Hertford College
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



Summer 2026

PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION

Welcome to Oxford

Dear Student,

Welcome to Oxford, and to Hertford College! We're so happy to welcome you to our college, and hope that soon it will feel as much like home to you as it does to us.

Living and studying abroad can be an exciting yet daunting experience. Hopefully this booklet will help answer any questions you may have about what to do and who to contact if you have a problem. It might take a few days to get your bearings, so don't hesitate to ask students or staff in college for help and directions!

We hope that during your time here, you'll improve your knowledge of the English language and of the United Kingdom in general. Many of our students find friends for life during their time here, and we encourage you to mingle as much as you can with other students.

Do not hesitate to ask your teachers for advice or guidance in class, to speak up, or to voice your opinion! We hope that your time here will be an enjoyable one, allowing you to grow both as students and as individuals.

With best wishes,

Caroline Rice,
Co-Director
International Programmes
Hertford College

About Hertford

One of the oldest of the Oxford Colleges, Hertford began life as Hart Hall, founded by Elias de Hertford at the end of the thirteenth century. The old site stood on Catte Street, where the oldest parts of the current college, the Old Hall and the north east corner of the Old Quadrangle, still stand today.



The college's most striking architectural features date from the late 1800s and early 1900s. Sir Thomas Jackson designed our Hall, with its quirky spiral stone-work on the staircase. He also built the famous a flying arch casemented bridge over New College Lane, today known as the 'Bridge of Sighs'. Jackson was also responsible for building a new chapel on the south side of the Old Quadrangle.



The Holywell Quadrangle was added to the main college site in 1975, followed by the development of accommodation in Warnock and Abingdon Houses by the Thames at Folly Bridge over the next two decades. The college has continued to grow in recent years, with the Folly Bridge accommodation blocks opening in 2000.

Hertford students have achieved renown in many spheres: in government and public service, including Prime Ministers and politicians; in the arts, particularly letters and music; in science and discovery. The political theorist and philosopher, Thomas Hobbes prepared his great work on society, Leviathan, while at Magdalen Hall. We have a copy inscribed by him as a gift to the college in the Old Library. The poet John Donne was a student here, as was Jonathan Swift, author of satires including Gulliver's Travels

More recent graduates of Hertford have been broadcasters and journalists, writers, lawyers, scientists, leaders in business and commerce, and even spies. Today the college is home to 400 undergraduate students, 300 graduate students, and one fluffy black cat, Simpkin IV.

We hope that you will enjoy your stay at this illustrious and prestigious college, and that your time here will help you to learn and grow both as students and as individuals. In the following pages, you'll find information about your programme, accommodation, and Oxford itself, to help you know what to expect and plan for your visit.



Meet Our Team

The International Programmes department at Hertford is a small team dedicated to organising and facilitating short- and long-term programmes for students from all over the world. We work year-round to ensure the welfare of our students, integrate them into the college, and, most importantly, ensure they enjoy the wonderful city and college that we have the pleasure of calling home.



Ms Caroline Rice, along with Mr Andrew Hemingway, is the Co-Director of International Programmes. She is the main contact for our Chinese and Taiwanese partner universities.



Mr Andrew Hemingway, along with Caroline, is the Co-Director of International Programmes. He is the main contact for our Japanese partner universities. Andrew is very interested in art, music, languages, and travel**.**



Ms Patricia Wimmer is the Operations Manager of the International Programmes Department, working behind the scenes to ensure that visiting students are well taken care of during their stay at Hertford College.

Our location: International Programmes Office (OB1), Hertford College Catte Street.
Contact details: international-programmes@hertford.ox.ac.uk
Telephone: 01865 289 148

We very much look forward to meeting you in Oxford!

What to Pack

As you may have heard, English weather can be quite temperamental! Most likely, it will be cooler than your home country, but it is never too extreme. The best thing to remember is to expect the unexpected - we're just as likely to have blue skies one moment, showers the next! While it may be a bit difficult to predict, here are a few items of clothing we would recommend bringing for each season.

Summer Season (June - September)

In June the weather starts to warm up and we tend to have more sunny days. July and August are the hottest months of the year - the sun is out most days and it feels warm with little rain fall. However, you should still be prepared for the odd cold and rainy day! The average temperature in peak summer is around 23°C , though we have been experiencing heat waves with temperature around 30°C.

