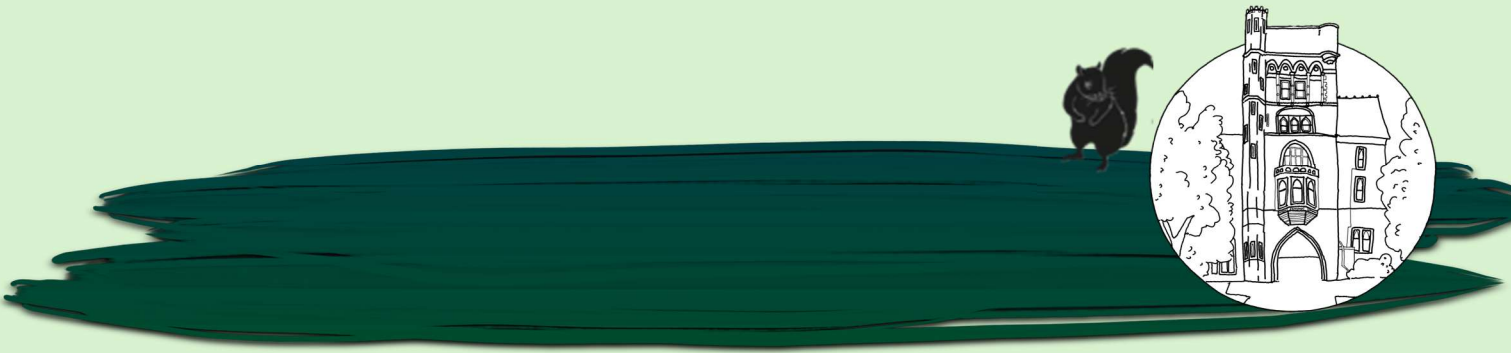
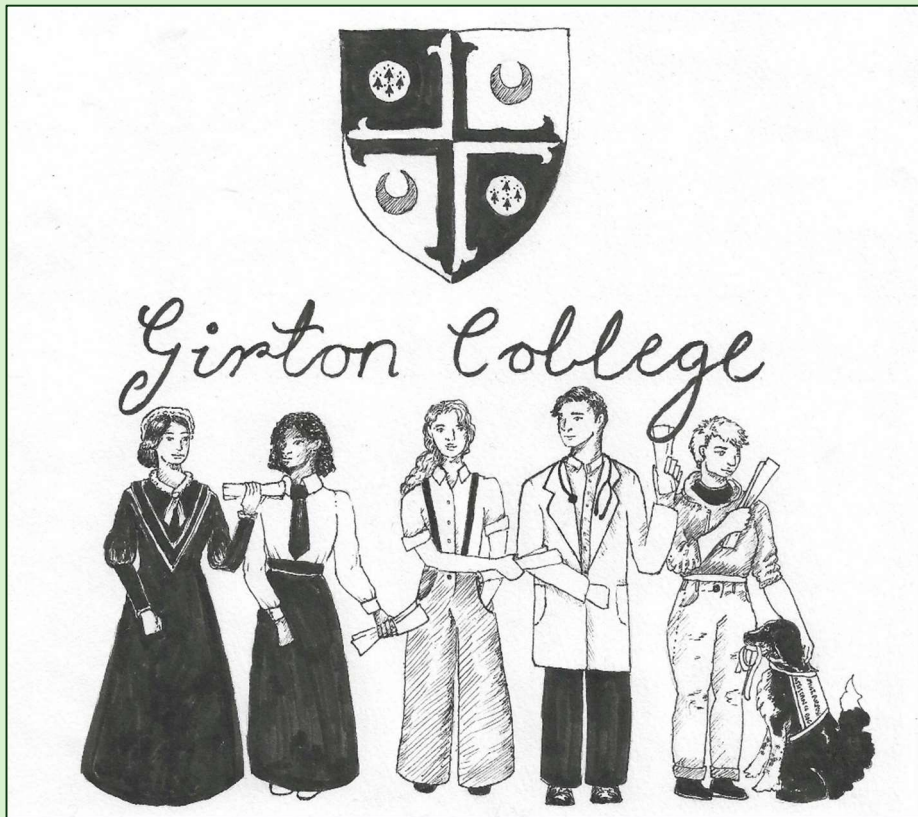




# Girton College JCR

# Freshers' Guide

# 2024





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## Welcome

Welcome to Girton! Here you will find all things Cambridge, and you'll come to know its quirks and see how special the Girton community is. As well as a week of exciting events from Girton JCR, you'll be given a toolkit to help you withstand the adjustment to College and Cambridge life. The academic pressure and huge range of activities on offer can be a little overwhelming at times, but we encourage you to get involved while feeling reassured that our Freshers' Committee have got your backs and are always on hand to help! This guide should act as a how-to index to help you navigate situations you might encounter during your time here, but our support doesn't end when Freshers' Week finishes: Girton JCR will always welcome queries and be prepared to give help where we can. Have a great week and get stuck in!

Gir'Tons of love,

Luisa Armitage

*Freshers' Committee 2024 President and JCR Vice President*





## How to use this guide

The main purpose of the guide is to give you an idea of what it will be like to live and study at Girton. You'll find out about your accommodation and facilities, the societies and events that you can get involved with, as well as get an insight into living and studying at Cambridge more broadly.

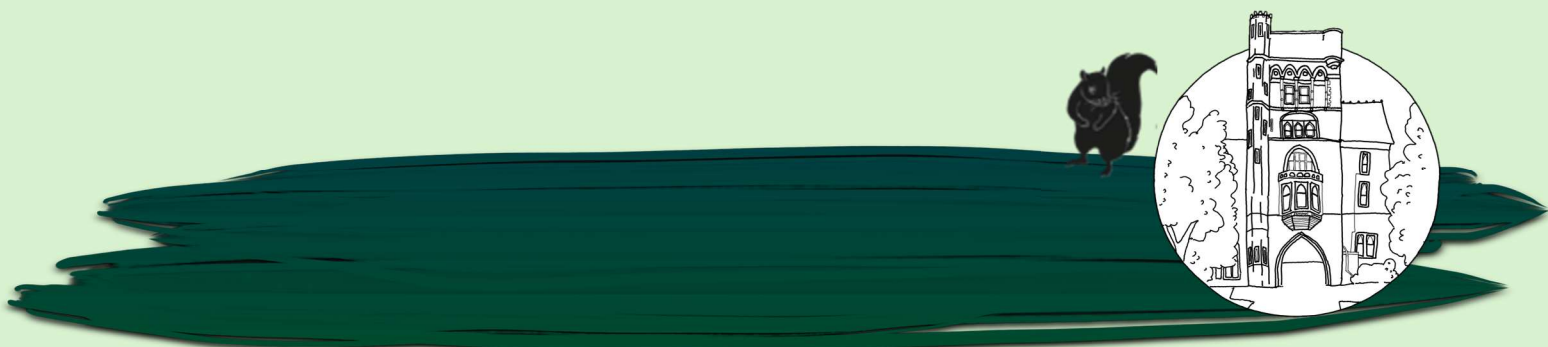
Taking care of yourself, both mentally and physically, is essential as you embark on your Cambridge journey. University life brings many changes, and adapting to a new routine and environment can be challenging. But remember, you're not alone in this! This guide is just the beginning of the support that we, the JCR, along with the entire Girtonian community, are here to offer throughout the upcoming academic year. We're like a family, ready to help you navigate everything from the ups and downs of student life to the everyday challenges. We strongly encourage you to read the section on "Taking care of yourself" ahead of your first term to help you prepare for the exciting times ahead.

## CRSids

These are the alphanumeric strings that all members of the university are assigned (e.g. abc11). Your CRSid is what you use to log in to your Cambridge email account on Outlook, and you should have already received instructions on how to access it via your personal email address. If you know someone's CRSid, you just need to add @cam.ac.uk to email that person.

## Slang

There are quite a lot of Cambridge-specific slang words that students here use (e.g., "Plodge", "Medwards" and "supo"). If we use any slang words in the Freshers' Guide, we will always clarify their meaning. We've also included a "Cambridge Slang" dictionary at the end the end of the Freshers' Guide, where you can check the meaning of words.





## Next steps after reading this guide

### Register to vote

- You can register to vote at both your home and uni address. Register to vote at Girton here <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>

### Open a Student Bank Account

- We suggest that you open a student account with an ethical bank.

### Register with a GP

- Huntingdon Road Surgery is the nearest GP clinic.

### Download Facebook

- Follow our social media pages linked in this email. There you will find a link to a Facebook group with easy-to-access links to join the main JCR Facebook group. If you are an international student, it's also a good idea to join the Girton College International Students' Facebook group.

### Follow the Girton JCR Instagram Accounts

- Follow us @girtonfreshers24, @girtonjcr and @girtonwelfare

### Make sure you have a formal outfit

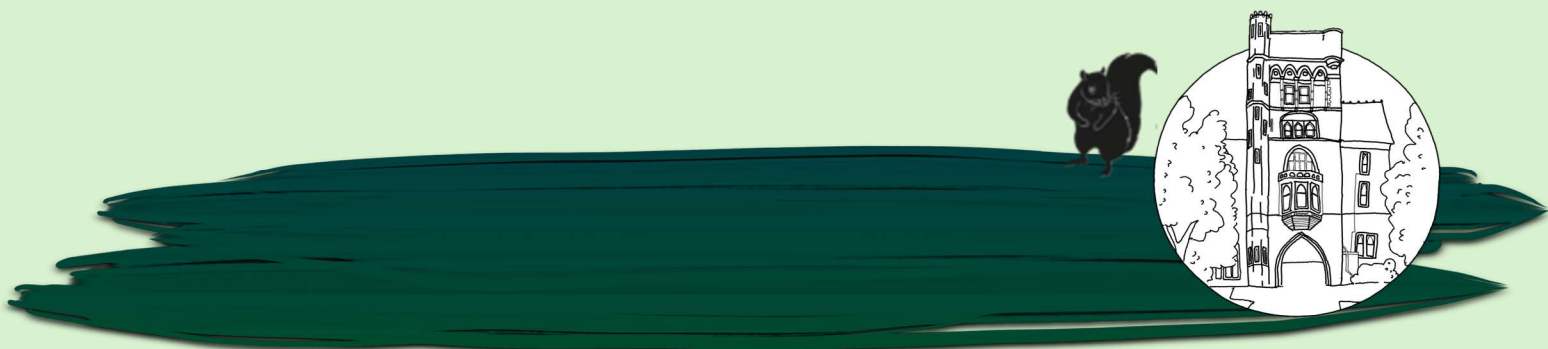
- You will need a formal outfit for matriculation. This can be a black/dark coloured trouser/skirt suit or dress, or dark formal trousers/skirt with a white formal shirt. Charity shops are a great source of cheap formal clothing!

### Add the Porters' Lodge number to your phone

- Their number is: +44 (0)1223 338999

### Sign up for student discounts like UNIDAYS

- You're a student now – make the most of it!





