Between Jesus and Christ's, lies Sidney Sussex. This is a guide for Freshers’ arriving here in October, 2021.
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Welcome to Sidney!

Hello and welcome to the graduate community at Sidney Sussex College! We’re really looking forward to welcoming you all in October. Sidney prides itself on being one of the most friendly and welcoming colleges in Cambridge, and life as a graduate student here is sociable, inclusive, intellectually stimulating and fun. We’re sure that 2021-22 will be a year to remember, whether you’re here for one year or for the long haul! Alongside this guide, please take a look at the College and MCR websites as well as the Graduate Handbook.

So, what is the MCR? All graduate students at Sidney are automatically members of the MCR (Middle Combination Room). The term ‘MCR’ refers to both our common room, and the graduate community itself. Sidney is made up of the MCR, the JCR (Junior Combination Room; undergrads) and the SCR (Senior Combination Room; fellows).

For most grads, their department is the focus of their academic life. The College and MCR are therefore here to provide a sociable environment and a ‘home’ in Cambridge. We have a very diverse range of subjects, backgrounds and nationalities, which provides a lively and interesting community to belong to. Most live in College accommodation for at least a year, eat in the College dining hall, use the College gym and squash court, join a range of College societies and sports teams, and attend social and welfare events organised on a regular basis by the MCR.

The Sidney MCR room, completed in 2011, was repainted a few years ago and recently, we re-hung the images of Sidney MCR students over the years. It is a large room with a widescreen TV, DVD library, PS3, Wii, board games, and magazines. There is a kitchen, with tea and coffee making facilities, and a separate room that can be booked for meetings, seminars, teaching, or simply used as a quiet space to work. It also has a supply of sexual and menstrual health products for you to collect.

To help you settle into Sidney and Cambridge, the MCR Exec organizes a series of events and activities during freshers’ week. These range from pub crawls to game nights and film nights – so there’s something for everyone. It is not mandatory to attend all of freshers’ week (though some events are mandatory), but we strongly recommend that you come for at least some of it, to meet fellow Sidneys and to get to know college better. More information on this is on the Freshers’ Timetable in this handbook, on our website, and will also be emailed to you as the week progresses.

This guide is aimed to help you get started at Sidney and guide you through your first weeks at Cambridge. Much more general information is available in the 2021-2022 Sidney Postgraduate handbook [https://www.sid.cam.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Postgraduate%20Handbook%20Final%202020-21.pdf].
The MCR Exec 2021-22

The Executive Committee of the MCR are a team of volunteers. Elections take place at the end of Lent term for each position, except for the Green Officer and the Computer Officer; both of whom are co-opted. Together, we are responsible for the MCR events, facilities, services and projects, and represent the graduate community in both and the wider College and University arena. We’re a friendly bunch so if you have questions or are unsure about something do get in contact!
From the President

Hello and Welcome to Sidney Sussex!

Congratulations on being accepted at Cambridge and at Sidney! We’re very excited to have you here and to get to know you!

So first, a little about ourselves. All graduate students at Sidney are automatically members of the Sidney Sussex Middle Combination Room (the MCR). This is a confusing name, because the MCR is actually a physical room in college, but also the name given to the wider community of graduate students who use this room – you’ll get used to it! In both senses of the term, the MCR is a space where friendships are forged, and memories made. The MCR community is where many of us turn to for social engagement and welfare support. This is organised by the executive committee of the MCR, of which I serve as president. We organise events such as formals, conferences, and brunches as well as offer welfare support in various ways. We also act as a conduit between graduate students and college.

To make your transition into Cambridge easier, the MCR Exec has organised a range of activities over Freshers’ Week. The week kicks off on October 1st and includes a garden party, a visit to the theatre, several welfare brunches, a pub crawl, and a tour of the city. It also includes some serious activities such as consent workshops and inductions to the college gym and library. A final version of the Freshers’ Week timetable will be circulated to you and also be uploaded on our website. Freshers’ Week is a great time to get to know your college, your peers, as well as old Sidneys, and we hope to see all of you there.

While we wait for you to get here, we also encourage you to join our online community by joining our Facebook Group (https://www.facebook.com/groups/14244815783055), and following our Instagram page (https://www.instagram.com/sidneysussexmcr/). If you have any questions for us, please reach out to us at https://sidneymcr.soc.srcf.net/wordpress/committee/.

