Churchill
- Documentary evidence of financial support for fees and maintenance
- Medical certificate/documentation to assist when you register for the NHS. This is particularly important if you have allergies or suffer from some sort of recurring injury.
- Enough cash to support yourself until you can open a bank account
- A valid passport, if coming from abroad (or an EU ID card)
- Entry visa and Biometric Residence Permit (to collect once you arrive here), if your nationality requires it.
- Passport-sized photographs for registrations, societies, and other bureaucracy.

3.2 Packing

Temperatures in Cambridge usually range from 0°C to 25°C, but it is no stranger to the occasional heatwave in the summer or snow in the winter. The weather is damp, but not as rainy as other parts of the UK. Instead it can get rather windy during winter. Pack to this specification, although buying suitable clothes once here may work out cheaper if you have luggage limitations and may also be more appropriate to the weather conditions.

There are a lot of formal occasions at Cambridge, and plenty of opportunities to dress up in black tie. So you should bring at least a suit or something elegant for formal night out. A full-length evening dress or tuxedo may be useful for attending galas or May Balls.

If you're planning to bring books, remember that you will have to carry them. The Cambridge libraries are well stocked for anything academic that you would require, so at best you would want to carry along casual reading.

If you’re bringing along electronic goods, remember to check its compatibility with the UK 240V 50Hz grid, and whether it will fit into a three pin UK socket. Items like laptops should be equipped with voltage adaptors, so you don’t need to worry, but it is worth the thought. As for UK plugs, cheap adaptors can be purchased once you arrive in case your connections are not compatible. If you’re planning to travel to Europe at all, there are different plug adaptors that you will need for European countries that are different from the UK. A universal adaptor is another option, which may save some money in the long run if you’re planning to travel extensively.

In case you find you want to carry more than your luggage allowance on your flight, or more than there is space for in the car, then you may want to consider delivery services like DHL, UPS,
These can be expensive, however, so make sure to compare shipping costs with the fees you would incur by checking another bag for your flight. Don’t forget though that people have a tendency to accumulate things, and so you’ll probably end up having to carry a lot more to pack with you when your time at Cambridge has come to an end. If you’re here on a year-long MPhil, carrying too much may just be a hassle.

However, it’s worth noting that you’ll need to supply your own linen, or else purchase it in town. A duvet and pillow are provided by College, but you need to either bring or buy sheets and duvet covers. Extra blankets for winter can be obtained from the Housekeeping staff. A linen package can be purchased from College for £11.75 for a single set or at a shop such as John Lewis, Marks & Spencer, or TK Maxx.

4 Finding things in Cambridge

Cambridge is a relatively small city where most things are easily within reach by walking or cycling. Churchill is located on the outskirts of the city centre, about a 15 minute walk from Market square. The benefit of this is that we have beautiful open spaces and no worries about tourists disturbing our daily lives, as is the case for many central colleges. The downside is the need to carry your heavy shopping bags from town, however for the most part you should be fine. During the week, there is the Universal bus that runs every 15 mins and every 20 mins on Saturdays (http://www.environment.admin.cam.ac.uk/what-are-we-doing/travel/catch-bus). It runs from the Eddington, through the West Cambridge site (lot of physical science departments are based here), to a stop just outside Churchill on Madingley Road and takes you to the Addenbrooke’s Hospital Bus station via the University Library, Fitzwilliam museum and Cambridge Railway Station. It can be handy on a rainy day, and it only costs £1 if you display your university card to the driver when you get on. A useful map source: www.cam.ac.uk/map (and see map on the next page with labels).

4.1 Arriving in Cambridge

If you’re not lucky enough to be driven up by your parents, or to own a car and drive yourself up you will either be arriving in Cambridge by train or by coach. The train station is located on the other side of the city centre from Churchill, nearer the areas that start becoming more ‘town’ (non-university) instead of ‘gown’. At any time of day there is a taxi queue just outside the station, and can get a lift to Churchill for £9. Mondays–Saturdays there is also the Universal bus that goes directly from the train station to Storey’s Way outside Churchill for £1 if you have you Cambridge university card or student card, and £2 otherwise.

If you are driving up, do note that you are NOT allowed to keep a car in Cambridge while pursuing your course here, unless you are above the age of 25 and/or have received the Cambridge MA. If you need a car, you will need to apply for a motor proctor’s license which requires permission from your tutor first.

The main bus station in Cambridge is located on Drummer Street in the centre of town, but larger coaches, such as National Express, stop outside Parker’s Piece, a few minutes walk from Drummer Street. Consequently, particularly if you’re arriving at an odd time of day or night, there may be no taxis around, and if you’re arriving in Cambridge for the first time you probably don’t
want to lug your suitcases all the way across town to get to Churchill. Here are some numbers that you will find useful for such an eventuality (and probably thereafter during your time at Cambridge):

- Panther Taxis: +44 (0) 1223 715 715
- CamCab: +44 (0) 1223 704 704

Note: When calling from international phones, use the +44 UK country code and omit the 0. Otherwise, if calling from UK phones, keep the 0 and omit the +44.

