

MERTON

ALTERNATIVE PROSPECTUS



MERTON
COLLEGE
OXFORD



HELLO, AND WELCOME TO MERTON'S ALTERNATIVE PROSPECTUS!

THIS HAS BEEN WRITTEN ENTIRELY BY US STUDENTS HERE AT MERTON FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF WHAT LIFE IS REALLY LIKE AT OXFORD'S OLDEST COLLEGE. FROM LIVING AND STUDYING TO SPORTS AND SOCIETIES, WE HOPE TO COVER EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE HERE TO SHOW YOU JUST HOW PROUD OF MERTON WE ALL ARE!

IF YOU'VE HAD THE CHANCE TO VISIT AND WALK THROUGH OUR BEAUTIFUL GROUNDS AND GARDENS, CHATTING TO OUR STUDENTS, YOU WILL HOPEFULLY AGREE THAT MERTON IS AN INCREDIBLY FRIENDLY AND DIVERSE PLACE. WE HAVE SO MUCH TO OFFER, SO PLEASE HAVE A READ THROUGH OUR PROSPECTUS AND LET US SHOW YOU WHY YOU'RE BOUND TO LOVE IT HERE! FIRST, A FEW FUN FACTS:

- MERTON IS OVER 750 YEARS OLD AND HAS THE OLDEST CONTINUOUSLY FUNCTIONING ACADEMIC UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN THE WORLD
- WE'RE A RELATIVELY SMALL COLLEGE WITH AROUND 90 UNDERGRADUATES ADMITTED PER YEAR, MAKING THE COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT SUPER FRIENDLY AND MEANING IT'S REALLY EASY TO MEET PEOPLE FROM ALL YEARS.
- WE PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION IN THE CENTRE OF OXFORD FOR EVERY YEAR OF YOUR UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE.
- WE HAVE AN AMAZING ENTZ TEAM WHO ORGANISE AN INCREDIBLE RANGE OF SOCIAL EVENTS FROM FRESHERS WEEK TO THE FOUR TERMLY BOPS – FAR MORE OFTEN THAN MOST COLLEGES.
- MERTON HOSTS A TRIENNIAL WINTER BALL, TO LOOK FORWARD TO AT LEAST ONCE DURING YOUR TIME HERE.
- WE PRIDE OURSELVES FOR BEING INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING TO ALL STUDENTS, REGARDLESS OF BACKGROUND.
- WE'VE PRODUCED MANY NOTABLE ALUMNI, INCLUDING SIR ROGER BANNISTER, KRIS KRISTOFFERSON, JUDGE DAME PHILLPA WHIPPLE AND T.S. ELIOT, AFTER WHOM OUR THEATRE IS NAMED!
- OUR LAST WARDEN, PROFESSOR IRENE TRACEY HAS RECENTLY BECOME OXFORD UNI'S VICE CHANCELLOR!

WHETHER YOU'RE ENTICED BY THE STUNNING SCENERY, GREAT FOOD OR WONDERFUL SENSE OF COMMUNITY, MERTON HAS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AND WE'RE SO EXCITED TO BE ABLE TO SHARE A GLIMPSE OF COLLEGE LIFE WITH YOU!

READ ON TO FIND OUT MORE AND ENJOY!



HAJRAH,
ACCESS & EQUALITY REPRESENTATIVE
2022-2023

P.1 WELCOME

P.3 ACCOMMODATION

P.5 COLLEGE LIFE + FOOD

P.7 ENTZ

P.9 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

P.13 WELFARE

P.15 INTERNATIONAL

P.16 SOCIETIES

P.17 SPORT

P.19 STUDENT STORIES

P.31 TIME CEREMONY + WINTER BALL

P.33 MERTON FACTS

P.35 OXFORD LINGO

P.37 COLLEGE MAP

P.38 CONTACT



MERTON IS A VERY CENTRALLY LOCATED COLLEGE, WITH THE HIGH STREET ONLY A FIVE TO TEN MINUTE WALK FROM ALL ACCOMMODATION.



MERTON STREET ROOM

FIRST YEAR ROOMS ARE RANDOMLY ALLOCATED TO STUDENTS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL, AND THEY ALL COST THE SAME. ALL ROOMS HAVE INTERNET ACCESS (BOTH WI-FI AND ETHERNET), FURNITURE (DESK, SHELVES, DRAWERS, BED, PINBOARD), A SINK, AND THERE IS AN OPTION TO BRING YOUR OWN KETTLE AND FRIDGE FOR WHEN YOU NEED SOME TEA AND SNACKS TO KEEP YOU FUELLED THROUGHOUT THE DAY! THERE ARE ALSO PLENTY OF SHARED BATHROOMS

A BONUS OF MERTON ACCOMMODATION IS THAT IT IS AVAILABLE FOR EVERY YEAR OF YOUR DEGREE, EVEN SIX FOR THE MEDICS! THERE IS THE OPTION TO LIVE OUT PRIVATELY AFTER FIRST YEAR, BUT MOST PEOPLE CHOOSE TO REMAIN IN MERTON-OWNED ACCOMMODATION, TO SAVE MONEY AND THE HASSLE OF HAVING TO SORT OUT LIVING ARRANGEMENTS IN YOUR FIRST TERM AT OXFORD. AFTER FIRST YEAR, ACCOMMODATION IS ASSIGNED WITH A BALLOT SYSTEM (DONE IN THE THIRD TERM), WHICH YOU CAN ENTER WITH A GROUP OF UP TO SIX PEOPLE.



IN YOUR FIRST YEAR, YOU WILL EITHER LIVE IN ROSE LANE (A COLLECTION OF HOUSES LOCATED WITHIN COLLEGE AND NEXT DOOR TO THE BOTANIC GARDENS,) IN ONE OF THREE HOUSES ON MERTON STREET OR IN FRONT QUAD.

ROSE LANE ROOM



THIS MEANS YOU GET TO LIVE WITH YOUR FRIENDS AFTER FIRST YEAR! SECOND AND FOURTH YEARS LIVE ON HOLYWELL STREET, ABOUT A 5 MINUTE WALK FROM COLLEGE, IN A VERY PRETTY PART OF OXFORD! IT'S AROUND THE CORNER FROM THE RADCLIFFE CAMERA (THE ICONIC CIRCULAR LIBRARY) AND IN A VERY CENTRAL AREA. HOLYWELL STREET ACCOMMODATION IS ESSENTIALLY A CHANCE TO LIVE IN A SHARED HOUSE, WHILST STILL ENJOYING THE AFFORDABLE COLLEGE RENT, HAVING CLEANING SERVICES, AND HAVING LAUNDRY FACILITIES NEARBY. EACH HOUSE HAS A WELL-EQUIPPED KITCHEN AND IS AROUND A 5 MINUTE WALK FROM COLLEGE.

SECOND YEAR ROOM



HOLLYWELL ROOM



ROSE LANE

MERTONIANS GENERALLY AGREE THAT THE ACCOMMODATION IS REASONABLY PRICED, OF A VERY GOOD STANDARD, COMPARING FAVOURABLY WITH UNIS ACROSS THE SOUTH EAST. THE ACCOMMODATION ALSO MAKES IT VERY EASY TO MAKE FRIENDS – I AM CLOSE FRIENDS WITH MANY PEOPLE FROM MY FIRST YEAR ACCOMMODATION IN ROSE LANE!

IN THE YEAR IN WHICH YOU SIT YOUR FINAL EXAMS (THIRD YEAR FOR MOST), YOU HAVE THE CHOICE OF MOVING BACK INTO COLLEGE TO LIVE IN ONE OF THE HISTORIC QUADS, INCLUDING MOB QUAD (THE OLDEST QUAD IN OXFORD!) MOST ROOMS COME AS A 'SET' SO YOU MAY BE LUCKY ENOUGH TO GET A BEDROOM, STUDY AND ENSUITE TO GET YOU THROUGH

FINALS!

THIRD YEAR ROOM



ACCOMMODATION

HAJRAH, 2ND YEAR ENGLISH STUDENT

LIFE AT MERTON

WHAT I LOVE MOST ABOUT MERTON IS BEING SURROUNDED BY SO MUCH HISTORY!

I'M A SPECIALIST IN MEDIEVAL LITERATURE (MORE ON THIS LATER!), SO I LOVE THAT I'M SURROUNDED BY BUILDINGS DATING BACK TO THE 13TH CENTURY.

WE'RE LUCKY ENOUGH TO HAVE MOB QUAD - THE OLDEST QUADRANGLE IN OXFORD! ALSO, FELLOWS GARDEN IS STUNNING - WE HAVE A FANTASTIC

GARDENING TEAM WHO WORK VERY DILIGENTLY TO PROVIDE US WITH A BEAUTIFUL GREEN SPACE. (I SHOULD MENTION THAT IT HAS Wi-Fi!)

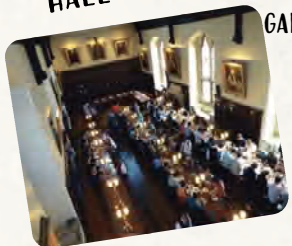
FELLOWS GARDEN IS GREAT FOR RELAXING/WORKING/PROCRASTINATING. TALKING OF PROCRASTINATING, THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER WAYS OF DOING THIS: WE HAVE THE TV ROOM, FOR YOUR SKY SPORTS

VIEWING/EUROVISION/UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE/ALL OF THE ABOVE, AND A GAMES ROOM WHICH INCLUDES FREE POOL, TABLE FOOTBALL AND DARTS. WE ALSO HAVE THE JUNIOR COMMON ROOM (JCR), A NICE SPACE TO CATCH UP WITH FRIENDS. WE DO OFTEN HAVE TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENTS IN THERE, IF YOU PREFER THAT TO PLAYING ACTUAL TENNIS. AROUND THE SITE, WE HAVE SIX MUSIC PRACTICE ROOMS FOR ANY MUSICIANS, AND A GYM FOR BUDDING ATHLETES! ALL OF THESE ARE FREE FOR COLLEGE TO USE.