Warmly,

Jinal
Arriving at Sidney

What to Bring

- **Clothing:** Compared to the UK average, Cambridge is cold in winter and hot in summer; statistically it is apparently dry, but that doesn't seem to prevent it from raining frequently. You can wear whatever you like most of the time (graduate students typically dress informally, and no-one wears academic dress to lectures or exams), but you should also bring some formal clothing for matriculation, graduation and formal dinners. You will also need a **gown** for some formal occasions, including in your first week (more details below).
- **Towels and bedding:** You will require your own bed linen unless otherwise advised. In college rooms, a duvet and pillows will be provided.
- **Kitchenware:** There is no guarantee that there will be any pots, pans, crockery, or cutlery in college accommodation, although there is often some from fellow students (or left by previous occupants). It is not difficult to buy this cheaply in Cambridge, though, so if you are travelling far, you might prefer not to bring any. If you live in/near college, you might also want to eat in Hall, especially as kitchens in college accommodation (particularly on the main site) are often small: see food.
- **Furniture:** If you are living in college accommodation, you will have at least a bed, desk, chair, lamp and somewhere to store clothes etc., although provision varies between rooms. Do not bring furniture as you may find there is nowhere to put it!
- **Medical Records** – especially if you have special conditions (e.g., asthma, old injuries etc.) As well be sure to bring records of your vaccinations – these will be needed when you register for a doctor. If you have been tested for coronavirus, you should bring that too.
- **Medicine** – if you have any personal need.
- **Photocopies** of passport/other form of ID.
- **Enough money** for daily use until your bank account is open (2 weeks if you don’t book an appointment in advance, 1 week if you do).

How to Get Here - Travel

If you are flying, the best airport to choose is **Stansted (STN)** if you have the choice: there are frequent, quick, and affordable direct coach and train services to Cambridge. Failing that, the other 'London' airports Luton, Heathrow, and Gatwick (in order of distance) are the usual alternatives.

You can take a bus, train, or taxi from the airport to Cambridge. Should you choose to use a taxi, we recommend booking in **advance** through one of the Cambridge-based companies, e.g. [https://www.panther taxis.co.uk/airport-transfer-guide](https://www.panther taxis.co.uk/airport-transfer-guide) or [https://www.a1cabco.co.uk/](https://www.a1cabco.co.uk/). The driver will meet you inside of the terminal building, assist you
with luggage and take you straight to the main college gate. You can also order an uber. 
https://www.uber.com/gb/en/

However, using the train or coach is usually cheaper and if you are choosing between coach and train, you may prefer the coach. The bus station and coach stops are much nearer to Sidney than the train station, so you could walk to college rather than wait for a bus or taxi. If you are coming from the airports with luggage, coaches also avoid having to change in (or travel across) London, but the journey generally takes longer. If you choose to take the train, you can catch a bus into the city centre to college, or walk from the train station, which takes about 20 minutes.

See other useful links for transportation:

https://www.thetrainline.com/

https://www.nationalexpress.com/

Arriving in college

There are two entrances to college- one on Sidney Street, right across from Sainsburys and the back entrance on King Street. The front entrance is directly in front of the porter’s lodge, but if you’re arriving with a car, you’ll be led to the back entrance.

You will first need to go to the porter’s lodge and collect your room key and university card. This card will give you access to your household and various university facilities.

The porter’s will direct you to your accommodation, but if you feel you need some extra help settling in, be sure to contact one of the MCR committee members in advance. We are always willing to give a helping hand!
Settling into Sidney - Accommodation

Most first year graduate students at Sidney will live in college accommodation. Graduates either live on the main college site, or in one of the several houses (or ‘hostels’), located in various places around Cambridge. Cambridge is a compact city, and nothing is very far even if it looks like it on the map. All the houses are within 20 minutes walk, or 10 minutes cycle from Sidney.

The rooms vary in size, but the rent charged is adjusted to take that into account. All rooms are located close to kitchen, bathroom and laundry facilities. College provides you with a duvet, pillow and mattress-cover (for single beds). You will need to provide your own bed linen and towels, but these can be easily and cheaply bought in town if needed. The various Sidney accommodation buildings are looked after by the Housekeeping team, and each has its own Housekeeping Assistant, or ‘Bedder’. Your bedder will keep the kitchens and bathrooms clean, keep the houses stocked up with toilet roll, kitchen towels, kitchen sponges etc.