If you arrive in Cambridge late at night, there is a vending machine near the Churchill Buttery, by the lift in the main concourse. The Buttery is open until 11 pm during term time and will have drinks, snacks and light meals available. Sainsbury’s on Sidney Street in the city centre opens until 11:30 pm on weekdays and Saturdays but shuts at 5 pm on Sundays. Just Eat and Deliveroo are great websites/apps on which you can order from local takeaways. Domino’s Pizza (01223 355155/dominos.co.uk) do pizza deliveries all day and the Esso Service Station on Histon Road is also open 24/7 and sells sweets, crisps and everything you’d expect to be sold at a service station.

4.2 Nurseries and Schools

For those of you with little kids who need looking after when you’re in the lab or at work, nurseries are a top priority. Just down the road from Churchill, on Clarkson Road, on the other side of the Maths department, is KidsUnlimited Nursery, a small building that looks like it’s a part of Girton College’s Wolfson court. Slightly further away, on the West Cambridge site is the University Nursery on Charles Babbage Road. In terms of schools, Cambridge is peppered with a range of private and state schools of very high calibre. This would require a lot more consideration than a Freshers’ guide can give, but the Families’ rep or the University Childcare Information Adviser (sarah.barnshaw@admin.cam.ac.uk) may be able to help on this front.

It is possible that those of you with families will be arriving much earlier than ‘Freshers’ Week’. If this is you, then don’t hesitate to contact the Families’ rep (mcr-families@chu.cam.ac.uk) who will be around to help you and your family settle in to your new home and meet your neighbours.

4.3 Shopping in Cambridge

As a quick note, for many of the stores mentioned in various sectors (grocery, pharmacy, etc.), you may find it worthwhile to sign up for a membership card, such as a Nectar Card for Sainsbury’s, a Tesco Clubcard, or a Boots Advantage Card. These allow you to accrue points with each purchase, that you can then redeem in the form of in-store vouchers (or even convert your points into vouchers at other venues, such as the Tesco Clubcard point conversion into restaurant vouchers). Most stores will allow you to sign up for a membership card in the store, and there may be options online as well.

4.3.1 Supermarkets

Sainsbury’s, located opposite Sidney Sussex College on Sidney Street, is the main supermarket in the city centre and is the most convenient place to do shopping, particularly if your department is in the centre of town. Marks & Spencer is located in Market Square and is another good place for food and other groceries, but may put undue strains on your budget with their higher prices. If
you are looking for more exotic foods, spices, etc., you'll need to venture up to Mill Road. If you're off by West Cambridge, then this would be replaced by the Sainsbury’s superstore in Eddington.

If you’re looking for a bigger selection and lower prices there are several Tesco on the outskirts of Cambridge, the largest being on Newmarket Road. There is also a large ASDA just off Newmarket Road on Coldham’s Lane. There is also a small Waitrose on Fitzroy Street near the Grafton Centre. Alternatively, you could order online, and typically for Tesco’s and other stores there is a 1 or 2-hour delivery window, which can be very handy.

Nearer to Churchill, on the other side of Murray Edwards is a little corner shop, Nazreen Dar, Histon Road. This is good for little emergencies, and if you’re into your Indian cooking, this is the place to stock up on spices. If you turn up Histon road a little bit of a walk will get you to Aldi, Iceland and a Co-op.

4.3.2 General

When you arrive in Cambridge, you’re probably going to lack a number of essentials, such as dishes, utensils, etc., simply because you were prudent not to fill up your bags unnecessarily. Once in the city centre, walk past Drummer Street, up through Christ’s Pieces, and you’ll find yourself heading towards the Grafton Centre. Just before you get there, you will find Argos, which is possibly the best place to pick up any basics you may need. There are a number of other major shops and clothes stores in the Grafton that you may find of interest. There is also an Argos adjoined to the Sainsbury’s superstore in Eddington. If you’re here for a short while, many graduating students are often looking to sell their used pots and pans for cheap or give them away for free, so do be on the lookout for these as well.

Closer to the town centre, the main place to shop is the Grand Arcade/Lion Yard where you can find department stores like John Lewis. Or there’s always Marks & Spencer’s. If you’re looking to decorate your room, the Guildhall holds a random poster sale at the start of every Michaelmas term (during Freshers’ week usually) where you can find something to suit most tastes.

4.3.3 Stationery and books

Even though many courses may have recommended reading lists, some of which you may wish to peruse, you do not NEED to buy any books whilst here. If the book is critical to your work, then you should just be able to find it in one of several Cambridge libraries or order it in to your College or Department libraries.

For stationery, WH Smith, just off Market square, or Ryman’s, a few metres down the street from Sainsbury’s are good places to shop, and the latter even offers a student discount when you present your student ID and sign up for a free student membership card. The Porters Lodge at Churchill College also stock some stationery.