## Living at Girton

Welcome to Girton, where you'll find space to unwind outside of central Cambridge life. Set on 30 acres of beautiful grounds, with sports pitches, woodland and gardens, Girton offers a peaceful escape from city life. We're only about 2.5 miles from central Cambridge (a 40-minute walk or a quick 10/15-minute cycle), but the distance gives you time to decompress as you head back to the familiar comfort of College. Girton is known for its friendly atmosphere, black squirrels, indoor swimming pool, and a strong sense of community that quickly makes you feel at home.

## Our history

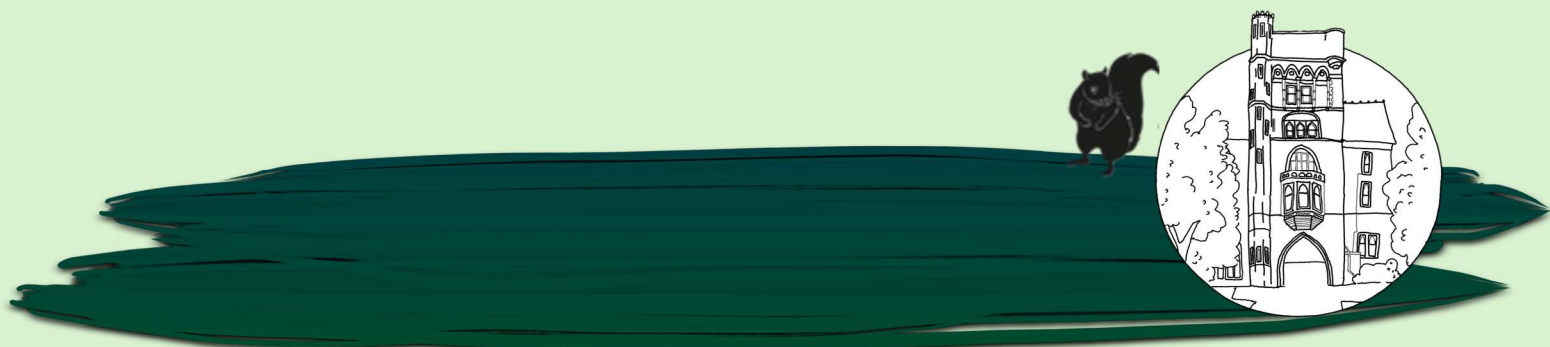
Girton College has a proud and pioneering history. It was founded in 1869 by feminist icons Emily Davies and Barbara Bodichon as the first residential institution in the UK for women's higher education. Built on ideals of equality and inclusion, Girton has always championed the belief that education should be accessible to all, regardless of gender or background. These values continue to shape Girton's identity today, as a place that fosters a supportive, diverse community where students are encouraged to challenge boundaries and grow academically and personally.

## The Porters' Lodge (Plodge)

- **Role:** the College's 24/7 reception and support centre.
- **Services:** help with keys, security, first aid (including mental health), and general assistance.
- **Contact:** reach the Porters at +44 (0)1223 338 999 for any issues.

## The Post Room

- **Pigeonholes (Pidges):** each student has a "pidge" for post, and larger parcels are stored in a central crate. Access is via your CamCard. You will need to check your pidge regularly for letters, but you will be emailed about large parcels.
- **Outgoing Mail:** the Porters will stamp and send letters for you. You can pay for this on your CamCard if you wish to.
- ★ For reference, your address at Girton will be: [Your Name], Girton College, Huntingdon Road, Cambridge, CB3 0JG





## Meet the JCR Committee

JCR stands for 'Junior Combination Room'. This used to be a physical place, as it still is in many colleges, but now the term refers to the undergraduate student body of the college. The JCR Committee represents the JCR body. They hold termly elections in which students who apply for a role are elected via the SU website by the JCR body. See [here](#) for more details and contacts.

### The roles

**President:** is the head of the JCR Committee, chairs meetings and is Vice President of the Freshers' Week Planning Committee. Sits on Council and is part of the executive JCR committee.

→ [jcr-president@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcr-president@girton.cam.ac.uk)

**Vice President:** organises elections, acts as the JCR's SU rep and chairs the Freshers' Week Planning Committee. Sits on Council and is part of the executive JCR committee.

→ [jcr-vicepresident@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcr-vicepresident@girton.cam.ac.uk)

**Treasurer:** is responsible for all JCR spending. Sits on Council and is part of the executive JCR committee.

→ [jcr-treasurer@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcr-treasurer@girton.cam.ac.uk)

**Executive Secretary:** manages JCR organisation, including arranging meetings, taking minutes and organising stash drops. Part of the executive JCR committee.

→ [jcr-secretary@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcr-secretary@girton.cam.ac.uk)

**Freshers' Representative:** is Vice President of the Freshers' Week Planning Committee and is responsible for representing freshers' concerns on the JCR.

→ [jcr-freshers@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcr-freshers@girton.cam.ac.uk)

**Welfare Officers:** provide confidential support and welfare resources to students.

→ [jcr-welfare@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcr-welfare@girton.cam.ac.uk)

**International Officer:** ensures issues facing International Students are brought to the JCR Committee and College and organises International Freshers' Week.

→ [jcr-overseas@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcr-overseas@girton.cam.ac.uk)





**Accommodation Officer:** communicates with College about accommodation and is responsible for room grading.

**Catering Officer:** acts as a point of contact between students and the Catering Department.

**Events (Ents) Officer:** organises the Girton JCR Garden Party in Easter Term and arranges other ents within College for the JCR body.

**Sustainability and Ethical Affairs Officer:** brings environmental, ethical and charitable concerns before the JCR Committee.

**Access and Academic Officer:** provides academic support to students and liaise with College and the JCR Committee about academic access.

**IT Officer:** supports students and the JCR Committee with IT and technical queries.

**Sports Officer:** acts as a port of call for queries about sports facilities and equipment and helps College sports societies on request.

**Bike Officer:** assists students with bike problems and brings bike-related concerns to the JCR (e.g. number of bike racks around College).

**Ethnic Minorities' Officer (BME Officer):** ensures that issues facing ethnic minorities are brought to the JCR Committee and College.

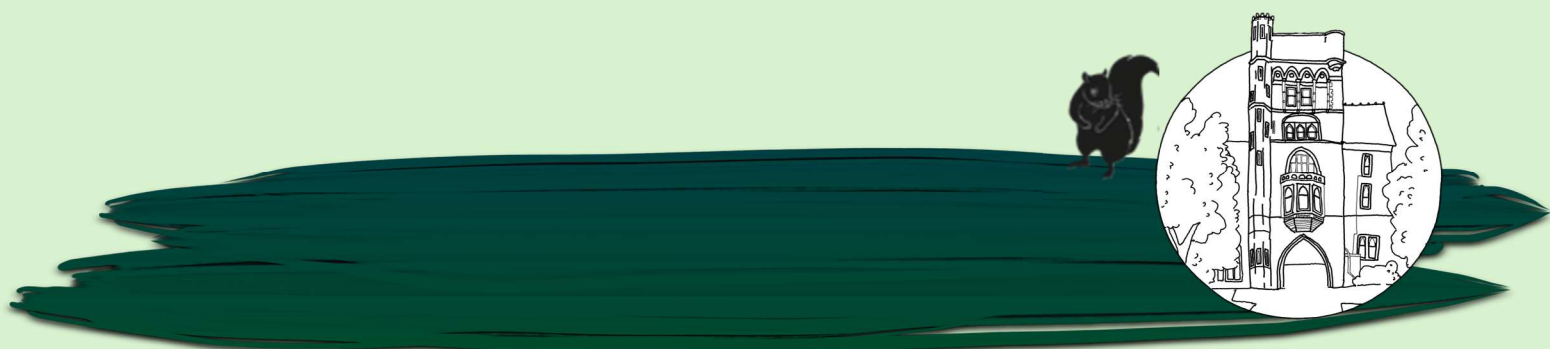
**Women's Officer:** ensures issues about womanhood are brought to the JCR Committee and College.

**LGBTQ+ Officer:** ensures issues facing LGBTQ+ students are brought to the JCR Committee and College.

**Physical and Mental Disabilities Officer:** ensures issues facing students with physical or mental disabilities are brought to the JCR Committee and College.

**Socio-Economic Inclusivity Officer:** ensures that issues facing students experiencing socio-economic inequality are brought to the JCR Committee and College.

**Transgender and Non-Binary Officer:** ensures that issues facing transgender and non-binary students are brought to the JCR Committee and College.







## Accommodation and Student Facilities

When you arrive, there will be an inventory form for you to check and return detailing the condition of everything in your room at the start of each year. Make sure you complete and return this quickly as it prevents you from being liable for any previous damage.

### Room essentials (provided)

- Bed (with mattress)
- Desk and chair
- Comfy chair, chest of drawers, shelves
- Wardrobe, plug sockets and ethernet socket
- Rubbish and recycling bins

### Shared facilities

Every corridor has showers, toilets, and a kitchen. Find information about using the library and study rooms [here](#), and for gym and swimming pool hours see [here](#). Laundry rooms are dotted around College and have washing machines, dryers and irons. Remember not to leave your washing in the machines or it will be moved!

### Room Grades

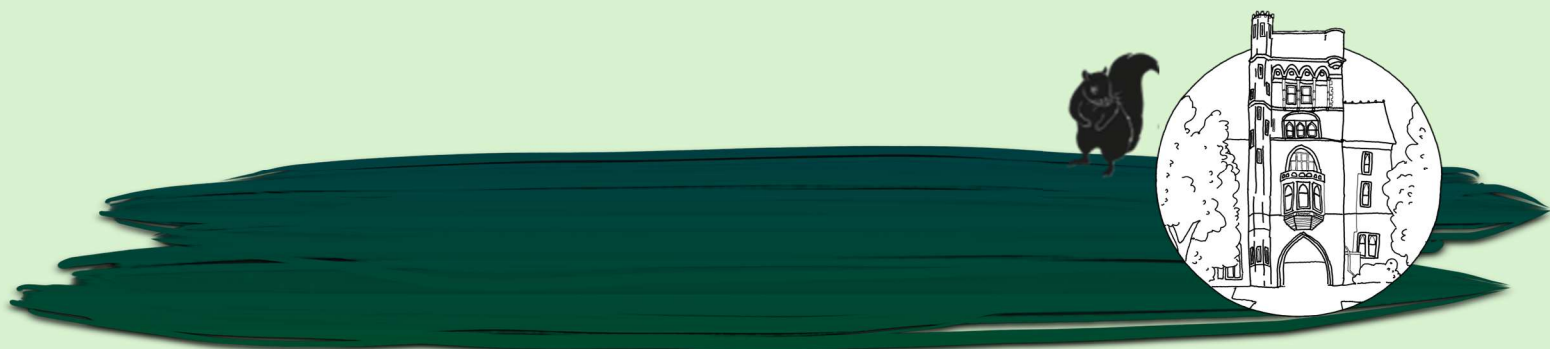
Range from A- to G, with freshers usually placed in A- to B rooms. Room allocation is done before arrival.