ALSO, MERTON HAS NOT ONE, BUT TWO LIBRARIES. CURRENTLY, THOSE ARE OWL (A BIG OLD VICTORIAN-HOUSE, CONVERTED TO A LIBRARY) AND MOB LIBRARY. BOTH OWL AND MOB ARE OPEN FROM 7.30AM-2AM, SO IF YOU'RE A NIGHT OWL (LIKE ME), THIS IS VERY HELPFUL. WE ALSO GET TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE FREE PRINTING!

WE ARE INCREDIBLY LUCKY TO HAVE SO MANY SPACES AROUND COLLEGE TO SOCIALISE, WORK AND ENJOY UNI LIFE! BEING PART OF SUCH A FRIENDLY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITY MEANS IT CAN BE VERY EASY TO HAVE A HEALTHY BALANCE OF SOCIALISING AND WORKING.

HALL



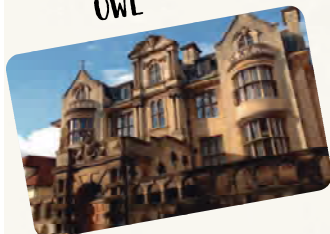
CHAPEL



OWL LIBRARY



OWL



FOOD IS THE ESSENCE OF LIFE... OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. LUCKILY, YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE. MERTON BOASTS SOME OF THE BEST AND CHEAPEST FOOD IN ALL OF OXFORD - YOU CAN GET A WHOLE DAY'S FOOD FOR JUST OVER £10: (FIGURES BELOW FOR THE 2022-23 YEAR):

BREAKFAST £2.13

LUNCH £3.88

DINNER £4.78 (SAME PRICE FOR FORMALS!)

MERTON OFFERS ALL THREE MEALS IN HALL ON A PAY-AS-YOU-GO BASIS - ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS BOOK THE DAY BEFORE. YOU WILL FIND CATERING FOR A RANGE OF DIETARY REQUIREMENTS - INCLUDING GLUTEN-FREE, DAIRY-FREE, VEGGIE, VEGAN, ALLERGIES, HALAL AND KOSHER - UPON REQUEST. FORMALS HAPPEN FOUR DAYS A WEEK, OFFERING A THREE COURSE MEAL AND A FUNNY LATIN GRACE AT THE START!

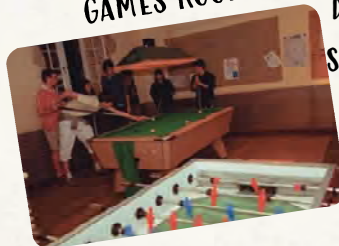
JCR



BAR



GAMES ROOM



FOOD

FORMAL HALL



WE DO ALSO HAVE KITCHENS AVAILABLE FOR ALL STUDENTS TO USE: THREE KITCHENS FOR FIRST YEARS, SECOND YEAR HOUSES ALL INCLUDE A KITCHEN AND THIRD YEAR COLLEGE ROOMS CAN ACCESS THE JCR KITCHEN. SO IF YOU FANCY STAYING IN TO COOK, YOU VERY EASILY CAN!

THE BAR IS THE HEART OF MERTON'S SOCIAL LIFE - ON ANY GIVEN EVENING YOU WILL FIND PEOPLE DOING ANYTHING FROM HAVING DRINKS BEFORE A NIGHT OUT TO PLAYING BOARDGAMES WITH A CAN OF COKE. EVERY WEEK WILL HAVE A BAR EVENT OF SOME SORT, WHETHER THAT'S THE WEEKLY BAR QUIZ OR KARAOKE NIGHTS, DRESS-UP NIGHTS, AND SO ON. AND MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, THE BAR IS THE ONLY PLACE YOU WILL FIND THE POWER PINT, THE MERTON DRINK: AT £3.80. OF COURSE, THERE IS A WIDE RANGE OF NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS TO CHOOSE FROM TOO, CURRENTLY INCLUDING (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) SAN PELLEGRINO, A VARIETY OF FANCY FENTIMANS DRINKS (MY FAVOURITE IS THE ROSE LEMONADE) AND YOUR USUAL FINDS OF COKE, LEMONADE, ETC.

SUSI - FOOD & BAR REP, 2022-23

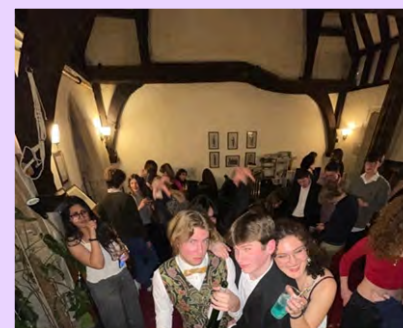
ENTZ (ENTERTAINMENT)

DESPITE WHAT YOU MAY HAVE HEARD, OXFORD STUDENTS DO GO OUT. IN FACT, WHAT MAKES OXFORD GREAT FOR FUN IS THAT EVERY COLLEGE HAS A TEAM OF STUDENTS GIVEN A NICE HEAP OF MONEY AND TASKED WITH HEAVING THEIR FRIENDS OUT OF THE LIBRARY (IT NEVER TAKES TOO MUCH CONVINCING). AT MERTON, THE HEART OF COLLEGE SOCIAL LIFE ARE THE BI-WEEKLY BOPS WE ORGANISE. THESE ARE BASICALLY HUGE THEMED PARTIES FOR UNDERGRADS AND GRADS, WHERE YOU GET THE CHANCE TO DRESS STUPIDLY, STEAL FREE DRINKS, AND DANCE TO CHEESY TUNES. EVERY COLLEGE RUNS BOPS, BUT MERTON IS A REAL CATCH FOR THE FREE PRE-DRINKS AND OUR OWN DANCE FLOOR WHICH KEEPS THE PARTY GOING TILL 2 A.M. AND TO TOP IT ALL OFF, HALL RUNS A BRUNCH THE NEXT MORNING SO YOU CAN MAKE SURE TO CATCH UP ON ALL THE GOSSIP.

AND BOPS ARE JUST THE TIP OF THE ENTZ ICEBERG; OVER THE PAST COUPLE TERMS WE HAVE ALSO HOSTED COLLEGE BAR CRAWLS, THEMED NIGHTS IN THE BAR, DRAG BINGO, KARAOKE, BLACK TIE DINNERS WITH FREE PROSECCO RECEPTIONS, AND WINE AND CHEESE NIGHTS. ENTZ IS ALSO ABOUT INCLUSIVITY, AND WE MAKE SURE TO CATER TO ALL STUDENTS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO DON'T FANCY DRINKING THEMSELVES STUPID. THERE ARE PLENTY OF FILM NIGHTS, BAKING COMPETITIONS, AND CARNIVAL GAMES TO LOOK FORWARD TO TOO! THIS TERM WE HOSTED A PANCAKE NIGHT AND A VALENTINE'S DAY COMPETITION. ENTERTAINMENT IN OXFORD ISN'T JUST ABOUT THE CITY; THERE'S JUST AS MUCH (FREE) STUFF TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IN COLLEGE.

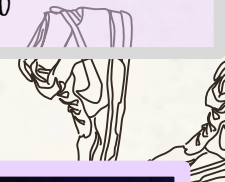
DRESSING FANCILY, DRESSING STUPIDLY; GOING WILD, HAVING A COSY NIGHT IN. WE DO IT ALL HERE AT MERTON!

JOE (HE/HIM) AND ZANDER (HE/HIM) – ENTZ REPS



MERTON'S FAMOUS ANNUAL WINE AND CHEESE NIGHT, WHERE WE GET IN OXFORD'S FINEST WINE AND CHEESE (AND LOTS OF IT!)

A SNAPSHOT OF THE SHAPES BEING THROWN IN THE BAR WHEN INVITED A LOCAL DRAG QUEEN TO HOST DRAG BINGO



BOPS ARE THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEKEND, WITH YOUR OWN MUSIC AND CHEAP COLLEGE DRINKS NEARBY



EQUAL OPPS

HAJRAH, ACCESS AND
EQUALITIES REP

HELLO – ME AGAIN! AS YOU WILL SOON SEE, WELFARE PROVISION AT MERTON IS FANTASTIC AND THE WELFARE REPS WORK ALONGSIDE A NUMBER OF THE JCR EQUALITY REPRESENTATIVES: LGBTQ+, BME, INTERNATIONAL, GENDER EQUALITY AND DISABILITIES. THESE INDIVIDUAL REPS WORK HARD TO ENSURE THAT EVERYONE IN THE JCR IS REPRESENTED AND THAT ANY SPECIFIC CONCERNS OR IDEAS YOU MAY HAVE ARE ADDRESSED!

AS WELL AS THE EQUALITY ASPECT OF THE ROLE, THE ACCESS REP CO-ORDINATES JCR PARTICIPATION WITH THE ACCESS AND OUTREACH WORK DONE BY THE COLLEGE. THIS INVOLVES HELPING OUT BY GIVING COLLEGE TOURS, TALKING TO PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS, DOING Q&A SESSIONS WITH VISITING SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES AND HELPING OUT WITH SUMMER OPEN DAYS. IT ALSO INCLUDES MAKING THE JCR INVOLVED WITH ACCESS-RELATED ISSUES WITHIN COLLEGE (E.G. THE PRICE OF CERTAIN EVENTS AND THE TRANSITION INTO UNIVERSITY) AND DEALING WITH OTHER ACCESS RELATED ISSUES.

