



St. John's College Oxford

Alternative Prospectus



Hi everyone,

You hold students' unadulterated thoughts about their college written for you, the prospective student. When I was asked to write this letter I didn't realise how hard it is to come up with something useful to say, so I'll just tell you a little about why I enjoy being at St. John's.



I arrived at Fresher's Week nervous and unsure of myself, but it didn't take long to settle in. On my first morning in Oxford I couldn't find my belt, which was of some concern, as trousers around my ankles didn't seem the best way to make friends. It transpired that, after the previous nights shenanigans, I had decided that the best place to put my belt was my fridge.

Since being here I haven't stopped doing things. Apart from my degree, I am involved with student drama, play pool for college and I'm on various committees. Basically if I'm not working I'm having a great time. I also have a great group of friends and wouldn't change my situation for all the gold in the world.

I realise I promised to tell you about St. John's but ended up using a rather rubbish, but true, anecdote. I guess you'll have to just carry on reading and check out our short film at www.sjctv.co.uk/access.

All the best!
Rhys (JCR President)

Money

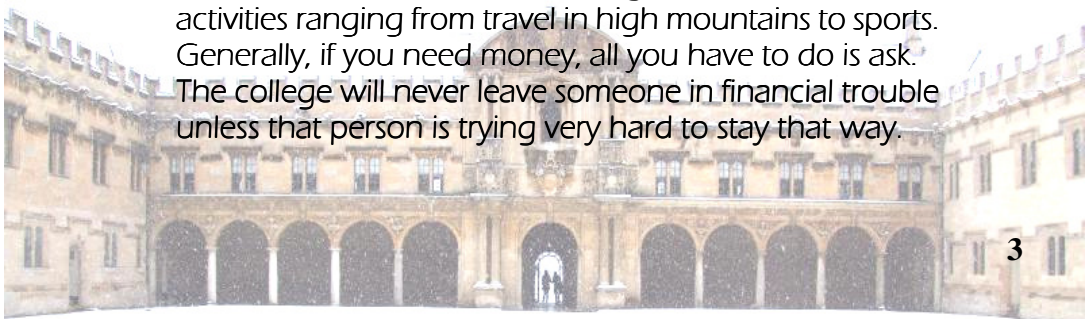
Money is a major factor in choosing a university. Oxford is an expensive city to live in. Well, if you aren't a student. If you are a student, things mostly work out cheaper than other universities. This is because the colleges and university subsidise many of life's essentials and give substantial support to anyone who needs it.



At John's this is even truer than at other colleges. As Oxford's richest college, there are some of the most generous grants schemes and lowest rents available. Every undergraduate gets up to £170 a year in book grant to help cover the cost of textbooks, paper, pens, and even computer software you might need.

The most popular grant is 'vacation residence'. This is where you apply to stay in Oxford over a vacation. The college will then pay your rent for the duration. This is very useful if you have a project you need to finish, want to take a vacation placement in your department, or just revise for exams away from the distractions of home.

We also have a number of other grants available for activities ranging from travel in high mountains to sports. Generally, if you need money, all you have to do is ask. The college will never leave someone in financial trouble unless that person is trying very hard to stay that way.



Accommodation

Where to live is virtually the most important question facing anyone. Luckily, it's very easy to answer at St. John's. The college offers accommodation for the duration of your degree, so you never have to worry about finding a flat.

Unlike most colleges, all of our rooms are in central Oxford, so you can always take advantage of our central location. Also, you'll be living among students from every year, background, and subject producing one the most diverse and vibrant student communities in the country.

Rooms all have certain basics, but some have sinks or even two separate rooms while others don't. However, all of the rooms have access to toilets, showers, and sinks, with no more than one shared between six people, so you'll never have to worry about a long queue in the morning.



Rents vary from about £650 to £750 for an 8 week term, which is among the cheapest in Oxford. And, if you want to stay longer, 'vacation residence' and grants to cover the extra costs are very easy to obtain, which is always useful if you need a few weeks to finish that extended essay or use the libraries for some exam revision.