### Ballot System

**Room selection:** the earlier you choose in the ballot, the better the chance you will get the room you would like. First-year students don't choose their rooms, but in later years your ballot position will be decided based on previous allocations and room grades.

### Visitors

**Overnight guests:** sign in at the Porters' Lodge for safety. There's a three-night limit and one guest at a time.





## Chapel and Prayer Room

**Chapel:** A non-denominational space with Anglican services. Open to everyone regardless of faith. The College Chaplain, Revd Dr Tim Boniface, is available for confidential chats in Room D4a or via email ([chaplain@girton.ac.uk](mailto:chaplain@girton.ac.uk)).

**Prayer and Meditation Room:** Located in D11a. Key available from Plodge. No booking required, but you can reserve it by emailing [conferences@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:conferences@girton.cam.ac.uk). With any questions, please contact [prayerroom@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:prayerroom@girton.cam.ac.uk).

## Kitchens

**Standard equipment:** kettle, microwave, fridges, hob, and cupboards. Most also have ovens, freezers, and toasters.

**Cooking rules:** No cooking in bedrooms. Use kitchen timers and avoid deep fat fryers or rice cookers.

To use the stove, you must press the button (usually labelled 'Hobsafe'). It will switch off after 15 minutes, so remember to turn it back on regularly.

## Maintenance

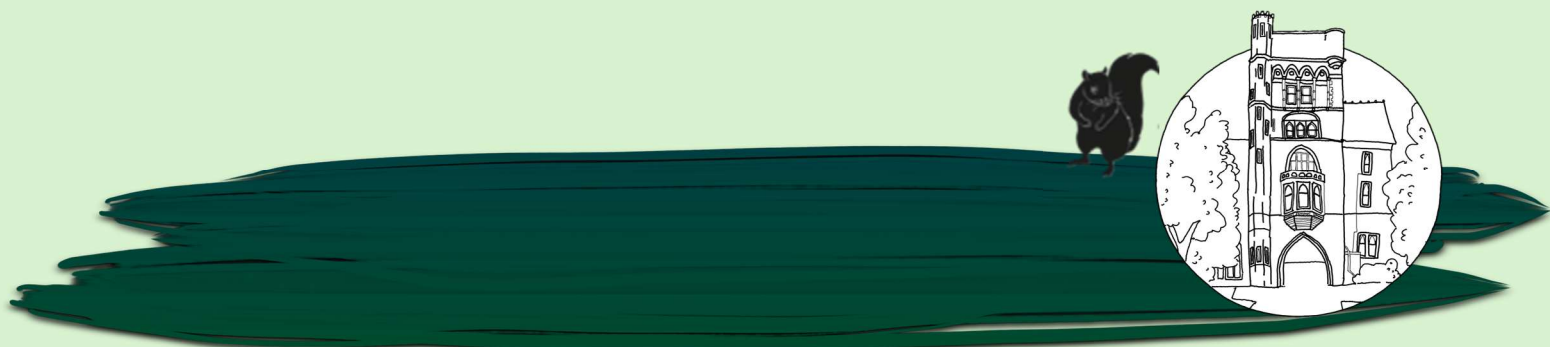
**Report issues:** use the [online reporting system](#) for repairs (e.g. broken lights, windows) or [report near misses](#) (e.g. faulty electronics) via a separate form.

## Waste collection

House services collect rubbish from kitchens on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

### Bin Types:

- Brown (general waste)
- Grey (recycling)
- Yellow (glass)
- Green (food waste)
- Batteries and electronics: dispose of at the Porters' Lodge.
- ★ Bins are clearly labelled and signs detail how to separate your rubbish.  
Remember to wash out any bottles or containers for recycling!





## Food at Girton

### Hall (Cafeteria)

#### Opening hours:

- Breakfast 8:00-9:00
- Lunch 12:00-13:30
- Dinner 18:00-19:30 on weekdays.
- Brunch 10:30-13:30 on weekends.
- ★ On days where there are formal halls (usually Thursdays), dinner timings may change. The opening hours and menus are always posted outside the entrance to the cafeteria, next to the JCR board.

**Menu:** Offers vegan, vegetarian, meat, and fish options. Includes a salad bar, desserts, and soft drinks. Weekly menus emailed and posted outside Hall.

**Cost:** Meals paid via CamCard on UPay. Main meals cost £4-£4.50. “Deal of the Day” offers vegetarian/vegan meals for £2.50.

**Allergies:** Options available for gluten, nut, and fish allergies. Menus are allergen-labelled. Email [catering@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:catering@girton.cam.ac.uk) with questions.

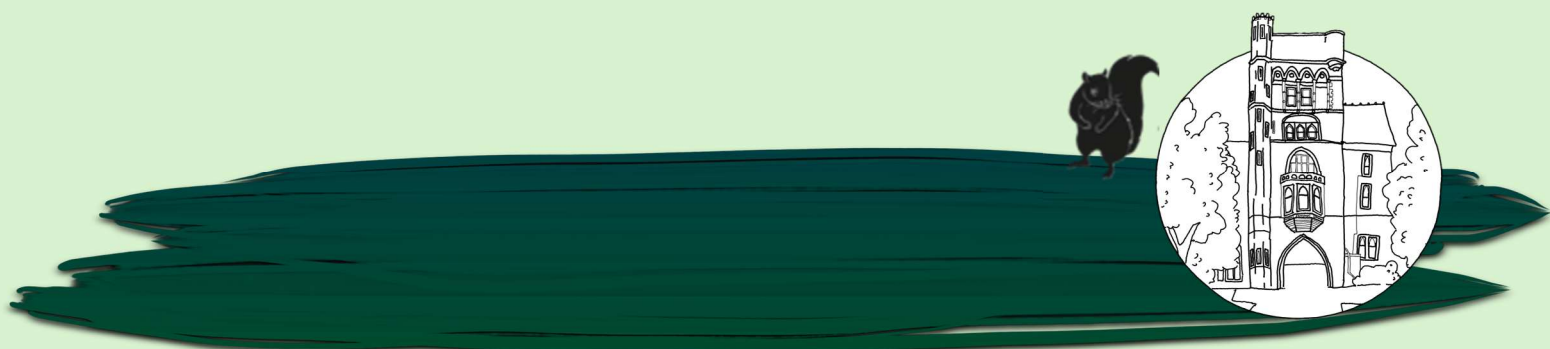
### The Social Hub (Schlub)

**Hours:** Café-style food from 8am to 8pm (hours sometimes subject to change but are usually posted by the counter).

- ★ Try the Schlub pancakes or waffles for breakfast or choose your toppings for a panini or pizza!

**Alcoholic drinks** served 7:30pm-11pm on select days. Remember your ID and credit/debit card as they do not currently accept CamCard payment.

**Deep Schlub:** A lounge area with a pool table, booths, and event space. There is also a bar, which is often open after formals. To find out about upcoming Deep Schlub Gigs, check the Girton Music Society (GCMS) Instagram page [@girtonmusicsoc](https://www.instagram.com/girtonmusicsoc).





## Green spaces

Girton has some of the most stunning green spaces in Cambridge and we really encourage you to make the most of them! You'll notice that there are no "Do not walk on the grass" signs at Girton (unlike other colleges!) which means you're free to roam wherever you want around the grounds.

### Where are the best green spaces in Girton?

#### The mile loop

- Enclosing the college is a mile long footpath which is open to the public as well as Girton students and staff. It's a great place to walk if you need to clear your head from work or fancy a catch up with a friend.

#### The Orchard

- This is a beautiful area and produces lots of delicious, free fruit to pick in the autumn! College even make their own apple juice from the orchard apples!

#### The Fellows' Garden

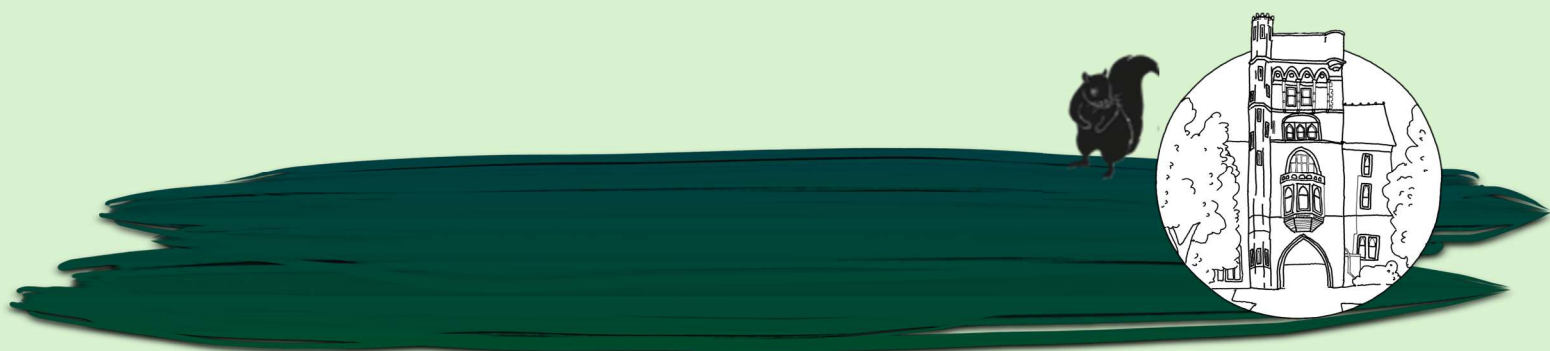
- This can be a lovely place to work during the summer. Some outdoor summer events are also held here, e.g. the Girton Garden Party and the Girton Amateur Dramatics (GADs) summer play.

#### The pond

- Another nice area to work during the summer – plus, it has ducklings!

#### The Sensory Garden

- This has been newly created at the top of the croquet lawn and some Girton students helped design it. Please remember to stay away from the beekeeping area unless you have permission to enter.





## Room bookings

### Study rooms

- Require booking via online form found [here](#).
- Study rooms are: D33, D34, D35 (Hyphen Corridor, near the library) and those on Middle and Top Chapel corridors.

