

**FRESHERS
GUIDE TO
ROBINSON
COLLEGE**

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WELCOME TO ROBINSON

We're the 2021-2022 Committee of the Robinson College Students Association (RCSA), undergraduate students at Robinson who are elected by the student body to represent student issues on a College level. You can find out more about us in the 'RCSA How to Guide' at www.rcsa.co.uk.

We'll be doing our best to help you settle in at Robinson and make your Freshers' Week as enjoyable as it can be!

This guide should provide you with a summary of all the information you might want to know before arriving in October, and during your first few weeks here.

Lots of information can be found on the College website, but this is designed to act as a supplementary resource that should hopefully help to answer any questions you might have.

We look forward to meeting you in October!

*The Robinson College Student Association
Committee, 2020-2021
<http://www.rcsa.co.uk/committee>*

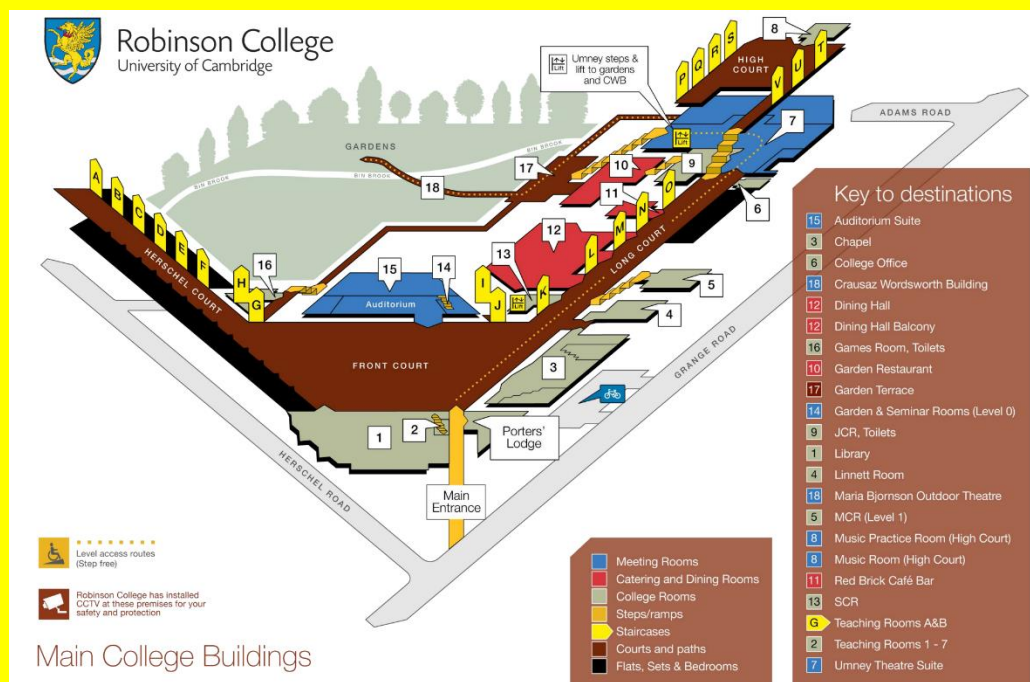
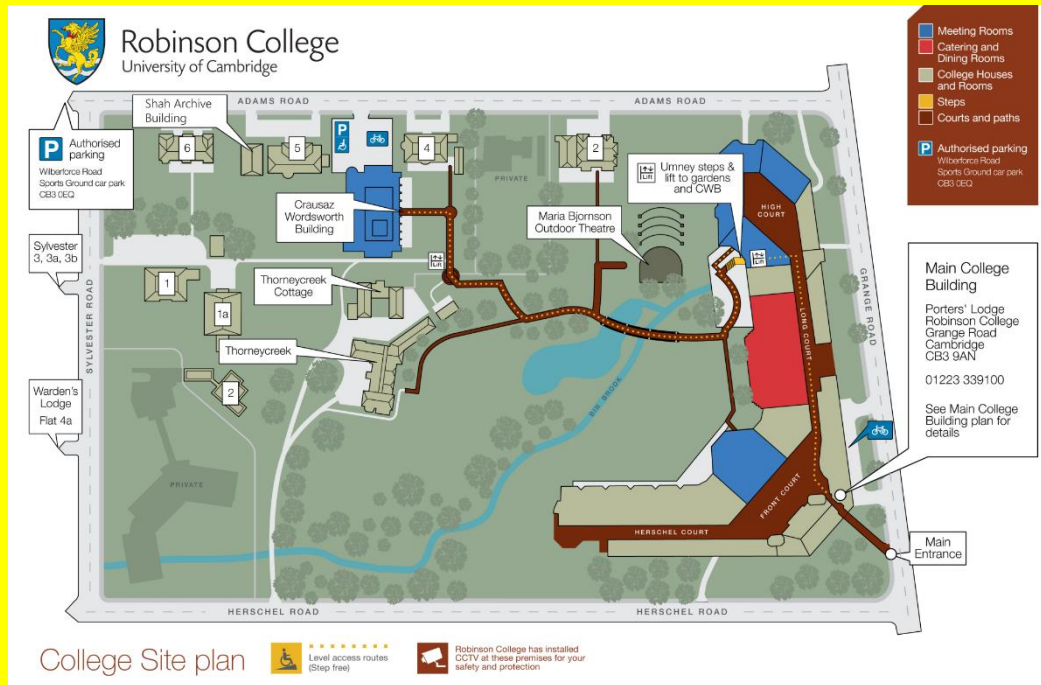
WHAT IS ROBINSON LIKE