In terms of bookshops, Cambridge is simply littered with them. The true treasures are the little out of the way hidden ones where you can spend some time nosing around dust lined book shelves. A more likely stop for most of you however will be Heffers (Trinity Street) or Waterstones (Market Street). The Cambridge University Press has a bookshop just opposite Senate Passage (near Gonville and Caius College and the Senate House) where you, as a Cambridge student, can get a 20% discount on any purchases.
4.3.4 Electronics

Argos, in Eddington or near the Grafton, or Curry’s, on Newmarket Road, are the best for these.

4.3.5 Pharmacies and Opticians

There is a very large Boots on Sidney Street that sells most health-care items in addition to pharmaceutical goods. Superdrug, also on Sidney street, is possibly a better option if you are on the look out for specific medications. Clamp Opticians, on St. Andrew’s Street, or Boots are good places to go in the event you need glasses or your eyes checked. There is also a Rowlands pharmacy on Histon Road near Aldi, the Co-op, and Iceland.

4.4 Religious Institutions

The Chapel at Churchill College may be found at the top of the fields and is open for general prayer for people of all and no faith. Unlike some of the older colleges, the Chapel does not play a significant part in the life of Churchill College because it was founded as a secular institution. However, there is a Christian service every Sunday at 5.45pm, led by the Chaplain Revd Dr John Rawlinson.

Cambridge is also replete with churches of all sorts of denominations, although predominantly Church of England. A church frequented by most Anglican students, particularly by members of the Christian Union, is St. Andrew’s the Great (on St. Andrew’s Street). The Catholic Chaplaincy (Fisher House) is located off Market Square on Guildhall Street.

For other religions, places of worship are a little more sparse around Cambridge, and may require further research since institutes under the umbrella of cultural centres may still offer small prayer spaces and communities specific to the faith. The Cambridge Jewish Centre may be found off Bridge Street, along Thompsons Lane. There is also a Chabad house on Castle Street and a reform synagogue on Auckland Road. There are two mosques near Cambridge on Kirkwood Road in Arbury and Devonshire Road, with the new Cambridge Mosque on Mawson Road to open at the end of 2018. Cambridge has one Gurudwara which is located on Arbury Road, and has a Buddhist Centre on Newmarket road. There are no Hindu temples in Cambridge, but the Indian Community and Cultural Association house a shrine where Aarti’s are done every Sunday from 6:30 pm to 7:15 pm.

The University Church, Great St. Mary’s, serves a more symbolic purpose: although it runs regular Anglican services, its main use is for special University religious services.

4.5 Movies and Theatre

The Vue Cinema, in the Grafton Centre, and Cineworld, on Clifton Road in the Cambridge Leisure centre, show all the big releases. The latter is a little far out, but if you have a bike and want a relaxed evening out including a movie, there are a number of restaurants in the area, and a bowling alley and an arcade on the ground floor. The Arts Picturehouse, on St. Andrew’s street, is an independent cinema that plays more artsy films and local talents; it also has a great bar!

Cambridge has a thriving amateur theatre community, as well as being a place that attracts a number of professional stars. The ADC and the Cambridge Arts Theatre are wonderful places to
spend an enjoyable evening, as is the Corn Exchange. Churchill’s very own GODS society is a good group to get involved with if you are keen on acting or producing.

4.6 Student Welfare

The MCR is a community consisting of friendly members who support each other. Whether you need some advice, an ear to listen to your problems, or someone to give you a helping hand, feel free to get in touch with any of your fellow MCR members. The welfare officers in particular are here to help, and they can put you in touch with professional welfare services if necessary. All communication between you and the welfare officers is strictly confidential. The officers can supply you with free condoms, pregnancy tests, and personal attack alarms on request; they will be in contact at the start of the year to detail what they can do, but you are always free to get in touch directly as follows:

Women’s welfare: Marija, mcr-womenswelfare@chu.cam.ac.uk
Men’s welfare: Janosz, mcr-menswelfare@chu.cam.ac.uk
Families’ representatives: Bang, mcr-families@chu.cam.ac.uk
LGBT+ Officer: Max, mcr-lgbt@chu.cam.ac.uk

You can contact the welfare officers anonymously via the links below. They will be able to reply to your note, but your email-address will remain hidden to them.

http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk/contact-form/?id=1 (Men’s)
http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk/contact-form/?id=2 (Women’s)
http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk/contact-form/?id=6 (Families’)
http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk/contact-form/?id=7 (LGBT+)

The Churchill College nurse (Jo Livingstone; nurse@chu.cam.ac.uk 01223 336133) and Churchill counsellor (Veronica McDouall; counsellor@chu.cam.ac.uk 01223 313515) are other people you can contact for help on welfare issues.