- A light but waterproof jacket for the odd rainy day
- Thin jumpers, long sleeved tops/shirts, light cardigans
- T-shirts/shirts
- Shorts/lighter or thinner trousers
- Summer shoes e.g. sandals that are comfortable for walking
- Sneakers
- Sunglasses
- Formal clothes for special events in College e.g. suit with shirt and tie or blouse, or an evening dress and smart shoes

Other essentials

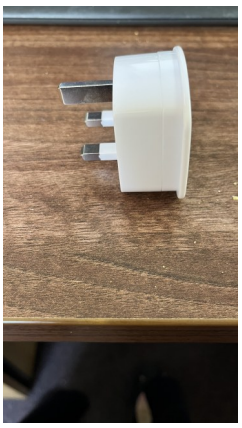
Of course, it's not just clothes you'll need. Don't forget to pack these things too!

- A laptop/tablet
- Travel plug adaptors - **NOT power adaptors!**
- Travel hairdryer that works with **UK 230 volts**
- Medicine from your home country.
- Sunscreen (for summer programmes)
- Travel Insurance

Example of Plug Adaptor to bring with you:







Banking and Money

There are a few things which you may want to budget for during your stay in Oxford. While your programme fee includes most things such as tuition, meals and study tours, here are a few things which you may want to consider budgeting for:

1. Travel Insurance

This is very important, as it will be very helpful if you experience any problems during your trip. Hopefully you won't have any trouble, but if you do get sick, misplace your belongings, lose your passport, or experience flight delays/cancellations you'll want to **be sure you have travel insurance before you arrive in Oxford**!

2. Gifts and clothes shopping

To buy gifts for your friends and family back home, or for personal shopping.

3. Food/Eating out

There may be days when you want to eat out. Of course, where you eat will affect how much you spend. There are plenty of fast food chains in Oxford, along with many restaurants at varying price points. It is likely you will spend at least £8 on fast food, and around £20 at a restaurant. You can check the website 'dailyinfo.co.uk' for the restaurant recommendations.

4. Going Out

Visits to other Oxford Colleges my have an admission fee. Also, if you go to a pub or a live music performance, you may have to pay, either for drinks or for entry. You can check the website 'dailyinfo.co.uk' about the latest activities in Oxford.

5. Mobile Phones

You can get a free or very inexpensive UK SIM card when you arrive in Oxford. We recommend using Skype, WhatsApp, WeChat, LINE or another form of online messaging over an internet connection to speak to your family and friends. You will have Wi-Fi in your room, so it's a good way to save some money. Your RAs can help you to obtain a UK SIM card. **Naturally, your budget will depend very much on what you plan to spend while you are in Oxford, so please take some time to think about what works for you!**

The Lodge

The Lodge is Hertford's reception area, staffed by friendly porters 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It should be your first contact point in case of any emergency. If you have an accident or feel ill and require urgent medical attention, please inform the porters as soon as possible.

The Lodge is also where post is delivered. Your post will be passed along to the International Programmes Department by the porters. You will be contacted when your post arrives—please collect it promptly!

Porters' Lodge telephone number: +44 (0) 1865 279 400

Receiving Post at Hertford

Please have all your post addressed as follows:

YOUR NAME
International Programmes Department
Hertford College
Catte Street
OXFORD
OX1 3BW
UNITED KINGDOM



Keys and Access to Buildings

When you arrive at Hertford College you will be handed a set of keys for your accommodation.

Please keep your keys safe and report any lost or stolen keys/fobs to the Porters' Lodge immediately. The normal replacement charge is £25 (each) for room keys, gate keys, and key cards/fobs.

About Your Programme

Residential Advisors



The Residential Advisers (or RAs) are what make Hertford's Academic Programme so unique and special. The RAs are all students at the University of Oxford, and are here to make your stay more interesting and enjoyable. They will take you to classes, eat meals with you, and organise activities. As well, they are there to help with any worries or problems you may have.

The RAs are not just there to make sure your trip goes safely and smoothly, though: they are also here to help you improve your English and promote cultural exchange. They are here to answer any questions you might have about English culture and language – and who knows, you might be able to teach them a little about your language and culture, too!