I'M ELLA (SHE/HER) A THIRD YEAR MATHEMATICIAN, I AM BLIND AND HAVE A GUIDE DOG CALLED RIO. MY ROLE INVOLVES REPRESENTING ANY STUDENT IN THE JCR WHO HAS ANY FORM OF DISABILITY, INCLUDING PHYSICAL/SENSORY IMPAIRMENT, SPLDS, SOCIAL COMMUNICATION DISORDERS (E.G. AUTISM), CHRONIC ILLNESS, AND MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS. I ADVOCATE TO THE WIDER JCR AND COLLEGE TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND PROVISION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, AS WELL AS OCCASIONALLY HOLDING SOCIAL EVENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TO GET TOGETHER AND CHAT WITH THOSE WHO MIGHT SHARE SIMILAR EXPERIENCES.



ELLA, JCR
DISABILITIES
REP

HI! I'M LOTTIE, THE JCR GENDER EQUALITIES REP. MERTON IS A GREAT COLLEGE AND DOES ITS BEST TO MAKE EVERYONE FEEL COMFORTABLE, REGARDLESS OF THEIR GENDER. HOWEVER, THERE IS ALWAYS MORE WORK TO BE DONE!

A BIG PART OF MY ROLE IS BEING AROUND TO CHAT WITH PEOPLE ABOUT ANY GENDER-RELATED CONCERNS THEY MAY HAVE OR HELPING THEM TO FIND THE RIGHT PEOPLE TO TALK TO IF I DON'T KNOW ENOUGH TO HELP THEM PERSONALLY. THERE WILL ALWAYS BE SOMEONE THAT YOU CAN COME TO TALK TO BE IT A STUDENT, MEMBER OF STAFF, TUTOR, OR WELFARE PROFESSIONAL.

ANOTHER PART OF MY ROLE COVERS CONSENT AND SEXUAL HEALTH: IF YOU EVER WANT TO TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT CONSENT, SEXUAL HEALTH, GENDER EQUALITY OR ANY OTHER RELATED CONCERNS, YOU CAN COME TO ME IN COMPLETE CONFIDENCE. IT CAN BE DAUNTING STARTING UNI AND HAVING TO NAVIGATE ALL OF THESE THINGS, SOMETIMES FOR THE FIRST TIME, SO CONSENT WORKSHOPS ARE ALSO PROVIDED AS PART OF THE FRESHERS' WEEK TIMETABLE.

MERTON ALSO HOSTS THE ANNUAL EQUALITY CONVERSATION TO BRING TOGETHER GUEST SPEAKERS ON THE TOPIC OF EQUALITY. GENDER INEQUALITIES EXTEND FAR BEYOND THE ISSUES WE EXPERIENCE AT UNIVERSITY, AND WE ARE KEEN TO GIVE EVERYONE ACCESS TO DISCUSSION AND DEBATE ON EQUALITY IN THE WIDER WORLD.

FINALLY, I ALSO ORGANISE THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY FORMAL IN HILARY TERM, WHICH IS A GREAT NIGHT TO COME TOGETHER AS WOMEN AND PEOPLE OF MARGINALISED GENDERS TO TALK ABOUT OUR EXPERIENCES, AND HAVE A LOVELY DINNER IN HALL WHILST DOING IT.



LOTTIE,
JCR
GENDER
REP



GRACE, JCR
LGBTQIA+
REP

HI, I'M GRACE (SHE/THEY), LGBTQIA+ REP! COMING TO UNIVERSITY IS, UNDOUBTEDLY, AN EXTREMELY EXCITING TIME AS A QUEER PERSON. WITH A HOST OF OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS OF ALL GENDERS, SEXUALITIES, OPINIONS, BACKGROUNDS AND BELIEFS, AND LOTS OF US ONLY BEING OUT FOR THE FIRST TIME, IT CAN BE ABSOLUTELY LIFECHANGING. AS THE LGBTQIA+ REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE JCR COMMITTEE, I AM DEEPLY AWARE OF THIS, AND GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK AFTER THE WELFARE OF, AND CREATE A MYRIAD OF EXCITING SOCIALS FOR THE QUEER MEMBERS OF THE JCR. ANOTHER ASPECT OF THE ROLE IS ADVOCACY FOR LGBTQIA+ MOTIONS DURING JCR MEETINGS, TO HELP MERTON REMAIN THE PROGRESSIVE, FORWARD-THINKING AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTION IT ALREADY IS. AT A UNIVERSITY LEVEL, OXFORD LGBTQIA+ SOCIETY HAS A PACKED CALENDAR OF SOCIALS AND WELFARE ACTIVITIES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL GENDERS AND SEXUALITIES, FROM HOT CHOCOLATE MEETS TO BOULDERING, TO BOARD GAME NIGHTS TO TUESGAYS, WE'VE GOT IT ALL!



KIANA, JCR
ETHNIC
MINORITIES
REP

THE ETHNIC MINORITIES REPRESENTATIVE IS THERE TO ENSURE PEOPLE FROM ALL RACES AND ETHNICITIES FEEL WELCOME AT MERTON, WHETHER THAT'S BY PUTTING ON EVENTS TO CELEBRATE THE VARIOUS ETHNICITIES WE HAVE, ORGANISING SPEAKERS WHO DISCUSS RACIAL ISSUES OR BY LISTENING AND ACTING ON BEHALF OF STUDENTS. THE OPENING OF A MULTI-FAITH PRAYER ROOM WAS ONE ACTION THAT AROSE FROM CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN THE STUDENTS AND COLLEGE. MERTON AND OXFORD ARE MAKING PROGRESS WITH EQUALITY BUT THERE IS STILL SOME WORK TO BE DONE, WHICH IS WHY MY ROLE AS ETHNIC MINORITIES REP IS A KEY PART OF THE EQUALITY COMMITTEE!

WELFARE



STARTING UNIVERSITY IS AN INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCE, BUT WE'RE ALL WELL AWARE THAT IT CAN ALSO BE A DAUNTING ONE. IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO BALANCE LIVING AWAY FROM HOME, COPING WITH AN INCREASED WORKLOAD, AND TRYING TO MAKE SOME NEW, LIFE-LONG FRIENDS. THANKFULLY, MERTON IS EXTREMELY LUCKY TO HAVE A FANTASTIC WELFARE TEAM AVAILABLE TO TRY AND MAKE THE TRANSITION A LITTLE EASIER, AND THERE ARE PLENTY OF PEOPLE AROUND TO HELP YOU OUT.

FIRST OF ALL, THERE'S US! WE'RE THE WELFARE REPS AND ARE PART OF THE JCR'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. OUR ROLE IS THREEFOLD. FIRSTLY, WE ORGANISE TONS OF FUN ACTIVITIES EACH TERM, INCLUDING ICE SKATING, COFFEE TRIPS, AND MOVIE NIGHTS. IN PARTICULAR, WE ALSO RUN THE SUPER POPULAR WEEKLY JCR WELFARE TEA ON SUNDAYS FEATURING LOTS OF FREE FOOD (INCLUDING HOT WAFFLES!).

SECOND OF ALL, ANOTHER REALLY IMPORTANT ASPECT OF OUR JOB IS TO PROVIDE AND COORDINATE PEER SUPPORT ACROSS THE COLLEGE. WE'RE PEER SUPPORT TRAINED OURSELVES TO HELP STUDENTS ASSESS AND EVALUATE THEIR OWN THOUGHTS. WE ALSO ARRANGE PEER SUPPORT TRAINING FOR OTHER JCR REPS, AND CAN ALSO POINT YOU TO OTHER SOURCES OF HELP LIKE OUR WONDERFUL WELFARE ADVISOR, HEAD OF WELFARE, COLLEGE NURSE, UNIVERSITY COUNSELLING SERVICES, AND COLLEGE DOCTOR.



WAFFLE MAKING AT WELFARE TEA:



PART OF OUR PARTICULAR ROLE OF PEER SUPPORT INCLUDES RESTOCKING SUPPLIES OF FREE CONDOMS AND ENDURING PROVISION OF FREE SANITARY PRODUCTS, PANIC ALARMS, AND PREGNANCY TESTS WHEN REQUIRED. FINALLY, WE ALSO REPRESENT ANY PARTICULAR WELFARE CONCERNS FROM STUDENTS AT TERMLY CONSULTATIONS WITHIN THE COLLEGE WITH THE SENIOR WELFARE TEAM.

MERTON ALSO BENEFITS FROM THREE LOVELY JUNIOR DEANS FOR WELFARE WHO ARE GRADUATE STUDENTS EMPLOYED BY THE COLLEGE TO BE A FIRST POINT OF CONTACT FOR WELFARE ADVICE, AND TO LIAISE WITH STAFF AND STUDENTS. YOUR TUTORS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE TO HELP YOU OVERCOME ANY PROBLEMS WITH STUDIES AND IF THE PROBLEM COMES DOWN TO WELFARE THEY WILL NEVER HAVE AN ISSUE WITH PROVIDING EXTRA SUPPORT. THE COLLEGE ALSO HAS A REALLY GENEROUS HARDSHIP FUND SO IF YOU EVER FIND YOU ARE STRUGGLING FINANCIALLY, FOR WHATEVER REASON, YOU CAN APPLY FOR THIS FUND.

THE BENEFIT OF BEING ONE OF THE SMALLER COLLEGES IS THAT MERTON HAS A REAL COMMUNITY FEEL WHICH MEANS THAT YOU WILL ALWAYS BE ABLE TO GET THE SUPPORT YOU NEED! THERE'S SUPPORT AROUND YOU EVERYWHERE AT COLLEGE – JUST REMEMBER TO ASK!