5 Other useful miscellania

5.1 The Academic Year

While this is irrelevant to most postgraduate students as they don’t operate on the same cycle as undergraduates, it is handy to point out the structure of the Cambridge academic year. There are three 8 week terms known as Michaelmas, Lent, and Easter, with a five week break (approximately) in between each. The term dates may be found at http://www.cam.ac.uk/univ/termdates.html All undergraduate lectures, with the exception of some courses like the 3rd and 4th year Manufacturing Engineering courses, take place only during these periods, known as Full Term.

By university statutes you are required to remain within a certain radius from Great St. Mary’s (the University Church) for the duration of Full Term, unless special dispensation has been made. This is known as ‘keeping residence’.

The week after the last week of full term in Easter term is known as ‘May Week’, despite it being held in June. This is the week of frivolity and festivity when most Cambridge balls are held to celebrate the end of the year. Churchill does not host its own May Ball, but holds a smaller Spring Ball in February.
5.2 Receiving Post

Your address while at Churchill is simply: Your name, Churchill College, Cambridge, CB3 0DS, United Kingdom.

All post gets delivered to your little hole-in-the-wall-letter box known as your ‘pigeonhole’. These are located either in the mail room, or in the Porters’ lodge, depending on your surname. The pigeon hole name tags are also colour coded, with all postgraduates demarcated by white tags so that they are easier to spot. If your post is too big to fit into the pigeon hole, the porters will put a note in its place to ask you to pick it up.

Deliveries that are fulfilled by Amazon are placed in a separate ‘Amazon Room’ just before the Post Room, opposite the porter’s lodge. The room is accessible by your university card. These are the only deliveries for which you will NOT receive a notification from the porters, since you should be receiving an email from Amazon when the items have been delivered.

During term time the university-wide student union, CUSU, runs a free mail system that allows you to post between colleges. Similarly, the main University Mail System, UMS, may be used during term time free of charge to post things of an academic nature to your supervisor or other colleagues.

You can post normal mail at the Porters’ lodge instead of walking to a Post office in town.

5.3 Cycling in Cambridge

A new city always brings a whole new set of rules. For a place like Cambridge where cycling is second nature, it is surprisingly not very cycle friendly, with numerous tourists doing their very best to walk right into you as you cycle around town. To assist with the flow of students, residents and everyone else who decides to visit, Cambridge has a strict (~ish, given that you always find ignorant people cycling the wrong way) one way and no cycling policy along certain streets in the historic city centre (see the mini-map below). Try and keep to this because if you’re caught, and the officer isn’t very kindly, you can be fined a rather hefty sum. Also, for those of you coming from abroad, we drive on the left hand side of the road here. Cycles are expected to follow the flow of traffic and the normal rules of the road, so please be careful not to end up cycling on the wrong side.

Given the number of cyclists in town, it is somewhat unsurprising that there are also significant numbers of reported cycle theft. As a precautionary measure, and also to keep track of who has a bike in college, all students are required to register their bike with the porters when they first buy/arrive with a bike. If you have a more expensive one, it may be worth considering registering yourself with a service like Immobilise just in case: http://www.immobilise.com/index.php

In addition to registering your bike with the Churchill Porters, a useful note is that you can also request more information from the Porters about secure bike storage. Churchill has several secure bike sheds for students, one with a PIN access code and the other with lock-and-key access. The Porters can help supply the code and get you set up with the lock-and-key system, if you so wish.

For some more helpful advice about cycling and other transportation-related concerns in Cambridge and throughout the UK, please see section 5.6 for Transportation FAQs!
5.4 Accommodation around Cambridge for visiting families

If you have any guests staying overnight in College, you should let the porters know how many guests you are having over as well as the date they anticipate leaving. If you are in a single occupancy College room (i.e. every College room apart from the Wolfson flats), children are not allowed to stay overnight. We understand this is quite difficult as accommodation around Cambridge is quite expensive, so we have compiled a list of some more affordable hotels/B&Bs in Cambridge.

- Arundel House Hotel
- Premier Inn Cambridge (A14, J32) Hotel
- Travelodge Newmarket Road Cambridge
- Stationroomz
- Holiday Inn Express Cambridge
- Hamilton Lodge
- Travelodge Cambridge Central Hotel

Also check out:

- University rooms to rent available rooms in the Colleges though (generally better out of term-time) [http://www.universityrooms.com/en/city/cambridge/home](http://www.universityrooms.com/en/city/cambridge/home)
- The University Accommodation Service which has a section on short visits [http://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/VisitingCambridge/](http://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/VisitingCambridge/)
- Airbnb [https://www.airbnb.co.uk/s/Cambridge--United-Kingdom](https://www.airbnb.co.uk/s/Cambridge--United-Kingdom)
5.5 Trips and travelling

After some time in Cambridge, sooner or later, you will experience what is widely known as ‘The Bubble Depression’. If your mood levels have dropped significantly and amid all the work you realize that the only places you visit every single day do not go beyond your room, the library/department, college hall and MCR Bar (if you are lucky), then it is time to LEAVE this place, even for just a few hours. Here are some inspiring places around Cambridge you can easily visit by foot or on your bike if you need a retreat (London is a chapter on its own).