Academic Programme Schedule

You will usually have class 4 days a week (Monday to Thursday) from 9:00 until 16:00. At tea breaks and lunchtime you will be free to chat with your teachers, friends, and RAs.

The programme offers Study Tours, which usually take place on a Friday. These trips will be to famous areas and landmarks around England, like Bath, the Cotswolds, and London. You can find more information on these sites later on in this booklet. These trips will give you an invaluable opportunity to learn about Britain's diverse and fascinating history and culture.

A typical day at Hertford might look something like this:

08:00 - 09:00	Breakfast with RAs and walk to class
09:00 - 10:30	Class
10:30 - 11:00	Tea, coffee and biscuits
11:00 - 12:30	Class
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch
14:00 - 16:00	Class
16:00 - 18:00	Free time or activities with RAs (for example sight-seeing, museums)
18:00 - 19:00	Dinner
Evening	Free time or activities with RAs (for example games, theatre visits)

Housekeeping, Laundry & Guests

We have several accommodation sites at Hertford, so it is possible that you will be staying at any of them. All of our accommodation includes the following:

- Single occupancy rooms
- Laundry machines (your RAs will help you with these
- Shared bathrooms (you may be sharing a bathroom with other students from your university)



Your accommodation will be cleaned each week. Bedding and towels are provided and changed weekly.

You will also be provided with a complimentary toiletries bag, so if you leave your toiletries at home, you can buy some in Oxford after a few days.

Please note that there are a few important rules to remember about your accommodation:

- No smoking/vaping inside any of the buildings at Hertford.
- Furniture such as beds, desks and chairs should not be moved.
- Please only use the bed sheets that are provided.
- Make sure that you close any access gates when leaving or entering the accommodation.
- Do not use candles or incense sticks.
- Do not make washing lines for drying clothes—please use the dryers provided.
- Do not bring any additional kitchen equipment—everything you need will be provided!

Guest Policy

You must seek permission in advance if you wish to host a guest in your accommodation (please inform Patricia in the International Programmes Office as well as your housekeeper). The Hertford Guest Policy is that a student may have a guest for up to two days within a given period.

Food at Hertford



During the week, you will be provided breakfast, lunch, and dinner from Monday to Friday. Meal times can be found on the following page.

There will also be a 30 minute tea break between the two morning classes at 10:30. You can use this time to enjoy tea, coffee and biscuits and talk with your classmates and teachers.

Although the food at Hertford may not be the same as your home country, it's well worth trying the different dishes—you may come away pleasantly surprised!

In case you ever feel like trying some of the local restaurants, take a look on the next few pages for a few recommendations from the International Programmes Team.



Food at Hertford

Hertford College Main Hall

Opening hours (term time)

Breakfast (Monday—Friday)	07:30-09:00
Lunch (Monday—Friday)	12:00-14:00
Dinner (Monday—Friday)	17:30-19:00
Weekends	Breakfast & Dinner (Sign up in advance with your RAs!)

Allergies and Special diets:

If you have any allergies or other special dietary requirements, please let us know before your arrival. We will pass this on to our Catering Team who aim to accommodate most allergies or alternative diets. Please also note this on your application form!

Our chicken and lamb is halal as standard and we can cater for vegetarians and vegans, with meat-free options available on a daily basis.

All our meals are accompanied by allergy charts, giving you comprehensive information about the allergens in your food. While we will do our best to cater for you we do not, as with most commercial kitchens, operate in an allergen-free environment.

Eating Out

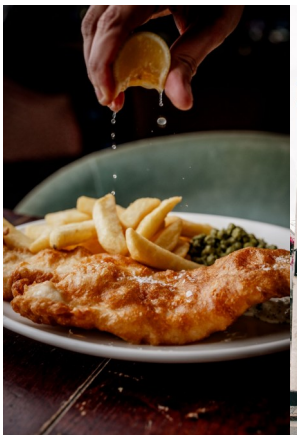
Oxford boasts a diverse and vibrant food and drink scene, with nearly 500 restaurants, around 150 cafés, and just under 100 pubs. Below, you'll find a few of our favourites:





Arbequina Restaurant & Bar is an independent, buzzy Spanish tapas bar and restaurant, focused on quality, delicious food and drink in an exciting and fun atmosphere. We highly recommend the Onion tortilla, crispy chickpea salad, and chicken thighs 'al ajillo'.