SHIVANII AND KIERAN, WELFARE REPS

WELFARE AT CHRISTMAS



ICE SKATING TRIP!



INTERNATIONAL

SHAMIN, JCR INTERNATIONAL REP

HI, MY NAME IS SHAMIN AND I'M A FIRST YEAR LAW STUDENT!

HAVING LIVED IN PAKISTAN MY WHOLE LIFE, I'M QUITE FAMILIAR WITH THE STRUGGLES INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FACE IN ADJUSTING AND SETTLING IN TO A NEW ENVIRONMENT – IT CAN BE OVERWHELMING AT FIRST BUT IMMENSELY REWARDING SIMULTANEOUSLY. WHETHER IT'S TIPS ON WHAT TO PACK, OR HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE NEW CHANGE, OR EVEN HELPING TO DRAG YOUR BOXES TO INTERNATIONAL STORAGE, AS INTERNATIONAL REP I AIM TO HELP MAKE STUDENT'S TRANSITIONS TO OXFORD AS SMOOTH AS POSSIBLE! HAVING LOVED MY FIRST YEAR HERE, I LOOK FORWARD TO BEING ABLE TO DO THIS, SO THAT EVERYONE CAN EXPERIENCE ALL OF THE AMAZING THINGS AT MERTON!

ONCE YOU ARRIVE IN COLLEGE, THERE WILL BE PLENTY OF COLLEGE MEMBERS AROUND TO HELP YOU SET UP THE INITIAL ADMIN, LIKE YOUR BANK ACCOUNT. THERE WILL ALSO BE HELPERS TO GUIDE YOU TO WHERE INTERNATIONAL STORAGE IS IN COLLEGE, AND EVENTS BEFORE FRESHER'S WEEK STARTS FOR EARLY ARRIVAL INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS!

DURING THE YEAR, THE JCR ORGANISES EVENTS SUCH AS CHARITY FORMALS, FILM NIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL WELFARE TEA. MANY DIFFERENT NATIONAL AND CULTURAL SOCIETIES ACROSS THE UNIVERSITY ALSO HOST EVENTS THAT ARE OPEN TO ALL. ALSO, IT CAN BE REALLY REWARDING TO STEP OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE AND TRY NEW THINGS AS WELL, AND TO EXPERIENCE THE WIDE RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES BOTH AT MERTON AND AT OXFORD.

MERTON HAS A LARGE COMMUNITY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND LOTS OF SUPPORT IN PLACE. INTERNATIONAL REPS ARE OFTEN PEER SUPPORT TRAINED AND WELCOME ANYONE WHO WANTS TO CHAT ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE OR CONCERNS. LIFE AT OXFORD CAN GET STRESSFUL SOMETIMES, BUT WE HAVE A SOLID SUPPORT NETWORK IN PLACE TO HELP THE TRANSITION BE AS SMOOTH AS POSSIBLE!



THERE ARE PLENTY OF WAYS TO GET INVOLVED AT MERTON, WITH SOCIETIES, MUSICAL OPPORTUNITIES, SPORTS TEAMS AND MORE!

SOCIETIES

THE JCR: EVERY UNDERGRADUATE IN MERTON IS A MEMBER OF THE JUNIOR COMMON ROOM (JCR). WE ELECT REPRESENTATIVES WHO ARE TASKED WITH DISCUSSING MATTERS RELATING TO THE STUDENTS WITH COLLEGE. BIWEEKLY MEETINGS (OGMs OR ORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS) ARE OPEN TO ALL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS!



SUBJECT SOCIETIES: EVERYONE AUTOMATICALLY BECOMES PART OF THEIR SUBJECT SOCIETY WHEN THEY JOIN. IF YOU'RE A JOINT HONOURS STUDENT, YOU'LL BE PART OF TWO/MORE SUBJECT SOCIETIES! EVERY SUBJECT HAS AN ANNUAL DINNER PARTY AND A GARDEN PARTY, WHERE STUDENTS AND SUBJECT TUTORS GET TO MEET AND ENJOY A NICE MEAL!

MERTON FLOATS: REVIVED IN 2018 WITH A VERY POPULAR PERFORMANCE OF SHAKESPEARE'S *LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST*, THE FLOATS HAVE BEEN PUTTING ON AN ANNUAL GARDEN PLAY EVERY SUMMER SINCE! OTHER PLAYS HAVE INCLUDED *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING* AND *TWELFTH NIGHT*.



MUSIC: THERE ARE MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED WITH MUSIC AT MERTON, INCLUDING THE FANTASTIC CHOIR OF MERTON COLLEGE, THE KODÁLY CHOIR (THE OLDEST NON-AUDITIONING CHOIR IN OXFORD), AND THE FIDELIO ORCHESTRA. THE LAST TWO ARE BOTH RUN BY MERTON COLLEGE MUSIC SOCIETY.

NEAVE SOCIETY: THE DEBATING SOCIETY OF MERTON, CONCERNED WITH POLITICS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS – A CHANCE TO DISCUSS CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL ISSUES.



SPORT

JAMES, SPORTS REP



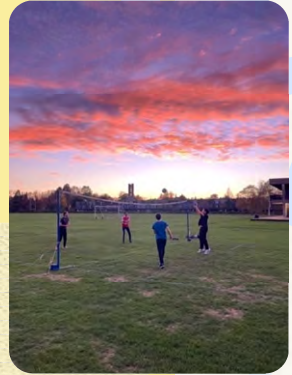
WOMEN'S ROWING TEAM

MERTON'S REPUTATION OF HOLDING OUR ACADEMIC SUCCESS ABOVE ALL ELSE IS ENTIRELY MISLEADING. IN REALITY, OUR COLLEGE SPORTS SCENE IS WHAT IT'S REALLY ALL ABOUT. CAN ANY OTHER COLLEGE CALL THEMSELVES SQUASH CUPPERS CHAMPIONS 2021? AND THIS IS ONLY THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG OF MERTON'S SPORTING OPPORTUNITIES.

'CUPPERS' IS THE NAME FOR THE INTER-COLLEGE TOURNAMENTS WHICH TAKE PLACE IN ALMOST EVERY SPORT IMAGINABLE. WE HAVE STRONG TEAMS FOR ALL THE MORE 'TYPICAL' SPORTS ONE MIGHT EXPECT - RUGBY, CRICKET, FOOTBALL, NETBALL, HOCKEY, TENNIS, BADMINTON. THE LIST ALSO EXTENDS TO THOSE WHICH MAY BE CONSIDERED SOMEWHAT MORE UNUSUAL. LAST YEAR WE FIELDED MULTIPLE TEAMS FOR PUNTING CUPPERS; NOT ONLY DO YOU HAVE TO PUNT FASTER THAN THE OTHER TEAM, BUT YOU ALSO MUST FINISH SOME PIMM'S AND TWO PUNNETS OF STRAWBERRIES BEFORE YOU REACH THE FINISH LINE... MERTON'S FLEET OF THREE PUNTS, FREE TO USE DURING THE SUMMER TERM, ARE IDEAL FOR TRAINING PURPOSES. WE ALSO HAVE KAYAKS AND A CANOE FOR ALL-YEAR-ROUND EXPLORATION OF THE RIVER CHERWELL!

IF THE IDEA OF COMPETITIVE PUNTING HAS NOT SATIATED YOU WITH OXFORD CLICHÉS ALREADY, MENTION OF MERTON'S ROWING CULTURE IS ESSENTIAL. IF THE IDEA OF WAKING AT THE CRACK OF DAWN (OR EARLIER!) TO GLIDE THROUGH OXFORD'S PICTURESQUE LANDSCAPE IS NOT AN ATTRACTIVE PROSPECT, WHY NOT? THE CAMARADERIE WITHIN THE BOAT CLUB IS UNPARALLELED AND PROVIDES A DISTRACTING ESCAPE FROM THE ACADEMIC SIDE OF LIFE, WHICH CAN OFTEN BE ALL TOO CONSUMING. IN ADDITION, THE FESTIVAL ATMOSPHERE OF THE INTER-COLLEGE REGATTAS SUCH AS TORPIDS AND SUMMER EIGHTS IS UNIQUE AND UNMISSABLE, EVEN FOR THOSE WHO WOULDN'T TOUCH A ROWING BOAT WITH A PUNT POLE!

BACK ON LAND, MERTON BOASTS ENVIABLE SPORTING FACILITIES AT THE 'PAV', ALSO KNOWN FOR OUR FAMOUS BOPS (SEE ENTZ). KEPT IN IMPECCABLE CONDITION BY OUR GROUNDSMAN, OUR SPORTS GROUNDS FEATURE RUGBY AND FOOTBALL PITCHES, CRICKET NETS, TENNIS COURTS, NETBALL COURTS, SQUASH COURTS, A VOLLEYBALL COURT AND, ALL IMPORTANTLY, A ROUNDERS DIAMOND. THE SPORTS GROUNDS ALSO PLAY HOST TO OUR TWO ANNUAL SPORTS DAYS, ONE WITH OUR SISTER COLLEGE PETERHOUSE CAMBRIDGE IN THE SECOND TERM AND A MORE SUMMERY ITERATION IN MAY. PICTURE YOUR SCHOOL SPORTS DAY, BUT LESS STRENUOUS!



SPORTS DAY



JAMES PUNTING



NETBALL TEAM

STUDENT STORIES



LOTTIE, 2ND YEAR
PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS AND
ECONOMICS STUDENT AND
JCR GENDER REP



HI! I'M LOTTIE, A SECOND-YEAR PPE-IST AT MERTON.