1. Ely

10 mins by train (or ca. 1.5 hours on a bike) from Cambridge lies one of Britain’s most impressive cathedrals. Also check out Oliver Cromwell’s House and the river, where the University rowing crews train every day.

2. Wimpole Hall Estate

Easily reached within an hour on your bike. Nice British countryside architecture with a huge park full of grazing sheep. Feed pigs and cows on their estate farm for a truly rural experience.

3. Wandlebury Country Park

Originally a large Iron Age Hillfort. Today, a natural reserve great for picnics, geocaching or just chilling. Just south of Addenbrooke’s and can be easily cycled to. Don’t miss the great view of Cambridge and the old Roman road.
4. Grantchester

A stereotypical escape for the tired Cambridge student. Explore the meadows, tease the cows and enjoy some afternoon tea in the famous Orchard like Virginia Woolf or Bertrand Russell did before you. Takes one hour of slow strolling to reach.

5. Coton

A small village just 30 min on foot from Churchill. Walk past West Cambridge and cross the motorway bridge to explore this small place with a nice church, pub and grazing llamas. Good for refreshing your brain.

6. St. Ives

Connected with Cambridge through a guided busway. Cycle (1 hour leisurely), walk or skate right next to it. Don’t miss the fen lakes reserve on the road and enjoy some ice-cream at the town’s beautiful bridge or next to the Oliver Cromwell statue.
7. Castle Rising, Sandringham & Hunstanton

Makes a great weekend trip. Catch a train to King’s Lynn and then go on with the Coasthopper bus to explore a 12th century castle, Her Majesty’s Norfolk estate and gardens, and a nice seaside town called Hunstanton (lighthouse, seal safari, beach).

If you feel like leaving the country altogether, London’s airports (especially Stansted, Gatwick and Luton) offer a wide range of extremely cheap flights all over Europe, Turkey and Morocco. You can get flights as cheap as £30! Check out some of these low cost airlines:

www.ryanair.com
www.wizzair.com
www.easyjet.com
www.monarch.co.uk

Paris, Brussels and Amsterdam are just a few hours away by the Eurostar trains: www.eurostar.com

5.6 Transportation FAQ

Q1: I’m flying into Heathrow airport and need to know how to get to Cambridge. What’s the best way to do this?

A1: There are a few ways to get to Cambridge, and how much luggage you have will likely determine the best approach. If you’re travelling with several pieces of heavy luggage (which is likely if you’re coming from far away), it’s probably best to take a National Express Coach from Heathrow to Cambridge. You may save some money if you buy your ticket online in advance (see Useful Links), or else you can buy the ticket at the Central Bus Station, which is attached to Heathrow Airport. If you choose to buy your bus ticket on the same day as your flight, it would be a good option to consider purchasing a Coachcard as well, which can then be applied to your ticket purchase and all future purchases. See Q3 and corresponding answer on the following page. A useful note is that Heathrow has free trolleys to use for your luggage, pick them up when you retrieve your luggage and they will certainly be useful for the long walk from your terminal to the Central Bus Station.

If you are not overloaded with heavy luggage, you may also consider taking the Piccadilly Line of the London Underground Tube all the way to King’s Cross station in London, from which you’ll
need to take another train to Cambridge. Although this may work out to be quicker and possibly a bit cheaper than the coach, it may be inconvenient with a lot of luggage, and very difficult to do when you need to transfer from the tube to the King’s Cross train station and its many stairs. It can be definitely can done, however, and worth considering with fewer bags.

Whether you arrive by train or by coach, you will need to take a taxi from either Parker’s Piece (if arriving by coach) or the Cambridge Rail Station. As mentioned in section 4.1, there is typically a taxi queue at the rail station, so you can find a driver willing to take you to Churchill College. As a note for international students, it is not customary to tip the taxi drivers, though they may be appreciative if you do. Section 4.1 also lists two common cab company numbers in Cambridge, and another link to taxi numbers can be found in section 5.8.

Finally, a wonderful resource if you still have questions about arriving in the UK and getting to Cambridge, potentially from Gatwick or other airports, is this Graduate Union page: http://www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk/wp/support/living-in-cambridge/informationtransport/#air

Q2: What is the best way to get around Cambridge, and what resources are available for the different transportation options?

A2: Depending when you’d like to travel, several options may be worth considering. A bike is really essential if you’d like to get around Cambridge easily and to set your own schedule with more freedom. The bus system can be helpful, though, for getting to big landmarks such as the city centre and Addenbrooke’s hospital. The bus system is considerably less reliable in the evenings, however, for certain parts of Cambridge. Some helpful links for when you first arrive to figure out which buses to take or where to cycle or walk are listed below:

- Google Maps (http://maps.google.com/) of course is a great resource for getting maps of an area and planning public transportation, walking, or even cycling trips. However, its infrastructure is much better for the US and is not as detailed for the UK and Cambridge. Thus some of the links below, like TransportDirect, are much more helpful for the UK.