There are washing machines in three of the quads, so there is rarely a problem finding somewhere to do your laundry (just buying enough clothes

to last a term is often a bad idea. You need more suitcases for a start). Many rooms also have access to shared kitchen facilities, including all first year rooms, so you'll have plenty of options available when you get here.

John's accommodation is one the main reasons many people apply here, and, even if we do say so ourselves, it is fantastic. Every room has enough space for all those vitally important bits of tit tat, enough chairs for evening poker games, and even a fridge for lunch, beer, or investigations of the effects of time on apples. They are right in the centre of town so tutorials, friends, food, and entertainment are all only a couple of minutes away, making John's the best placed college in Oxford.



Food

Student eating is legendary. When cooked by a student, food will be the cheapest tomato sauce on the cheapest pasta. When eating out, the menu is chips. Stereotypes are such wonderfully incorrect things, aren't they?



In John's, there are three main options for food: hall, your kitchen, and Oxford at large. Oxford at large is covered fairly well by other guides and is reasonably priced if you know where to avoid, so I'll leave you to look them up.

Hall is a very popular option. Breakfast, lunch, and informal dinner are served on a cafeteria basis using a

pay-as-you-go scheme, so you can eat as much or as little as you like. The food is excellent (we all seem to keep going back for



more) and cheap, with breakfast about £1, lunch £1.50, and informal dinner £2.50.

There is also formal hall. The formal bit means you have to wear a gown, but you can just wear normal clothes under that. For an extra 50p, you get a third course, waiter service, and can order wine, beer, and juice from the legendary college wine cellar or buttery (rumour has it that much of Oxford rests upon our cellars). Formal hall is always popular with guests, for special occasions, or if you just want a candle-lit dinner.



Finally, there are kitchens. All first year rooms have some kitchen provision. Thomas White quad gives you two hobs and a sink, which though it doesn't sound much brings out your culinary creativity, and is perfect for



heating tins. The Beehive, on the other hand, is fully equipped for all your culinary needs. In later years, rooms have various levels of kitchen from none to full suite, so you can choose what suits you.

Entertainment



We might be an institution of academic might at Oxford, but Johnnies still know how to enjoy ourselves. When we aren't enjoying the heady pleasures in town we have events organised very regularly by the JCR Entz Officers. The

college itself holds functions every so often too.

The most visible events are bops. These are nights of dance, flashing lights, strange costumes, cheap drinks, and cross-dressing; lots of cross-dressing. Held four times a term, these are always well attended evenings of high spirits and good memories (well, hopefully).

There are also guest dinners, being evenings with unlimited wine, fantastic food, and assorted other distractions from the rigors of Oxford life.





On the less alcohol-fuelled side of things, there are still many activities to enjoy. Punting, live music, rowing, and sports rank highly.

To appease your more cultured side, the college orchestra plays regularly throughout the year. There are also lectures, exhibitions, and debates held throughout the college.

And, if you just want something simple, we have a massive wide screen TV with every channel Sky offers, a games room with cheap pool table, a wide selection of newspapers and magazines, a quiz machine (simultaneously a source and drain of many incomes), and tons of comfy chairs to group around. Finally, the bar provides all the cheap drinks, good food, sweets, and friendly staff you could possibly want.



Academic Facilities

We wouldn't have got where we are on the Norrington table (an informal ranking of college's performance of



which we are always fairly near the top) without the right equipment for the job. If you're building a house, you need a

hammer; if you're fighting Superman, you need Kryptonite; if you're reading for a degree, you need books, desks, and computers.

Books and desks are lovingly provided by the college library. Nestled in a corner of Canterbury Quad, one of the quietest urban places in Britain, the library is your first port of call for any essay. The library has thousands of books and gets thousands more every year, covering all the major elements of any



course. And, if you find they've missed something important, the librarian is more than happy to buy a copy.