Established in 1977, Robinson is one of the newest Cambridge colleges. We enjoy the traditions you would expect at a Cambridge college, but within modern buildings made almost entirely (in case you haven't notice) red bricks.

Robinson is renowned for being a laid back and friendly college, and our students live on the same site, so you'll get to know your year group very well, as well as students in other year groups. There are plenty of ways to get involved in College life and to make the most of the time you'll be spending at Robinson.

Robinson is located less than a ten minute walk (or a three minute cycle) west of the city centre, situated directly behind the University Library. It is very close to both the arts faculties on Sidgwick Site and the science buildings in West Cambridge. The main building is comprised of four courts and behind it you can find the College gardens, where you can spend time outside and are even allowed to walk on the grass – unlike many other colleges!

FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND



KEY STAFF MEMBERS



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LIVING AT ROBINSON

Undergraduate accommodation runs throughout the whole main College building, which is separated into lettered staircases. On your staircase, there will be a mix of students from all year groups, with a kitchen on both the top and bottom floors.

There are also college owned houses on the streets that run along the main site, where many students choose to live in their second or third year at Robinson.

There are five types of room at Robinson:

Best rooms are the largest and have ensuite facilities.

Standard Plus rooms are slightly smaller but also ensuite.

Standard rooms are slightly smaller still and share bathroom facilities between two rooms.

Standard Shower rooms are slightly smaller than standard rooms and have an ensuite with a shower.

Value rooms are smallest and share bathroom facilities between three rooms.

LIVING AT ROBINSON

TOP TIP:

You can read descriptions and reviews of all the rooms in College on the RCSA Rooms Database: <http://rooms.rcsa.co.uk/#home>

What's in my room?

- ✓ Bed
- ✓ Desk
- ✓ Bedside table
- ✓ Coffee table
- ✓ Shelves
- ✓ Wardrobe
- ✓ Approx. 6 hangers
- ✓ Desk lamp
- ✓ Bedside lamp
- ✓ Kettle
- ✓ General and recycling bins
- ✓ Desk chair and lounge chair
- ✓ Notice board
- ✓ Radiator
- ✓ Multiple plug sockets

LIVING AT ROBINSON

Bedmakers (or 'bedders') are the College housekeeping staff. They work Monday-Friday and in a normal term would clean your room once a week (hoover, clean bathroom etc.) and empty your bins, as well as cleaning the kitchens on your staircase every day. When you arrive on your first day, you will be told which day of the week is your 'Bedder Day'.