### Music rooms

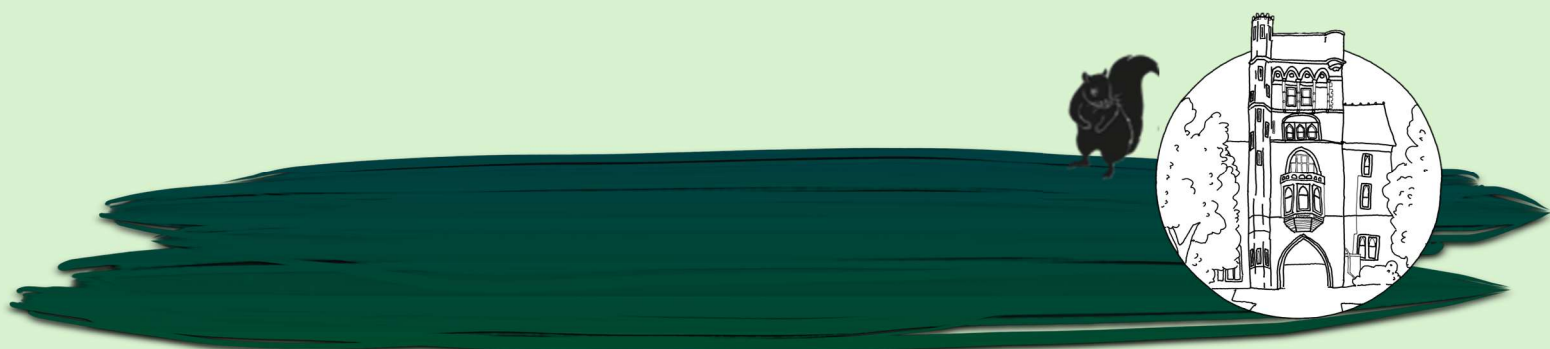
- Do not require booking.
- Collect the key at Plodge.
- D36 and A40 are the music rooms. They each have a piano in them, but you will need to bring your own music stand.
- If you wish to use the Steinways in Old Hall or the Stanley Library, you will need special permission. For more questions, contact [Martin Ennis](#), the Director of Music at Girton.
- ★ Music hours are officially 8am-10pm, but to be courteous of your neighbours (if you choose to practice in your own room), it's best to stick to the 9am-9pm rule.

### Sports pitches

- Must be booked in advance.
- [Booking form](#) found on the 'Requests and forms' section of the Girton website.

### Hosting your own events

- All parties require prior approval from College.
- Barbecues and corridor parties are not permitted.
- Follow amplified music rules: not allowed in Easter Term and must end at 11pm on Fridays or 11:30pm on Saturdays.
- If you are hosting something with more than 8 people invited, then you must acquire permission from College.
- ★ If you wish to have a party, complete the [event booking form](#) found on the 'Requests and forms' section of the Girton website.





## Academics

Now we have the fundamentals covered, let's come on to your experience studying with us at Girton. We'll keep this brief for now and provide some more detail in our Academic Guide (provided in your JCR arrival tote bag!).

### The Tripos

Your "tripos" is the course you study. Your work may consist of lectures, labs, supervisions, seminars, essays, and problem sheets, depending on your subject. Cambridge isn't all about work. It is a big part of life and there's lots of it, but it should be manageable. There's time to do loads of other things like sport, arts, societies, nightlife and enjoying the city, and there is lots of support in place to help you balance this with work.

### Key Academic Contacts

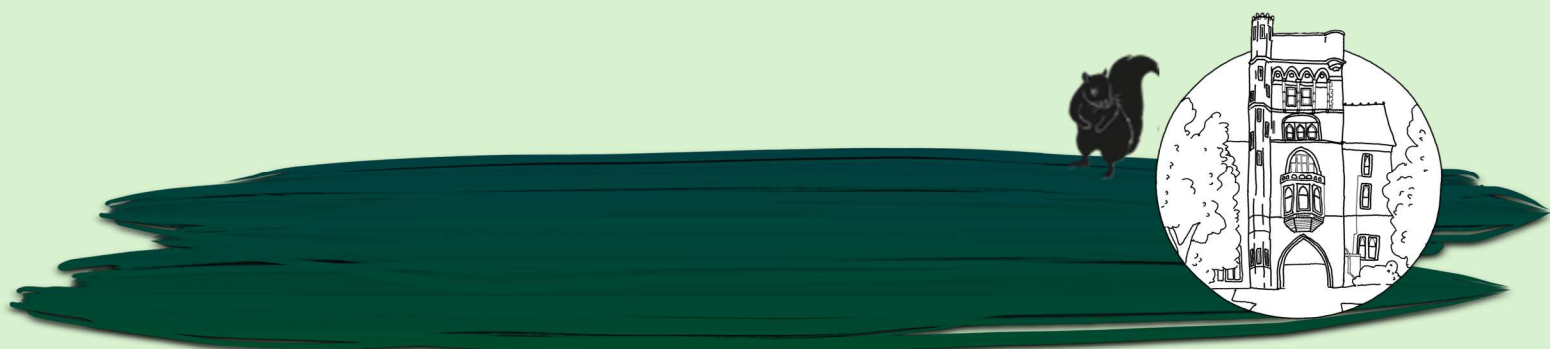
**Director of Studies (DoS):** oversees your academic progress and College-based teaching. They should assist you with any academic issues and you'll typically meet them at least twice each term. Your DoS, not your faculty, organises supervisions.

**Supervisors:** lead small-group teaching sessions known as supervisions or 'supos', usually with 2-3 students per group (depending on subject). They set weekly assignments like essays or problem sheets. Supervisors may be from Girton or other colleges, and you might need to travel for some sessions. You will need to arrange with your supervisor when you have supervisions.

**Student Services:** handles academic and non-academic administration, including exam arrangements, student visas, bursaries, and scholarships. Contact: [tutorial@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:tutorial@girton.cam.ac.uk).

**Skills Programme:** Provides study skills to help with the transition from school to university and offers career advice and life skills through various events and workshops.

**Department/Faculty:** Sets course material, organises lectures, and marks exam papers. They may also arrange classes, seminars, or practical sessions. Supervisions are organised by your DoS at Girton, not by the department.





## Your guide to formal hall

Formals are a quintessential part of life at Cambridge. Some Colleges run formals slightly differently, but here is how ours work.

### Who's at the table?

Formals are a mix of undergrad and postgrad students, with the Mistress and other Fellows sitting at the high table. To get a ticket, keep an eye out for emails from catering about ticket release dates – these can sell out fast! Tickets and any special dietary requests are managed via UPay, which you'll get access to at the start of term. Don't forget to bring your CamCard for entry, and if you're bringing guests, you must accompany them.

### Dress code

The dress code is 'smart': suits and ties, dresses, or traditional wear. You'll also need to wear your gown. While the gown is a must, the rest of the dress code is a bit more flexible. So, suit up, but don't stress too much about the details!

### The gong

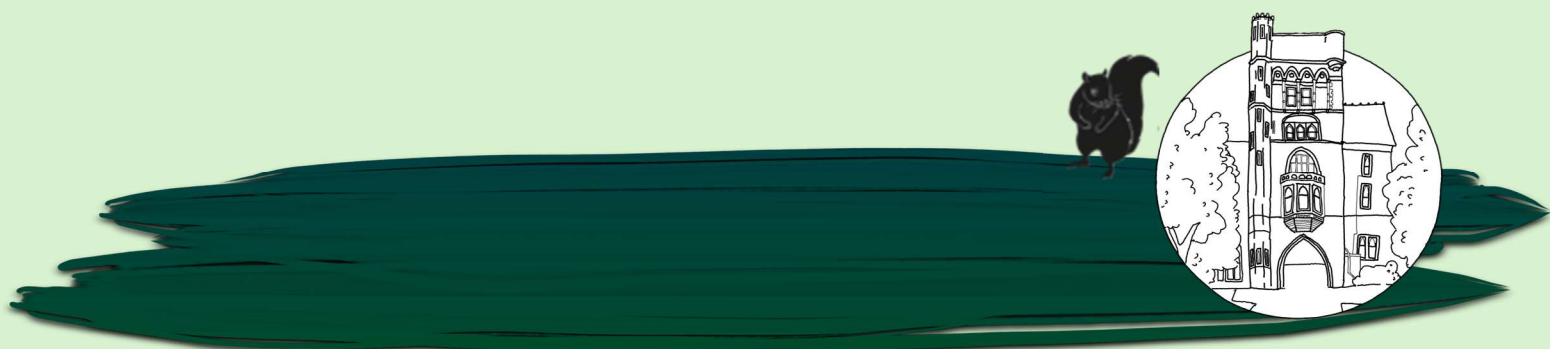
The Mistress presides over formals with a traditional flourish. No eating or drinking before she arrives! When the gong rings, everyone stands. Wait until the Mistress and Fellows are seated and Grace is said (a brief Latin phrase) before you sit down. The same gong-stand-Grace routine applies when they leave at the end of the evening – only then can undergraduates depart. You are expected to remain quiet while standing.

### During the formal

Try to stay seated throughout the meal, especially while the catering staff serve and clear plates. With cutlery, work from the outside in. You will need to bring your own wine and pay corkage in Schlub (unless purchased within College) before entering.

### Enjoy the experience

Embrace the tradition, enjoy the food and company, and most importantly, have fun!





## Taking care of yourself

Cambridge student life can be stressful. Here is a list of useful sources of support within Girton and the University. See also [here](#) for the College's advice.

### JCR Welfare Officers

→ **Email** [jcr-welfare@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcr-welfare@girton.cam.ac.uk) or visit **Instagram** [@girtonwelfare](https://www.instagram.com/girtonwelfare).

### JCR LGBTQ+ Officer

→ **Email** [jcr-lgbt@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcr-lgbt@girton.cam.ac.uk).

### JCR BME Officer

→ **Email** [jcr-bme@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcr-bme@girton.cam.ac.uk).

### Girton welfare

→ Deji Maxwell is Head of Welfare. **Email** [headofwelfare@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:headofwelfare@girton.cam.ac.uk).

### College nurses

→ **Email** [nurses@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:nurses@girton.cam.ac.uk) or **call** +44 (0)1223 338937

### University-wide services

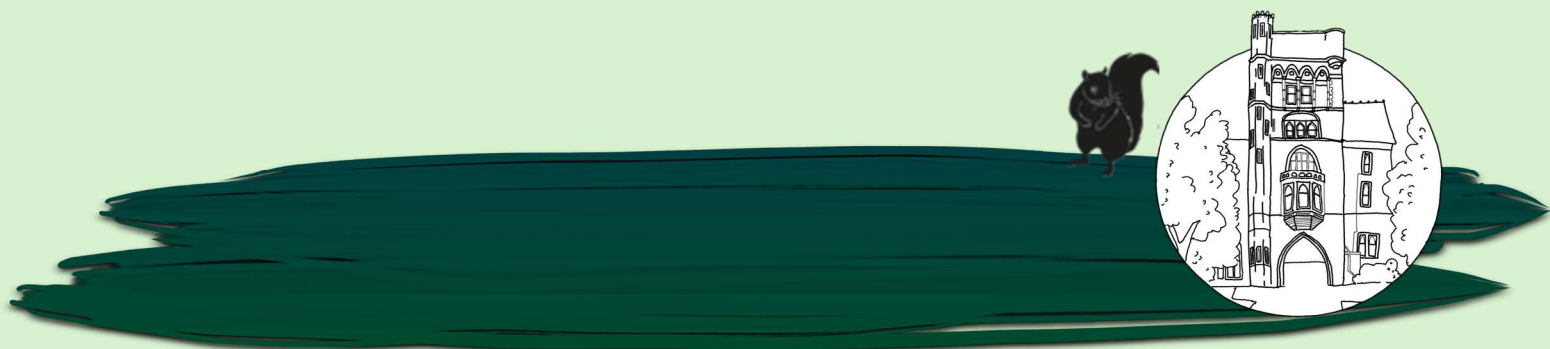
→ Referral form to get support: complete this form to request support for yourself or a student at the University of Cambridge.