Arbequina, 72-74 Cowley Road, Oxford OX4 1JB
01865 792777 / info@arbequina-oxford.co.uk
https://
arbequina.co.uk/





The Bear Inn is the oldest pub in Oxford, a hidden gem dating back to 1242. Situated just off the hustle and bustle of the busy High Street, it is popular with students, locals, and tourists alike. The Bear is a beacon for anyone who enjoys a fantastic pint of real ale and good, home-cooked, traditional pub food. Their traditional beer-battered haddock and chips is a heavenly example of time-honoured pub fayre.

The Bear Inn, 6 Alfred Street, Oxford, OX1 4EH
01865728164 https://www.bearoxford.co.uk/





Sartorelli's Pizza is a relative newcomer to the Oxford food scene, but we believe they produce the best Neapolitan-style pizza in the entire city! Located in the Covered Market, their fabulous dough, made with sourdough, offers a developed flavor and crispy crust. The combination of excellent pizza and fair prices makes Sartorelli's a worthwhile visit.

Unit 21, The Covered Market, Oxford, OX1 3DZ. 01865 244407
https://
www.sartorellis.com



Colombia Coffee Roasters is a family-run company that celebrates the high quality and diversity of Colombian coffee. Their café in the Covered Market is known for producing some of the best cups of coffee in Oxford.

Colombia Coffee Roasters, 106-107 The Covered Market, Oxford OX1 3DY
https://www.colombiacoffeeroasters.co.uk/

Shopping

Hertford is located in the centre of Oxford and only a short 2 minute walk away from the main shopping area.

Oxford city centre offers a vibrant shopping experience, blending modern retail with historic charm. Here's a guide to help you navigate the best spots for all your shopping needs.

Westgate Shopping Centre



The Westgate Centre is Oxford's premier shopping destination, featuring over 100 stores with a mix of high street brands and luxury boutiques. Key stores include John Lewis & Partners, Zara, H&M, and Uniqlo. The centre also boasts a variety of dining options and a rooftop terrace with stunning views of the city.

Groceries and Toiletries

For everyday essentials, there are several convenient options:

- **Sainsbury's**: Located within the Westgate Centre, Sainsbury's offers a wide range of groceries, toiletries, and household items.
- **Tesco Metro**: Situated on Magdalen Street, this store is perfect for quick grocery runs and basic necessities.
- **Marks & Spencer**: Found on Queen Street, M&S provides high-quality food, clothing, and home goods.
- **Boots**: Located on Cornmarket Street, Boots is ideal for toiletries, health products, and beauty supplies**.**

Specialty Shops and Markets

Oxford is also home to unique boutiques and markets:

The Covered Market: A historic market with a variety of independent shops selling fresh produce, baked goods, and artisanal products.

Blackwell's Bookshop: A must-visit for book lovers, located on Broad Street, offering a vast selection of books and rare editions.

Most shops in the city centre open from 9 AM to 6 PM, with extended hours on Thursdays and weekends.

Things to do in Oxford

There's so much to do and see in Oxford, and whether you're interested in shopping or sightseeing, museums or the theatre, you're bound to fall in love with the historic city of dreaming spires! Here are a few suggestions of things you might like to do in your free time during your visit.

Oxford Colleges There are 39 Oxford colleges, and some are open to the public during your time here. Christ Church is very popular with tourists because of its beautiful cathedral and because parts of Harry Potter were filmed in its historic dining hall. However, there are many other stunning colleges to visit; New College, for example, is just a few minutes' walk from Hertford and boasts lovely gardens and part of the old city wall.





The Bodleian Library dates back to 1488, with the library, as it stands today, opening in 1602 by Sir Thomas Bodley. In its reading rooms generations of famous scholars have studied through the ages, amongst them monarchs, Nobel Prize winners, British Prime Ministers and writers including Oscar Wilde, CS Lewis and JRR Tolkien. Visit the Bodleian website for information on tours, and to book in advance.

Oxford Castle & Prison is one of Oxford's oldest landmarks: the foundations of the castle were built in the eleventh century. The Castle has been renovated and rebuilt over the last few centuries, making it diverse and interesting both in its architecture and its history. Tours of the Castle run from 10:00-17:00 Monday-Sunday. Please visit the Oxford Castle & Prison website for pricing details.