- TransportDirect (http://www.transportdirect.info) allows you to search public transportation options or cycle routes in and around Cambridge and other parts of the UK. The bus times may not be reliable using that site, though, and for that you should use the link below to determine timetables and bus routes.

- StageCoach (http://www.stagecoachbus.com) and Whippet (http://www.go-whippet.co.uk/routes-timetables/) operate the main bus systems in Cambridge. You can get timetables, bus routes, and other information regarding buses for travel within Cambridge and in other parts of the UK. The times are fairly reliable but listings for times where there’s heavy traffic (common in the mornings and evenings around ‘rush hour’ times such as 8–9:30 am and 5–7 pm) and nighttime estimates may not be as accurate.

- WalkIt (http://walkit.com/) offers good information about walking routes in the UK. It’s helpful both for figuring out routes in Cambridge and London.

Cycling Resources

- Cambridge Cycling Campaign (http://www.camcycle.org.uk/resources/map/) offers a good map, and you can request one for free to your UK address, as well as helpful links shown to the left for cycling rules and bike maintenance.
• Second hand bike shops in Cambridge (there are various... one of which is: [http://www.camcycles.co.uk/](http://www.camcycles.co.uk/) and you can search for bike shops in Cambridge on this site, which also has helpful general info about cycling: [http://www.cyclescheme.co.uk/partners](http://www.cyclescheme.co.uk/partners))

• CUSU cycle information ([http://www.studentadvice.cam.ac.uk/welfareissues/cyclingsafety.html](http://www.studentadvice.cam.ac.uk/welfareissues/cyclingsafety.html)) has a lot more links than are provided here for information about cycling in Cambridge.

• Important cycle safety tips:
  – Always wear a helmet! It’s not the law to do so in the UK, but is best for your overall health and safety.
  – Turning left on red is illegal for cars AND for cyclists! You could be fined for doing this.
  – It’s also best NOT to cycle against the flow of traffic, as this will endanger your life and confuse drivers and pedestrians.
  – Stick to the flow of traffic and obey all traffic laws, including stopping at ‘zebra crossing’ crosswalks when pedestrians are present.

Q3: There are a lot of ‘cards’ out there for transportation to and around London. What’s the difference between the types of ‘cards’?

A3: There are 4 types of cards you should be aware of, travelcards, railcards, Oyster cards, and coachcards.

• Travelcards provide a day’s worth of travel on London public transportation, such as the underground subway (tube), buses, and trains. Read more about travelcards here: [http://www.londontravelpass.com/](http://www.londontravelpass.com/). You can choose the travelcard option when purchasing rail tickets either online or at the station, and this will potentially save you money when you’re in London. If you’re doing a day trip, especially, and are planning to use a lot of the tube lines and buses in London, it’s probably worth it to get a travelcard rather than a return rail pass (two-way) and Oyster card top-ups (see below for more info on Oyster cards). You can also buy a travelcard independently of a rail ticket, if that seems like a more economical option for a day’s worth of extensive travel in London.

• Railcards (such as the Young Person’s 16-25 railcard: [http://www.16-25railcard.co.uk/](http://www.16-25railcard.co.uk/)) provide a 33% discount on rail tickets in the UK. Even if you are older than age 25, you can still qualify for a 16-25 railcard as a full-time student; however, you’ll need to get the necessary paperwork from your department in order to do so. Check out the website for more info. An important note for international students is that the online form is designed for evaluating UK passport numbers and may not work for your country’s passport (but it’s worth checking first). Thus you will need to bring a UK-sized passport photo to the rail office to obtain your railcard, which is £30.

The office where you will get your railcard is not located in the main Cambridge rail station entry, but in a side entry to the right of the main entrance. It also helps to print out and fill out the railcard form ahead of time so you can expedite the process of getting your railcard. The most important point is that you’ll need to bring in a passport photo, so for international students already getting one of those for the Visa process just get an extra one at that time and hold onto it for the railcard. The size isn’t super important since they trim your photo anyway (so they’ll probably accept a US-sized passport photo), but you’ll need one of approximately the right size.
● Oyster cards (https://oyster.tfl.gov.uk/oyster/entry.do) are used for the public transportation network in London and are valid for pay-as-you-go credit on the tube, buses, and some rail lines. You can buy an Oyster card from one of the machines at an underground (tube) station for a £5 deposit or can buy a card online too. After you have the card, you simply ‘top up’ or add credit as you travel around and the cost of certain modes of transportation is determined by zoning. The Oyster card is definitely a good investment for any trip longer than a day trip to London (where the travelcard may be more economical) because it’s a reloadable card and not time-limited. You can top up or add credit to your Oyster card online, or else you can top up at tube stations.

