



FAQs for Parents

General

My child is shy and I am worried they won't fit in. How can I reassure them?

It is only natural to feel apprehensive about a major event like leaving home for university, but here at St John's we welcome a very wide range of students from all kinds of backgrounds with all kinds of personalities. Current students have a well-established 'college family' system which is set up specifically to make sure that new students feel welcomed and included and that there is always someone to turn to for support and friendship especially during first few weeks.

Would we qualify for any financial support?

For details about the Oxford Bursaries, which are means tested, and other scholarships, please get in touch with Student Funding at: student.funding@admin.ox.ac.uk

Other scholarships available for Home Students are the Crankstart Scholarship and the Lloyds. Details about eligibility are available on the ['fees and funding' section of the University website.](#)

How are meals organised and what about self-catering?

Excellent meals are available in the Hall. Service is on a cafeteria basis and students use a pay as you go system. This means that they are not paying for food they don't eat. There are basic self-catering facilities on most staircases. Typically these will include a microwave, a couple of rings and a toaster. Cooking in rooms is strictly prohibited for fire safety reasons. If a student has any dietary concerns due allergies or religious preferences, the catering team are always willing to help and advise accordingly. Vegetarian and vegan options are routinely available.

My child has a special requirement. What can be done to make things easier for them and will this affect their chances?

Any student with special requirements can rest assured that they will be taken seriously and that wherever possible the necessary arrangements will be put in place to make their life in College as normal and as comfortable as possible. Usually what happens is that new students are contact well in advance of their arrival so everything is place by the time they start their course. If a student has a disability or medical condition that would need adjustments to be made they should declare this right from the start. Declaration of any such conditions will in no way prejudice their application.

Don't you have to show that you are doing all kinds of extra-curricular activities in order to stand out?

No, is the short answer. Our tutors are interested in academic matters and an applicant's interest in their subject. We would encourage the 80/20 rule when it comes to personal statements. 80% about the subject and 20% general background information including any hobbies or related activities.

The school says that my child should do X but I think they should do Y. What do you think?

In such a situation it is important to make sure that student's views are taken seriously and that any advice giving by the school is given due consideration before being either accepted or rejected. At all



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times keep in mind the basic requirements for the chosen university course and make sure that the student is aware of any compulsory and/or recommended subject combinations. At the end of the day a student who is forced into doing something for which they do not feel entirely suited is unlikely to be either happy or successful.

I am worried that the school is not giving the necessary support. Is there anything I can do?

It is true that some schools do not have the knowledge or the resources to give the best possible support to a student thinking for making an application. If this is the case it might be an idea to discuss any concerns you might have with the school and also to check out the free help that is often available online. For example, the University has a comprehensive guide on their website to the application process, subject requirements, selection criteria and interviews. If you are concerned about the admissions test, many of the departments and faculties have guidance and instructions about how to gain access to past papers. 'For Dummies' reference books also publish guides to the BMAT and the TSA.

The Admissions Office here at St John's is always willing to talk about any concerns.

My child is interested in a hobby. Will there be any opportunities to carry this on while at St John's?

There are lots of opportunities to pursue hobbies and interests here at St John's and in the wider university. University societies and sports teams are a good way of making friends at other colleges and providing opportunities to take a break from studies. Students can pitch their level of involvement to suit. Also, if a particular interest doesn't have a university or college society or club.... why not form one?

Accommodation

Do you offer accommodation for all three/four years?

Yes, and furthermore it is all on site.

Do students have to share rooms?

No, all rooms are single occupancy.

What about the cost?

St John's College is able to offer reasonably priced accommodation; you can find the most up-to-date pricing [on the college website here](#). One important factor to keep in mind is that at Oxford students are only ever paying for their room if they are in residence. Unlike a lot of other institutions we do not charge a flat yearly rate. This is a very cost effective way of paying for accommodation.

What do the rooms contain? How much of their own stuff should they bring?

All rooms at St John's will contain a bed, chairs, desk and a fridge and the majority have their own wash basin. There is generous storage space and shelving. There are Ethernet connections and full Wi-Fi coverage throughout the College.



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Basics bedding is provided, but some student do prefer to bring their own.

Students should also bring their own kettles and cups.

How do you apply for accommodation?

There is no need to worry about this. For all new students accommodation is allocated by the Domestic Office. First year students are accommodated in Tommy White Quad or the Beehive building in North Quad. In subsequent years students organise their own system of room balloting.

How many, on average, will be sharing bathroom facilities?

About 4 or 5.

What about storage?

As we need to make use of unoccupied rooms during the vacations (particularly during the admissions period), students are asked to take all their belongings away with them after the end of term. There is some limited storage space available but students from overseas will have priority in this matter.

Security – is the accommodation secure? What about access arrangements?

Access to the College, other than through the Main Lodge, is controlled by electronic fobs that are issued to staff and students. All rooms are lockable. There is also extensive CCTV coverage of the main entry and exit points. The Main Lodge is manned 24/7.

Electronics

What are the recommended insurance arrangements for things like laptops?

We would advise that student make their own insurance arrangements for anything of value such as a lap top or a bicycle.

Is there college-based IT support?

Yes, the College has a friendly and very experienced IT team who can help with and advise upon any IT related issues.

International Students

How many non-UK students to you accept (on average) each year?

Approx 25

Are there quotas for international students?

Apart from Medicine, No.

My child is taking a foreign qualification. How is this viewed and what would be the requirements for their subject?



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As Oxford is attracting an ever increasing number of applicants from all over the world, we are used to making assessments of very wide range of different qualifications and we have constructed entry requirements and offers to reflect this. Having qualifications other than A Levels or IB need not be a problem. For a full guide to equivalencies for international qualifications, please go to: [International Qualifications](#)

Practicalities

What are the parking arrangements in college?

One disadvantage of having been founded in 1555 is that St John's is not that well adapted to the motorcar. Parking outside the College is metered, very expensive and limited to 2 hours. When off-loading luggage at the beginning of term the Porters can arrange for 45 temporary parking permits, but do not be tempted to go even one minute over this allowance as the wardens are lurking... especially at the beginning and end of terms. One way around this problem is to off load quickly and then find a place at one of the many Park & Ride car parks on the edge of the city.

Here are some useful parking contacts and links:

Parking Hotline: 01865 252489

[travelpage](#)

[park&ride](#)

Also please be aware that the speed limit outside the College is a mere 20 mph and speed traps are frequent.

What about nearby shops – especially food shops?

We have a branch of Sainsbury's and TESCO less than 5 minutes-walk from the College.

Do you have any further questions not answered here? Get in touch with our Undergraduate Admissions Officer, Sarah Jones, at:

sarah.jones@sjc.ox.ac.uk

[01865 277317](tel:01865277317)