

LINCOLN



INTERNATIONAL FRESHERS' GUIDE

2025-2026

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INTRODUCTION



Hi! Welcome to Lincoln!

My name is Marysia and I am a 2nd year law student from Poland. I am this year's International Students' Representative!

Lincoln is a smaller college, which is known for its tight-knit community. However, this also means that there are fewer international students than at other colleges, which can feel a bit isolating at times. I am here to help with logistical or moving issues, but also to organise events and activities so you can feel more at home away from your actual home.

There will be plenty of opportunities to meet fellow international students during Freshers' Week, so stay tuned. Everyone is welcome, regardless of whether you are an international or a domestic student.

If you have any questions before or after you arrive in Oxford, feel free to contact me at
maria.mezykowska@lincoln.ox.ac.uk

YOUR ARRIVAL

Lincoln College is situated in the heart of Oxford, along the beautiful Turl Street. It's one of three colleges on that street, so if you're unsure which one it is, just look for the Missing Bean Café, Lincoln is directly across from it! When you first arrive, go to the Lodge (staffed 24/7), where our Porters will direct you further. Your arrival date is Sunday (5th of October), but if this is not possible, you may request an arrival from the 3rd of October (subject to availability).

GETTING FROM HEATHROW Most of you will be flying to Heathrow. The easiest way of getting to Lincoln is by bus. The airline bus departs approximately every 20 minutes (during the day). The first bus departs at 2am and the last one leaves at midnight. You can purchase a ticket directly from the driver when you board the bus; however, if you manage to book two weeks in advance, the fares will be cheaper. If you arrive at Terminal 2 or 3, or at Terminal 4, you will depart from Central Bus Station. If you arrive at Terminal 5, the closest bus stop will be Stop 10.

GETTING FROM GATWICK There is a similar service as from Heathrow. The bus departs every hour from the North and South Terminals.

GETTING TO LINCOLN If you are taking the bus, the closest bus stop is Queen's Lane (6-minute walk), or you can go to the final stop, Gloucester Green (8-minute walk). If you are getting here by train, the Oxford Train Station is a 15-minute walk from Lincoln

More information about arriving in Oxford can be found [here](#)

A photograph of the Lincoln Library Tower, a large, ornate stone building with a prominent dome and classical columns. The tower is the central focus of the image, with its intricate architectural details clearly visible.

Lincoln Library

You will be able to see our Library's Tower from a distance!



ACCOMMODATION

My first-year room



Your room

All of the first-year rooms are single en-suite, and some of the rooms even have double beds. Every room will have:

- Bed (without any bedsheets)
- Desk and chair
- Wardrobe
- Kettle
- There may also be additional storage space or furniture if space allows
- A few rooms will also have a mini-fridge

If your room does not come with a mini fridge, you can purchase one after you arrive (the cheapest option is to buy one second-hand). While you will have to get your own bedding, it will definitely be easier to buy it in Oxford instead of bringing it from home (there is a John Lewis in Westgate, 10 min walk from Lincoln). Keep in mind that in first year, you do not have access to a kitchen, so no need to bring any kitchenware.

*View of Grove Quad
from my room*



ACCOMMODATION

Storage

For the first two years, you will be on a 3-term contract, which means you will have to fully move out of your room after each term ends. If you have an overseas status, you will be eligible for storage in college over the vac (trunk room is located in Lincoln House). Storage is generally unlimited, but you have to fill out a form beforehand (e-mails are sent out by Porters in due course). Your mini fridge can be stored in the bike shed (between Staircase 15 and Lincoln House).

'Vac res'

One academic year consists of three terms (**Michaelmas**, **Hilary** and **Trinity**), with each term being 8 weeks long. However, you will most likely arrive before week 1 – in 0th week (Sunday, Week 0 of each term is when your accommodation contract begins). It is also possible that you will have to stay in Oxford in week 9, for example, for your exams. In order to be able to stay in college past week 8 (or arrive before week 0), you will need to book '**vac res**' (vacation residence). Whether you're granted vac res will depend on the availability of rooms, as the college rents out the rooms for various events. You are guaranteed to get vac res if you have to stay due to College or University exams. There is also a vac res grant (around £12/day) that you can apply for on the Lincoln website ;)



Some more first-year rooms

Essentials

DOCUMENTS

If you are an overseas student, you will have to apply for a visa before arriving in Oxford. More information can be found on the [University's website](#). Lincoln will also require you to upload relevant documentation onto the College's visa portal. More information can be found [here](#). For convenience, print out your share code and CAS letter before you leave home to show at the airport.

