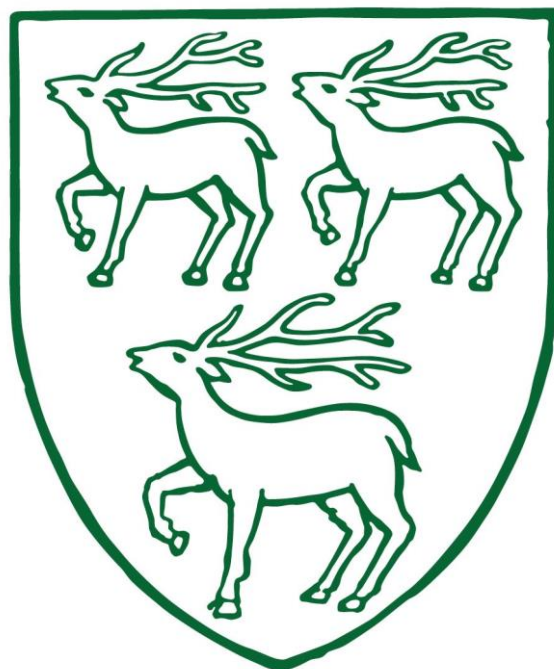


Jesus College, Oxford

Freshers' Study Guide



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Introduction

This guide is intended to introduce how to get the most from your teaching while at Oxford. We have tried to answer the questions likely to arise in the first few weeks of your time at Jesus College. It is not intended to be a definitive set of rules because every student has their own approach to work and should know how they study to best effect. Part of the challenge of moving to university is learning how to study independently, and how to manage your time to fit the demands of your course. You will find that different courses have different work patterns, in terms of both the kind of work and how many hours of formal teaching/practicals you receive and spend in personal study. If you have any questions about how to approach an aspect of your academic work please do ask your tutors!

This guide is also available on the College website at:

<https://intranet.jesus.ox.ac.uk/academic-office/student-handbooks-guidance>

You will meet your College tutors within your first few days at Jesus. Some subjects have one College tutor whereas others, particularly the joint schools, will have several. Your College tutor may be either a Fellow of the College, or a College Lecturer, who has expertise in a specific area. During your time at Oxford you should also expect to be taught by Fellows and lecturers at other colleges, when they have specialist expertise in areas which your College Tutor(s) does not.

This guide will:

- Explain the teaching system and its requirements
- Suggest ways to manage your work effectively
- Provide information on sources of feedback
- Provide information on academic and personal support

A study guide may also be provided by your Department or Faculty tailored to your subject needs: the Jesus College Freshers' Study Guide is complementary to this information. There is also guidance [available here on the University website](#).

Making the transition to University can be very exciting, but also daunting. There is advice available on the University [transition support webpage](#) to help you adjust to life at Oxford and make the most of your time here. This page will also direct you to all of the support available from the University, your department, and your college.

Teaching Structure at Oxford

Each course at Oxford places a different emphasis on lectures, seminars, classes, practicals and individual teaching. Your Department or Faculty will run introductory sessions in the first few weeks of term to explain the emphasis within your subject.

Tutorials:

Tutorials are central to teaching at Oxford. A tutorial normally involves a tutor and two students, but may also be conducted one-to-one or in larger groups. You will normally have at least one tutorial a week for the eight weeks of Full Term, each lasting about one hour. You will need to prepare work either to submit in advance or to take to the tutorial. At the tutorial you will discuss the work you have prepared (e.g. an essay or problem sheet) and its wider implications with your tutor and the other student(s).

Lectures:

Tutorials are usually arranged by the College, whereas lectures are organised by Departments and Faculties. Lectures are given by Oxford academics and sometimes highly respected scholars from other institutions. The lecturer will be an expert in the subject and will have researched in that area. The lecturers will be able to provide you with an analysis of the subject matter enabling you to understand the breadth of your subject. It is also useful to hear information delivered in different ways.

In some Departments and Faculties, lectures are mandatory. In others, attendance is at your discretion. If lectures are not mandatory, this does not mean that you should not attend, but rather that you are expected to select which lecture courses are most beneficial to you. Students who attend lectures are more successful at learning than those who don't.

Some lectures are also recorded and available online. You should check with your Department or Faculty to see if this will be the case. You should try to attend lectures in person where possible, as you will engage with the information differently in-person, and in some Departments you may be able to ask questions at the end. There are also social benefits to attending lectures. Attending a lecture in-person allows you to block out a clear time for learning, and to engage with other people learning the same material.

Small Group Teaching:

Many subjects use small group teaching where you get more individual attention from lecturers than in a formal lecture, but less than in a tutorial. In these classes you will benefit enormously from the exchange of ideas with other students. You may also be expected to undertake group-work such as presentations. Take group-work seriously – it is an excellent 'transferable skill' for when you start your career after your degree!

In the Sciences, you are likely to have practical classes each week. These are essential to help you develop your knowledge of the subject and become adept at handling 'the tools of the trade'. Some subjects also use field trips and excursions to reinforce teaching and show you the resources available within the University and further afield.

Email Etiquette

Email is the main way that your tutors, departments and College staff will contact you. It is **extremely** important that you check your emails regularly, and that you are in contact with your tutors whenever there are problems with your work or with your ability to attend tutorials / seminars / classes. There are some key etiquette principles that you should adhere to when sending and answering emails:

- Schedule time to check (and reply to) your emails. Your emails should not invade your study time, but you should check them regularly.
- Answer emails promptly within working hours. You are not expected to respond to all emails immediately, but should ideally try to respond within the same working day.
- Email your tutors as soon as a problem arises. If you cannot attend a class, or are having trouble completing the assigned work, you should contact your tutor to let them know. It is not acceptable to miss classes or fail to turn in work without contacting your tutor.
- Allow 72 hours before following up an email unless it is extremely urgent.
- Do not expect replies outside of normal working hours. Your tutors have home and personal lives and will not necessarily be monitoring their emails on evenings or weekends. This means that if you want to discuss work you are preparing for a tutorial, you should leave enough time for your tutor to respond (i.e. do not email on Friday at 9pm and expect a response over the weekend!)
- Emails should be composed professionally and with due respect, politeness, and formality.
- It is generally polite to address tutors using their titles (e.g. Professor X or Dr Y) if you are not on first-name terms or have not communicated with them before. If they respond with their first name, you may use this when you reply.
- If you are emailing somebody for the first time, it is helpful to introduce yourself briefly (e.g. 'I am a first year student in Chemistry').
- Common email sign-offs include "best wishes", "kind regards", "many thanks", or "all best".