WHILST THE WORK CAN BE SUBSTANTIAL, IT'S ALSO VERY ENJOYABLE AND PPE AT OXFORD CAN BE A RANGE OF WORKLOADS DEPENDING ON WHAT PAPERS YOU CHOOSE TO TAKE. FIRST-YEAR CAN BE QUITE INTENSE BECAUSE YOU TAKE ALL THREE SUBJECTS, WHICH MEANS SWITCHING BETWEEN DISCIPLINES THROUGHOUT THE WEEK. BUT IT'S ALSO FUN, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU HAVE TUTES WITH YOUR FRIENDS.

ONE OF THE GREAT THINGS ABOUT MERTON IS THAT TUTORS ARE SO HAPPY TO LET YOU EXPLORE YOUR OWN INTERESTS WITHIN A TOPIC, AND ARE OFTEN WORLD EXPERTS IN AN AREA. IN YOUR SECOND AND THIRD YEAR, YOU HAVE THE OPTION TO DROP ONE OF THE THREE SUBJECTS (AND MOST PEOPLE DO!). I'VE CONTINUED WITH PHILOSOPHY AND POLITICS, WHICH MEANS I WRITE TWO ESSAYS EACH WEEK, FOR PAPERS THAT I CHOOSE EACH TERM. BUT IF YOU KEEP GOING WITH ECONOMICS. OFTEN YOU'LL HAVE A PROBLEM SHEET INSTEAD OF AN ESSAY. I REALLY ENJOY GETTING TO CHOOSE THE AREAS THAT REALLY INTEREST ME, AND LOVE THE FREEDOM OF CHOICE WE GET AFTER FIRST YEAR.

MY DAYS LOOK SOMETHING LIKE THIS: I GET UP AT 6 AM TO ROW (BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS!), AND I GET BACK TO MY HOUSE AROUND 8.30 AM, WHERE MY FRIENDS AND I COOK BREAKFAST TOGETHER. AFTER THAT, WE EITHER HAVE LECTURES FOR A FEW HOURS, OR HEAD TO THE LIBRARY TO WORK ON OUR ESSAYS OR READINGS FOR THE WEEK. MERTON IS VERY CENTRAL, SO IT'S EASY TO GO AND GET LUNCH AT ONE OF THE MANY SANDWICH SHOPS IN THE CENTRE. AFTER THAT, IT'S BACK TO THE LIBRARY,

THIS TIME WITH A COFFEE. WE DO SOME MORE READING (AND DISTRACT EACH OTHER FROM READING BY TAKING LONG BREAKS) BEFORE WE GO HOME FOR DINNER. AFTER THAT, WE MIGHT HEAD TO MERTON'S BAR, GO OUT FOR A CREWDATE (MERTON COLLEGE BOAT CLUB IS GREAT FOR THESE), OR HAVE A CHILL EVENING IN AND WATCH A MOVIE TOGETHER.

AND WHEN YOU'RE NOT WORKING, THERE'S SO MUCH TO DO AT MERTON! I'VE BEEN GENDER REP ON THE JCR THIS YEAR, AS WELL AS WOMEN'S VICE CAPTAIN FOR ROWING AT MERTON; I WAS ON THE WINTER BALL COMMITTEE AND NOW I EDIT FOR THE CHERWELL (A STUDENT NEWSPAPER). BUT YOUR FREE TIME DOESN'T HAVE TO BE SPENT ON EXTRA CURRICULARS. MERTON HAS PUNTS AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS TO USE IN THE SUMMER, AND LOVELY GARDENS TO SPEND TIME IN. YOUR HOUSE, TOO, IS A GREAT SOCIAL SPACE TO SPEND TIME WITH YOUR FRIENDS, SO YOU'LL NEVER BE BORED OR BE SHORT OF THINGS TO DO!

I HAVE ABSOLUTELY LOVED MY TIME HERE, AND I WOULD REALLY ENCOURAGE YOU TO APPLY IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN PPE.

WHAT LIVING AT
MERTON IS LIKE
FOR THE STUDENTS
THEMSELVES

STORIES FROM STUDENTS
STUDYING:

- PPE
- LANGUAGES
- CLASSICS
- ENGLISH
- HISTORY
- BIOLOGY

HI, I'M HAZEL, A SECOND-YEAR ENGLISH AND FRENCH STUDENT! AS I DO A HUMANITIES DEGREE, MY TIMETABLE TENDS TO BE A LITTLE LESS RIGOROUS THAN FOR STEM BECAUSE I DON'T GET BOGGED DOWN BY HOURS OF LECTURES AND LAB WORK. THE FREEDOM TO DO WHAT I WANT WITH MY TIME CAN BE NICE, BUT ON THE FLIP SIDE, THAT MEANS I HAVE TO BE QUITE SELF-DISCIPLINED, AS I'VE GOT TO SET MY OWN WORKING HOURS AND DECIDE HOW MUCH READING I WANT TO GET DONE DURING THE DAY.

I WILL JUST PREFACE THIS BY SAYING THAT THERE REALLY ISN'T A TYPICAL 'DAY IN THE LIFE' FOR ME AS MY SCHEDULE VARIES (MY CLASSES ARE SCATTERED ACROSS THE WEEK) , AND ALSO DEPENDS ON HOW BUSY MY TERM'S WORKLOAD IS.

7.00AM: WAKE UP. SOMETIMES A BIT LATER THOUGH!

7.30AM: GO TO THE COLLEGE GYM. IT'S COMPLETELY FREE SO I LIKE TO MAKE THE MOST OF IT!

8.30AM: HAVE BREAKFAST.

9.00AM–12.00PM: STUDY AT EITHER ONE OF THE COLLEGE LIBRARIES OR THE ENGLISH FACULTY BUILDING. LECTURES AREN'T COMPULSORY SO I ATTEND FAR FEWER THAN I PROBABLY SHOULD...

12.00PM – 1.00PM: LUNCH BREAK. SOMETIMES I LIKE TO GO TO HALL AS IT'S QUITE CHEAP AND THE FOOD IS PRETTY GOOD! IF I'M OUT, I MIGHT GRAB SOMETHING WITH A FRIEND. GLOUCESTER GREEN MARKET HAS LOTS OF NICE FOOD.

1.00PM–6.00PM: HEAD TO THE LIBRARY. SOMETIMES I'LL HAVE TO ATTEND A CLASS OR TUTORIAL. MY CLASSES ARE ALL RUN BY COLLEGE RATHER THAN THE FACULTY. FOR FRENCH (THOUGH THIS SHOULD APPLY TO MODERN LANGUAGES IN GENERAL) , WE HAVE THREE CLASSES A WEEK: TRANSLATION (FRENCH TO ENGLISH) , GRAMMAR (ENGLISH TO FRENCH) AND SPEAKING. I HAVE TUTORIALS ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK. THESE ARE JUST HOUR-LONG SESSIONS WHERE I SIT DOWN WITH A TUTOR AND DISCUSS A CERTAIN TOPIC, WHICH I WILL HAVE HANDED AN ESSAY IN BEFOREHAND. MY TUTES ARE ONE TO ONE FOR THE MOST PART, WHICH ISN'T AS SCARY AS IT SOUNDS! THEY'RE INCREDIBLY USEFUL BECAUSE YOU CAN TALK ABOUT AN AREA THAT YOU PARTICULARLY ENJOY OR WANT TO EXPLORE FURTHER. TUTORS REALLY WANT TO HELP YOU OR SEE YOU IMPROVE (IT'S LITERALLY THEIR JOB) .

6.00–8.00PM: I COOK DINNER. USUALLY MY HOUSEMATES ARE AROUND SO WE HANG OUT IN THE KITCHEN.

9.00PM: FOR THE REST OF THE EVENING, I GIVE MYSELF SOME TIME TO RELAX AND BASICALLY JUST DO WHATEVER I WANT!

HAZEL, 2ND YEAR LANGUAGES STUDENT



WAKING UP (7AM–9AM) : YOUR ALARM GOES OFF AT 7. USUALLY, THIS IS FOLLOWED BY SOME TIME SLEEPING IN, SCROLLING THROUGH YOUR PHONE, AND MAKING YOURSELF SOME BREAKFAST, BUT OCCASIONALLY YOU MIGHT BE MORE ACTIVE WITH A MORNING WALK OR WORKOUT. AFTER TWO HOURS AND A NICE CUPPA, YOU ARE FINALLY READY TO FACE THE DAY'S WORK!

MORNING STUDY (9AM–11AM) : HEAD TO THE LIBRARY AND DO SOME READING. MERTON HAS NOT ONE, BUT TWO LIBRARIES TO CHOOSE FROM, SO YOU'RE SPOILED FOR CHOICE – OR YOU COULD HEAD TO ONE OF THE COUNTLESS LIBRARIES ACROSS OXFORD. NOW YOU HAVE ACTUALLY LOOKED AT YOUR ESSAY TOPIC FOR THIS WEEK, YOU REALISE YOU REALLY SHOULD HAVE STARTED READING FOR THIS EARLIER, BUT IT'S FINE BECAUSE YOU CAN GET THROUGH FIVE ARTICLES IN TWO HOURS, RIGHT? (HINT: IT'S UNLIKELY)

LECTURE TIME (11AM–12AM) : YOU ARRIVE 5 MINUTES LATE TO THE LECTURE EVEN THOUGH IT IS LITERALLY BEING HELD NEXT DOOR TO YOUR COLLEGE BECAUSE YOU WERE TRYING TO FINISH AN ARTICLE, BUT IT'S FINE. THE LECTURE HAS A 50% CHANCE OF BEING ONE OF THE INTERESTING ONES. AT THE END, YOU CAN CHAT TO A FEW FRIENDS ON YOUR COURSE FROM OTHER COLLEGES, WHO YOU HAVE PROBABLY MET IN FIRST YEAR INTERCOLLEGIATE LANGUAGE CLASSES.