BANKING

- It is essential to have access to money in your first few weeks in the UK (either cash or your home country bank account). Personally, I have a Revolut account, which I use on a daily basis, and it makes exchanging money very easy!
- It may also be useful to bring some cash with you in cases of emergencies. Most places in Oxford accept contactless payments, but there may still be a few cash-only places.
- You may also want to open a UK bank account. To open a bank account, you will need:
 - Passport/ID
 - Evidence of your UK address (proof of an accommodation agreement)
 - Student Enrolment Certificate, which can be downloaded after completing your university registration (typically occurs during Freshers' Week).

More info can be found [here](#).

- You may find the ranking made by one of the previous Reps useful when deciding where to open your account:



NatWest



HSBC



Santander



BARCLAYS

EASIEST
TO OPEN



HARDEST
TO OPEN



PHONES

The most convenient option is to get a UK phone number once you arrive in Oxford. Some services may require you to register using a UK number. **Vodafone, EE, O2 and Three** are some of the main UK phone providers. The two main options for a phone plan are:

- **Pay-as-you-go:** you purchase the plan outright and then buy credit (top-ups) as needed for calls, texts, and data.
- **Contract plan:** you pay a fixed monthly fee that includes a set allowance of minutes, texts, and data.
- Some Telco companies may require you to have a UK bank account, so check if this is necessary beforehand.
- I personally use GiffGaff's 'monthly rolling' plan, which I can cancel at any time without incurring any fees or being obligated to continue. This is very useful whenever I return home and don't have to keep paying for my SIM. Other than GiffGaff, I know some people also choose to use VOXI.
- You will also have access to a uni-wide Wifi (Eduroam) and separate Lincoln College Wifi. Being able to access Wifi almost anywhere means you don't have to worry about the ability to make international phone calls with your plan – you can use Whatsapp or Messenger to call home instead!

LAUNDRY

Laundry rooms (with both laundry machines and dryers), which Freshers use, are located in Chapel Quad and in Staircase 15 (which is connected to Lincoln House). You can top up online after making an account or pay as you go using the machines in the laundry room.

MEDICAL SERVICES

- The NHS is UK's healthcare system. If you are coming here on a student visa then you will have paid an IHS (immigration health surcharge) as part of your visa application (check the [website](#) to see if this applies to you).
- If you're in a life-threatening situation call 999
- You should use the NHS **111** service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation.
- Before you arrive, you will also have to register with a GP at King Edward Street at the Northgate Medical Practice. You can make an appointment with them either online or by calling 01865 242657.
- College nurse (Kinneret Milgrom) is also available in weeks 0-9, Tuesday - Friday, from 12.40 to 2.30. There is no need to make an appointment, you can just drop in, email (nurse@lincoln.ox.ac.uk) or book an appointment [here](#).

WELFARE

- Lincoln's Welfare Team is led by the lovely Lisa Stokes-King, who is the Welfare Coordinator. You can drop in at any time (Monday to Friday in weeks 0-9) or [book a meeting](#) beforehand. Lisa's office is in Staircase 4, Room 2.
- You can also contact our JCR Welfare Officers: Madison Stanton-Kami or Daniel Mayer-Jones. They are amazing if you're feeling stressed or just need a chat. If you're unsure who to reach out to with your issue, they can listen and identify the best person to refer you to!
- Our Chaplain, Revd Dr Jonny Torrance is also a great person to talk to and his door is open to anyone. You can find him in his room above the JCR (Staircase 5 Room 2).
- Outside of College, some helpful resources include: Oxford Nightline number (01865 270270), Samaritans UK (116 123). More information can be found on www.mind.org.uk

PACKING

Moving into College

Moving to University means you will have to bring a lot of things with you. Bringing more suitcases may be the more secure option than shipping boxes (especially if sending from outside the EU). However, if you decide to send your stuff, let the Lodge know beforehand. My box arrived two days before me, and there was no issue, but it is always better to email and ask!