Managing your time

One of the big challenges about starting your degree is that you are moving from a highly structured environment to one that is more self-driven. You will probably have a lot of time that isn't scheduled for you. Depending on your subject, lectures may be optional; you might have a lot of seminars and practicals scheduled in the mornings, but then find that you are expected to organise your own study in the afternoons; or you might be expected to choose which further reading you want to do, and how much of it. Another challenge can be that within the eight weeks of the Oxford term, no two weeks will be exactly the same. And of course, there will be new demands on your time that you might not have had to think about before: when are you going to do your laundry, or your grocery shopping, for example? Or when are you going to call your friends and family from home?

It is productive to think about time in terms of ownership rather than management, because you should be making your time your own. You should be decisive about it: you should be making the decision to work, or to rest, or to socialise, at the specific time that works for you. You should expect to study, on an average, about 40 hours per week during term time. You must fit these hours into your other activities, and pacing yourself so that you avoid last minute panics.

Time ownership is one of the most important skills for you to develop whilst you're at Oxford. Good time ownership won't just help you to meet deadlines, or to leave enough time for your problem sheet: it will help you to enjoy everything that Oxford has to offer socially, and ensure that you are taking care of your physical and mental wellbeing as well.

The key to success is planning your days, and sticking to your plan!

Some tips for time management:

- **Focus on your work.** Remember that amidst the social, sporting and other College and University attractions, your first and overriding responsibility is your academic work, and you should expect this to take the majority of your time.
- **Get a diary / planner / calendar.** You can use a digital or physical version: whichever works for you. Enter all of your academic commitments into it so that you can quickly see where you need to be and when. Then write in all of your deadlines: you may not have all of these right away, and may need to update later. Then write in other major commitments, like social time, sports practice, or time for laundry: these are all important aspects of your life, and if you don't diarise them, it's easy for them to get put to one side. When this is all in your diary, you will be able to see when you can study, and can book in times for tasks such as preparing for tutorials, finding evidence for your essay, or writing up your lab notes.
- **Organise by task, not by hour.** "Go to the library for 5 hours" is not a useful thing to write in your diary. Instead, break your work into tasks. A task should be as small and specific as possible, and something should clearly have changed by the end

of it. Break every piece of work into as many smaller tasks and blocks as possible. For example, “read one article” is better than “do reading”, and “find three pieces of evidence”, or “write the introduction” is a much better task than “write essay”.

- **Prioritise.** If you have problems deciding what to do when, consider whether the task is important or unimportant, urgent or non-urgent. You might want to use the priority matrix: see [this Youtube video](#) by the University for an explanation.
- **Know when you work best.** Most people have a time of day when they know they produce their best work. Try to schedule the most difficult or intensive work during your most productive part of the day, and use your less productive times for more routine tasks such as checking your emails or reading through feedback from your tutor.
- **Try to keep a regular schedule.** It is easier to work at roughly the same time every day for regular hours.
- **Remember to include breaks in your schedule.** It is important to take a break away from your desk if you are becoming unproductive – a five-minute break may be enough to get you back into optimal working mode.
- **Avoid distractions.** Social media, email and doomscrolling are common time drains. Many students find it helpful to turn their devices to ‘do not disturb’ mode when they have scheduled study time. There are lots of apps and browser add-ons available to help you to stick to the task at hand. It can also be helpful to study in the same place as someone else to keep yourself accountable.

Making the most of your tutorials

What happens in a tutorial?:

Your tutorials will be organised by your Jesus College tutor. They will usually take place in the tutor's office or study in College, but may also take place in the relevant department. Your first tutorials are likely to be with a Fellow of Jesus College or a College Lecturer, but later on they may be with a specialist in your subject from another College.

You will be required to produce work in advance or to take it along to the tutorial for marking afterwards. This will commonly be either an essay or a set of problems to solve. These are often based on the lectures you have attended or on key texts from your reading list. Your tutor will tell you what they want you to do. If you are unsure what is required of you, ask your tutor when they set the work.

There is no single way that a tutorial works, and your tutorials may vary a lot between different tutors and subjects. You might be asked to read your work aloud; summarise the main arguments of the piece; work through a problem on a board; or have a discussion on the work. It depends on the tutor and the subject matter.

How to prepare for a tutorial

It is important to be well prepared for a tutorial. If you are unprepared and have little to contribute, you are wasting your time and your tutor's and tutorial partners' time. The tutorial is your opportunity to develop your ideas, challenge your tutor, clarify issues etc – make the most of your tutorial time! You will get the most from a tutorial when you are well prepared and come to the tutorial with a solid knowledge of the key concepts or principles of the topic. If there are things that you need explained further, be ready to ask your tutor.

As soon as you receive the reading list and essay title or problem sheet, read through the instructions thoroughly and think about the questions or title. If you are unsure what is required of you (including the length of the essay) or have any difficulties, contact your tutor as soon as possible; do not be afraid to ask for guidance. If you have an essay to produce, most tutors will give you a reading list to help you get started, or they will be able to recommend texts that will help you to target your reading effectively. Try to discuss the work with other students in College and your Department or Faculty. They may have some useful ideas or perspectives.

Getting the most from a tutorial

The main aim of tutorials is to provide a forum for ideas. A tutorial may begin with the tutor explaining some of the more difficult concepts and placing them into the context of the

discipline but this should develop into an exchange of ideas, and you should be able to engage in discussion with your tutor and tutorial partner. This may seem like a daunting prospect at first, but the tutorial is a learning space, and it is important to be prepared to speak up.

Another aim of the tutorial is to improve your written work by developing your organisational skills and strengthening the force of your arguments. Your tutor will be able to suggest ways to improve your work and, through the tutorial itself, provide you with a framework for your studies. You can also learn from your fellow students when reading essays, debating points or working through a problem on the board. By observing their techniques you can incorporate the most successful into your own repertoire.

Here are some good general rules for getting the most from your tutorials:

1. **Do the work.** Always prepare the work you have been asked for, and hand it in on time.
2. **Prepare.** Immediately before the tutorial, look at the work that you handed in or prepared in order to refresh your memory. It can also be helpful to make a list of questions you want to ask in a tutorial, based on the work that you have done.
3. **Arrive prepared.** You must attend scheduled tutorials, so always have your diary/personal organiser with you when you arrange them. Always arrive for the tutorial in good time, and equipped with the relevant primary sources, copy of the problem sheet, pen, paper etc.
4. **Be in contact.** If you have a problem attending the tutorial or completing the work for it, let your tutor know well in advance. Tutors will try and adjust meetings to accommodate illness or other similar difficulties, but they have busy schedules and cannot alter arrangements merely for your convenience.
5. **Get comfortable being 'wrong'.** A tutorial is a place to learn, not to show off what you already know. Be active, and do not only contribute when you feel you have a firm grasp on the material, but also when there is something that you do not understand, or when you have a new idea you would like to try out.
6. **Be prepared for a debate.** Do not worry about disagreeing with your tutor: so long as your argument is well reasoned they will respect your opinions. You should also be prepared to discuss ideas with your tutorial partners both inside and outside of the tutorial.
7. **Take notes.** Make sure you take good notes but do not spend the whole tutorial writing, or use writing down ideas as a way to avoid having to speak!