There is a kitchen at the top and bottom of each staircase. Most are shared between around eight students.

- ✓ Two hobs
- ✓ Cupboards
- ✓ Tea towels
- ✓ Washing up liquid, scourer and cloth
- ✓ Microwave
- ✓ Fridge (with ice box)
- ✗ Freezer
- ✗ Oven
- ✗ Toaster
- ✗ Pots and pans
- ✗ Cutlery and crockery
- ✗ Cooking utensils

ACCOMMODATION FAQs

Do I need to bring my own bedsheets?

Yes. The college does not provide bed sheets so you will need to bring a mattress cover, duvet cover and two pillow covers. The college will provide bedding (2 pillows, a duvet and a mattress) so no need to bring that with you.

Can I stay in my room outside of term time?

Like other Cambridge colleges, Robinson hosts a lot of external conferences, which means that conference guests stay in the rooms during the vacation periods. The termly residence usually runs from the Saturday before term begins until the Saturday after it ends. If you need to stay in your room outside of these dates, you will need to request permission to do so by emailing Mrs Keisha Sharp (ks610@cam.ac.uk).

What is included in the residences charge?

The residence charge includes rent, electricity, water, IT and domestic services. There is no additional kitchen fixed charge or charge for utilities, and there is no charge for normal levels of internet use.

ACCOMMODATION FAQs

Do I have to pay a deposit?

All students must pay a £250 deposit. You will be invoiced at the beginning of September and expected to pay it within 10 days.

Can I put a fridge in my room?

If you wish to put a fridge in your room, it must be registered with the Housekeeping Department. It should be a small refrigerator (no more than 50 litres) and must be taken home during each vacation.

Can I choose where I live?

In your first year, you are randomly allocated a room in your chosen band. The order for choosing second year rooms is determined by a randomly drawn ballot, the order of which is reversed in third year.

THE GARDEN RESTAURANT

The Garden Restaurant (GR) is the canteen in Robinson. It is open for three meals a day and brunch on the weekends. The food is some of the best in Cambridge. There are always meat, vegetarian, vegan and halal meals.

Also available are the following:

A pasta, snack/jacket potato bar

An extensive salad bar

Fresh fruit

A wide range of hot and cold desserts

As well as using a debit card, you can pay for food in College using your student card. GR purchases are taken off of your 'food purse'. Your card can be topped up online, or at the till in the GR. You will be able to top up your card on the arrival day in October. No cash will be accepted in college.

THE RED BRICK CAFE

Conveniently located in the heart of the College, the RBC is open every day, with a large flat screen TV, daily papers, wifi, comfy sofas and a cosy environment. It's a great place to grab a bite to eat or catch up with friends. The RBC becomes a bar in the evening, with regular karaoke nights, quizzes and screenings of sports matches.

The cafe offers hot and cold drinks, as well as a huge range of food options including:

Paninis, wraps, sandwiches

Freshly baked pizza from 6pm

Evening meals on the weekend

Desserts, cakes and sweets

Smoothies, juices and fresh fruit

Homemade milkshakes

Groceries such as pasta, milk, bread and eggs

Here, you can pay using your student card as well as with a debit card. Food and non-alcoholic beverage purchases are taken off your 'food-purse', while alcoholic drinks come off you 'bar-purse'.

OTHER FACILITIES

Formals

Formals are three-course meals served by waiters, which take place twice a week at Robinson, on Tuesday and Friday evenings. They are more expensive than eating in the GR or RBCB (£11.00 for members, £17.22 for guests) but are really enjoyable for special occasions, such as birthdays or when friends or family are visiting. You are allowed a maximum of 3 guests at each formal.

Formals need to be booked online in advance using the following link: <https://meal.robinson.cam.ac.uk/> This is also where you should go to check the balance of your food purse and top it up.

Formals can be a little bit confusing and they have some weird traditions to get your head round so here are a couple of things to know!