LUNCH (12AM–1PM) : TIME TO APPRECIATE THE MERTON DINING HALL, WITH A HOT MEAL, DESSERT, SOUP AND SALAD OPTIONS TOO! ARGUABLY THE BEST MEAL OF THE DAY. PLUS, YOU CAN SIT WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND COMPETE TO SEE WHO HAS THE MOST WORK THIS WEEK. THERE IS A WEIRD SORT OF GLORY IN BEING THE MOST STRESSED. IT'S ALSO FUN TO HAVE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT YOUR SUBJECTS AND HEAR SOMEONE'S PASSION AS THEY TEACH YOU ALL ABOUT THEIR NICHE RESEARCH INTERESTS!

AFTERNOON NAP (1PM–4PM) : YOU TRY TO CONTINUE WITH READING BUT THE AFTERNOON LULL SETS OVER YOU AND YOU CAN BARELY KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN. YOU TAKE HALF AN HOUR TO GET SOME FRESH AIR AND A CUPPA/SNACK, WHICH ENDS UP BEING A TWO HOUR LONG PROCRASTINATION SESSION... WHEN YOU RETURN TO THE LIBRARY, YOU END UP REPLYING TO EMAILS AND ORGANISING YOUR WEEK INSTEAD OF READING. TECHNICALLY THAT'S STILL PRODUCTIVE!

TUTORIAL (4–5PM) : TIME FOR THE QUINTESSENTIAL OXFORD EXPERIENCE OF A TUTORIAL. YOU HANDED IN A TRANSLATION YESTERDAY AND NOW YOU AND THE TUTOR GO THROUGH IT. YOU MADE SOME MISTAKES, BUT YOU USE THOSE AS A LEARNING CURVE – YOU STILL DESERVE TO BE HERE!

MORE READING (5PM–7PM) : YEP, MORE READING. UNFORTUNATELY, IT'S NECESSARY.

FORMAL (7PM–8:30PM) : YOU GO TO THE HALL FOR FORMAL DINNER! THE FOOD IS DELICIOUS AND IT'S NICE TO TAKE A SLIGHTLY SLOWER PACE AT THE END OF THE DAY. OF COURSE, IF YOU HAVE AN ESSAY DUE SOON, PROBABLY BEST TO GO TO EARLY SUPPER INSTEAD.

HANGING OUT (8:30PM–10PM) : YOU HEAD TO THE BAR AND PLAY POKER WITH YOUR FRIENDS, WHICH HAS BECOME A WEEKLY TRADITION! THERE ARE LOTS OF PEOPLE CHILLING OUT THERE AND THE ATMOSPHERE IS NICE.

BEDTIME (10–11PM) : EVENTUALLY, YOU HEAD BACK TO YOUR ROOM, REPLY TO A FEW EMAILS, THEN FINALLY GO TO BED! HOPEFULLY YOU CAN GET STARTED ON WRITING THAT ESSAY, BUT THAT'S FUTURE YOU'S PROBLEM NOW.



*HAJRAH,
2ND
YEAR
ENGLISH
STUDENT*

IT IS A TRUTH UNIVERSALLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT ENGLISH STUDENTS HAVE FAR FEWER CONTACT HOURS THAN MOST OTHER STUDENTS. WHILST THAT MAY BE TRUE, (I CURRENTLY HAVE FOUR CONTACT HOURS PER WEEK, INCLUDING LECTURES, CLASSES AND TUTORIALS) , THE WORKLOAD IS CERTAINLY NOT LACKING.

I AM ALSO A MEDIEVALIST, AND THE ONLY ONE IN MY MERTON COHORT! IN FIRST YEAR, YOU GET TO STUDY FOUR PAPERS: 1910–PRESENT, 1830–1910, 650–1350 AND A LITERARY THEORY AND LINGUISTICS PAPER. OF COURSE, I ENJOYED THE MEDIEVAL PAPER THE MOST, AND CHOSE TO SPECIALISE IN THIS – IF YOU PREFER THE MODERN STUFF, THEN YOU CAN STUDY THAT INSTEAD IN SECOND YEAR. WHICHEVER PATH YOU CHOOSE (MEDIEVAL OR MODERN) .

IN AN AVERAGE WEEK, I WILL HAVE AN ESSAY DUE IN FOR A TUTORIAL, A CLASS OR TWO, AND 2–4 LECTURES. I LIKE TO SPREAD MY WORK OUT ACROSS LIBRARIES, SO MORNINGS ARE TYPICALLY SPENT AT THE ENGLISH FACULTY AND AFTERNOONS OFTEN IN OWL LIBRARY AT MERTON. COLLEGE LIBRARIES TEND TO HAVE MOST OF WHAT I NEED – THIS WAS ESPECIALLY TRUE IN FIRST YEAR. AFTER FINISHING MY WEEKLY ESSAY, I USUALLY TAKE A BREAK BY MEETING A FRIEND FOR COFFEE, OR GOING FOR A WALK, OR MAYBE WINDOW SHOPPING IN BLACKWELL 'S, THE BOOKSHOP EVERY ENGLISH STUDENT QUICKLY BECOMES VERY FAMILIAR WITH.

WHEN I ' M NOT SPENDING MY STUDENT LOAN ON BOOKS I WILL PROBABLY NEVER READ, YOU CAN FIND ME PLAYING OR TRAINING FOR THE MERTON COLLEGE NETBALL TEAM, WORKING ON ACCESS AND EQUALITY FOR COLLEGE, AND IN THE EVENINGS I ' M QUITE LIKELY TO COOK! I FIND IT A RELAXING AND PRODUCTIVE WAY TO END THE DAY. IT ' S ALSO A GOOD WAY OF BEING SOCIAL, BECAUSE I OFTEN HAVE DINNER WITH MY HOUSEMATES.

I DO REALLY ENJOY MY DEGREE, AS WELL AS ALL THE EXTRA CURRICULARS. STUDYING MEDIEVAL LITERATURE AT THE OLDEST COLLEGE IN OXFORD IS A PRETTY SURREAL EXPERIENCE, AND I GET TO DO THAT WITH THE MOST WONDERFUL PEOPLE AT MERTON, INCLUDING FRIENDS AND TUTORS. SO, IF YOU ' RE CONSIDERING ENGLISH AT MERTON, GO FOR IT AND APPLY NOW!

DAY IN THE LIFE

- 7:00 – YOU ARE WOKEN UP BY YOUR ALARM AND IMMEDIATELY GO BACK TO SLEEP.
- 8:00 – YOU FINALLY GATHER UP THE STRENGTH TO DRAG YOURSELF OUT OF BED.
- 9:00 – AFTER A COMBINATION OF SHOWER, COFFEE AND BREAKFAST HAS WOKEN YOU UP, IT'S TIME TO GO TO THE LIBRARY. THERE ARE LOTS OF BEAUTIFUL PLACES TO CHOOSE FROM, BUT YOU EVENTUALLY DECIDE ON THE UPPER BODLEIAN READING ROOMS – MAKING SURE TO PICK A DESK OVERLOOKING THE GLORIOUS RAD CAM SQUARE.
- 11:50 – YOU SOON REALISE THAT THIS WAS A MISTAKE, AS YOU'VE SPENT TOO MUCH TIME STARING OUT OF THE WINDOW AND ROMANTICISING ACADEMIA RATHER THAN DOING ANY ACTUAL WORK. NEARLY THREE HOURS AND ABOUT 15 PAGES DOWN YOU HEAD OFF FOR ONE OF YOUR TWICE-WEEKLY LECTURES.
- 13:00 – OUT OF THE LECTURE, IT'S TIME FOR A WELL-EARNED BREAK, A BIT OF SOCIALISING AND RIDICULOUS AMOUNTS OF FOOD WITH LUNCH IN HALL.
- 14:00 – WORK TIME AGAIN, AS AN INTERESTING ARTICLE ON ANCESTOR WORSHIP IN THE INCA EMPIRE HELPS YOU BRAVELY POWER THROUGH YOUR FOOD COMA AND THE DESIRE TO TAKE A NAP.
- 16:00 – YOU SENSE THE NEED FOR ANOTHER BREAK TO CLEAR THE HEAD AND MOVE THE ATROPHYING MUSCLES. TODAY IT'S A WALK IN THE BEAUTIFUL UNIVERSITY PARKS, BUT TOMORROW YOU MIGHT HAVE A BIT OF A KICK ABOUT WITH THE MERTON / MANSFIELD FOOTY TEAM.
- 17:30 – FEELING REFRESHED, IT'S BACK TO A LITTLE BIT MORE WORK BEFORE DINNER.
- 18:30 – DINNERTIME. TONIGHT YOU DECIDE TO SHOW OFF YOUR COOKING SKILLS WITH SOME PESTO PASTA.
- 19:30 – AFTER DINNER, IT'S TIME TO BE SOCIAL. YOU HEAD TO A CONCERT AT THE STUNNING SHELDONIAN WITH SOME FRIENDS. AFTER THE CONCERT, YOU GATHER FOR TEA AND CAKE – OR SOMETHING STRONGER – IN SOMEBODY'S ROOM (USUALLY WHOEVER HAS THE MOST CLEAN MUGS).
- 23:00 – EVENTUALLY, AFTER A HARD DAY'S WORK (OR SO YOU'RE TELLING YOURSELF) IT'S FINALLY TIME FOR GLORIOUS, GLORIOUS SLEEP.