8. **Avoid Google.** If you have brought a laptop or tablet, avoid using the internet to check answers to questions: think on your feet. It is better to get it wrong and to work towards better understanding than to get the correct answer right away.
9. **Consolidate.** After your tutorial, take a few minutes to write down what you have learnt while it is still fresh in your mind.

If you are experiencing particular difficulties with your work or feel that for one reason or another you are not best suited to your tutorial partner, make a separate appointment with your tutor to discuss this. If you feel reluctant to speak to your tutor, then arrange to talk to the Academic Director (see the 'Welfare support' section at the end).

Gaining tutorial confidence

The tutorial will be different from your learning at school level, and can be intimidating to begin with. However, you will get the most from your tutorials when you engage fully with them, and when you speak up. Recognise that you are not alone: it's normal to feel nervous to begin with, and your peers are probably feeling the same. Here are some practical tips to help you start participating if you do not feel confident:

- Commit to speaking up within the first five minutes. It is much easier to keep contributing once you have started!
- Write a list of questions ahead of time and bring them to the tutorial.
- Prepare at least one point in advance. This might be about some extended reading you have done in preparation for the essay, or a point from the lecture that you found particularly confusing or interesting.

Using the Library

When you have your reading list, set aside some time to go to the library and seek out the literature. You may find that you need to consult more than one library to find all of your key texts. During Freshers' Week you will have had library inductions, including sessions on how to use the computer-based catalogues. If you need further assistance with a catalogue, please ask at the Information Desk in any of the libraries. Take some time to explore the libraries in your first week here. A few minutes spent orientating yourself now could save you hours of frustration in the future.

Take a look at the University's [Getting Started pages](#) to find out more about how the libraries work, and support available for disabled readers.

Which libraries can I use?

There are one hundred libraries in Oxford. You have access to your own college library, as well as the specialist University libraries that make up the Bodleian Libraries. It's not always obvious which libraries you can use, so click the symbol next to the name of a library in SOLO to find its opening information. Libraries are not just places to get books: they are also spaces for you to study. To find a library to use as a study space, you can use the Bodleian [Find a library](#) tool. This will let you search the 26 central libraries that you have access to. You can find a library by name, browse by location or use the filters to find your perfect workspace – e.g. those with gender neutral toilets, those which permit hot and cold drinks, or those open after 7pm. Try out a range of libraries to discover which works best for you!

The college library at Jesus is called the Meyricke Library, in Staircase 17. The Meyricke Library aims to provide books for the first two years of undergraduate study. It's open 24 hours a day, and you can borrow any number of books, for the whole term (or a whole vacation). You will receive an invitation to a tour in Freshers' Week, but you can start using the library as soon as you have your college fob.

You can work in any of the reading rooms across four floors, or you can borrow books to read elsewhere, including the study spaces in the Cheng Building.

Please say hello to the library team, in the office or by email. Do share your reading lists and let us know what you are working on. It is worth getting to know your librarians, who can alert you to useful books in your subject. Larger libraries employ qualified subject specialists.

The Bodleian Libraries have more extensive collections but more limited opening hours, and borrowing arrangements vary between libraries, so check before you visit. Your University Card will give you access to most subject libraries, regardless of your own degree course, and even if they don't have 'Bodleian' in the name. However, as a rule, you can't use libraries in other colleges (just as you wouldn't expect to use their other facilities).

How do I use Oxford libraries?

It is worth attending a short induction session at any new library you visit, but you can also ask library staff for an orientation when you arrive, and of course there is plenty of information online.

Libraries use different classifications to arrange their collections, and learning how these work will not only help you navigate the shelves but will also help you discover more books on specific topics. Some libraries also have displays of new books and journals to keep you informed of current research.

How do I find what I need to read?

You may have a reading list from your department, or your tutors may have recommended specific readings for you. The first step is to use the catalogue to locate these, either online or in a library. Take some time to explore Oxford's catalogue, which is called SOLO (Search Oxford Libraries Online). This not only lists books in every Oxford library, it is often the best way to access ebooks and journal articles. SOLO is powerful but can be overwhelming because it contains information on literally millions of texts. The sidebar 'Sort & Filter Results' will help you narrow down your search to discover books in your college library, or online, or in English, or published this century.

If a book you need is not in the college library, you are encouraged to suggest it for purchase, either through the intranet or in person. Please also get in touch when a textbook is available in an updated edition, especially in law or science.

The college library can buy ebooks, but remember that not all books are published electronically, and not all ebooks are affordable. When reading online, be aware that different publishers have different interfaces for searching, annotating, and downloading.

Finally, library staff can help track down specialist material or decipher an obscure reference, and can direct you to other libraries in Oxford and elsewhere.

Some top tips:

- Do not count on being able to read works at the last minute: they may be on loan to someone else or otherwise unavailable. If an important work is unobtainable, ask your tutor for advice.
- Be willing to use a range of libraries! There may not be a copy of every book on the reading list in the College library. Plan time into your schedule to visit Department or Faculty libraries, or the Bod.
- Be judicious in your reading choices. You are not expected to read every book on a reading list, or every page of a reference text!

Do not feel that you have to buy lots of books. Your tutors and 'College Parents' will be able to suggest key texts that are worth buying. When buying books second-hand, make sure they are the latest editions if this is likely to matter. If you do buy any books for study, it should be possible to claim back part of the cost through the College Book Grant, so please keep your receipts. You will need to have your claim approved by your tutor at the end of the academic year. You can get more details of this scheme from the College intranet: <https://intranet.jesus.ox.ac.uk/academic-office/grants-form>

Using online resources

An increasingly large number of journals, books and other research resources are available online, which can provide quicker access, so familiarise yourself with what there is in your subject.

Reading online can create additional challenges, and there are a range of technologies available to help make reading on a screen easier for you, such as programmes that allow you to listen to your readings, or apps that allow you to minimise distractions or blue light. Further information about assistive technologies to help you study effectively and efficiently at Oxford is [available on the IT courses website](#).

Online resources are often searchable in ways that physical books are not, so they can be an excellent way of checking whether a book is relevant or helpful. Make use of the search function to look for key words. You might then prefer to read and take notes from a physical copy.

Some online resources are only available if you are using a Bodleian library computer. These will be clearly labelled on SOLO. As of Michaelmas 2024, many of these resources are unavailable due to a system outage at the British Library. This is an ongoing issue with no definite end-date, so you should look for other ways to access these resources. If you have any concerns, or are unable to access the books you need, please contact your tutor or the librarian.

Reading and note-taking

Reading is a key academic skill. You will develop your reading skills over the course of your degree. In order to read well, you need to be able to find appropriate reading materials, prioritise your reading, and read purposefully and effectively.