More info can be found in the Accommodation Guide at: http://www.sid.cam.ac.uk/current/postgrads/joining

35 Elizabeth Way – A large house, containing a few en-suite rooms and a large kitchen. Close to Newmarket Road Tesco. Approx. 20 mins walk to college.

Herne Lodge – A large house with two kitchens, a sun room and giant garden (with the MCR allotment). Approx. 20 mins walk from college, convenient for Judge Business School, Engineering Dept, Downing and New Museums sites and train station.

7 and 8 St Paul’s Road – A medium sized house with a good-size kitchen. Approx. 15 mins walk from college, good for the train station, the Mill Road area, New Museum, Downing and Addenbrookes site.

4, 6, 25, 26, and 27 Park Parade – Medium-sized houses with large kitchens and back gardens. Approx 5 mins walk to college. Convenient for almost everywhere.

56 DeFreville Avenue - Large rooms with shared bathroom and kitchen. A short walk/cycle from college. Close to the boat house.

College site:

- 30 Sidney street - Rooms built in 2011,
- 26-29 Sidney street – Rooms built in 2016. Very convenient for the MCR.
- Garden and Hall Courts – Rooms in the main college building.

6,7 Humberstone Road and Pearl Close – Couples accommodation. Approx. 0-25 mins walk from College across Midsummer Common.

45, 52, 55 and Pearl Close – Flat accommodation, a short walk/cycle from college.
Practical things

There are several things you should try to sort out during the first week(s) of this term:

University Card

This photocard acts as your library card, allows you access to various University buildings (including departmental) and allows discounts at places offering student discounts (always worth asking!). Your card is also used to charge food bought in Hall and any printing done in College onto your college bill. Instructions on how to receive your card will be communicated to you by email but do make sure you get this card in your first week, speaking to porters if there are any issues.

Setting up a bank account

There are a variety of banks with branches in Cambridge including Barclays, Santander, HSBC, Lloyds, and Metro - though unlikely it is worth asking for services specifically for international students, or students in general (often none), but you will likely want to find a current account with no or minimal fees. Here’s a list of the major banks in Cambridge:

- Barclay’s, 9-11 St. Andrew’s Street: 0345 734 5345
- HSBC, 63-64 St. Andrew’s Street: 0345 740 4404
- Lloyds, 3 Sidney Street: 0345 300 0000
- NatWest, 56 St. Andrew’s Street: 0845 788 8444
- Santander, 60 St. Andrew’s Street: 0845 765 4321
- Metro Bank, Unit 1, Christ’s Lane: 020 3402 7780 Note that the Metro Bank is very quick in setting up accounts and you usually do not need an appointment beforehand – that could be an alternative for the big banks, but look at the student options of all banks and decide which one suits you best

Setting up an account will typically require an appointment at a bank branch, however expect them to be busy during fresher so get there early! Book an appointment well in advance as most Freshers use the start of term to open bank accounts. There are always long waiting periods for a booking at the start of term. It can take up to three weeks to get a booking with the much larger banks. You will need to request a letter a letter of introduction from the Postgraduate Administrator, which you will need to open an account.

Make sure you bring enough cash with you to keep you going until you have a bank account.
you do not have one already you should set up a UK bank account for local transactions. This would be a current account and will give you a card withdrawals at ATMs (largely free in the UK) and likely support contactless payment in shops, restaurants etc.

**BRP collection**

Book your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) collection appointment and collect your BRP from the post office (there’s one post office two minutes from college on St. Andrew’s Street) or from any location specified. It takes 10-20 mins. Or you can collect it from the Graduate Office. Click for a guide from the University on BRP collection and you can see how you can set it up during visa application.

You’ll also have to “check-in” by signing a form at the Tutorial Office at the start of every term.

**Police registration**

International students from some countries have to register with the police after collection of BRP.

You will have to register with the police upon 7 days of your arrival to the UK. You should make an appointment in advance with the Cambridge Parkside police.