An important note is that you need to touch the Oyster card to the sensor both when you enter the underground station and when you leave, so keep it handy after the tube ride. For buses, though, you just ‘touch’ the Oyster card to the sensor when you get onto a bus but not when you get off the bus. It’s actually important to know how to touch in and out since the maximum daily pay-as-you-go fee of £7.40 will be charged if it’s done incorrectly. The Oyster card can also give a discount on riverboat fares. The fees for various zones and modes of public transport are quite detailed and depend on what time of year you’re travelling as well (classified as ‘peak’ and ‘off-peak’), and can be found here: https://tfl.gov.uk/ DAMAGES/.

● Coachcards are considerably less complex than the other cards described, and are only £10 for a young person coach card. They are offered by the National Express coach service and provide up to a 30% discount on coach fares, which could be helpful for travelling directly from Cambridge to various London airports since National Express provides direct coaches to Heathrow, Luton, and other airports. You can buy the £10 coach card from a National Express bus station (such as the one at Heathrow) or online, but you have to wait for the card to be mailed to you if you buy it online. As opposed to the railcard, you do not need a photo for the coachcard. More info can be found here: http://www.nationalexpress.com/ coach/Offers/StudentCoachDeals.cfm

As a final summary, the transportation terminology (using the term ‘card’ prolifically for example) can be confusing but with the information and links above it can be manageable, and once you have the terms distinguished traveling to and within London isn’t impossible, but perfectly doable with a bit of planning. A tube map that shows all the underground lines and which stops connect with which lines is a must (such as this one: http://www.afn.org/$\sim$alplatt/tube.html). You can also pick up tube maps from some of the underground stations, but it’s not intuitively obvious where they’re kept. More helpful links, transportation-related and otherwise, are listed below.

5.7 Cambridge-isms

Here’s a little glossary for the most common Cambridge-isms you will encounter during your time here:

● Advanced Students:

  The Churchill term for graduate students.

● Tutor of Advanced Studies:

  The academic in charge of the welfare and academic well-being of all Churchill graduates, from a college perspective.
• Bedder:
  This term varies in exact definition from one college to the next but essentially refers to the
  people responsible for cleaning rooms and college staircases/houses (the places where students
  live).

• Blue:
  The Cambridge colour is light blue. ‘Blue’ is the term to describe sports undertaken at uni-
  versity level, and people who have taken part in a ‘Varsity’ match (a game against Oxford)
  for events deemed to be at ‘Blue’ level are awarded the title of a ‘blue’.

• Boatie:
  The most famous and arguably important sport in Cambridge is rowing. A person partaking
  in the sport is known colloquially as a boatie.

• Bop:
  A dance party, usually featuring drinks, loud music, & fancy dress (costumes).

• Bumps:
  Bumps are the most important rowing races that occur within the University. These take place
  at the end of every Lent and Easter term between college teams. The name of the event derives
  from the fact that to progress in the race it is necessary to bump the boat ahead of you in the
  starting line-up.

• CompSci:
  The colloquial term used to describe a Computer Science student.

• Cuppers:
  Every year, the college teams compete against each other in a range of sporting events. Each
  competition at this level is known as ‘Cuppers’.

• Dean:
  In general Cambridge terminology, the Dean may either be the person responsible for College
  discipline or the person responsible for the college Chapel. At Churchill, the Dean is the aca-
  demic responsible for enforcing discipline within the college. If you commit 3 misdemeanours
  considered ‘deanable’ offenses, you may be ‘sent down’ (i.e. expelled) from the University.

• Director of Studies:
  This is the college academic responsible for the overall academic welfare of a student. This
  exists in an undergraduate capacity, but is mostly irrelevant for postgraduates, unless you want
  to get involved with undergraduate supervisions, in which case these are the people to talk to.

• Fancy dress:
  Means to wear a costume according to a theme (as opposed to dressing up for a formal event)

• Fellow:
  A senior member of a College, elected to a particular position of authority and responsibility
  in relation to the academic work and government of the College.
• **JCR:**
  *Junior Combination Room.* The JCR refers to the undergraduate student common room and undergraduate student body at a college.

• **Matriculation:**
  This is the ceremony during which all new students enroll in college by signing a register confirming that they will conform with University regulations.

• **Mathmo:**
  The colloquial term used to describe a maths student.

• **MCR:**
  *Middle Combination Room.* — The postgraduate student body (and common room) of a college. You are members of the Churchill MCR.

• **Mentor:**
  A College Mentor is an academic at college in a vaguely similar field to your own, who will be assigned to you as a contact during your time as a Postgraduate at Churchill. They do not serve any academic purposes, but give you an opportunity to mix with the College fellowship and expand your academic horizons.

• **NatSci:**
  Historically there was never any distinction between the study of worldly phenomenon, largely classed as the Natural Sciences. The modern system of classification gives us a diversity of subjects such as Physics, Chemistry, Materials, Biology, etc. At Cambridge, however, as an undergraduate you embark on the Natural Sciences Tripos, from where you may then specialise in the field of your choice. People working/studying in any of these fields are consequently referred to as NatScis.