Navigating your reading list:

At first, reading lists always appear quite daunting and most students initially feel that they need to read everything on the list. There are different types of reading lists. At the start of a particular course, you may be given a list of basic references fundamental to the course which will be referred to at different times and may be essential reading. You may then be given supplementary reading lists for specific essay topics. Make sure you know which texts are essential to read, and ask your tutor if you are not sure.

Your tutor will point out which reading is essential, but you are expected to read widely, and you may have to analyse the reading list and decide for yourself how to prioritise your supplementary reading. You will have a limited time in which to read and may have to cope with competition from other students for the same texts. It is therefore necessary to spend time analysing your reading lists to make them manageable. In general, it is best to begin with more general textbooks or overviews, and then move on to more specific and specialised journal articles or chapters once you have a grasp of the basics.

When you receive a reading list, examine it and consider:

- Which texts will give you a good general overview? Which are more specialised?
- Which texts will be easiest to understand first? Which will be more difficult?
- How easy is it to access the texts? Are they available online?
- How long is each item? How long will it take you to read?

You can then choose readings that are appropriate for the time, resources, and energy that you have available.

Reading effectively:

When reading a book or article, you should read efficiently and effectively. For most readings, you should not be just starting on page one and working through the text page by page. Instead, you should always consider why you are reading:

- Beginning to learn about a new subject
- Developing a broader understanding of something you already know about
- Looking for specific evidence or examples to support your argument
- Mastering understanding of a very specific topic
- Finding areas of interest or difficulty to discuss with your tutor or peers who have read the same material

Make sure you have chosen a suitable type of resource for the kind of reading you are trying to do. When you have selected a source, it is worth thinking about how to approach reading it. The following offers an example framework. If it becomes clear at any point that the resource is not suitable for your purposes, you should consider selecting another resource:

1. Check the publication date to make sure that the research is up-to-date and to understand how the text sits within particular subject paradigms.
2. Read the abstract / keywords / introduction, as these tend to contain the structure of the book or article, and a summary of the main themes.
3. Read the conclusion: this will provide a summary of the main ideas and may point to a different perspective arising from the author's discussion of the material.
4. If you are reading a book, check the table of contents / index to see which parts will be useful to you. If you are reading an article or chapter, check headings and subheadings, to find the sections that are most relevant.
5. If you have a particularly difficult piece to read, you may need to read it more than once – first to understand the basic ideas, then more closely to get answers to the specific questions you have in mind. You may need to go back and read a simple text as an introduction.
6. If you are reading to prepare for an essay, report or project, then regularly remind yourself of what the assignment is asking you to do in order to focus your reading.

Making reading manageable

If you are prone to procrastination or are feeling overwhelmed by your reading list, the 'Pomodoro method' can help. All you will need is a timer:

1. Make a clear reading task (e.g. 'find three pieces of data to support my argument') and decide how much time is reasonable to spend on it.
2. Set a timer for 25 minutes, and then read with no distractions until the timer alarm sounds. You might find it helpful to set your phone / laptop to 'no distractions' or 'airplane' mode.
3. Take a five minute break.
4. Set the timer again and repeat! When you have completed four rounds, take a longer break.

Reading Actively and Critically:

Especially in the Humanities and Social Sciences, tutors are not looking for a regurgitation of the text you have read, or for you to simply have progressed from page 1 to page 300. You must read actively and critically. Ask yourself some of the following questions:

- Is the material well presented?
- Do the facts support the main ideas of the author?
- Is the author biased?
- Does the material support the conclusion?
- How does the author's perspective compare with those of others who have written on the same subject?
- What is your perspective?

Taking notes

You might be tempted to try and write down everything you read. This is not practical or effective. You will not know whether you properly understand the text if you do not master the art of note-taking. The following guide will help you to take good notes:

1. Understand why you are making notes. You will want your notes to be organised differently and use different amounts of detail if they are being used for revision in six months' time than if you are recording useful examples for an essay you are writing tomorrow.
2. Look for the key points or main ideas. These may be summarised in the preface, introduction and at the beginning of each chapter. Record more detailed information where it helps to clarify or illustrate the main ideas.
3. Try to write the main points down in your own words rather than copying down the author's exact wording verbatim. This will help you to understand what you are reading, and also to avoid plagiarism. If you do copy down exact wording in your notes, it is really important to make it clear by enclosing the material in quotation marks or writing it in a different colour / font.
4. Keep good records of where you found the information, as you will probably need to revisit sources at a later date. You should write down full citation details so that you know where you found the information.
5. Try to avoid overlong notes; you should be creating a summary of the ideas.
6. Do not worry if your notes are perfect, or if your hand-writing is messy: but make sure that you can read them, and that they are stored safely for later in a filing system or in well-labelled folders on your computer / tablet.

There are various ways to structure your notes. You may use mind-maps, diagrammatic notes, or the Cornell method, for example. If you are not yet sure which works best for you, it is worth trying out several. For explanation of various note-taking techniques, see the [Open University Guide to Note-taking techniques online](#).

Writing essays

Though you have probably written essays before, it can be daunting to write your first tutorial essays. Your tutors will have high expectations of you — as you should have of yourself! — but they will also be aware that you are still learning, particularly in the first few weeks. Remember that writing is a skill, and like any skill, you will need to hone and develop it over time. The word ‘essay’ originally derives from the Old French ‘essayer’, which means ‘to try’: it can be helpful to remember that a tutorial essay is a way to experiment with ideas rather than a final piece of work. Tutorial essays do not form part of your final grade, but are a way for you to develop your writing skills and to test out your ideas. They are also a way for your tutors to assess your learning and to understand which aspects of a given topic you might benefit from further understanding in. Try your best, and be willing to learn from your tutor’s feedback.

The ‘essay crisis’ is a common problem at Oxford. You can help yourself by scheduling enough time to read, plan, and write your essay. Everyone takes a different amount of time to write an essay but as a guide, you should allow at least a morning or afternoon for planning and the same for the writing process. As each subject will have a different style of writing your tutor will be able to advise you appropriately and give you specific tips.

What makes a ‘good’ essay?

Students often want to know how to write a ‘good’ essay. There is rarely one, single, right way, and conventions will vary between disciplines. In general, essays should not be a list of facts or a rehashing of what you have read elsewhere. A good essay will identify key principles or present new ideas, and back this up using illustrative examples and evidence. You should also present the specific ideas covered in your essay within a wider context (e.g. how a scientific field has developed over time, or what historical circumstances provoked literary innovations). If you are unsure what makes a good essay in your subject, you should look at the marking criteria for essays: these should be available in your course guide or handbook. If any of the marking criteria are unclear, your tutor can provide advice.