Report + support: how to report the behaviour of a student or member of staff at the University.

### Financial support

→ See [this website](#) for University-wide sources of financial support.

→ Contact your Tutor or email the Girton Financial Welfare Officer, Nicky Shevlane, at [fwo@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:fwo@girton.cam.ac.uk).







# Other sources of support

## 1. Porters' Lodge

The Porters are your go-to for immediate help and guidance, whether you're dealing with an emergency or just need someone to talk to. They're available 24/7.

→ Visit the Porters' Lodge in person or call +44 (0)1223 338 999.

## 2. Your Tutor

Your Tutor is here to support you with non-academic issues like health, welfare, and finances. They can also direct you to other resources and act on your behalf if needed.

→ You'll be given more details about contacting your tutor soon, but generally, you can email them or visit during office hours. For emergencies, an on-call Tutor is available through the Porters' Lodge.

## 3. Your Director of Studies (DoS)

Your DoS oversees your academic progress and teaching. They're the person to turn to for help with academic issues.

→ You'll typically meet with your DoS at least twice a term.

## 4. Student Services

This office provides advice and support on a range of matters including exams, student finance, visas, and more. They work closely with your tutor and DoS.

→ Email them at [tutorial@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:tutorial@girton.cam.ac.uk).

## 5. College discrimination and harassment contacts

If you have concerns about discrimination or harassment and prefer not to speak to your tutor, you can reach out to:

→ **Senior Tutor, Toni Williams:** [senior.tutor@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:senior.tutor@girton.cam.ac.uk)

→ **Tutor for harassment cases:** [cdhc@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:cdhc@girton.cam.ac.uk)





## 6. The College Chaplain

Revd Dr Tim Boniface is available for confidential chats about anything you might need, whether it's related to faith or personal issues. The chapel is a quiet space open to everyone.

→ Find him in room D4a, email [chaplain@girton.ac.uk](mailto:chaplain@girton.ac.uk), or contact through the Lodge in emergencies.

## 7. Your College family

You'll be paired with 2nd or 3rd year students who share similar interests or study the same subject. They're here to offer support and advice based on their own experience at Girton.

→ More details about your college family will be shared with you later.

## 8. Your Freshers' Representative

Your Freshers' Representative is dedicated to supporting you throughout your first year. They will be hosting weekly drop-in sessions where you can come for advice, ask questions, or just have a chat in a relaxed and supportive environment.

**Social spaces:** Each week, there will be two opportunities to visit these drop-in sessions (times announced at the start of term):

- **Morning drop-in:** A welcoming space to start your day with a friendly face and address any concerns you might have.
- **Evening drop-in:** An opportunity to unwind, ask questions, or simply spend time in a safe and supportive space after your day's activities.
- **Freshers' hour:** Additionally, there will be a weekly Freshers' Hour aimed at providing guidance and a chance to connect with your peers in a friendly and informal setting.

→ Reach them via email at [jcr-freshers@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcr-freshers@girton.cam.ac.uk).

Remember, everyone needs support from time to time, and there are many people here at Girton who are ready to help you. Don't hesitate to reach out whenever you need it!





## External sources of support

### Your GP

We will help you register with a GP during Freshers' Week. The nearest surgery to college is Huntingdon Road Surgery at 1 Huntingdon Road, Cambridge, CB3 0DB. Their phone number is +44 (0)1223 364127. For emergency same-day appointments, ring the number at 8.15am.

### Addenbrooke's hospital

Addenbrooke's is the nearest hospital and is south of the city centre. If you need to go there then the Porters can call a taxi for you from college.

→ 111 NHS non-emergency medical advice, ask for option 2 for mental health advice

### Samaritans

→ [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)- or 116 123 on mobile

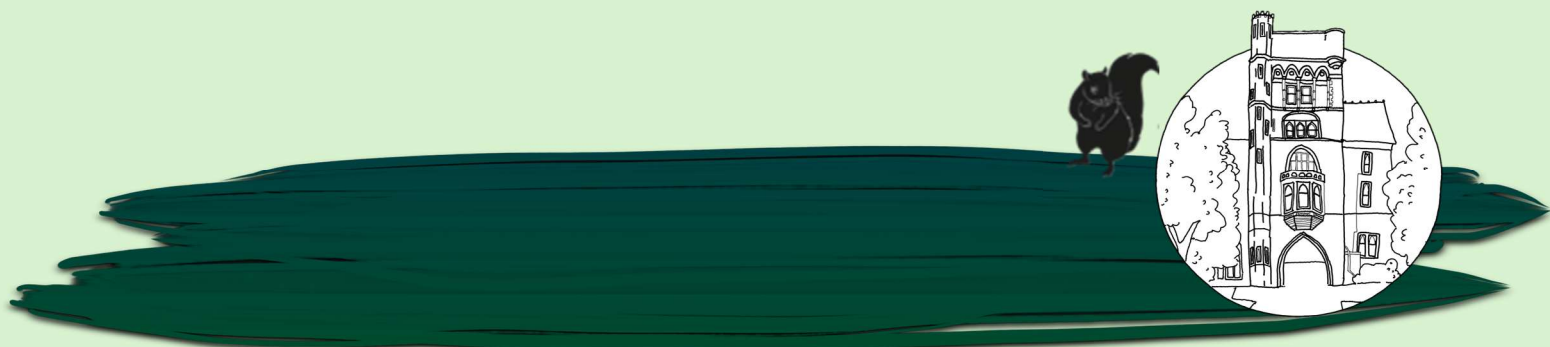
### Nightline

During term time, Nightline offers a confidential nighttime helpline if you ever need to talk.

→ 19:00-07:00 on +44 (0)1223744444 or- <https://www.nightline.ac.uk/want-to-talk/>

### Cambridge Students' Union

The SU provides confidential and independent support to all students through the Student Advice Service: <https://www.cambridgesu.co.uk/support/advice> or email on: [advice@studentadvice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:advice@studentadvice.cam.ac.uk).





## Sexual health and counselling services

### Contraception

Condoms, lube and pregnancy tests can be found outside the nurse's office, in the welfare room or through contacting the JCR welfare officers.

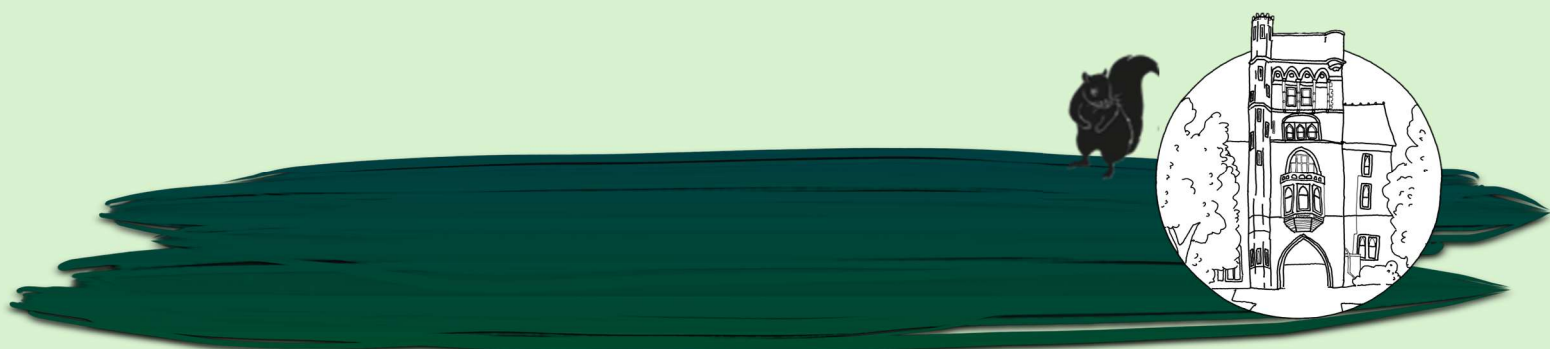
### Lime Tree Clinic

(+44 (0)300 300 30 30 option 2, option 2; <https://www.icash.nhs.uk/where-to-go/icash-cambridgeshire/lime-tree-clinic-cambridge>) offers STI tests and contraception, including emergency contraception.

- ★ We would recommend that you get STI tests regularly.

### Counselling

Free counselling is available through the Student Services' University Counselling Service (UCS) and other mental health support is provided by the Mental Health Advice Service. Please consult the Welfare Directory or speak to one of the JCR Welfare Officers about the options which are available to you and how to use them. You can also visit the UCS website at <https://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/studentcouns>, contact them at +44 (0)1223 332865, or visit in person at the Student Services centre on the New Museums site, CB2 3PT.





## Getting stuck in

University life at Girton can be exciting, but it's also important to balance your academic and social commitments while looking after your mental and physical well-being. This guide is designed to be a clear and practical resource to help you navigate your first year, from getting involved in extra-curriculars to staying safe on nights out.

### Get involved

**Extra-curriculars:** Joining societies or clubs is a great way to meet new people and take a break from your studies. Attend both the Girton and University Freshers' Fairs to explore your options.

**Social events:** Girton and Cambridge have a packed social calendar, from formals, JCR quizzes, and Girton ents, to plays, talks, and welfare events. Social events are a great way to find balance and create distance from your academic work.

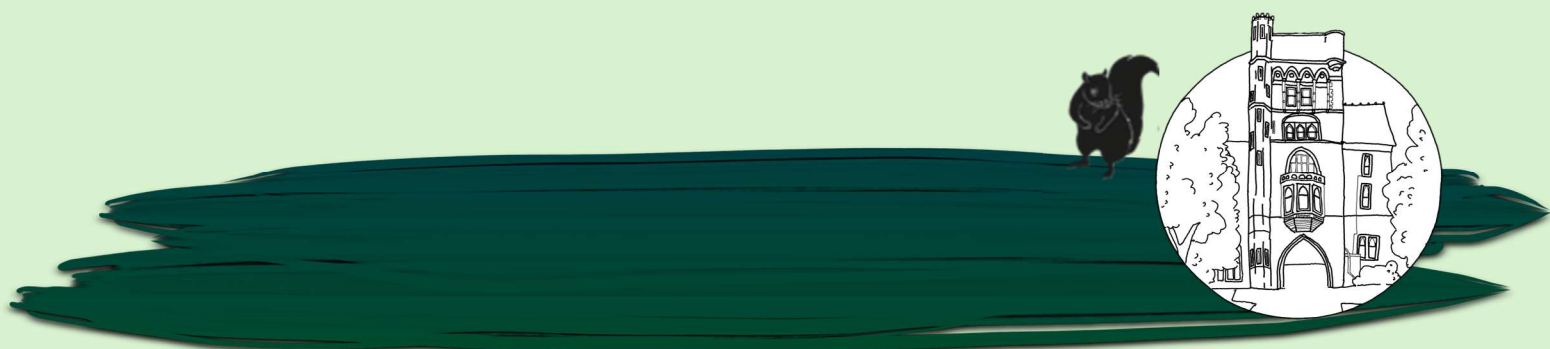
### Staying safe

**In town:** if you ever need help while out in town, you can go to the nearest college's Porters' Lodge for assistance. The Porters at Girton can also arrange a taxi back to college for you. Please save their numbers in your phone.