Packing for UK weather

The UK is known for its cold, rainy weather, so it's important to keep this in mind when packing. Older buildings, in particular, can get quite cold, and occasionally, the heating in older libraries might not work properly. Because of this, it's a good idea to pack some extra warm pieces:

- **Thermal wear:** although you arrive in Oxford in October, which is still quite nice, Michaelmas lasts until early December, meaning it will get really cold before you know it.
- **Puffer jacket:** you can bring one from home or buy one with a college crest and your initials (The Stash Rep will send a link in Freshers' Week).
- **Blankets:** they are a really cosy addition to your room and will keep you warm during the night.



PACKING

Oxford-specific

There are a few Oxford-specific things you should keep in mind while packing:

1. **Sub fusc**: this is the formal outfit worn during any formal University ceremonies, e.g. Matriculation and exams. More info can be found [here](#). You will be able to buy your gown when you get to Oxford, so don't worry about it for now. Your sub fusc also includes a white shirt and a black skirt or trousers (for girls) or a dark suit (for guys), so pack a few sets. This is also a good smart outfit, which you might need for some of the events.
2. **Formal dress**: you may not expect how many formal events you will attend during your time in Oxford. Among others, you will go to formal dinners, Black Tie Drinks and Lincoln Ball! You obviously don't need a different outfit for each event, but it's always good to have one or two options. This can be a bit expensive, so I highly recommend buying second-hand or swapping dresses with your friends!
4. **Bop outfits**: sometimes you will attend bops and socials that require you to dress up in silly costumes. So, if space allows, consider packing one or two accessories! If not, you can always buy stuff once you're already in Oxford (e.g. on Amazon)



FEELING AT HOME AWAY FROM HOME



DIFFERENCES

Food

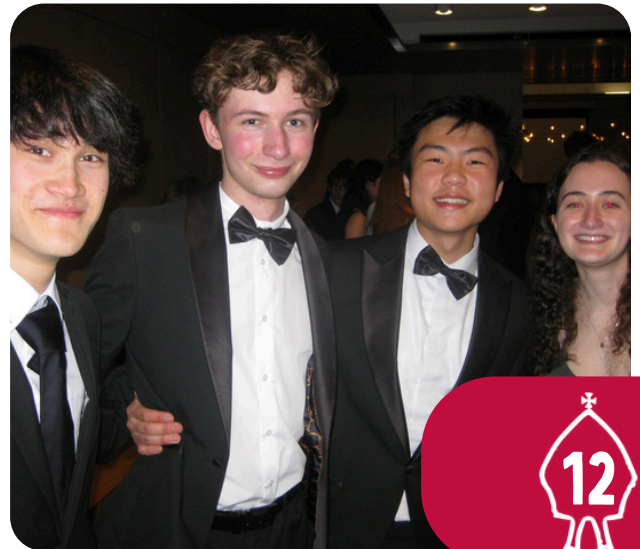
British food often gets a bad reputation, though in reality, much of the criticism is exaggerated. Still, it can be comforting to bring some of your favourite snacks from home, especially for times when you're feeling homesick. Supermarkets like Tesco and Sainsbury's typically have international aisles with a decent selection, but you can find some speciality stores in Oxford too.



Drinking

Drinking culture is a noticeable part of student life in the UK. Alcohol is relatively affordable, and social drinking is quite common, which may be different from what you're used to back home. However, it's important to know that you should never feel pressured to drink. In my experience, people are respectful and don't push the non-drinkers; therefore, you can feel comfortable sharing your personal preferences. If you do choose to drink, make sure you know your limits and don't feel the need to keep up with others.

Remember, even if you don't drink, there are still plenty of ways to be part of the social scene. At Lincoln, the Entz Team always provides non-alcoholic options like soft drinks and mocktails at college events. The culture is generally friendly and open, so feel free to be yourself and talk to new people. Making friends comes down to being open and making the effort to reach out, and drinking is not a requirement to feel included.



COMBATting HOMESICKNESS

It's ok to struggle

Terms generally tend to pass by really quickly, and before you know it, you will be packing to go home for the vac. Nevertheless, it can still be quite easy to miss home, especially if you're living alone for the first time. Make sure to set aside time to call your family or close friends from home and make it part of your daily or weekly routine.