Bring to your appointment:

- £34 in cash
- 2 passport sized photos
- Passport (and visa)
- Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)
- Registration Form

**Telephone companies**

There are a lot of options available to you, so again, you will need to do some research to determine what best suits your needs

- Lebara is great for making overseas phone calls.
• Giffgaff offers good phone plans overall (unlimited texts, calls, data for £20), although service can be patchy. Also, Giffgaff offers free calls and texts between Giffgaff users.

• EE has strong coverage (they also have a very good £10 plan with unlimited texting and 200 calling minutes).

• To find an array of cheap plans Car Phone Warehouse is a store that sells appliances and plans at low prices and has a great selection. Check them out in the Grafton Centre.

• The UK prefix is +44 and should be added to every number if you call from abroad.

NHS registration

You’re encouraged to register with a local doctor, specifically a General Practitioner (GP). They are your useful first port of call for all health problems and checks and may be necessary for booking vaccinations as well as emergency treatment for international students. While treatment is free, those on Tier 4 student Visas and their dependents will have been required to pay an immigration health surcharge as part of their visa application fee.

A list of city-center doctors can be viewed at the Health Centre (P staircase, Garden Court). Further health information and information about registration with a doctor can be found on the Health and Welfare section of the College website.

Gown

You will need to get hold of a gown for the matriculation ceremony, dinner and photograph, as well as for your graduation. Most people find that it is worth buying one, especially because most of the formal dinners in College require them. They are available from academic dress shops in Cambridge (e.g. Ryder & Amies), the Graduate Union, or from Colin, the Head Porter at Sidney. If you don’t want to buy one, you can hire from the Grad Union for a cheap rate. For people new to Cambridge, you need a ‘BA Status’ gown if you do not have a masters and are under 24, or a ‘MA status’ gown if you have a masters or are over 24. Don’t worry if this sounds confusing – just ask when buying and the sales assistant/porter will make sure you are purchasing the right one!

Departmental Inductions

Get in touch with your department/supervisor if they haven’t already to find out when inductions for new students are (and don’t miss them!) This is important as College is unlikely to have information on specific departments. For those working in labs, expect mandatory safety courses/inductions, some of which may be done online before you are granted access to your departmental buildings.

Bike

Cambridge is small and flat, which means that most people find a bike to be the most useful way of getting around. Though many also prefer to walk or use the bus. While there is a bit of a rush during freshers, several shops around
the city sell both new and second-hand bikes, otherwise check out gumtree/ebay for online deals. You will need a good lock, as theft is unfortunately quite a common and infuriating occurrence. Also, lights are essential; a front (white) and back (red) light is a legal requirement, and the police give out on-the-spot fines if you don’t have them.

Post/Mail

Everybody has a pigeon-hole (a small mailbox) in the College Post Room, which is where the Porters put anything addressed to you that arrives at college. Regardless of where you are living, you should get all of your mail sent to college. If you are ordering parcels its particularly useful because there is someone to sign for it all day every day.

Fees

Termly bills are issued on the first Tuesday of full term and payable in full within ten days of receipt. Expect a college deposit of £250 (returned at the end of your study) and a kitchen fixed charge. If you expect difficulty in being able to meet this deadline, please contact the Tutorial Office and Student Finance Manager, Mr David Graves, as early as possible at telephone +44 (0) 1223 760972, or email studentfinance@sid.cam.ac.uk.

Internet

All rooms have internet access – either wireless (most of the houses off the College site), or via an Ethernet cable, which can be bought cheaply in Cambridge or from the College Computer Office.

Information on how to connect to the internet can be found on the College website in the Computing Section: http://www.sid.cam.ac.uk/life/comp/
Freshers’ Week

During the first week there is a program of events to welcome you into Sidney and the University at large. While some of these are mandatory, most of these are relaxed events you can fit around your departmental introductions, both to help you settle in and to get to know fellow Sidney postgraduates. It also includes matriculation, which is the official ceremony where you become part of the University, followed by an awesome (and free) formal dinner in Hall.