ANNA, 2ND YEAR HISTORY STUDENT

GENERAL OVERVIEW

HISTORY IS GREAT (READ: THE BEST) BECAUSE OF ITS FLEXIBILITY. HAVING FEW CONTACT HOURS ALLOWS ROOM FOR EXPLORING NEW ACTIVITIES, KEEPING EVERY DAY DIFFERENT AND EXCITING. A TYPICAL WEEK OFTEN INVOLVES GOING TO CONCERTS, MEETING FRIENDS FOR COFFEE, PLAYING SOME COLLEGE SPORT, AND ATTENDING FORMALS IN MERTON'S BEAUTIFUL DINING HALL (WITH THEIR EQUALLY IMPRESSIVE FOOD).

OF COURSE, THE LIBRARY ALSO MAKES A SUBSTANTIAL APPEARANCE, THOUGH IT'S HARD TO FEEL INDIGNANT ABOUT STUDYING WHEN SURROUNDED BY THE GRANDEUR OF THE RADCLIFFE CAMERA. HERE AGAIN, THERE IS LOTS OF FLEXIBILITY. THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE YOUR MODULES MEANS YOU CAN GO FROM READING ABOUT HIPPIES IN SOVIET RUSSIA TO MEDIEVAL VEGANS IN A SINGLE WEEK!

THOUGH OXFORD CAN BE STRESSFUL, MERTON'S TIGHT-KNIT COMMUNITY MEANS SUPPORT IS ALWAYS AT HAND, WHETHER THIS IS THROUGH TUTORS, WELFARE OFFICERS (AND WELFARE TEAS!), OR THE STRONG FRIENDSHIPS YOU FORGE OVER THE COURSE OF YOUR DEGREE – YOU'RE SURE TO HAVE AN AMAZING TIME!

SALMANA,
3RD YEAR
BIOLOGY
STUDENT



Hi, my name is SALMANA, and I am currently in my third year studying Biology at Merton.

Biology has been a remarkable degree; it has given me a broad perspective of the fundamental processes underpinning life as we know it. I've really enjoyed learning about the evolution of life on Earth, its origins and organism interactions throughout evolution. I also appreciate how this course links cell biology to ecology and its wide applications in agriculture, infectious diseases, and conservation.

Typically, Merton has 4-5 biology students per year. It is a diverse cohort in terms of thought processes and interests in biology. This makes weekly tutorials (2-3 students) interesting because your ideas are constantly challenged, and you can think about a topic in a new way, helping you to develop your conceptual understanding of that topic.

Merton has some of the most experienced and knowledgeable tutors this university offers.

They help to develop your scientific essay writing planning and structure, but also the scientific process and underlying research skills. The degree changes your thinking process, helping you critically evaluate the textbooks/research articles' narratives and the biases and motives. It is a tough process transitioning from A-levels to university, but over time you'll start to feel more confident in your abilities and feel you've learned so much you possibly can't write it all down!

This year I enjoyed learning about infectious diseases such as plague, African sleeping sickness, and malaria, especially their pathogenesis and vaccine development. I also enjoyed the advanced cell biology course, which had aspects of metabolic engineering and synthetic biology. I also enjoyed learning how to improve agricultural productivity, water, nutrient and CO₂ uptake, and promote resistance to plant diseases.

Aside from academics, I have enjoyed Merton's atmosphere and the community. I've enjoyed going to various formals and dinners and enjoyed concerts and plays by Merton students. My favourite part is the Fellow's Garden in Trinity term, which is a fantastic spot to read, draw or socialise with friends. I've been involved in the Merton South Asia network and the Merton Biomedical and Life Sciences network, which have helped me to develop communities based on my interests.

TIME CEREMONY

ONE OF MERTON'S STRANGEST TRADITIONS ACTUALLY ONLY DATES BACK TO 1971, WHEN A GROUP OF UNDERGRADUATES AT MERTON CAME UP WITH THE IDEA OF THE TIME CEREMONY.

EVERY YEAR, AT TWO O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING ON THE LAST SUNDAY OF OCTOBER, WHEN THE CLOCKS ARE ABOUT TO TURN BACK, EVERYONE GATHERS ON SUNDIAL LAWN, NEXT TO FELLOW'S GARDEN.

AFTER LISTENING TO THE FOUNDER'S HISTORY OF THE EVENT (THE FOUNDERS HAVE RETURNED EVERY YEAR ESPECIALLY FOR THE TIME CEREMONY!) WE HEAD TOWARDS FELLOW QUAD, WHICH IS WHEN IT STARTS TO GET REALLY STRANGE.

WE BEGIN TO WALK, BACKWARDS AROUND THE QUADRANGLE, AND SPIN (CAREFULLY!) AT THE CORNERS, IN GROUPS, LINKED TOGETHER ARM-IN-ARM. OH, AND BY THE WAY, WE'RE ALSO IN OUR OXFORD GOWNS (THE ONES YOU HAVE TO WEAR TO THE ADMISSIONS CEREMONY), AND DRINKING PORT OR SOME OTHER REFRESHMENT. I TOLD YOU IT WAS STRANGE.

IT IS FOR A PURPOSE THOUGH: WE ALL GATHER AND WALK BACKWARDS FOR AN HOUR EVERY YEAR IN ORDER TO SAVE THE SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM. WITHOUT THE TIME CEREMONY, REALITY WOULD LITERALLY COLLAPSE, SO YOU'RE WELCOME, FOR SAVING US ALL. OF COURSE, THIS HAS BEEN SUPPORTED BY THE STRONGEST SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE – IT IS TOO COMPLEX FOR ME TO EXPLAIN HERE, SO YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO TRUST ME ON THAT ONE.



WINTER BALL

ONCE EVERY THREE YEARS, MERTON HOSTS A WHITE TIE WINTER BALL – THE ONLY WINTER BALL IN OXFORD. THE COLLEGE UNDERGOES A MASSIVE TRANSFORMATION, BECOMING A WINTER WONDERLAND FOR ONE NIGHT AND ONE NIGHT ONLY (UNTIL THE NEXT ONE, THAT IS). SECURITY BECOMES INCREDIBLY STRICT, TO STOP ANY GATE CRASHERS (YES, IT IS THAT GOOD) AND EVERYONE IS DRESSED TO THE NINES, FOR A MAGICAL NIGHT.



DODGEMS



WHITE TIE



THE EVENING WILL INVOLVE AN ALL YOU CAN EAT BUFFET AT THE FOOD STALLS, AN OPEN BAR, DANCING (SO MUCH DANCING!) AND LIVE MUSIC. IN 2022, THE ACTS INCLUDED DYLAN AND AN ABBA TRIBUTE ACT!

DEPENDING ON THE BALL COMMITTEE, MADE UP OF MERTONIANS, THE THEME CHANGES EVERY TIME. LAST TIME, THE THEME WAS 'THE IMMORTAL HOUR.'

ATTRACTIONS INCLUDED DODGEMS, LIVE MUSIC ACTS THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT, SILENT DISCO, CANDY FLOSS (MY PERSONAL FAVOURITE), PALM READING AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

MERTON WINTER BALL

MERTON FACTS

1) ALTHOUGH UNIV AND BALLIOL MIGHT DISAGREE, MERTON IS OXFORD'S OLDEST COLLEGE SINCE IT WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1264 AND WAS THE FIRST TO OFFER LIVE-IN STUDYING.

2) FIRST-YEARS CELEBRATE JOINING MERTON WITH A CANDLE-LIT CEREMONY IN CHAPEL FOLLOWED BY DRINKS AND A FORMAL DINNER.

3) OUR PREVIOUS WARDEN, PROFESSOR IRENE TRACEY, RECENTLY BECAME OXFORD UNIVERSITY'S VICE CHANCELLOR.

4) MERTON HOLDS A WHITE TIE WINTER BALL EVERY THREE YEARS SO EVERYONE GETS THE CHANCE TO ATTEND IN THEIR TIME HERE.

5) ANDREW WILES, THE MATHEMATICIAN WHO PROVED FERMAT'S LAST THEOREM, WAS AN UNDERGRAD AT MERTON, AND RETURNED TO THE COLLEGE AS A PROFESSORIAL FELLOW IN MATHEMATICS.

6) MERTON HAS 4 NOBEL PRIZE LAUREATES AMONGST ITS OLD MEMBERS.

7) MOB QUAD IS THE OLDEST QUADRANGLE IN OXFORD AND IS SUPPOSEDLY SO NAMED BECAUSE IT WAS HOME TO THE 'MOB' OF UNDERGRADUATES.

8) IN F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S *THE GREAT GATSBY*, JAY GATSBY NAMED HIS LIBRARY MERTON COLLEGE LIBRARY.

9) THOMAS BODLEY, A FELLOW HERE IN THE 17TH CENTURY, FOUNDED OXFORD'S BODLEIAN'S LIBRARY.

10) MERTON CELEBRATES 'OXMAS' WITH A BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS TREES IN FRONT QUAD, SEVERAL MORE IN HALL, 3 CAROL SERVICES AND 2 CHRISTMAS DINNERS.



FELLOWS QUAD



ENTRANCE TO HALL

11) THE TABLE IN FELLOW'S GARDEN IS SAID TO HAVE INSPIRED C.S. LEWIS TO CREATE 'THE STONE TABLE' IN *THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA*.

12) THE MEDIEVAL UPPER LIBRARY IN MOB QUAD IS THE OLDEST CONTINUOUSLY FUNCTIONING ACADEMIC UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN THE WORLD.

13) IN THE MID-20TH CENTURY, MERTON BRIEFLY KEPT WHITE PEACOCKS IN FELLOW'S GARDEN, BUT THEIR MATING SCREAMS KEPT THE STUDENTS UP AND THEY HAD TO BE REMOVED.

14) BASIL BLACKWELL, WHO ATTENDED MERTON COLLEGE, FOUNDED THE FAMOUS OXFORD BOOKSHOP, BLACKWELL'S.