→ **Girton Porters' Lodge:** +44 (0)1223 338999

→ **Swirles Porters' Lodge:** +44 (0)1223 760021

**Sticking together:** as Girton is a bit further from the town centre, it's best to stick with friends when heading out. This can also save you money on taxi fares back home.





## Night life

Cambridge has a unique night life with a variety of clubs, bars, and pubs to explore:

### Popular clubs:

- Lola's, Revolution (Revs), and Mash are the main clubs, each with their own famous nights.
- Look out for special events like DJ sets at Cambridge Junction or themed nights like ABBA or Taylor Swift at Mash.

### Society nights

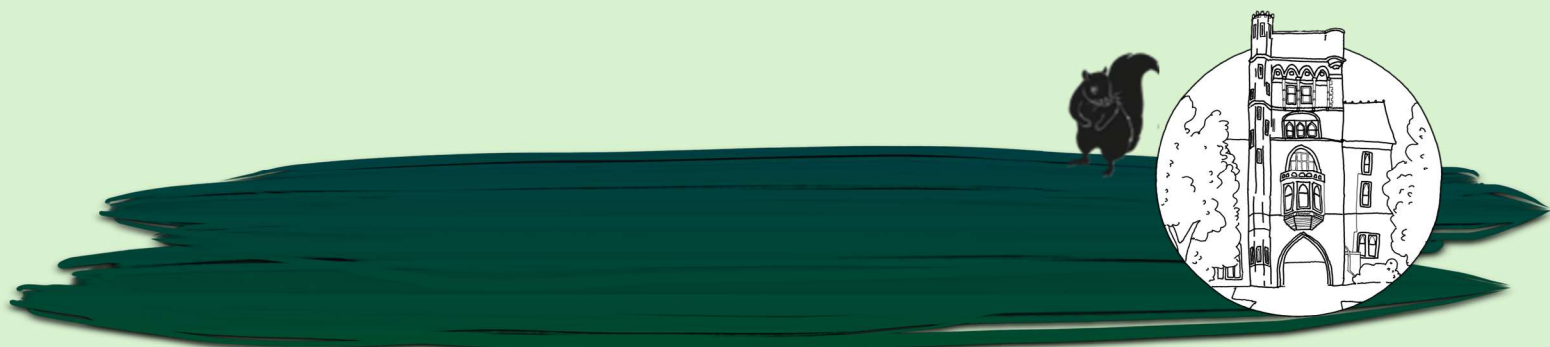
Some student societies also host club nights, often focusing on specific genres like techno or hip-hop.

### Safety

Unfortunately, there have been cases of drink spiking in Cambridge. The JCR welfare officers provide free drink covers and testing wristbands, available in the Welfare room (D11), the Porters' Lodge, or by contacting the welfare officers. If you're ever worried about your safety, reach out to the JCR Welfare Officers or Deji, the College's Head of Welfare and Wellbeing.

## Restaurants and cafés

Cambridge is home to a wide range of eateries, from independent cafés to popular chains. Many offer student discounts through apps like Unidays, or by showing your CamCard. You'll also find great street food in the Market Square, and most places offer delivery through services like Deliveroo. FitzBillies and Jack's Gelato are classic spots!





## Sports and societies

Whether you're into rugby, music, film, activism, or even pole-dancing, there's a society for you. Cambridge has a huge range of student groups covering every interest imaginable. You can explore a full list of societies through Cambridge SU's website [here](#).

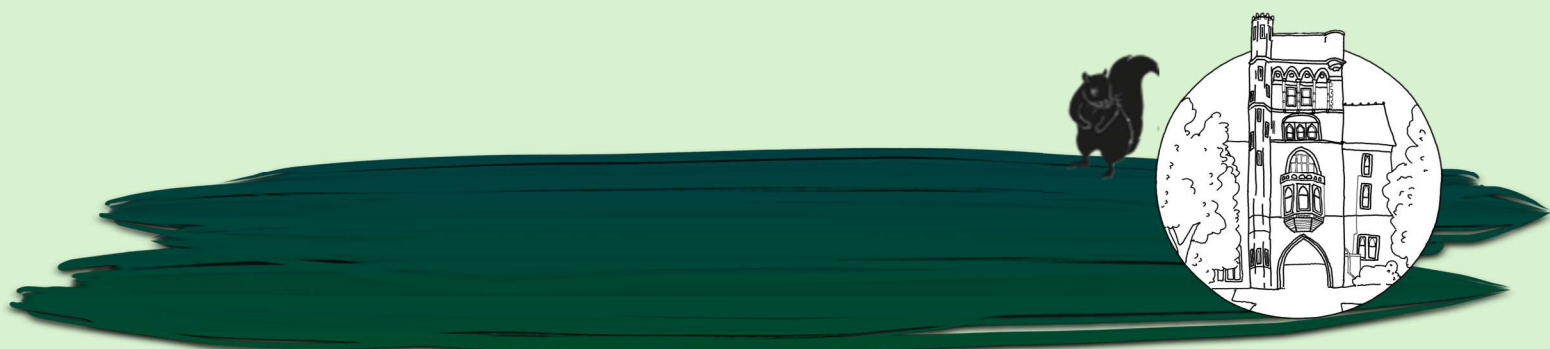
### University sports and societies

**Cultural and faith societies:** Cambridge's international community is represented through a diverse range of cultural and national societies, such as the Afro-Caribbean Society (ACS), Indian Society (IndiaSoc), and many more. There are also faith-based societies like CICCU (Christian Union) and CU ISoc (Islamic Society), where you can connect with students who share similar backgrounds and beliefs.

**Access societies:** there are societies focused on making Cambridge more accessible, such as the 93% Club and Girton's own Class Act Society. These groups provide support and host events for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

**Sports at Cambridge:** Cambridge offers a huge sports scene with plenty of teams and clubs to join. Whether you're looking to compete at a high level or just stay active, there's something for everyone. Representing Cambridge against Oxford might even earn you the prestigious title of 'Cambridge Blue.'

**Theatre and film:** Cambridge has a thriving theatre scene. The ADC Theatre and the Corpus Playroom are the main venues, with many opportunities to get involved in productions. Girton also has its own drama society, GADs, where you can participate or enjoy performances. For film lovers, Cambridge offers several cinemas, many with student discounts.





## Freshers' Week and Fairs

During Freshers' Week, you'll have two great chances to discover what's on offer:

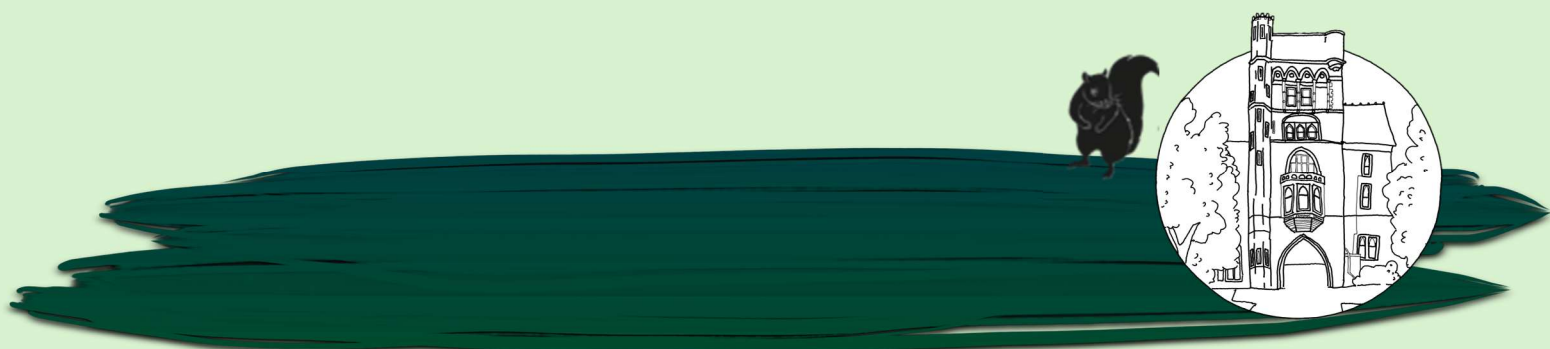
- **Girton Societies Fair:** this is your first stop to learn about all the societies and clubs available within Girton College.
- **University-wide Freshers' Fair:** hosted by Cambridge SU, this fair showcases all the university's societies and sports teams. There's also a separate Sports Fair at the university's sports centre where you can meet teams and explore opportunities.
- **University Sports Fair:** held at the University Sports Centre, this is where you can find out all about taking part in sports at Cambridge.

These fairs are the perfect opportunity to meet people involved in the societies, ask questions, and sign up for what interests you.

**Varsity Ski Trip:** this is a highlight for many students, with over 3,000 from Oxford and Cambridge coming together for a week of skiing and socializing. Even if you're a beginner, it's a fantastic experience to try something new. The trip takes place at the end of Michaelmas Term and is one of the most affordable ways to go skiing.

**Girton Spring Ball:** while most colleges have May balls (in June), Girton hosts a (now annual!) Spring Ball in March. It is student-run, and members of the committee get free tickets to other balls and to the following Spring Ball. Keep an eye out for calls for applications over the summer!

This guide gives you just a taste of what's available, but the most important thing is to explore for yourself! Keep an eye out for the Girton Societies Fair and the wider University Freshers' Fair to discover all the details and meet the people directly involved in these exciting opportunities.







## Getting around Cambridge

Yes, Girton is a little further from the city centre, and you *will* hear jokes about needing a plane to get there. But if distance is the worst thing about Girton, we're doing pretty well! Here's how you can actually get around – and yes, “I teleported” is a great response to that tired old joke!

### Walking

Walking is the simplest option, and it takes about 40 minutes to get into town. Pavements are generally well lit, but a torch at night is still a good idea.