The Ashmolean is the University of Oxford's museum of art and archaeology, founded in 1683. Their world famous collections range from Egyptian mummies to contemporary art, telling human stories across cultures and across time.

There are many more museums in Oxford, such as the **Museum of Natural History; Modern Art Oxford**; **History of Science Museum** to name a few. You're sure to find something of interest!

Most museum entry is free, although a small donation is suggested.

Things to do in Oxford

Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum. Established in 1621, this is the oldest botanic garden in Britain. This is a lovely place to spend an afternoon strolling among the flowers and walk-ways, while being educated about the science and important of plants. Tickets cost £7.20.

Opening times: Daily 10:00-17:00 (last entry 16:00).





University Church of St. Mary the Virgin is a vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive church withing the Church of England. Standing in the centre of Oxford, it is the spiritual heart of the oldest university in Britain. There is no charge to enter the church, and for £6 , you can climb the spiral staircase up the tower, which commands some of the finest views of the dreaming spires of Oxford.

Opening times: Mon-Sat 9:30-17:00, Sun 12:00-17:00.

Christ Church Meadow is a tranquil open space at the heart of the city. The Meadow is open during daylight hours throughout the year (except 25 December), offering a peaceful and beautiful space for everyone to enjoy. Entry is free of charge. Go for a walk or run, sit by the river and watch the boats pass by or join friends for a picnic. Follow the historic pathways and take in the views of the river, the buildings of Christ Church and Oxford's famous skyline.



University Parks offers an escape from the hustle and bustle of City life. Aiming to be available for the enjoyment of members of the University, local residents, and visitors to Oxford the park is open to the public almost every day of the year until dusk (the only exception being Christmas Eve) and boasts a choice of walks, a large collection of trees and plants and space for informal games and picnics.



Music and Theatre Oxford has a rich history of the performing arts, boasting numerous theatres and music venues. Whether you're intested in Shakespeare, contemporary theotre, live music, or stand-up comedy you are sure to find something your taste. To find out what's on and where, visit https://www.dailyinfo.co.uk/whats-on/listings.

Oxfordshire and Beyond

Many famous historical and cultural sites are just a stone's throw away from Oxford, and the city has excellent public transport connections. Here's a little information on places you might want to go at weekends (ask your RAs for help booking train tickets and finding bus routes!) or places where you might go on one of our organised Study Visits.

Bicester Village



Here, a roster of globally renowned British and international fashion and lifestyle brands – offering unbeatable year-round savings – sit alongside an unmissable curation of restaurants and cafés.
Opening hours: 09:00-21:00 Monday-Saturday, 10:00 to 19:00 on Sundays.

Blenheim Palace

The stunning architecture and expansive grounds of Blenheim Palace make this truly a sight to see.
As well as being a popular filming site in recent years (parts of the Bond film *Spectre* were filmed here), Blenheim Palace boasts a long and rich history.
The Duke of Marlborough and his family still live there to its day, and tours of the Palace allow you to learn about the history of this fascinating family, who boast such members as Winston Churchill.



Opening hours: Park: 9:00-17:00; Gardens: 10:00-15:45; Palace 10:30-15:45
Admission: £38.00 for palace, park and gardens

Windsor Castle

Windsor Castle is the oldest and largest occupied castle in the world. First established by William the Conqueror in the 11th century, it has been redecorated, enlarged and rebuilt by successive monarchs to the present day. This is a magnificent example of a royal castle with visitors able to view the State Apartments, the Great Kitchen, St. George's Chapel and the Semi-State Rooms.
Opening times: 10:00-17:15, last admission 16:00
Admission: £21.50



Safety and Wellbeing

Your safety is our priority. Please take note of the following important points:

Fire Safety

- **Fire Alarms**: If you hear the fire alarm, evacuate the building immediately, even if you suspect it might be a false alarm. Assemble at the Fire Assembly Point indicated on your room door. Once outside, call the Lodge at 01865 279400 to report the alarm.

- **Preventing False Alarms:** Fire alarms are highly sensitive to smoke. Avoid burning food in the kitchens. If you do burn something (e.g., toast), do not open the kitchen door as this may trigger the corridor alarms. Instead, use the kitchen fans and windows to ventilate the smoke.