There is timetable of events below but there will be regular emails describing the day’s activities in more detail. While not required you are encouraged to take lateral flow tests before events, alternatively there will be online activities/provisions for those unable to attend in person. The Covid situation has been very changeable so please do regularly check the following links for information about COVID-19:

**College:** [https://www.vle.cam.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=180912](https://www.vle.cam.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=180912)

**University:** [https://www.cam.ac.uk/coronavirus](https://www.cam.ac.uk/coronavirus)

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**Notes:**
Where there are multiple sessions of the same event, you can choose which one to attend. Eg. There are two slots for library induction, but attending just one is fine.

It is necessary to attend at least one session of the events marked in red (i.e. the wellbeing workshop, the consent workshop, and the anti-racism workshop).

However, if you think that any of these events will be triggering/otherwise uncomfortable for you, please get in touch with one of us, or with the Head of Student Wellbeing, so that an alternative can be arranged.

This year, you need to book your free ticket to the University Freshers’ Fair ([https://events.cambridge.ac.uk/event/18455](https://events.cambridge.ac.uk/event/18455)). If you’d like to go with the MCR group, book them for one of the timelots on the schedule.

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**Timeline:**
- **Friday 1st October:** Welcome Board (in the MCR)
- **Saturday 2nd October:** Consult Workshop (online)
- **Monday 4th October:** Working Workshop (in the MCR)
- **Tuesday 5th October:** Consult Workshop (in the MCR)
- **Wednesday:** Working Workshop (in the MCR)
- **Thursday 7th October:** Working Workshop (in the MCR)
- **Friday 8th October:** Working Workshop (in the MCR)
- **Saturday 9th October:** Working Workshop (in the MCR)
- **Sunday 10th October:** Working Workshop (in the MCR)

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**College Events:**
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**University Events:**
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- **Friday 8th October:** Working Workshop (in the MCR)
- **Saturday 9th October:** Working Workshop (in the MCR)
- **Sunday 10th October:** Working Workshop (in the MCR)
Life at Sidney

Dining

The food served at Sidney is consistently rated as some of the best to be found in the University (the College chefs have won numerous awards, and win the inter-college competition on a regular basis). As well as the regular formal dinners, a self-service cafeteria is available during term-time: Breakfast (08.00-09.00 Mon – Fri), Lunch (12.30-13.30 Mon – Fri), Dinner (17.45–18.30 Mon - Sun), and Brunch from 11.30–13.30 on Saturdays. There is a reduced service during the Vacation period. Items are priced individually and you pay using your College card, which is then charged to the College Bill that you pay every term. You can get a two-course meal for approximately £5.00.

International Food

Mill Road has a good selection of international food stores and is easily accessible by bike or foot. Cambridge also has a relatively good selection of international restaurants.

What isn’t represented in Cambridge can be supplemented by ordering online. Amazon has a wide selection of international food and drinks that you can order, and students in the UK get a free 6-month trial for Amazon prime.

Welfare

Sidney’s MCR offers various welfare facilities and events to graduate student. Free condoms and pregnancy tests can be requested from both of the MCR Welfare officers. Alternatively, free condoms are also available from various locations around Cambridge through the C-Card scheme. The committee can sign you up and give you your C-Card key-ring, which allows you to pick up free condoms from pharmacies and colleges around Cambridge. The MCR offers other free things on request, such as attack alarms and Chlamydia tests. If there is anything you need, don’t hesitate to ask and the Welfare Officer will try to get it for you. The Welfare Officer is also there to help with problems, or to find a person suitable to help. To keep our grads happy, the Welfare Officer organises Sunday brunches in the MCR, or afternoon tea on another day of the week. Whether it's brunch or tea, there will be lots of good food and good company.

Caring for African and Textured Hair

Superdrug and Boots in the city centre have an okay selection of hair products for African and textured hair. Dukels in Regent Street sells a good selection of products for textured hair and if you speak to the owner, she can refer to people who do braiding, extensions etc.
MCR Events

Sidney is a very social place, and we’d encourage everyone to come to as many events as possible – dive in and get involved!

This begins with Freshers’ Week itself, a programme of entertainment and information put on by the MCR and the College to help you settle in as quickly as possible. The schedule includes a range of events designed to welcome you to Cambridge and to meet as many people as possible.