15) HENRY SAVILE, WARDEN IN THE 16TH CENTURY, WAS ELIZABETH I'S ANCIENT GREEK TEACHER.

16) J.R.R. TOLKIEN, AUTHOR OF *THE LORD OF THE RINGS*, WAS PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE AT MERTON FROM 1945 TO 1959.

17) WILLIAM HARVEY, WHO DISCOVERED THE CIRCULATION OF THE BLOOD, WAS ONCE WARDEN OF THE COLLEGE.

18) ON ASCENSION DAY, YOU CAN CLIMB TO THE TOP OF THE CHAPEL TOWER TO LISTEN TO THE CHOIR SING & ADMIRE THE VIEW.

19) SIR ROGER BANNISTER, WHO RAN THE FIRST FOUR-MINUTE MILE AT THE NEARBY IFFLEY ROAD FIELDS, IS AN HONORARY FELLOW OF MERTON COLLEGE.

20) HER IMPERIAL HIGHNESS PRINCESS ARIKO OF MIKASA, MEMBER OF THE IMPERIAL HOUSE OF JAPAN, CAME TO MERTON AS A VISITING STUDENT IN 2001.



MERTON STREET

OXFORD LINGO



Battels: Your college bill for your accommodation and a few other bits and pieces, which is kindly waiting for you when you arrive back in Oxford for a new term.

Bod card: Your student card. This little rectangle of plastic is your everything at Oxford so guard it with your life! You need it for books, student discounts, to enter some of the university buildings, and most importantly at Merton, this card gets you your food. How many more reasons do you need?

Crew date: A dinner (and usually a night out at a club afterwards) where one team or society meets up with one from another college, normally of the opposite sex.

Cuppers: Any intercollegiate competition.

Formal Hall: An excuse to dress up and have a lovely meal in Hall (and Merton have them six times a week if you're that keen!).

Hilary: The name of the second term.

Hustings: A group interview/debate held before elections in which candidates attempt to win your vote (with the questions getting steadily more ridiculous!).

Bodleian: Oxford's main library and where you will find all the books you will ever need (and a load of others you won't...). It holds a copy of every publication printed in the UK, and you can find or request any of them but they are never lent out (this rule even stood for King Charles I in 1645!).

Bop: A "breach of the peace" and the college-based fancy dress parties which take place roughly once every two weeks at Merton.

Collections: College exams which take place in Oth Week of each term for most subjects.

Finalists: Students in their last year at Oxford who, funnily enough, will be taking their Finals at the end of the year. Try to be nice to them, they're very stressed.

Gown: The slightly ridiculous black garment which most undergraduates have to wear to exams and normally to Formal Hall as well. The term 'Gown' is another name for students of the University as opposed to the "normal" people who actually live in Oxford and spend more than eight weeks at a time there.

JCR: The Junior Common Room. You and all your other fellow Merton undergraduates are automatically part of the JCR, in which you can vote for the members of your JCR Committee. The acronym also stands for the Common Room itself which is a perfect place to go to whenever you are in desperate need of procrastination.

Mods: Short for Moderations. Formal University exams which some subjects have (essentially equivalent to Prelims).

Oxmas: The Oxford celebration of Christmas in mid-November (the short terms mean that we're never in Oxford for long enough to truly celebrate Christmas).

Pidge: Short for Pigeon Hole. Where all of your mail is sent, as well as countless flyers and leaflets which almost always go straight in the recycling bin (yes, we're very eco-friendly!). It can also be used as a verb if you are planning to "pidge" a letter to someone else.

RadCam: Short for the Radcliffe Camera, which is part of the Bodleian libraries. It is the big round building which is one of Oxford's most iconic structures.

Scout: The wonderful individual who comes round to your room five times a week to empty your bins and even cleans your room for you once a week. The Merton Scouts are absolutely lovely so be nice to them!

Trashing: Covering your friends in confetti after they have finished their exams.

Trinity: The name of the third and final term of the year (and the perfect time for BBQs, Pimm's, punting, and garden parties - as long as you're not a Finalist!).

Matriculation: The odd ceremony held early on in Michaelmas Term of first year which, with only a couple of lines in Latin, formally makes you a member of the University.

MCR: The Middle Common Room. Where all of the graduates hang out.

Michaelmas: The name of the first term.

OUSU: The Oxford University Student Union.

Oxford Union: The debating society which boasts a wide range of famous speakers and interesting debate topics. Students have to pay to become members.

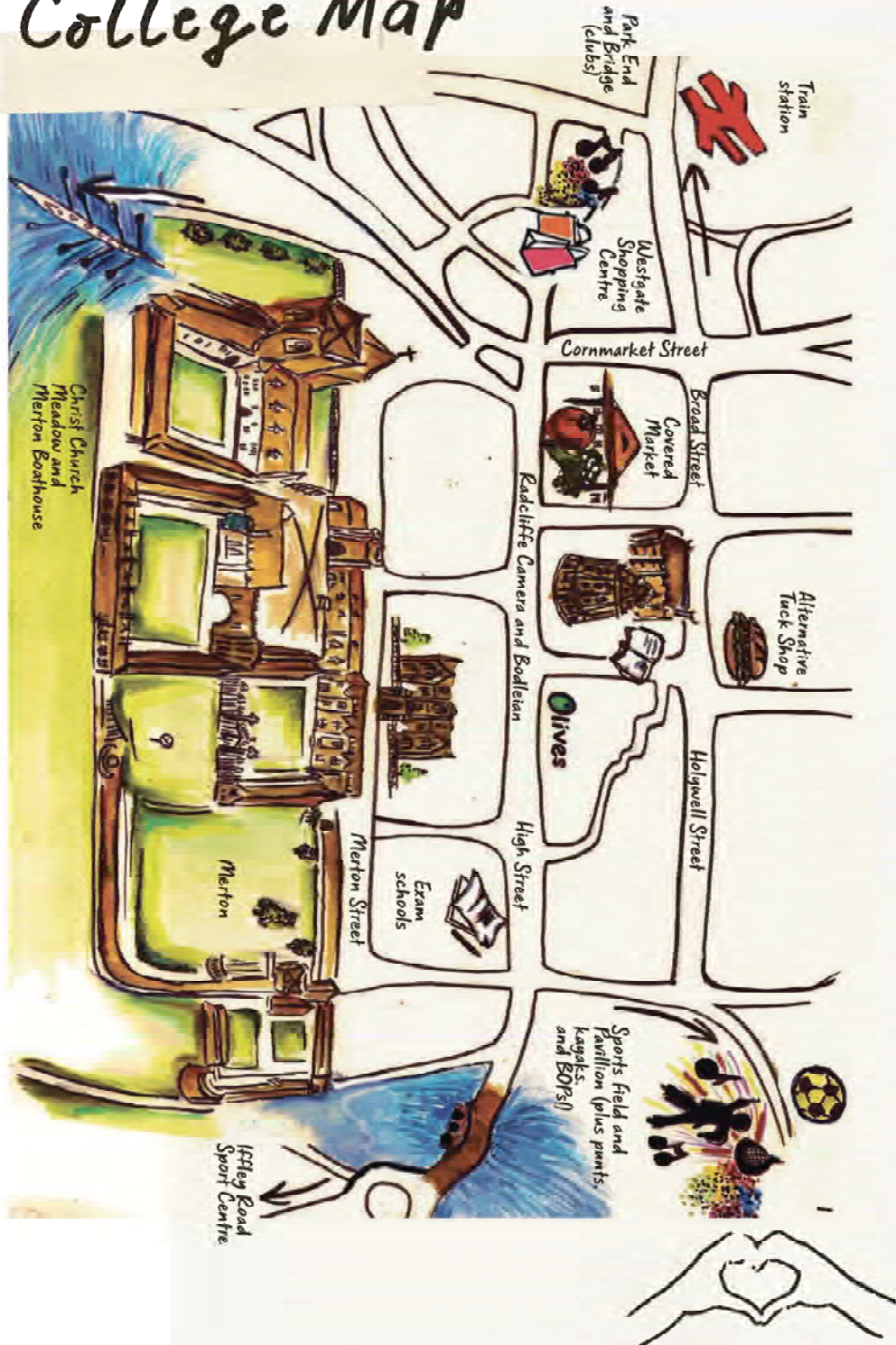
Prelims: The end of first year exams which most subjects have. Don't worry about them too much, they don't count towards your final degree but they show your progress in the first year. You have to pass them to continue to the second year.

SCR: The Senior Common Room. Where all the Tutors and Fellows hang out.

Sub Fusc: Essentially your uniform for exams: white shirt with black skirt or trousers and your gown. You also have to take your mortarboard with you, but you are not allowed to wear it. Don't ask why.

Tute: Short for tutorial. The main form of teaching at Oxford with you, and sometimes one or two others, and a tutor.

College Map



The End So there you have it!

We hope you think Merton is the college for you. but if you still need a little more info you can find the answers to many questions on our website:

<http://www.merton.ox.ac.uk/>

For any other questions about applications you can contact our Admissions Officer:

undergraduate.admissions@merton.ox.ac.uk

You can also find further information about Merton's Open Days on the College website:

<http://www.merton.ox.ac.uk/opendays>

Have a look at the University website for more information. and/or to take part in outreach events:

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate>

If you would like to read more about student experiences at Merton. follow us on Instagram @mertonjcraccess and have a read of our blog:

<http://www.merton.ox.ac.uk/undergraduate/student-ambassadors/blog>

You can also find all of the major subjects offered by Merton on Twitter; these accounts are run by students so you can see what we get up to on normal working days.

Just search @Merton[subject]. e.g. @MertonHistory or @MertonPhysics.

Hope to see you around Merton very soon!

HAJRAH,

JCR ACCESS AND EQUALITIES

REP ☺

Design: Andy Welland