Whilst there is no formula for a perfect essay, there are common areas where tutorial essays go wrong. Some major ones to avoid are:

- Not answering the question, or answering a different one instead
- Only partially answering the question
- Writing about the general topic, not the specific area covered in the question
- Getting sidetracked and writing about other things, or a side issue
- Not checking and proofreading your work before you submit it

Answering the question

University essays are not just about *what* you know. Your tutors are interested in *how* you use your knowledge to construct an argument in response to a prompt or question. Before

you start writing, you should think carefully about the wording of the question and how you will formulate a response to it.

Check the key words of the question: any major concepts, ideas or things that are mentioned. Then check the wording of the question to see how you are being asked to write about those key words. There is a helpful guide available online [here](#) which breaks down common 'instruction' words and what they are asking you to do.

Planning

There is an old cliché that 'failing to plan means planning to fail'. You should take the time to plan your essay **before** you start writing. Set aside time for planning. You will have lots of ideas and notes, but it is important to consider how you will synthesise these into a single, coherent piece of work. You should carefully reflect on which information to include: try to choose the most convincing points and pieces of evidence rather than those which you feel are less convincing. Planning will help you to consolidate your Ideas, and to reflect on how best to structure them.

Every subject has its own conventions of essay writing and structure, and you should discuss with your tutors to make sure you know what is expected of you. In general, most essays have an introduction, main body, and conclusion.

- **Introduction:** should be succinct and should outline the main points of your argument or the scientific technique. You may also wish to include important context (e.g. trends in previous scholarship, important historical or social context) to highlight the background to the specific area discussed in your essay. You should define your keywords and concepts here, and then outline your proposed answer.
- **Main body:** should be analytical and should use evidence (usually experimental or from a primary source) in order to illustrate your argument. Do not just write a survey of the literature. In your first year, you will probably be writing about three major points in the humanities, or two or three experiments in the sciences – but your tutor will advise on norms for your field.
- **Conclusion:** should restate the arguments or main points of the essay and explain how you have reached your conclusions. You should not introduce substantial new ideas. You may use this section to mention unresolved points.

Some general tips for essay planning are:

- I. Remember that when you come to revise you will be able to use your notes as well as your essay, so you do not need to include everything you have read in your essay.

If there are interesting ideas that did not fit your essay, note them down and discuss them during the tutorial: do not include them if they are peripheral to the subject.

2. Make sure that every paragraph relates to the essay title, and helps to answer the question.
3. Check that each paragraph is unified — it can be helpful to deal with each point in its own separate paragraph, and to use headings and subheadings in your plan.
4. Consider your paragraph structure to ensure that there is a logical order and progression to your ideas. Build from the big picture to something more nuanced, or from one factor to another and then to a third in order to build a cumulative picture.
5. Think carefully about how much detail you will need in each section of the essay, and about which diagrams, quotations, illustrations, or other evidence you will include.
6. When you have finished your plan, re-read the essay title and ensure that you are about to answer the question in full. If you have doubts, change or rewrite your plan: it is easier to change your plan now than when you have written half of the essay!

Writing

Being able to convey your ideas clearly in writing is a life skill, and will be valuable in every profession that you might pursue after University. Although writing styles vary between disciplines, all good academic writing is clear, concise and straightforward. Do not mistake clarity of expression for simplicity of ideas: it is a common misconception that good academic writing should “look” complicated, with extremely long sentences and as many long or technical words as possible. Simple sentence structure and clear vocabulary will help you to convey complex and difficult points precisely. Your ideas should be complex: your writing style need not be.

It is often harder to write the introduction than the main body of the essay. You might find it helpful to start writing in the middle, and to come back later to write your introduction once you have a clear sense of how your essay will go.

Some general writing tips are as follows:

- Make sure that you have included clear and concise definitions of key terms
- Never use a long word if a short word will do, and don't be afraid to use familiar, non-technical words... **but** never replace a word with a narrow scientific definition with a word with a broader common definition!

- If a sentence is longer than 30 words, consider splitting it into two separate sentences.
- Appearance matters: consider white space, footnotes, appropriate section headings, good spelling etc.
- Only include relevant references, quotations and diagrams, and if you are quoting work, ensure that you cite the source.
- Consult your tutor about whether you should include a bibliography or reference list

For more tips on essay writing, check these downloadable [Tips for Successful Essay Writing](#).

Writing in Science Subjects

In science subjects, you may have to think not only about the words you include, but also how to present data, how to include diagrams, and how to use white space. Tutorial essays in most science subjects must include diagrams to illustrate your argument. Diagrams are an excellent way to convey a lot of information clearly and concisely.

Diagrams are usually drawn in pencil (although check with your tutor) and should be:

- Large, clear, and easy to read
- Correctly labelled and annotated
- Titled (e.g. “Fig 1”)
- Directly referred to in your essay (e.g. “as shown in Fig 1...”)

In science writing, you should think carefully about your audience. You are writing for a specialist audience: this may differ from popular science books that you have read in that you are not writing to entertain, or to simplify concepts for a general reader. Your essay should focus on scientific and experimental detail rather than historical context, and you must use precise and mathematical descriptions.

For further help with Scientific Writing, see the handbook [Notes on Effective Scientific Writing](#) by John Dixon, of Libra Scientific Communications Ltd, which you can download as a PDF through the University of Oxford Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division. There is also a PDF providing further [guidance on writing science essays for tutorials](#), available through the University website.

Solving problem sheets

Everyone takes a different amount of time to solve a set of problems but as a guide, you should allow at least a morning or afternoon for the process. If it is a topic that you find particularly difficult, you should allow longer. The type of problem set will vary considerably. You may be presented with a set of maths problems, reaction equations or questions which will need a written paragraph to answer them. If you are unsure on how they need to be answered, ask your tutor for advice.

Unless you are told otherwise, you should attempt to solve the problems on your own, using your reading and lectures to help you: you should only consult others in the course or the lecturer if you have attempted the problem and are stuck. You should never search for solutions online or use generative AI to solve the problems for you.

Here are some general guidelines that apply to all subjects:

1. Read the problems thoroughly. This should be done as soon as possible after they are set so that you can ask your tutor about any sections which you do not understand.
2. The problems may relate to a specific set of lectures or a chapter in one of the key texts. Your tutor will be able to advise you on where to look for information. Spend some time reading the relevant texts or lecture notes, to help you to clarify the ideas in your mind.
3. Annotate your lecture notes or create supplementary notes if this helps you but do not lose sight of the task in hand.
4. Set your work out neatly. Do not overcrowd a page; writing on one side of the paper allows you to take notes during the tutorial. If you are quoting a formula, ensure it is clearly separated from the text or your other workings. Ensure you leave enough space around the text to allow your tutor to add comments, as their feedback is essential to improving your work.
5. Write legibly or type your work. Remember that you will have to write your answers by hand for your examinations so it can be good practice to do so for some of your tutorial work.
6. Include all your workings unless your tutor has specifically said not to. If you are uncertain how many of the intermediary steps to include, ask your tutor.