The fun continues through Michaelmas, Lent, and Easter term, with fortnightly formals – a ubiquitous part of Cambridge life where you dress up and go and eat a delicious formal dinner in our magnificent dining hall. These sell out quickly and are so much fun! They are often themed, such as Diwali, Burns Night (with an after-dinner ceilidh), Christmas (accompanied by carols from a brass band), or Casino Night. Sidney tends to throw themselves wholeheartedly into fancy dress, ranging from ‘Kings and Queens of Pop’ to Harry Potter!

Alongside MCR formals, College hosts formal dinner three nights a week, which you can sign up for anytime you want alongside members of the JCR and SCR.

We also offer formal swaps, so you can experience dining in other Cambridge colleges. Ever a place of learning, we also hold Graduate seminars where Sidney grads present their own research, which is followed by a formal dinner where we can meet friendly College Fellows.

The MCR Committee works hard to organise a variety of events, ranging from camping trips, whisky tastings, wine tastings, to chilled out film nights and welfare events – to get you involved in College Life.

The academic year ends with the June Event. This is the week after the end of the undergraduate (and most of the postgrad) exams, and a party atmosphere descends on the whole city.

Sidney’s June Event

May week includes the famous Cambridge balls (otherwise known as May Balls), huge garden parties, picnics and punt races on the river Cam. Being a smaller college, Sidney hosts a May Ball and an Arts Festival on alternate years – both of which are hugely successful. The MCR holds its annual Garden Party on the final weekend in the College’s stunning gardens. This has been a great success in recent years, with live music, sumo suits, delicious food, ice cream, fantastic drinks and garden games providing a fitting end to the academic year.

Sidney Bar

The College bar was refurbished in 2014 and is one of the cheapest in Cambridge, and is student-run. Whether you fancy a quiet drink and a game of darts / pool / table football, or the slightly livelier first stop after a formal dinner in Hall, it’s a friendly and functional place for some cheap drinks with friends.
Sports and Societies

Being part of a College means that it is very easy to get involved in a wide range of sports teams and societies, with strong men and womens teams. If you wish to try for the university teams, you can – however College teams offer a more social option. Sidney grads play a very significant part in Sidney’s sports teams. Make sure you go to the Sidney Freshers’ Fair and see what’s on offer, whether it’s continuing an old hobby, or trying out something new!

The new Sidney Gym opened in 2011 and consists of a cardio room and a weights room, along with showers and changing facilities, all on the College site. For a very cheap rate – £50/year - you can have unlimited use. Inductions will take place during Freshers’ week and also regularly throughout the year. Just sign-up, complete your induction and then sign a key out from the Porters’ Lodge. A word of warning, you will need to bring a pair of clean shoes to use in the gym – the Porters are strict about this!

The College also has an onsite squash court which is free to use, as well as a table tennis room. Just sign out a key from the Porters – the clean shoes rule applies here too! We also have (free) access to the St John’s College tennis courts.

A full list of Sidney societies is on the college website.

Music

Music plays a large role in Sidney life. The Chapel Choir regularly tours internationally, and the Sidney orchestra gives regular concerts. The Chapel also runs a series of relaxed recitals to give all Sidney students an opportunity to perform informally. The Sidney choir also sing at Choral Evensong three times a week – well worth a watch as the music is beautiful.

Allotment

Want a good way to get free organic veggies, or just feel like poking around in the dirt? Sidney has an MCR allotment located about 20-minutes walk south of College, in the back garden of Herne Lodge, one of the graduate houses. Gardening outings are planned most weekends during term (and often out of term as well) to plant, weed, water, and harvest, as well as (from time to time) moving dirt and bricks to create new beds.