Loans are done on a termly basis, so you can take books home over the vacations for finishing work and don't have to worry about frequent renewals. The library also has one of the photocopiers so if you just want a couple of pages to take away, for a couple of pence, they will be yours.

Being near the centre of town also means that we are just a couple of steps away from the world's biggest library system and all the resources it can offer.

Computers are also very well provided in college, with four separate computer rooms, alongside those in the library. They all have hyper-fast Internet connections and completely free printing. One is even open 24 hours a day. You never have to worry about printing off that last minute essay at John's.



And, if you prefer the more personal touch, every room has access to the college's Ethernet, giving

you free Internet access from the comfort of your own bed, desk, closet, or window. You'll never have to use the excuse, "I couldn't find a printer," at John's.

Societies

Being one of the largest colleges in Oxford means that at John's you can almost always find someone else with similar interests. As such, we have a vibrant collection of societies and clubs that students participate in on top of those available throughout the wider university.



Joining with St. Anne's College, we have a very popular orchestra,

playing a wide range of styles and accepting all levels of skill. They perform regularly throughout town and are always well received.

For the more altruistic, there is always the JCR (Junior Common Room). The JCR is the body that represents our views to the senior members of college and ensures we



get a fair deal on rents, welfare provisions, and other important items. The JCR always needs help for its various projects, from holding committee positions to helping people repair their bicycles. And, you can always just come along to our meetings to enjoy the free food and discuss what is really important to students.

John's has very strong ties to student drama. The Mummings is one of the largest student drama societies in Oxford. It regularly funds student



productions, especially those with participation from John's students. It also organises a college pantomime and other events throughout the year. Actors, crew, and techies are all in high demand for plays put on in the many venues in Oxford, including the Playhouse Theatre. We are the only college to have our own TV show with SJCTV, a twice-termly program produced entirely by John's students. If you have an interest in drama, John's is definitely the best-equipped college for you.

Sports



John's is secretly the best-equipped college in Oxford for sport, but we don't like to brag. We play virtually every sport available – from football to tiddlywinks, hockey to pool (it is a sport!). Our teams regularly place strongly in the college rankings, and members of the college are often on university teams.

We have plenty of facilities to keep our athletes well trained. On-site we have a gym, squash courts, weights room, and table tennis room, all completely free to use. Just down the street are football and hockey pitches. And a number of other facilities will likely be built with the new Kendrew Quad. We also have easy access to the many pitches across the street at University Parks and the Iffley Road Sports Complex, just a short cycle away.

And of course there's rowing. John's has four to six boats training for the many events held throughout the year. They welcome any level of experience,



most people starting with none at all. You might be getting up at 5am to be on the river, but it is an incredibly rewarding experience that helps you keep fit, make new friends, and kick other's college's butts on the river.

I hope this guide has given you a taste of St. John's College. If you are applying to Oxford, I can't think how you could do better than applying to



John's. We've got everything: brilliant accommodation for the duration of your course, extensive grounds in the centre of Oxford, among the most state-school applicants of any college, one of the best academic records in the university, a vibrant, friendly, and diverse student body, cheap, tasty food, enough sports facilities to host the Olympics (OK, maybe not all of it), etc.

I think you've gotten the idea by now that I rather like St. John's and want you to enjoy it as well. If you want to learn more, here are a few contacts that can point you in the right direction for information about Open Days, college tours, and all the other events we run, including a special access video from SJCTV on the website:

College Access Officer – access@sjc.ox.ac.uk

JCR Academic Affairs Officer – jcr-acaffairs@sjc.ox.ac.uk

College Admissions Officer – admissions@sjc.ox.ac.uk

Official College Website – www.sjc.ox.ac.uk

JCR Website – <http://jcr.sjc.ox.ac.uk/>

Hope to see some of you next year!

Share and enjoy,

Adam Povey

JCR Academic Affairs Officer