Making the most of lectures

Take lectures seriously and get into the lecture habit early — ideally in-person rather than online. Lectures are a good way of meeting students from other colleges, and of hearing from a wide range of tutors and specialists. Lectures also have the following advantages:

- The lecturer is often more up-to-date than the textbooks because they have access to a wider range of source material and the latest ideas, often because they are doing the research themselves.
- In subjects where the source material is diverse and scattered, the lecturer will have spent time and energy on searching out material, sifting it and ordering it. Why repeat all that hard work yourself?
- The lecturer may have a different viewpoint or a different way of explaining things from any text or your tutor.
- The lecturer may just be very good at making their subject interesting, exciting and/or relevant!
- The lecturer may be so well known in your subject that it is interesting to hear them live and find out what sort of person they are.
- Examiners may use the lecture courses to define the exam syllabus, or base specific questions on material that they know has been covered in detail and is available to all students (unlike material covered in college tutorials).

You may feel that you are not getting anything out of the first lecture or two. Even so, it is worth persevering. Even if you understand only 10% of the ideas, that still gives you a 10% start if you have to tackle the subject later in tutorials or classes. Even if the lectures are not relevant to work you are doing at present - but they may be relevant to work that you will be doing in the next term or next year.

Take notes during lectures, if only to help you concentrate on what is being said. However, the first priority is to understand what is going on. Do not try to take over-detailed, hurried notes during the lecture. Take down major points and the overall thread of the argument. It is often worthwhile to read through your notes immediately after the lecture so that you can highlight the key points and annotate where necessary. Some students re-write all their lecture notes afterwards but you need to consider whether this is an effective use of your time.

If you are watching lectures online, it can be tempting to pause them to write out everything verbatim. Try to avoid this: one of the key skills that you learn in lectures is the ability to listen and synthesise information. This is a hard skill to learn, and it is natural that you will find it harder to begin with, but it will be important in your professional life after your degree, so it is worth working on.

Lectures can be as much about modelling an approach to the subject, or how to develop an argument, as about the specific knowledge that is being imparted. Think carefully not just about *what* your lecturer is telling you, but also about *how* they are structuring that material.

Academic Integrity

You are expected to undertake your studies with academic integrity, and avoid all forms of cheating and academic dishonesty. This includes, but is not limited to: plagiarism, use of generative AI, collusion, falsification of results / evidence, and submission of work which is not your own.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism means using the work of others without acknowledgement. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

“Presenting work or ideas from another source as your own, with or without consent of the original author, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition, as is the use of material generated wholly or in part through use of artificial intelligence (save when use of AI for assessment has received prior authorisation e.g. as a reasonable adjustment for a student’s disability). Plagiarism can also include re-using your own work without citation. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence.”

Using any of the following without acknowledgement counts as plagiarism:

- **Word-for-word quotation without acknowledgement.** If you quote, you must make it clear you are doing so by including a citation and employing quotation marks or indentation.
- **Paraphrasing.** If you include someone else’s argument, make sure that you are not replicating their choice of words or the structure of their argument. It is better to summarise their argument and assess it rather than to try to reword individual sentences or to follow their line of argument in your own essay. For examples of how not to paraphrase, see the section ‘Examples of plagiarism’ [on the University website](#).
- **Copying from the Internet.** Never cut and paste information from the Internet without including proper citation.
- **Collusion.** Do not copy work from another student, either at the University of Oxford or at another University. Make sure that you carefully follow any regulations for group projects to ensure that everyone is acknowledged correctly.
- **Inaccurate citation.** Make sure that you are familiar with the citation conventions in your field, and that you include all of the necessary information. You should be as precise and clear as possible, and include page numbers to show exactly where you found the information. For more information, see the [University website here](#).
- **Essay mills.** You should neither make use of professional agencies in the production of your work nor submit material which has been written for you.
- **Use of AI.** You should never use AI unless you have specific prior authorisation.

- **Auto-plagiarism.** You should not resubmit work that you have submitted for assessment at the University or elsewhere.

It is not necessary to give references for facts that are common knowledge in your discipline. If you are unsure as to whether something is considered to be common knowledge or not, it is safer to cite it anyway and seek clarification. You do need to document facts that are not generally known and ideas that are interpretations of facts

Plagiarism is dishonest and is a form of cheating. There is no excuse for plagiarism. Stating that you 'did not mean to' or 'did not realise' that you had 'accidentally' copied someone else's words or ideas is not acceptable.

The University regulations on plagiarism can be found in the Conduct in Examinations section of the 'Essential Information for Students (Proctors' and Assessor's Memorandum)' which every student has access to. Spare copies are available in the Academic Office. The University also provides guidance on plagiarism [here](#).

What kind of information must be acknowledged?

The basic principle is that no one should pass off someone else's work as if it were their own. All kinds of media are covered, including but not limited to:

- Text
- Computer code
- Illustrations
- Graphs and diagrams
- Published information (e.g. books, journal articles)
- Unpublished materials (e.g. lectures or your classmates' work)
- Information found online or downloaded from the internet
- Material you derive from lectures

What about AI?

You must never use AI without consulting your tutors first. Generative AI such as Chat GPT can 'hallucinate' and produce incorrect information or references, so you should never use it for generating bibliographies or for fact-checking. You are forbidden from using AI for translation, generation of code, or solving problem sheets.

The university policy on AI is as follows:

“Artificial intelligence (AI) can only be used within assessments where specific prior authorisation has been given, or when technology that uses AI has been agreed as reasonable adjustment for a student's disability (such as voice recognition software for transcriptions, or spelling and grammar checkers).”

Third Party Proof-readers

For work of over 10,000 words, the University permits the use of a third party proof-reader. Shorter work is expected to be proof-read by the student themselves unless the use of a proof-reader is approved as a reasonable adjustment for disability.

There are strict guidelines on the use of proof-readers. For full information, please visit the [University policy on proof-readers](#).

How is Plagiarism detected?

Examiners and tutors are better at spotting plagiarism than students realise. Your tutors are experts in their field and will often recognise data or ideas taken from other sources. They also become familiar with your writing style and your typical strengths and weaknesses, so can notice material that is not typical of your work. The University also uses a text matching system, called Turnitin, which checks submitted work against extensive databases of other student work, internet sources, and text databases in order to find points of similarity and text matches. The University also monitors a range of essay sources (e.g. online databases and personal essay writing services).

Penalties for Plagiarism

The regulations apply to all work either in examination conditions or not, and any submitted material may be checked for plagiarism, whether it has been done in examination conditions or not.