• **P’lodge:**
  Shortened nickname for the Porters’ Lodge, which is the place where the Porters operate from in a College.

• **Pidge:**
  Shortened nickname for your pigeonhole, which is where you post and other notices are delivered.

• **Porters:**
  The people responsible for College security.

• **Proctors:**
  Two officials who are elected annually by the Senate house upon nomination by the Colleges. They are representatives of the Senate house in most formal and disciplinary matter across the University.
• **Regent House:**
  
  *This is the governing and legislative body of the University comprised of all the academic and administrative officers of the University and Colleges. The physical entity is the Senate house at the Centre of Cambridge.*

• **Scarlet days:**
  
  *Days of special importance to the University, or nationally, during which Doctors are required to wear their scarlet gowns in public.*

• **SCR:**
  
  *Senior Combination Room — The room, and body of members, for the Fellows of a College.*

• **Supervision:**
  
  *A small group (usually 1, 2 or 3 people) teaching environment undertaken as part of undergraduate courses to help consolidate the normal lecture course.*

• **Supervisor:**
  
  *In the undergraduate sense, the person responsible for teaching undergraduates either individually or on a small group basis. In the postgraduate sense, the person in charge of guiding your research. As a PhD student, you could both be a supervisor and have a supervisor!*

• **Swap:**
  
  *Formal hall swaps are arranged with the MCRs of other colleges such that students can dine with people from other colleges. They are a good way to meet new people, try new food and dance the night away at a party afterwards.*

• **Tripos:**
  
  *The Cambridge Tripos system refers to the undergraduate system of study wherein you begin on a very general course of study, before becoming more and more specialised as you narrow down on what you want to do with your life. This structure consists of a Part I (usually 2 years, but possibly 1) followed by a more specialised Part 2 (normally 1 year, but sometimes 2). Thus three years of the degree forms the Tripos. In reality, for a number of subjects the undergrad degree continues a further year, concluding with Masters level knowledge of the subject most usually referred to as Part III (except if you’re an engineer where it is Part IIB): this is the alternative way of looking at the Tripos structure. In fact, a number of you will be here to undertake the Part III Maths course. But the more colourful etymology suggests that it stems from the fact that students once had to take oral exams sitting on a three legged stool, and legend has it that for each ‘Part’ passed the students were awarded a leg of the stool until they received the full stool at graduation.*

• **Tutor:**
  
  *A college officer responsible for the welfare and guidance of students. With respect to MCR members at Churchill, they are referred to as Advanced Studies Tutors. You will be assigned one when you come receive your acceptance from College.*

• **Vice-Chancellor:**
  
  *The Vice-Chancellor is the principal academic and administrative officer of the University. Our current Vice-Chancellor is Prof. Sir Leszek Borysiewicz.*
5.8 Useful links

University Links

- The university website: [www.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cam.ac.uk)
- Graduate Union website: [http://www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk/](http://www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk/)
  - Note that the Graduate Union has a lot of really useful pages about various aspects of student life, including living in Cambridge (scroll down to the bottom to view the subtopics): [http://www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk/wp/support/living-in-cambridge/](http://www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk/wp/support/living-in-cambridge/)

Churchill Links

- The college website: [www.chu.cam.ac.uk](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk)
- MCR website: [http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk](http://mcr.chu.cam.ac.uk)
- University sports and societies website: [www.societies.cam.ac.uk](http://www.societies.cam.ac.uk)
- Formal Hall booking link: [http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/internal/catering/hallbooking/](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/internal/catering/hallbooking/)
- Maintenance Requests (Raven login): [http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/internal/maintenance/](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/internal/maintenance/)

Transportation Links

- National Rail services: info about train times, fares, etc: [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)
- National Express coaches: [www.nationalexpress.com/](http://www.nationalexpress.com/)
- The Trainline rail site ([http://www.thetrainline.com/](http://www.thetrainline.com/))
  - Note that the Trainline is just another train searching site/app and does charge a booking fee, but allows slightly more flexibility when selecting tickets. It also cost 20p less just now for a return to London when I checked!

Also note for using the Journey Planner tools with the National Express, National Rail, and First Capital Connect sites: Remember to check ‘I have a Coachcard’ option if you have one and similarly for searching for tickets on the National Rail or Trainline pages, indicate that you have a 16-25 railcard. You will also need to carry your Coachcard and railcard with you at all times when you’re using that mode of transportation (bus or train, respectively); otherwise, you will be fined!

In closing, welcome to Churchill College! We’re friendly people who want to get to know you, so do all you can during Freshers' Week and stop by the MCR whenever you need a break. The committee is always willing to answer questions and help you navigate this new place, so say ‘Hi’ and introduce yourself! The experiences you’ll have here will be unforgettable and definitely a lot of fun, so get ready, you’re in for a treat!