Please feel free to come along and give it a try - no experience necessary!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The Backs</strong></th>
<th>The big, grassy areas behind the colleges on the River (Queens’, King’s, Clare, Trinity Hall, Trinity and St John’s).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bedder</strong></td>
<td>The Housekeeping Assistant who looks after your accommodation – see the Accommodation section above.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Blades</strong></td>
<td>The prize given to rowing crews who manage to ‘bump’ everyday during Lent or May Bumps. The opposite of Spoons.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Blue</strong></td>
<td>The name of the award and of a person who represents the University at certain sports (a half-blue for the other sports).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Boaties</strong></td>
<td>People who row, like wearing lycra and get up early in the morning to do it...</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Boat Race</strong></td>
<td>The annual rowing race between Oxford and Cambridge on the River Thames in London – a great day out around Easter.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bop</strong></td>
<td>A college party in the bar, lots of dancing and usually with a theme and fancy dress [see below] if you are up for it...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bumps</strong></td>
<td>Manic rowing races at the end of Lent and Easter terms. The idea is to catch and crash into the boat in front. A Great spectator event down on the river; demonstrate your college pride!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Buttery</strong></td>
<td>The little hatch outside the Hall where you buy the wine for dinner (Note – only College wine is allowed, unlike at some colleges, and the buttery closes religiously 15 minutes before dinner, so don’t be late and miss out!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cheese</strong></td>
<td>Not only the foodstuff, but the old, classic dance music that recurs at every party if it gets late enough, and every bop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cuppers</strong></td>
<td>Competition between colleges in most sports.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fancy Dress</strong></td>
<td>Come in costume, not smart like this means in the US! Some of the Graduate Guest Nights will come with a theme, and bops are always fancy dress.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fellow</strong></td>
<td>An academic affiliated with a college and engaged in teaching and research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal</strong></td>
<td>Either the name for a Guest Night or dinner in the Hall, or a dress code – lounge suit or equivalent. These occasions are pretty frequent so you might want to bring a few different outfits!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Freshers</strong></td>
<td>New students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Full Term</strong></td>
<td>The 8 weeks (Michaelmas: October-December; Lent: January – March; Easter: April – June), where everybody in the university is in residence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cambridge Union</strong></td>
<td>The university-wide organisation that represents all students at the university. The GU is also a physical venue on between Silver Street and Mill Lane, which is a nice place to hang out with a cafe, rooms for meetings, the Student Advice Service, and a service point for all your copying/printing/binding needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hall</strong></td>
<td>The College dining hall, or to have the self-service dinner in College – ‘Are you going to hall tonight?’</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Knackered</strong></td>
<td>Colloquial term for ‘very tired’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Loo</strong></td>
<td>The toilet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Master</strong></td>
<td>The over-arching head of the College – currently Prof. Richard Penty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>May Ball</strong></td>
<td>One of the biggest parties you’ve ever seen – with an abundance of food, drink, live music, entertainments, spectacular attractions and much more.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>May Week</strong></td>
<td>Confusingly actually in late June, the last week of the official academic year (which doesn’t count for many grads), which is filled with May balls, garden parties, events and generally a whole lot of fun. Not to be missed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pidge</td>
<td>The short name for your ‘pigeon hole’ where all your mail is delivered. Can also be used as a verb – “I’m pidging it to you”.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Porter</td>
<td>They know everything there possibly is to know about College, and can help you with absolutely anything. There is someone in the Porters’ Lodge (just inside the main gate – and occasionally shortened to the ‘plodge’) all the time if you have any problems.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punting</td>
<td>Classic Cambridge activity – the flat-bottomed boats you see on the Cam and propel with a long pole. Great way to spend a summer afternoon with a picnic while you try and master the skill of driving…</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smart/Casual</td>
<td>A dress code that generally means ‘on the smart side of casual’, i.e. definitely no ties/suits, but not shorts and T-shirt either…</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spoons</td>
<td>Either short for ‘Wetherspoons’ – the Regent St version of the large chain of pub/clubs which serve very cheap drinks and food, or the wooden spoons awarded to those who get bumped (overtaken) every day in the rowing ‘Bumps’ (see above).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Union</td>
<td>A debating society which hosts prominent speakers, has a bar and a library. Not a Union in the usual sense of the word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UL</td>
<td>The University Library – holds a copy of every book ever published in Britain, and many more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vac</td>
<td>Short for Vacation, i.e. any period between ‘Full terms’ (see above). The Long Vacation is the one in the summer. It doesn’t really mean a holiday for most grads, unfortunately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varsity</td>
<td>A match between Oxford and Cambridge – some sports e.g. varsity rugby are massive spectator events and a chance to get a cheaper than normal experience of some of Britain’s most famous sporting venues such as Twickenham and Lords’ Cricket Ground.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please do get in touch with any of us on the Committee for more information, no matter how silly you think the question is. Our email addresses can be found at [http://sidneymcr.soc.srcf.net/committee/](http://sidneymcr.soc.srcf.net/committee/)

We look forward to meeting you all and welcoming you to the Sidney MCR!