1. Dress Code is smart casual with gowns (you will be given a gown to purchase by the college when you arrive so no need to buy one beforehand).
2. They start at 7:30pm but always come at least 10/15 minutes in advance - people often head to the bar for a pre dinner drink before hand.

OTHER FACILITIES

3. Make sure you give your dietary requirements ahead of time (you can put them on your booking form for the formal). You can then pick up your dietary requirement slip of paper at the door to the hall when you enter for the formal.
4. You can sit wherever you want on the main tables (sometimes there is a big group that have booked in advance e.g. choir and then there will be seats especially reserved that you cannot sit in). If you are going with a larger group of people try and go early so you can make sure you are all sitting together - it's not guaranteed! There will be a seating plan for special formals like matriculation formal though.
5. There is a special high table at the front of the hall where the Warden and other fellows and members of the SCR will sit.
6. Stay standing behind your chair at the beginning of the formal and wait until high table have arrived. Then the Warden will say grace and they will hit a gong and then you can sit down.
7. You can either bring your own bottle of wine you can buy from the supermarket or from the bar or you can buy wine with the formal - this will be an option in the form when you book - alcohol is not necessary though and many people don't drink at formal.

OTHER FACILITIES

8. As any other meal you must be generally respectful of people around you, especially the staff, and don't get too drunk or be too rowdy.
9. Just a point to know - outer cutlery is used first for starters and then you move inward for main and dessert.
10. Don't use your phone during the formal and only move from your seat if you need the toilet. You cannot get up to go and talk to people across the room.
11. After dessert there will be tea and coffee and you are allowed to leave after high table gets up to leave.
12. Most people head up to the bar or the JCR after formals and sometimes go out to town clubbing afterwards.

I know that seems like a lot but formals, although maybe daunting to start with, are really fun events and get a lot easier once you go to a couple!

OTHER FACILITIES

Laundry

There is a laundry room with washing machines (£1.80 per wash) and dryers (£1.60 per dry). It is situated down the stairs across from the Porters' Lodge. You can pay a £10 deposit (which you can get back at the end of your time at Robinson) to obtain a laundry card in the Porters' Lodge, which can be topped up online and used with the machines. Some laundry detergent is provided in the laundry room by the RCSA, but you are also welcome to bring your own. You can also borrow an Iron from the porter's lodge and use the ironing board in the laundry room.

Wifi

There is free wifi throughout College, which you can access as a Robinson student using your CRSid, as well as through Eduroam.

LIBRARIES

The **Robinson Library** is situated in Front Court. The library is open 24 hours and contains all the main books you will need for your course, which you can borrow throughout your time at Robinson. They are organised by subject matter across the three floors. There are also plenty of workspaces, with rows of desks, individual rooms and relaxed seating areas.

You can check whether a particular book is available in the library by looking it up in the library catalogue, which can be found here:

<https://www.robinson.cam.ac.uk/Heritage/>

As a Cambridge student you also have access to all of the **department libraries**, as well as the **University Library**. The UL is right across the road from Robinson - it's a copyright library, which means it has a copy of every book that is published in the UK.

You can borrow books from any of the libraries - just register your card at the desk. All of the libraries have different feels to them and you should try out different ones to work out which you prefer working in. You can find out about all the different workspaces and cafés in Cambridge on a website called **Spacefinder**, which allows you to search and filter locations by a variety of criteria (e.g. noise level, natural light, layout). Check it out at <https://spacefinder.lib.cam.ac.uk>.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

College Societies

Societies are an important part of life at Robinson and there is a huge range of societies that you can get involved in.

Whatever you enjoy – whether it's film or hockey; gardening or choir; video games or croquet – you'll be able to find a society you'll want to join! If you wish there was a particular society that doesn't already exist, you can easily set up your own society by speaking to the RCSA Sports and Societies Officer.

If you're someone who enjoys sport, joining a sports society is a great way to keep fit and have fun in a more relaxed environment than university wide sports teams. If you represent Robinson at a sport, you'll get to play against other Colleges – it's also a great way to meet students in different years.