Plagiarism is not tolerated either within College or the University as a whole. Cases of suspected plagiarism in assessed work are investigated under the disciplinary regulations concerning conduct in examinations (if plagiarism is detected in University exams or under the College's Academic Discipline Procedures if plagiarism was committed as part of your termly college work). Intentional or reckless plagiarism may incur severe penalties, including failure of your degree or expulsion from the University and College.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Students rarely plagiarise entirely maliciously. Most students who plagiarise do so because they lack confidence or because they did not manage their time well. A student who argues that they did not acknowledge properly another person's ideas or words because they were taking notes in a hurry etc. are revealing that they are not working properly or efficiently. It is important when you are taking notes to ensure that you are clear when you quoting someone and to take down page references so that you can cite them in your own work.

A lot of students who plagiarise do so because they are unconfident in their own powers of argument, or feel that it is difficult to develop their own interpretation of the subject at hand. It is also common to feel that including citations makes your work look 'unoriginal'. It can be hard to gain confidence, and at first you are likely to paraphrase the works of others or to rely on their views as you begin to develop your own voice. However, it is important to learn to synthesise, summarise and analyse the views of others rather than simply create a patchwork of the reading that you have done.

Avoiding plagiarism does not mean avoiding using other peoples' work. Though it is important to avoid plagiarism, it is expected that you will read the work of others, and build on the views and ideas that you have read in existing scholarship. Academic work is almost always a collaborative endeavour in which individual scholars build upon each others' findings in order to achieve a broader, field-wide understanding. You will get credit for citing the works of others, because it demonstrates that you have read and understand what others have contributed to your field.

However, when you are using somebody else's work, you must always make it clear that you are doing so, either in the body of your essay or in footnotes. It is important that you follow the citation conventions of your field closely and include all of the necessary information. You should always cite the most authoritative source possible to support your argument, and think carefully about how trustworthy or up-to-date the information you are citing is. For example, a peer-reviewed journal is almost always better than an Internet blog, and a study from 2023 will probably be more up-to-date than one from 1923.

Here are some top tips for making sure that you avoid plagiarism in your work:

- **Keep good notes.** Keep clear records of exactly where you found material so that you can cite it properly later. Make sure to note down any verbatim quotations using quotation marks, and to include full citation details.
- **Cite as you go.** Do not wait until you have finished your essay to include the citations. Write them as you go to make sure you do not forget anything.
- **Be familiar with your referencing system.** Each discipline uses different conventions. Course handbooks often include a guide to citation. You can also consult handbooks of referencing systems, usually called a 'style guide'. Some examples are the *MLA Handbook* or the *The Chicago Manual of Style*.
- **Learn to summarise.** It is better to write a brief summary of the author's overall argument in your own words than to paraphrase particular sections of his or her writing. This will ensure you have a genuine grasp of the argument and will avoid the difficulty of paraphrasing without plagiarising.
- **Ask for help.** If you are unsure how to acknowledge the source you should speak to your tutor and consult the course or department handbook, which often contains citation norms for your discipline. The Academic Skills Support Fellow is also able to assist you in learning citation styles, and runs workshops on plagiarism avoidance.

Feedback

Feedback from your tutors is one of the most effective ways to develop your academic skills whilst at Oxford. Most of the feedback on your work will be given orally during tutorials and some will appear on your submitted work. Your tutor may not give precise grades or numerical marks for each essay or set of problems: constructive criticism and advice is more helpful than placing you in a league table. If you would like more detailed feedback during term, ask your tutor.

You should carefully consider your tutor's feedback and use it to improve your work in future. If you are unsure what your tutor means in their feedback, you should clarify with them. Make sure that you pay attention to feedback on skills-based areas (such as clarity of writing, whether an essay is well structured, or whether your diagrams are presented properly) as well as on knowledge-based areas (such as your understanding of a specific historical movement or scientific process).

Reports

At the end of term, each person who has taught you that term will write a report on your performance, which your College tutor will normally discuss with you at a meeting at the end of each term. Reports appear online and you will be able to view them there. The reports will form the focus of the annual meeting you will have with the Principal, Academic Director and your tutors, called 'Principal's Collections'.

Collections

Collections are college examinations that are set at the start of term. On Friday and Saturday of 0th Week, tutors regularly set exams which are designed to test either or both of a) work done in the previous term and b) vacation work done to prepare for the term ahead. At the end of term, your tutors will give you notice of what sort of Collections you will be set and you should plan your vacation work accordingly. Please note, sometimes tutors may set a vacation essay instead of an exam-type Collection.

Collections are taken without wearing gowns but under exam conditions – i.e. invigilated, timed and in silence, in various locations around College. Timetables are emailed two weeks before Friday of 0th Week, and put up on noticeboards in the Lodge and JCR and [here on the Academic Office website](#) in 0th Week. Collection scripts are marked by your tutors and returned to you in the early part of term.

You may think that as these are College examinations which do not contribute to your Public Examination marks, you do not have to take them seriously. This would be a big mistake! Take these examinations seriously by preparing for them properly, arriving on time

for them, and writing legibly. Collections are valuable for consolidating a topic through revision, giving continuous exam practice through your time at Oxford, and providing you with an idea of the standard of your work in terms of the standards used in University exams. They may also be used by tutors when writing references for jobs / further study, so it is in your best interest to do well!

There are further incentives: you can be awarded an Academic Prize for Collections by the Governing Body worth £60 in books if you do well in Collections over the academic year (usually a borderline First/III or above). However, if you perform poorly, the College may commence Academic Discipline Procedures which can have serious consequences.

Principal's Collections

You will also have an annual 'Principal's Collection' in 8th week of one of the terms, where you will discuss your academic and personal progress with the Principal, the Academic Director and your College tutors. All present, including you, wear their gowns. During the short meeting your reports and progress will be discussed as well as your future study plans and your plans for the coming vacation. You will be asked to comment on your performance and which areas of study require improvement. The meeting provides an opportunity for you to discuss the year's work, and to make any comments that you think appropriate.

You will have the opportunity to give your feedback on the performance of your lecturers and tutors. This will generally take the form of questionnaires sent out by the College or Department. The Jesus College questionnaire is emailed to you at the end of each term. It is in your interest to complete and return these forms, so please try to do so. The Academic Director writes a report each term for Academic Committee regarding this feedback and follows up specific points with individual tutors and lecturers. There are also two book tokens for £25 or bottles of champagne available for two lucky winners drawn at random.

Using your vacations

The Oxford term is very busy, and you will have lots to do during the eight weeks of full term. You can remove some pressure by making good use of your vacations. You are expected to spend a reasonable amount of your vacation time on your studies, alongside your non-academic commitments like paid work, travel, or seeing family and friends.

In a number of subjects the vacation is the time for reading large numbers of essential texts; in others, it is the time for extended essays or projects. It is important not to neglect this work since failure to cover the texts or other preparatory work in vacations can seriously impede your tutorial work in the following term. Vacations are also a very good time for general background reading and for tidying up work left over from the previous term. Your tutor may also set specific vacation work. If you leave this until you come back to Oxford at the beginning of the next term, then you will just create more problems for yourself.