Sometimes even the smallest things remind that you are not in your home country and bring on a wave of homesickness. That's totally normal and completely valid. So don't be hard on yourself, it's okay to feel a bit overwhelmed. Remember that people are here to help. College welfare (Lisa) or the JCR Officers are a great place to start if you just need a chat.

Join International Societies!

The easiest way of keeping in touch with your home country is to join a society. Oxford has a wide variety of cultural and international societies that represent people from around the world. This is an excellent opportunity to connect with others who share similar backgrounds, make new friends, and ease feelings of homesickness. The societies are very casual and are an opportunity for people from similar background to bond. Some societies even organise uni-wide events, such as Balls or Black Tie parties (e.g. European Night)

You can find more information [here](#), and most of these societies will also have stands set up during Freshers' Fair. You can also find most of them on Instagram!





FINAL ADVICE FROM OTHER INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Some bits of wisdom...

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO REMEMBER IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE DOING IS INCREDIBLE. MOST PEOPLE WILL BE MOVING TO A NEW CITY, BUT ON TOP OF THAT, YOU ARE MOVING TO A NEW COUNTRY. REMEMBER IT'S OK TO FEEL OVERWHELMED, NERVOUS, ANXIOUS, SCARED AND MANY MORE. BUT ALSO REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE, AND THERE ARE OTHERS AROUND YOU GOING THROUGH A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE

COMMUNICATE WITH THE OTHER YEARS! IT'S OFTEN A SHOCK, BUT BEING ABLE TO HAVE A CHAT WITH 2ND YEARS AND ABOVE ABOUT THE TRANSITION HAS BEEN REALLY HELPFUL

COMING AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IS ALWAYS DAUNTING, SO DON'T BE AFRAID TO REACH OUT TO OTHER INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND MAKE A LOT OF FRIENDS DURING FRESHERS' WEEK, AS IT WILL MAKE EVERYTHING MORE WELCOMING

REMEMBER EVEN IF WE ALL SPEAK THE SAME LANGUAGE, THERE ARE LOADS OF DIFFERENT WAYS OF SPEAKING, AND SOME ARE VERY PARTICULAR TO OXFORD. SO DON'T WORRY IF THINGS ARE SOMETIMES LOST IN TRANSLATION, IN BOTH WHAT THE WORDS ACTUALLY MEAN AND HOW THEY ARE INTENDED TO BE MEANT. IF IN DOUBT, SOMETIMES BEST TO ASK FOR CLARIFICATION!

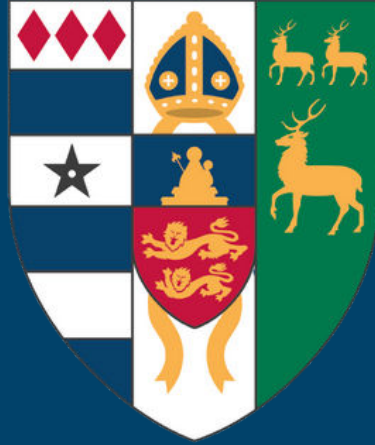
*... and some
practical
advice*

**DON'T OVERPACK BECAUSE
YOU'LL BE MOVING IN AND OUT
EVERY TERM**

**GET THE BANK ACCOUNT PROCESS STARTED AS SOON AS YOU CAN. THEY
CAN BE SLOW. DON'T HESITATE TO ASK HOME STUDENTS, THEY'RE HAPPY
TO HELP WITH ADAPTING TOO, BUT LEAVE TIME TO ADJUST SO YOU'RE NOT
STRESSED ABOUT BOTH THE MOVE AND THE START OF UNI ALL AT ONCE**

**MAKE TIME TO EXPLORE SHOPS, SUPERMARKETS,
PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND RESTAURANTS EARLY ON,
BECAUSE LIFE IN THE UK WILL BE DIFFERENT FROM LIFE
AT HOME. IF YOU DO THIS AT THE BEGINNING, YOU
WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IT LATER**

**I'D RECOMMEND LLOYDS FOR STUDENT BANK
ACCOUNT BECAUSE OPENING ACCOUNTS WITH
OTHER BANKS IS WAY MORE COMPLICATED**



See you all in October!