**To see all of the sports and societies currently available at Robinson, follow this link:
www.rcsa.co.uk/societies.**

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

University Societies

There are over **500 clubs and societies** that you can join at any point during your time at Cambridge, including 52 university-wide sports clubs.

During Freshers' Week there will be a **Freshers' Fair**, where you can meet representatives from each society and sign up if you're interested. Members of the RCSA will be walking groups down to the Freshers' Fair when it happens in Parkers Piece.

Robinson has two exercise spaces in college, one with a treadmill and bike and one with cable weights machines. Membership costs £15 a term and will be charged to your termly bill if you sign up. Additionally the **University Sports Centre** in West Cambridge offers discounts for Robinson students on their pay-as-you-go, termly & annual memberships. Just show your CamCard when you sign up.

A list of all University societies can be found here:
www.societies.cam.ac.uk

SOCIAL

Robinson Bops

The RCSA Ents Officer run bops every Friday night in the Party Room. Bops are essentially themed discos with great tunes from student DJs, as well as extremely cheap drinks. They're really popular with students from all year groups and a great way to finish the week.

The JCR

The JCR (Junior Combination Room) is a social space which is next to the bar and open to all undergraduates at Robinson. There are lots of new, comfy sofas and chairs, a huge range of board games and a pool table.

FRESHER'S WEEK

Fresher's Week is essentially an opportunity for you to meet other Freshers and settle into life at Robinson before term starts. There are a mix of compulsory and non-compulsory activities, and members of the RCSA Committee will be around throughout the week, so if you have any questions at all, please just ask!

When you arrive in College you will be greeted by members of the RCSA who will be around all day to help you. When you arrive, you can expect to do the following things:

1. Collect the key for your room from the Porters' Lodge.
2. Sign in by showing some form of ID & receive your University Card. At this point you will have the option to add money to your food purse and bar purse, which you will then be able to spend in the GR and RBCB.
3. Move into your room. There will be members of the RCSA in Front Court who will be able to show you to your room!
4. Once everyone has arrived there will be activities so you can meet other students and start settling into life at Robinson – you will get a schedule of event on arrival.

THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge is a beautiful and vibrant city and you'll be able to go on tours of the centre during Fresher's week. The city centre is less than an 10 minutes walk from Robinson, or only a couple minutes if you cycle.

There are two large shopping centres in Cambridge: Grand Arcade (in the centre of town) and Grafton Centre (on the other side of town).

It is easy to have packages shipped to College – just put the delivery address as Robinson College and your letters and parcels will be left either in your pigeon hole in the Porters' Lodge, or with the Porters' themselves.

GENERAL FAQS

Do I need to bring/buy a bike?

Robinson is very close to both West Cambridge and the city centre. Whichever subject you do, a bike is useful but not essential at all! If you are looking for one, get a cheap bike with a good quality lock from one of the many second hand bike shops in the city.

Are there bursaries and support funds outside of the student loan?

Yes! Here is the RCSA guide on all the support that is available:

<http://www.rcsa.co.uk/files/documents/RCSA-Funding-Guide.pdf>

Do I need to register with a GP in Cambridge?

Yes. The College Nurse will help you register you with a GP. However, if for whatever reason you wish to visit a GP on your own, Newnham Walk Surgery is the closest to Robinson College. Bring your ID when you go, know your current GP name and address, and other relevant details such as your NI/EHIC number.

GENERAL FAQs

How do I obtain a proof of address for a student bank account?

Ask Ms Jane Hall at jh814@cam.ac.uk.

Can I store items in college during the holidays?

There are lockable overhead cupboards in lots of rooms. This and the lockable kitchen cupboards are good places to store items over the Christmas and Easter break, but must be cleared out for the summer. The Trunk Room can be used for storage over summer and is operated by the Porters. Local students are permitted one item, whereas international students and those requiring a long journey can store three.

Can I practise music in my free time?

Robinson College Music Society is very active and runs the music room booking system together with the Porters. You can check the timetable at the Porters' Lodge and select the time you would like to use the music room. The Chapel can also be used whenever it is free. Music practice in your room is discouraged after 10pm and in exam term.

LOOKING AHEAD

THINGS TO DO NOW:

- Set up your Raven Account
- Set up your email (you will start getting important emails!).
- Talk to your college parents when they have been allocated.
- Save the phone number of the Porters' Lodge: 01223 339100.
- Get a Nectar Card, Unidays or any student discounts you'll use.
- Make a facebook account, most events are publicised here. Also join the Robinson College Freshers and Students 2022 Facebook groups.
- Set up a student bank account.
- Follow RCSA on Instagram: @robinsoncollegejcr
- Ask us anything you're unsure about! If you have any questions regarding Freshers' Week, you can email vice-president@rcsa.co.uk

DON'T FORGET THESE THINGS:

Towels, a laptop, cooking equipment, cutlery, crockery, documentation, laundry bag, sports equipment or kit, cash, decorations, formal clothes...

USEFUL WEBSITES

Cambridge SU - for information about societies, support and events:

<https://www.cambridgesu.co.uk/>

CamSIS - to register for your papers and exams

<https://www.camsis.cam.ac.uk/>

CamCORS - where you receive your supervision reports <https://www.camcors.cam.ac.uk/>

Moodle - lecture notes and resources

<https://www.vle.cam.ac.uk/>

DS-Print eCredit Top Up

<https://ecredit.ds.cam.ac.uk/>

iDiscover - the database of books in all libraries

<https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/>

Spacefinder - a tool that lets you search for libraries in Cambridge by a range of different criteria

<https://spacefinder.lib.cam.ac.uk>

Raven setup

<https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/studentregistry/current/yourinfo/studentregistration/index.html>

USEFUL WEBSITES

Raven setup

<https://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/studentregistry/current/yourinfo/studentregistration/index.html>

Email access

<https://help.uis.cam.ac.uk/service/email/emailintroduction/>

Free Microsoft Office

<https://www.uis.cam.ac.uk/for-students/students/>

Eduroam

<https://help.uis.cam.ac.uk/devices-networksprinting/network-services/wireless/eduroam/>

Robinson College

<https://www.robinson.cam.ac.uk/>

RCSA

<http://www.rcsa.co.uk/>

Garden Restaurant Menu

<https://www.robinson.cam.ac.uk/college-life/garden-restaurant-menu>

Formal Hall Booking System/Food Purse Top Up

<https://meal.robinson.cam.ac.uk/>

USEFUL WEBSITES

RCSA Rooms Database

<http://rcsarooms.soc.srcf.net/>

Washstation Laundry set up and top up

<http://www.washstationstudent.co.uk/>

Heritage - Robinson Library catalogue

<https://www.robinson.cam.ac.uk/Heritage/>

Resources for international students

www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/tier-4-responsibilities/

www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/collecting-your-visa-brp/

Nightline

<https://cambridge.nightline.ac.uk/>

SU Advice Service

<https://studentadvice.cam.ac.uk/>

Uni Counselling

<https://counselling.cam.ac.uk/>

CAMBRIDGE LINGO

When you arrive in Cambridge, you'll find that there are a lot of strange abbreviations and names given to things that you'll encounter. No need to memorise them, as once you're here you'll get to grips with them really quickly – but it might be worth taking a look!

In College

Bedder – Your bedmaker. Bedders are housekeeping staff who come into students' rooms once a week in the morning and clear out the bins, make your bed, vacuum the room and clean the bathroom.

Bop – Basically like a school disco with student DJs, cheap drinks and fun themes. At Robinson, these take place every Friday in the Party Room and are organised by the Ents (Entertainment) Officers.

College parents – Students in the year above, who will help welcome you to the College and answer any questions you may have.

CAMBRIDGE LINGO

DOS – Your Director of Studies, who oversees everyone in your course and acts as your point of contact for any academic plans or concerns. You will meet with them at least twice a term to check up on progress.

Fellow – A member of academic staff in College.

Formal – A formal dinner held in College, where you wear gowns.

JCR – Junior Combination Room, where undergrads can relax and socialise. The JCR can also mean the organisation that represents undergrads in College - at Robinson, this is the RCSA.

MCR – Middle Combination Room: the same as JCR, but for graduate students.

Pidge – Pigeon Hole. A space in the Plodge (see below) that acts as your letter box during your time in Cambridge. They are shared between five to six students.

CAMBRIDGE LINGO

Porter – College staff based in the Porters' Lodge who are a good point of contact for any queries, issues and emergencies.

Tutor – The Fellow (see above) responsible for your personal and pastoral welfare during your time at Cambridge. This is the person to contact if you have any concerns to do with your well-being.

Warden – The head of our College (usually the Master at other colleges).

The University

Alumnus – A former student of the University.

Tripes - This is the name of a university examination, but essentially describes the subject you are studying. For example, if you are a Maths student, you will be sitting the Mathematical Tripos.

Cantab – Another name for Cambridge. Students from The Other Place (see below) call Cambridge students 'tabs'.

CAMBRIDGE LINGO

Caesarian Sunday - A Sunday before exams start when everyone at the University goes to Jesus Green for a day of fun in the sun.

Faculty – The name for a department of the university.

Freshers – First year students.

Matriculation – A ceremony in College during Freshers' Week where students are formally admitted to College.

May Ball – The balls held by many Colleges in May Week, at the end of the academic year. They are basically an all-night party with unlimited food, drinks and entertainment.

May Week – The week of relaxation after exams when most May Balls, June Events, Garden Parties take place.

Punt – The long, flat-bottomed boats that go up and down the River Cam. They are used for guided tours down the river or self-hire.

CAMBRIDGE LINGO

Supo – A unique component of the Cambridge teaching system. They're generally where most of your learning takes place, in small groups with an academic.

The Other Place - Our long-time rival, Oxf*rd.

Extracurricular

ADC – The Amateur Dramatic Club, the main source of Cambridge student theatre.

Blue – Sporting colours awarded by certain University clubs after an annual 'Varsity Match' against Oxford.

Blues – The University's first team for any sport. For example, if you are in the 'Hockey Blues,' you play for the first team and will compete in Varsity.

Boat Race – The annual Varsity rowing competition between Oxford and Cambridge. The crews race down the Thames and it is broadcast on the BBC. It is hugely popular with students, alumni and the public.

CAMBRIDGE LINGO

Bumps – The inter-college rowing race that takes place in Lent and Easter terms. All crews start at the same time with a length and a half of clear water between each boat. A boat wins by ‘bumping’ the boat in front.

Cuppers – Inter-college knock out competitions in different sports.

Footlights – The student comedy society.

RAG – Raising And Giving, a uni-wide charity organisation with reps in every college who organise events throughout the year.

Tab – An online student magazine.

Thesp – Slang term for an actor.

Varsity – Sporting (and other) contests between Cambridge and Oxford. It is also the name of the University of Cambridge's student newspaper.

CAMBRIDGE LINGO

The City

ARU – Anglia Ruskin University: another university in central Cambridge.

Addenbrooke's – Cambridge's hospital.

Backs – The area of Cambridge that backs onto the river. It is named for the backs of the Colleges which run along the river (Queens', King's, Clare, Trinity Hall, Trinity and John's).

The Nightclubs – the four nightclubs in Cambridge, Revs (Revolution), MASH, Vinyl and Lolas. The biggest Cambridge students nights are Sunday Life (at Vinyl), Tuesday Glitterbomb (LGBT club night at Vinyl), Wednesday Revs, Fleek Thursdays (at Revs). Students don't usually go clubbing on Saturday's as they are townie (non-student) nights.

The Vans – The Trailer of Life (a.k.a. **Van of Life**) (unless you go to the Gardenia (a.k.a. **Gardies** instead).