- **Prohibited Items:** Do not smoke or burn candles/incense sticks anywhere in College housing. Any such items found in your accommodation will be removed as they pose a fire risk, even if kept for display purposes.

Lanyards

It is very important that you wear your lanyard at all times when on College property (except in your rooms). This is so that we know you are a visiting student. If you do not wear your lanyard, you may be stopped and asked to leave!



Emergencies

- **Contacting the Lodge:** For any emergency (medical or otherwise), you can reach the Lodge 24/7 at 01865 279400.

Emergency Services

- **Immediate Assistance:** In case of a fire, medical emergency, or other urgent situation, call 999 and specify whether you need the police, fire brigade, or an ambulance. If you are in college accommodation, call the Lodge first at 01865 279400.

- **Non-Urgent Medical Advice:** For non-urgent medical situations or if unsure whether an ambulance is needed, call 111 for medical advice.

Staying safe in Oxford

Theft and Crime
While Oxford is generally safe, crime does occur. Be vigilant with your belongings, especially when walking around the city. Thieves often target smartphones, cameras, and open bags. Keep valuable items out of sight to reduce the risk of theft.

Opportunistic Pickpockets: Be particularly cautious in busy areas such as markets, shopping centres, and public transport. Keep your bags zipped and close to your body, and avoid displaying valuable items like phones and wallets.

Road Safety
Oxford's city centre has many buses and bicycles, but fewer cars. Pay close attention when crossing roads, as buses can be quiet and cyclists may not always be visible. Additionally, the streets are old and uneven, so watch your step to avoid tripping. Jaywalking is not illegal in the UK, but always use pedestrian crossings where possible for safety.

Cyclists and Electric Cars: Cyclists and electric cars are often not audible, so it's crucial to look carefully before crossing any road, even if you don't hear any approaching vehicles.

Carrying Cash
Because most places accept card payments, many of us opt not to carry cash. **It is important you know whether your bank will charge you for making payments abroad in a different currency.** If you must carry cash, only carry the amount you need for the day. If you bring large amounts of money or travellers cheques, keep them securely in your room. When withdrawing cash from an ATM, try to do so during the day and put your money away quickly. Never share your PIN number with anyone.

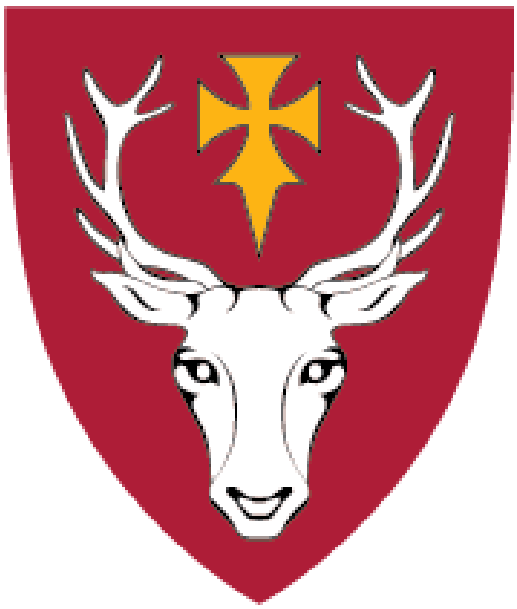
Alcohol
The legal drinking age in the UK is 18, which might differ from your home country. While many people drink alcohol at pubs, it's perfectly acceptable to order soft drinks or coffee if you prefer—do not feel pressured by others' choices. If you do choose to drink alcohol, be mindful of your personal limits to avoid becoming unwell.

Personal Safety
Walking Alone: Try to avoid walking alone at night. If you must, stick to well-lit and populated areas. Consider using a taxi or ride-sharing service if you feel unsafe.

Trust Your Instincts: If something feels off, trust your instincts and remove yourself from the situation. It's always better to be safe.

Healthcare: Familiarise yourself with the nearest healthcare facilities. If you need medical attention, the NHS 111 service can provide advice and direct you to the appropriate care.

We hope you enjoy your stay with us!



THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES DEPARTMENT

HERTFORD COLLEGE, OXFORD

The International Programmes Department,
Hertford College,
Catte Street,
OX1 3BW

Tel: 01865 289148