### Cycling

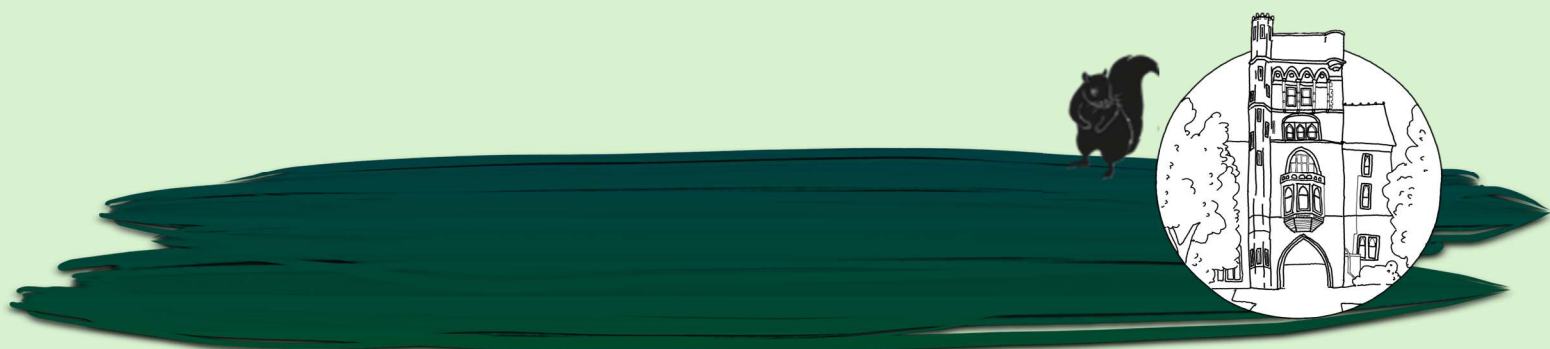
Cycling is by far the quickest way to travel, with about 15 minutes to the centre of town or Sidgwick Site. Most freshers bring a bike or buy one here. Beware though: Cambridge shops love hiking up bike prices at the start of term, so consider buying one beforehand.

### Bike Safety Essentials

- **Helmet:** please wear one! Bike accidents happen, and a helmet can make all the difference.
- **Lights:** legally required between sunset and sunrise. You can get rechargeable ones at the Porter's Lodge, and Tiger in the Grand Arcade sells cheap sets if you're stuck in town.
- **Lock:** a good D-lock is a must, as Cambridge is notorious for bike theft. It's wise to avoid bringing a flashy bike, as thieves tend to target the nicest ones.

### Registering Your Bike

When you arrive, register your bike with the Porters' Lodge to get a registration sticker. This helps recover your bike if it gets stolen and prevents it from being cleared out during bike culls.





## Cycling Tips

If you're not used to cycling, practice a bit before arriving, but don't stress! Cambridge is very bike-friendly with designated cycle paths. The route from Girton to central Cambridge is straightforward, with a cycle lane the whole way. Just take it easy, avoid curbs and pedestrians, and don't cycle after drinking.

- ★ **Freshers' bike tours:** during Freshers' Week, second and third years will guide you around all the important places for your course in town – on bikes, of course!

## Buses

The bus route is less direct than a bike but can be a good option, especially when it's cold or rainy.

- **Citi5 and Citi6:** These buses stop right at Girton Corner. They run regularly, though they're known to be a bit unreliable at rush hour. Show your CamCard for student-priced tickets. Click the links for more information about timings.
- **U-Bus:** Subsidized by the University, the U-Bus now stops at Girton Corner and offers £1 single tickets for students. It's perfect for getting to the University Library (UL), Sidgwick Site ('Sidge'), or the train station.

## Taxis

For nights out or late evenings, taxis are the best option. They can be cheaper than the bus if split with friends. Panther Taxis are the go-to, and the fare to town is usually £8-10. Girton students are known for sharing taxis back after nights out, so don't hesitate to join in!

If you become unexpectedly injured during term, you may be able to have taxi transport paid for by College. Email your tutor if this happens and you need help with transport.

## E-Scooters

You'll spot Voi e-scooters all around Cambridge. They're handy to rent via the app, though the nearest ones are a 5-minute walk from Girton. Just remember, you need a provisional driving license and must be 18 or older to ride them.





# Finances

## Tuition Fees and Payments

**Tuition fees (UK/EU):** your tuition fees can usually be covered by a student loan, which is paid directly to the college/university. For international students, additional college fees apply. You can find up-to-date tuition fee information [here](#).

**Student loans:** tuition fee loans are paid directly to the college. Maintenance loans and grants (for living expenses) are paid into your bank account each term.

- ★ **Tip:** If your household income has dropped by more than 15% from the year used to assess your loan, apply for a “current year income assessment”.

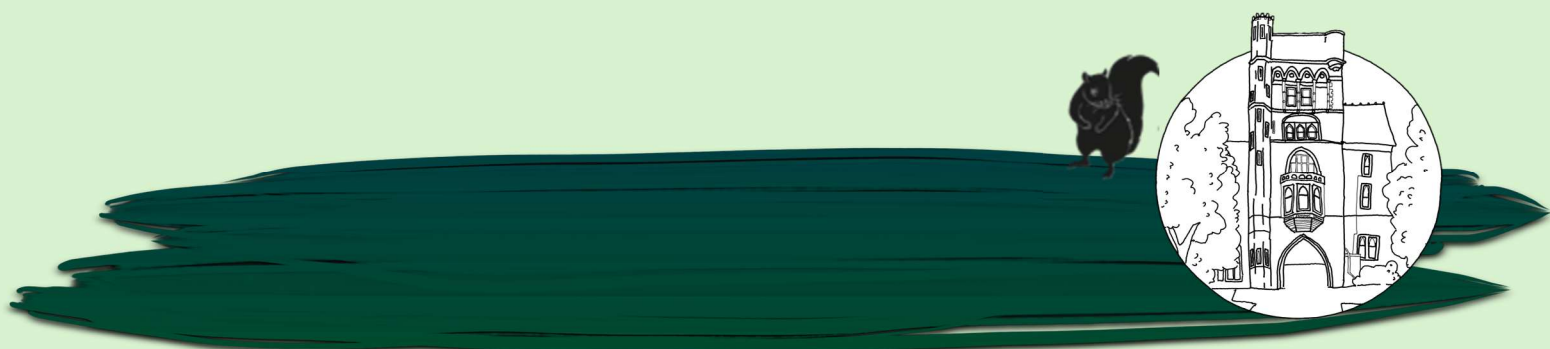
## College bill

Your College bill covers your accommodation, food, incidental charges (like society fees or damages), and any remaining tuition fees if you don't have a loan.

**Payment method:** bank transfer is preferred. The college doesn't accept credit/debit cards or cash for bill payments anymore. Always check the bank details before making a transfer. Bills and payment instructions are provided by the bursary office via email.

**Payment deadline:** you must pay your bill within 10 days of the start of full term, even if your student loan hasn't arrived. If your loan is delayed, talk to your tutor – they can contact the bursary on your behalf.

**International transfers:** international students may face admin fees for transfers. You can avoid commission by using Transfermate, which allows payment in foreign currency.





## Financial support

### Bursaries and Scholarships

**Cambridge Bursary Scheme:** if your household income is less than £62,215, you can receive up to £3,500 annually. Free school meals recipients get an additional £1,000 Educational Premium. You're automatically considered for this when you apply for a maintenance loan.

- **Note:** EU students with settled or pre-settled status are eligible; unfortunately, non-EU international students are not.

**Scholarships and awards:** you can compete for various scholarships and prizes throughout the year, from academic achievements (e.g., getting a First) to sports and music awards. Travel grants are also available during summer vacations.

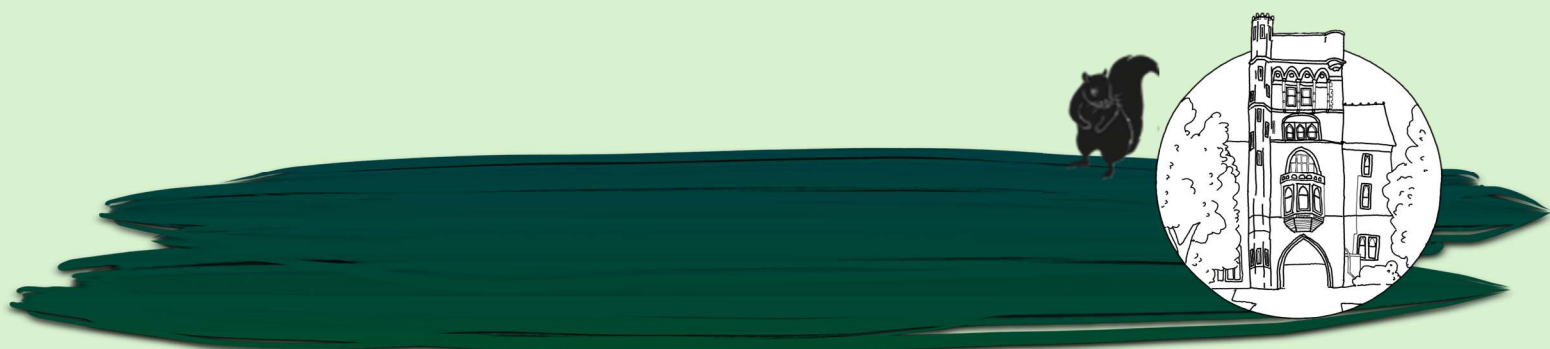
**Recipients of the Cambridge Bursary** are often eligible for reduced Spring Ball tickets, automatic rent reductions and other concessions from Girton College and JCR.

### Financial difficulties

If you run into financial difficulties, talk to your Tutor or the College's Financial Welfare Officer, Nicky Shevlane ([fwo@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:fwo@girton.cam.ac.uk)). The University and College have funds that can provide small grants or low-interest loans to help.

### CamCard (University card)

Your CamCard is your key to everything: buying meals, library access, opening doors, and even getting into some events. The card works on a credit system with a £500 limit, and what you spend in a term appears on your next college bill.

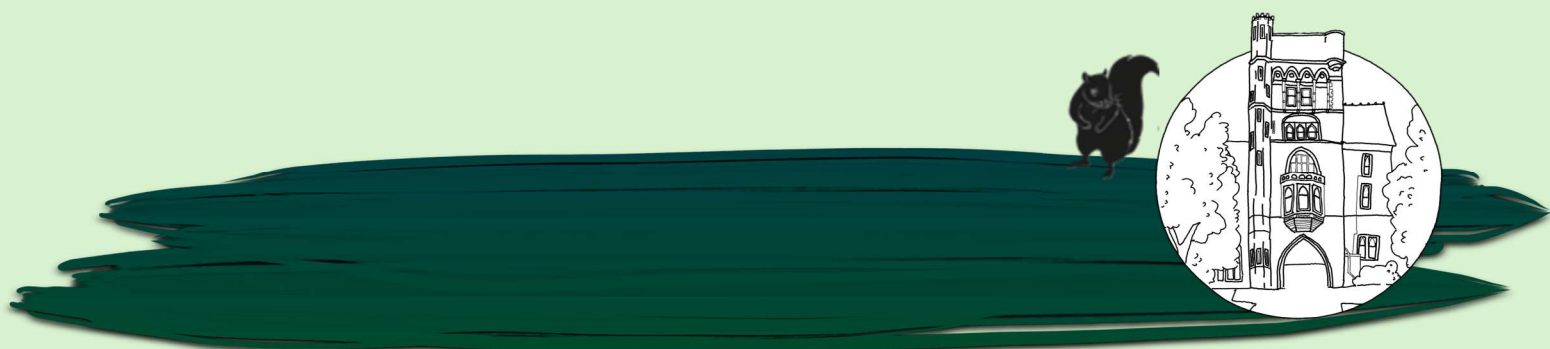




## Key tips

- ★ **Don't ignore financial issues:** if you're struggling, talk to your tutor ASAP – they're your first point of contact for any financial problems.
- ★ **Check your bill:** keep an eye on your email for your College Bill each term and make sure you pay it on time.
- ★ **Look out for scholarships:** scholarships and prizes aren't just for top students – there are lots of opportunities for awards throughout the year. Keep an eye on your emails!
- ★ **Look after your CamCard:** replacing them comes with a fee. If your card is blurry or faded, tell the Porters' Lodge and they will tell you how to have it replaced without cost.