You need to plan your vacation work before you leave Oxford to make sure that you have available all the information and resources that you need (e.g. borrowing books you need from Oxford libraries or arranging the use of a library close to where you will be staying during the vacation). Of course, we are aware that vacations are important for re-charging your batteries, and do expect you to take time for rest and relaxation! But you should be aware that you will need to set aside a reasonable proportion of vacation for your academic work.

Study Support

There are a variety of resources in College to help you to improve your student skills. Make sure to make use of these in order to help you to succeed!

Books

There are a large number of books with advice on how to develop your academic skills. Books on academic skills are available on the ground floor of the Meyricke Library, including style guides and advice on academic writing. These are shelved as you enter the library, near the photocopier. These books are borrowed anonymously, so you do not need to be concerned that your tutors or peers can see which ones you are taking out.

There are also books held in other libraries, and online as eBooks. In particular, the Palgrave Academic Skills collection has a range of helpful volumes, including *Writing for Science Students*, *How to Use Your Reading in Your Essays*, and *The Exam Skills Handbook: Achieving Peak Performance*. You can find these volumes [on SOLO here](#), or by searching 'Palgrave Study Skills'.

In addition, the Bodleian Libraries offer free 'iSkills' training, in person or online, which is particularly useful for research skills. To look at training options, please [click here](#).

The Academic Skills Support Fellow

The Academic Skills Support Fellow is [Dr Luisa Ostacchini](#). Luisa has lectured in English Literature at Oxford since 2018 so is extremely familiar with what tutors and examiners are looking for and can help you to master your academic skills and get the most out of your degree. She offers workshops during term time to help you with general skills such as plagiarism avoidance, essay writing, good note-taking, and time management: the timetable for every term is available in the Study Support booklet.

Luisa also offers one-to-one support to support you with mastering skills such as interpreting tutor feedback, improving specific writing skills, or managing your workload. You can book in for 20 minutes, 40 minutes, or 60 minutes. You can book in on her online booking page [here](#).

You can always get in touch with Luisa via email or in one of her drop-in sessions. Depending on your query, she may suggest that you book an appointment to discuss at more length.

Other Services

The University Counselling Service also has a useful selection of podcasts on revision and exams which can be found [on their website](#).

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD)

If you have a specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or ADHD), there is a range of support that the University and College can offer. We do encourage you to come forward, as a number of students do every year, so we can work out the best ways to provide the help you may need.

If you have already been diagnosed then you need to let your College tutor know, and make an appointment to see the Academic Director. We can then check whether your educational psychologist's report meets Oxford University standards, and arrange for special provision for university exams, College Collections, and any study support you may require. If your existing report does not meet University standards then we will arrange for you to be reassessed.

If you have not been diagnosed, but think you might have an SpLD, then you need to make an appointment to see the Academic Director so we can arrange for you to be assessed by a University-approved educational psychologist as the first step.

Individual needs and exams

If you need any individual provision in University exams (such as extra time or rest breaks), the College has to arrange this in good time with the University, well before you are due to sit your exams; so do not delay taking the action on the points above. Please enter for your exams according to the advertised deadlines (provided by the Academic Office) and act in Michaelmas Term if at all possible regarding individual provision needs. The Proctors set a deadline at the start of May for notifying any individual needs for exams, and all cases bar emergencies must be sorted out by then. If you would like to look up more information about studying with a disability at Oxford, please see the University guidance [here](#).

Welfare Support

If you have academic or personal issues that you would like to discuss with someone, you may talk to your tutor. However, there are also a number of other people who you may feel are more relevant to your problem. Full details of these people are listed in the Welfare leaflet which is placed in your pidge at the start of each term (further copies are available from the Lodge). The leaflet is also available on the [Jesus College welfare intranet page](#). If you do experience difficulties, there really are many sources of help, so please never be afraid to ask.

The Academic Director

The Academic Director is [Dr Alexandra Lumbers](#). She has general responsibility for the academic administration of the College, including students' academic progress. She is happy to see you about any matter that is troubling you. An appointment to see her can be made by calling in to the Academic Office or by emailing alexandra.lumbers@jesus.ox.ac.uk.

The Principal

The Principal is [Sir Nigel Shadbolt](#). He is also available to see students on any matter, by appointment with his secretary by emailing principals.secretary@jesus.ox.ac.uk.

The Welfare Officer

The Welfare Officer is [Kirren Mahmood](#). She serves as the first point of contact for students dealing with any issues related to welfare or wellbeing and support is tailored to the specific needs of each student. She is available to see students on any matter on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. You can contact her by emailing welfare@jesus.ox.ac.uk.

The Disability and Grants Officer

The Disability and Grants Officer is Tahmina Sorabji. She is responsible for advising students about provision and support available for a wide range of disabilities- seen or unseen and can help you with any reasonable adjustments you may require to have the full experience of what this college and university has to offer. She can work with you to explore the type of support you may need to study well here and access all parts of your education.

Tahmina is also the Grants Officer and can advise on a range of financial matters. She can advise students facing financial hardship and tell you about bursaries or scholarships available through the College or University. She can support you with navigating Student Finance, and guide you with finding the right help for any unforeseen financial difficulties.

The Chaplain and Interfaith Officer

The Chaplain and Interfaith Officer is Philip Harbridge. His role is to be here for all students and staff, regardless of faith – or absence thereof. He's available to talk through difficulties and problems, to give advice, to discuss deep theological questions, or just to chat over coffee. As a member of the Welfare Team, he's also able to signpost people to other areas of support if necessary. You can get in touch with Philip by email at chaplain@jesus.ox.ac.uk, or telephone (01865 279757).

Other College Support

Help is also available from the College Nurse, the College Doctor, and the Welfare Fellow (Prof Caroline Warman). The Junior Common Room (JCR) has two dedicated Welfare Officers (one male and one female) who can offer help. The JCR also runs a 'Peer Support' programme where you can talk to other students in confidence about your difficulties. Details of this are on posters located around College including in the JCR, Computing Room and outside the Library. The Welfare Support offered by the JCR is also detailed at: <http://jcr.jesus.ox.ac.uk>. The College's Junior Deans are available in the evenings and weekends in weeks 0-9 – see their details on the Welfare Leaflet.

University Support

Students can approach the University Counselling Service independently and in complete confidence. Full details are detailed [on their website here](#). You can also email them on: reception@counserv.ox.ac.uk

OUSU also runs a full range of welfare support schemes: you can read about them [here](#). Nightline, run by students, offers support and advice between 8pm-2am Mondays to Thursdays and Saturdays, and 8pm-8am on Fridays and Sundays, 0th week to 9th week during Oxford term time on 01865 270270 (just dial 70270 from any University telephone). Further information is available online on their website [here](#).