If in doubt, reach out to your tutor or contact the Finance Office at [finance@girton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:finance@girton.cam.ac.uk) with any financial questions.





## Packing list

Here's what you need to remember...

- Cooking utensils (pots, pans etc. since college does not provide any)
- Plates, bowls, glasses, mugs, cutlery
- Washing up stuff - a favourite of uni students are the brushes that can contain washing up liquid and have removable sponges at the end
- A tea towel
- A bottle opener! (People are always looking for these)
- Toiletries and a small bag/box/basket to put them in to make them easier to carry between your room and the toilets
- Menstrual products
- Towels and face towel
- Washing powder/liquid for clothes
- Multi-purpose cleaning spray and cloth for your room
- Dustpan and brush
- Normal clothes for everyday
- Coats – raincoats are so helpful for cycling when it's wet and layers are essential when it gets cold
- Formal wear for matriculation photo and formals
- For the matriculation photo, it is recommended that you wear either a dark suit, light shirt and tie, or a light blouse and dark knee-length skirt, or a plain dark knee-length dress
- For other formal events, such as Formal Hall, any colour of dress/skirt/suit are permitted, as long as the style still adheres to the College's guidelines.
- Ball wear (black tie or national dress) for any balls
- Fancy dress for Freshers' Week and nights out
- Dressing gown/onesie and slippers - you will love yourself for this <3
- Crocs or sliders – essential for getting around college when you can't be bothered to put actual shoes on!
- A bike and the aforementioned essentials: lock, lights, helmet
- A door stop (or a creative interpretation of a door stop)
- Alarm clock
- Basic medication (lemsip, paracetamol, plasters)

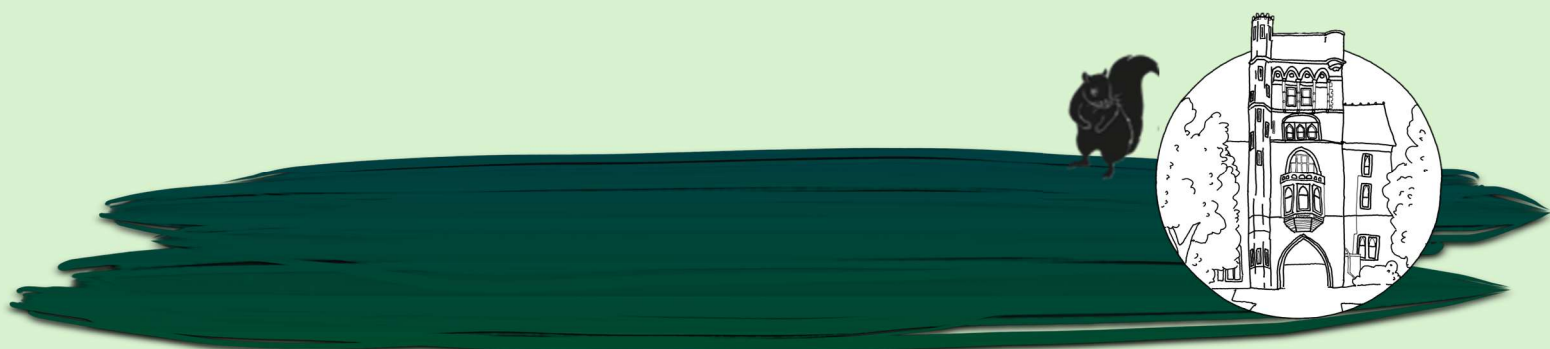




- In case of a resurgence in COVID-19, we recommend you bring face masks and several antigen tests
- Kitchen items
- Toiletries, washing and cleaning items
- Clothes
- Any other essentials or personal items

## Optional items you may want to bring

- Drying rack
- Spare bed sheets (to avoid strip and washing on the same day!)
- Mattress topper
- Extra blankets/cushions
- Basket for shower stuff/skincare
- Spices that are harder to find in shops
- Large 2l+ bottle for water to avoid trips back and forth to the kitchen
- A good book
- Door stop/box of sweets to act as a doorstop
- 1/2m charging cable
- Portable charger
- Ethernet cable
- Extension leads (must be purchased from Plodge)
- Fan for the warmer days
- Sewing kit (100% needed for last min fashion emergencies!)
- Sliders + dressing gown
- Lots of hangers
- Ear plugs
- Mini whiteboard for study purposes/weekly planning of work
- Speaker
- Amazon Student do 6 months free Amazon Prime (and £3.99/month thereafter)





## Cambridge slang dictionary

ASNaC – Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic degree.

The Backs – The backs of some of the oldest and most famous colleges, visible when punting along the River Cam (St John’s, Trinity, King’s, Clare, Queens’).

Blue – A prestigious sports title: someone who has played in a Varsity match against Oxford in a particular sport and meeting a set standard.

Boaties – People who get up early to cycle down to the river and practice rowing with varying levels of skill and success.

Bumps – A competition that happens twice a year on the river, where rowers (boaties) play dodgems with very expensive boats.

CamCard – Your university card. Required to get into your department and parts of College and used to pay in hall or Schlub.

Coming up – Arriving in Cambridge at the start of a term.

CRSID – The part of a Cambridge email address before the @ (e.g. abc12).

Cuppers – Annual inter-college competitions between colleges in many sports.

Ent – A party in college, usually following a fancy-dress theme. Known as ‘bops’ at some other colleges.

Formal – Formal Hall, a fancy three course meal dinner hosted by a College. Everyone dresses up in suits and gowns.

Gardies – The Gardenia, a kebab shop just off Market Square that is a student favourite for post-clubbing food.

GDBO – God Damn Bloody Oxford - a phrase printed on Cambridge stash (sports kit). It is often said casually in a playful manner.

Going down – Going home at the end of term.

Hall – the student name for the cafeteria at Girton. E.g., “Hall at 6pm?”.

Long Vac – Long Vacation – summer holidays.

Mainsbury’s – The Sainsbury’s in town, opposite Sidney Sussex College.

Mathmo – A maths student.







May Ball – A big, expensive party in May Week. Probably the most extravagant, typically Cambridge thing ever. Run by student reps for most colleges annually or semi-annually.

May Week – A week of Pimms and punting by day, parties and clubs by night. It occurs after exams and in the middle of June.

Medwards – Murray Edwards College, with which we share a football team (Gedwards).

MML – Modern and Medieval Languages - a degree where a lot of the students tend to study quite different subjects due to the variety in their languages!

Muso – A music student.

Natsci – (pronounced Nat-Ski) A Natural Scientist/Natural Sciences.

PBS – Psychological behavioural sciences (a degree).

Plodge – Porters' Lodge.

Rev's Warrior - Someone who goes to Revolution Bar Cambridge a considerable amount (even when they might have an essay due very soon!)

Schlub – Girton-specific, has become the name of the 'social hub' and daytime cafe/study space. Deep schlub is the downstairs bar below this.

Spring Ball – Girton's May ball held in spring!

Stash – Clothing from a sports club/society or college. College stash can be purchased from Plodge or the JCR during a 'stash drop'.

Swap – A group of people from one society/college go out for dinner/drinks/a night out with another group.

The Other Place – Oxf\*rd University.

The Tab – A student-run online tabloid newspaper.

Terms – Term 1: Michaelmas (October to December); Term 2: Lent (January to March); Term 3: Easter AKA exam term (April to June).

Trainsbury's – The Sainsbury's shop in the train station.

Trinmo – A mathmo at Trinity.

Tripes – The name given to your degree or exams.





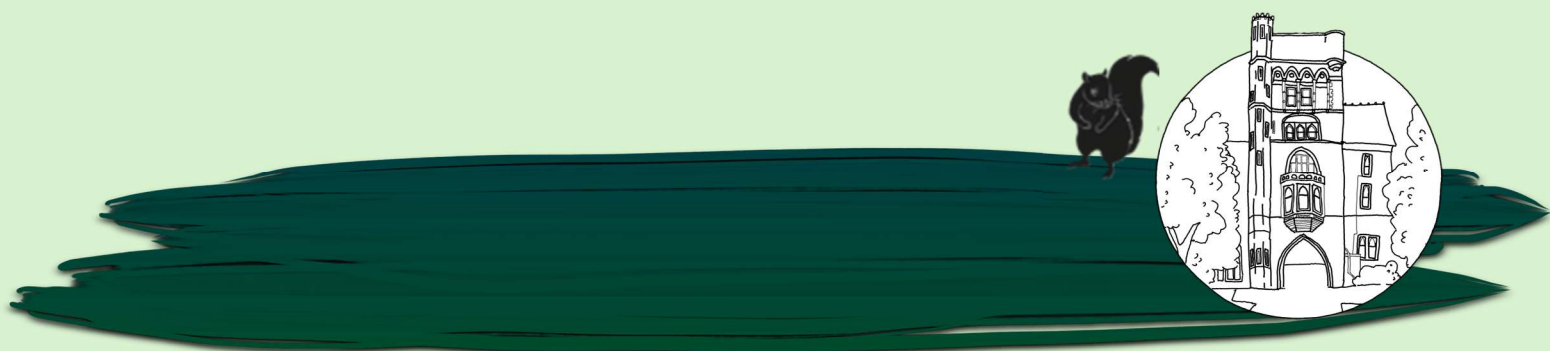
U-Pay – The website you can check the balance of your uni card on, as well as book formals etc. See [www.upaychilli.com](http://www.upaychilli.com).

Van of Life – Real name “Trailer of Life” – a place to get food in Market Square (Central Cambridge) after a night out.

Vacation – What your friends back home will call a “holiday”, but ours are longer since terms are shorter. Called so because you ‘vacate’ College but don’t stop working completely!

Varsity – An annual sporting fixture between Oxford and Cambridge, or the Annual Varsity Ski Trip that Oxford and Cambridge students go on at the end of Michaelmas. Also a student-run newspaper.

Week 5 Blues – Feeling of despair around week 5 of term when the workload is at its peak.





## Maps

### Map of Girton:



For a floor layout and photos of some rooms, see [here](#) (slightly outdated) and [here](#) (less comprehensive).

See room specifications and grades [here](#).





# Map of Cambridge:

