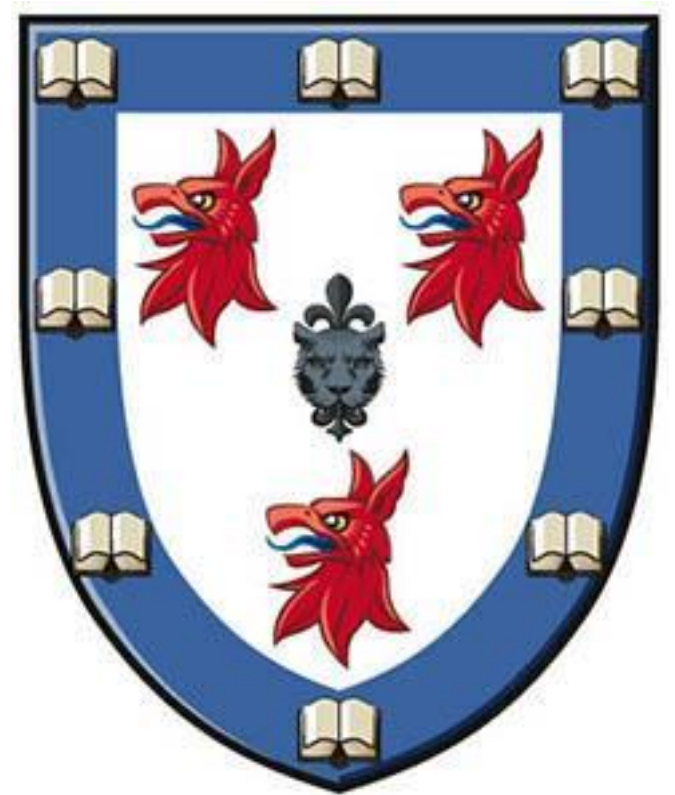


# Homerton College

University of Cambridge

## MCR Freshers' Guide

2023-24





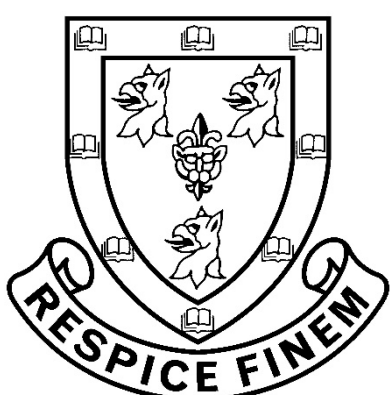
# Welcome to Homerton!

On behalf of the MCR, we are **delighted** to welcome you to Homerton College, and to Cambridge! We really hope that you are excited about beginning your postgraduate courses and are looking forward to your time at Homerton. This truly is the most friendly college in Cambridge, something we hope will shine through during your studies here!

We've assembled this short guide to hopefully answer some of the questions that you may have about college life, Freshers' week and getting settled into Cambridge. We're sure you'll enjoy your time at Homerton with us!

Kogulan Vipulan

MCR President 2023-2024



# Arriving at Homerton

## What is the MCR?

The MCR is the postgraduate community within Homerton and is made up of every Masters', doctoral, and PGCE student in College, as well as some affiliated members such as Part III, mature undergraduate, and some visiting students. It's one of the many uniquely Cambridge things that you'll soon come to know and love! The MCR is part of the Homerton Union of Students (HUS), which also looks after undergraduate students, and has an office in the Cavendish building where you can go to buy stash and ask advice. For most of you, your academic life will be centred around your department. However, the MCR is designed to be a postgraduate home during their time at Cambridge and is supported by the MCR committee, who organise many events each term such as exchanges with other Colleges, cocktail/movie nights and much more.

## Student Support

One of the roles of the MCR committee is to provide support to students, in the form of: advice, an ear to listen, or more practical support (e.g. making our events accessible to everyone). We will have a dedicated Welfare team to make this happen, who will either help you out directly or give you more advice about who to speak with. We're also here to act as a representative for the student body, to help you get in touch with relevant College staff, or to take queries/issues/complaints to them.

If there is something you'd like us to raise on your behalf, please get in touch with us – we're here to help!

## Postgraduate Tutor team

All postgraduate students will be allocated a College Tutor, who will be able to assist with any personal, financial or work-related problems. You will be given contact details of your own Tutor, and you will have an individual meeting with them soon after arrival. During your course, it is very important to inform your Tutor as soon as you can if a medical issue or other difficulty occurs that could affect your study or research. The Postgraduate Tutor team is there to help and support you.

**Melanie Keene (mjk32@cam.ac.uk)** is the lead Postgraduate Tutor at Homerton and can be contacted if you are unable to contact your allocated Tutor or you would prefer to talk to her.

## What happens when I arrive?

The MCR will be here to help you settle into Cambridge and College, both practically and socially, and to provide another source of support alongside your department and College staff. As well as all of your scheduled induction talks (both College and faculty), we'll be running our own Freshers' Weeks to help start off your time! We put on a range of events to make sure that there's something for everyone, and it's the best way to meet Homertonians (old and new).

## Freshers' Week

When you arrive in Cambridge to start your course, you'll also be invited to join in with the full programme of Freshers' Week activities! Some of these will take place in College, but we'll also use the opportunity to show you around the city a little. We hold two Freshers' Weeks: one in September and another at the beginning of October. They are both great opportunities to meet old and new MCR members.

The events are all run by members of the MCR Committee, and we'll be available as point of contact throughout week (and the rest of the year!). On the next pages are some names & faces of people you will almost definitely meet during Freshers' Week and have a look at the MCR Committee section for a bit more detail on what we do (and how YOU can get involved).

The Freshers' Week schedule can be found on the Homerton MCR website [www.homerton-mcr.co.uk](http://www.homerton-mcr.co.uk)!

In the meantime, please join the Homerton MCR Facebook group (<https://bit.ly/3C0HUaQ>), where you can meet all of our current students, including those starting in 2023. You can also follow us on Instagram @homertoncollegeMCR, where you can get some insight into what our events have looked like in previous years.

We also have a Facebook group for PGCE students starting this year. Please join "Homerton PGCEs 2023-24" (<https://bit.ly/47Gh990>) group to stay updated on what we've got going on.



Homerton MCR Facebook group



PGCE 2023-24 Facebook group



# The MCR as a concept

## The Committee

We're here to keep the postgraduate community at College ticking over smoothly. We're all current MCR members ourselves and are elected to the committee by our peers. The committee does everything from planning and hosting social events, to buying resources for the common room, to taking student issues and queries to relevant College staff on your behalf.

The full MCR committee will get elected in early October, during first term and consists of:

· President · Treasurer\* · Vice Presidents\* · Ents Officers - Welfare Officers\* - Comms Officer\* - Access and Education Officer\* - Sustainability and Green Officer\* and 2 PGCE Officers\*. Head to the website and the 'How the MCR Works' section to see how you can get involved! There are also a handful of unelected, Liberation Officer roles, again see the website for more. We have elected a President and Ents Officers in advance of the start of Michaelmas term (first term). **\*Vacant roles denoted.**

## How to get involved:

There will be an election during Michaelmas Term, usually around October, in which we will be looking for applicants to put themselves forward for all of the roles that have not yet been elected. No experience of student committees is required, and all students are welcome to apply, including those who are here for just one year – all we ask is that you're enthusiastic and interested in making the MCR a better place!

If you are interested or want to learn more about these positions, you can approach any member of committee to ask for more details, information or advice. We'll put out more information when the time comes for applicants to send in their manifestos.

## The JCR

PGCE students are a member of both the JCR and the MCR (lucky you!). The JCR represents all the undergrads in college and the committee has already been elected – see the table below for contact details:

Position	Name	Email (@homerton.cam.ac.uk)
Office Manager	Emma Themba	
President	Ben Ward	HUS-President
VP – Internal	Maysie Haynes	HUS-Internal
VP – External	Sulanya Pallewatte	HUS-External
Treasurer	Leo Wang	HUS-Treasurer
Welfare	Aleena Kombanal	HUS-Welfare
Welfare	Alesia Laci	HUS-Welfare
Welfare	Andre Pancholi	HUS-Welfare
Communications	Lizzie Banner	HUS-Comms
Green	Felix Armstrong	HUS-Green
Services	Liliana Walker	HUS-Services
Academic Affairs & Liaison	Anna Bevan	HUS-Academic
Target & Access	Lorena Piedrahita-Lopez	HUS-Access
Ents	Anna Kilvington	HUS-Ents
Ents	Emily Simmons	HUS-Ents



# The MCR as a concept

## The MCR Committee this year & KEY CONTACTS



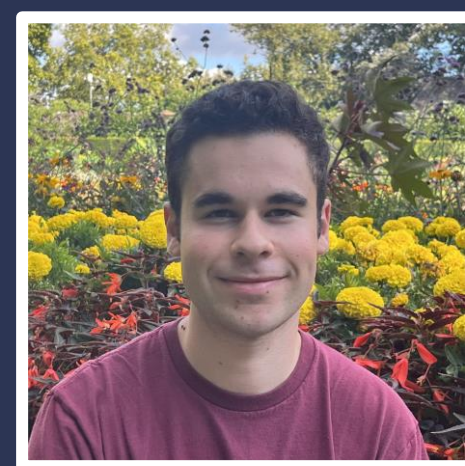
**Kogulan Vipulan**  
(he/him)  
**MCR President**

Hi All, I'm Kogulan, more commonly known as Kookie 🍪 around College! I'm a Master's student reading Chemical Engineering. I'm active on the College sport scene, as I co-lead the badminton society, and I am also an ambassador for our in-house Changemakers programme. Homerton has been a wonderful place to live over my past three years here. I look forward to getting to know all of you and integrating you into our friendly community! Please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions!

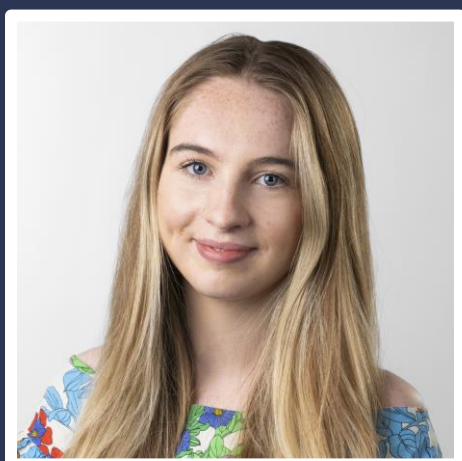
Contact: MCR-President@homerton.cam.ac.uk OR kv332@cam.ac.uk

I'm Joe, currently in my second year of a PhD in Cell Biology. Along with Tilly, I will be helping to organise a variety of events throughout the year to keep your calendars packed with fun things to do and provide you with opportunities to get to know each other. Looking forward to meeting you all this year and for the good times ahead!

Contact: MCR-Ents@homerton.cam.ac.uk OR jtg34@cam.ac.uk



**Joe Ganellin**  
(he/him)  
**Ents Officer**



**Matilda Grayson**  
(she/her)  
**Ents Officer**

Hi, I'm Tilly! I'm a second year Architecture Masters student here at Homerton. This is my second year on the MCR Ents team, and I am really excited about some of the fun socials and themed formals we have planned for the year. I understand it can be simultaneously exciting and daunting starting a new university, so I hope to make your experience an amazing one. I am always here if you have any questions or are looking for a friendly face!

Contact: MCR-Ents@homerton.cam.ac.uk OR mg2096@cam.ac.uk

Over the next year we will both serve as points of contact between the MCR and college. Which includes meeting with staff, and getting the postgraduate voices heard! We're a friendly bunch so please shoot us a message or email! **We will be adding more faces to this committee following the October elections and hope you will want to get involved!**

Make sure to head to [www.homerton-mcr.co.uk](http://www.homerton-mcr.co.uk) for details on all the events we have planned for Freshers' Week, including:

- Croquet and Pimms
- Pub Crawl
- Outdoor Cinema and Pizza Night

**Also visit the 'How the MCR Works' section to learn more about us and how YOU can get involved!**



# The MCR as a concept

## Events & Social Life

Throughout the year we will be holding a variety of social events. We will publish a Termcard every term (there are three terms per year: Michaelmas, Lent, and Easter) which will look a little like the Freshers' timetable. We aim to include a mix of drinking and nondrinking events so there's a little something for everyone. MCR favourites include tea & cakes, wine & cheese and movie nights, which take place in College, and pub crawls that take us a little further afield! We also like to keep things interesting by throwing in some one-off events, such as table tennis tournaments, trips to the tea gardens at Grantchester just outside of Cambridge, or ghost tours of the city. If there are any events that you are interested in seeing on our termcard, or would like to run yourself with our help, just get in touch with the committee!

## Formal Dinners

Like many Colleges in Cambridge & Oxford, Homerton puts on regular formal dinners. Postgraduate formals run on selected Friday and are really special occasion! These are 3-course evening meals that take place in the New Dining Hall, all enjoyed by candlelight! This is an opportunity to dress up a little, e.g. in suit & tie or cocktail dress, and your gown if you would like. You can buy tickets for formals using the same Upay system that you use for other food & drink in College (please see College Freshers' guides for more detail), and you can also get tickets for guests from outside Homerton. Tickets cost ~£16 for Homertonians and a little more for guests, or for fancier formals (e.g. Christmas Formals). In addition to the postgraduate formals, postgraduate students are welcome to attend almost all other formal dinners in College unless specifically stated, including the ones that take place every Tuesday night that undergraduates also attend.





## The MCR as a place

Somewhat confusingly, “MCR” refers not only to the postgraduate community, but also to our common room. This is on site in College, located in Morley House (one of the postgraduate accommodation buildings) and is a place for all MCR members to relax, socialise and attend planned events.

What is the MCR used for? Everything! The MCR acts as a common room for all MCR members, living on or off site. The committee often holds our meetings here, and many of our official MCR events (e.g. wine & cheese, tea & cakes, movie nights, pre-drinks). There are comfy sofas, a TV, a table tennis table and a fully outfitted kitchen, so you can use the space for anything from a dinner party, to a movie night, to a workspace during the day. There’s also a patio area outside with picnic tables, and a brick BBQ on the lawn beyond, for use during the warmer months. However, please be aware that the doors to the patio are alarmed and you should contact the Porters beforehand if you want to open them.

### Who can use the MCR?

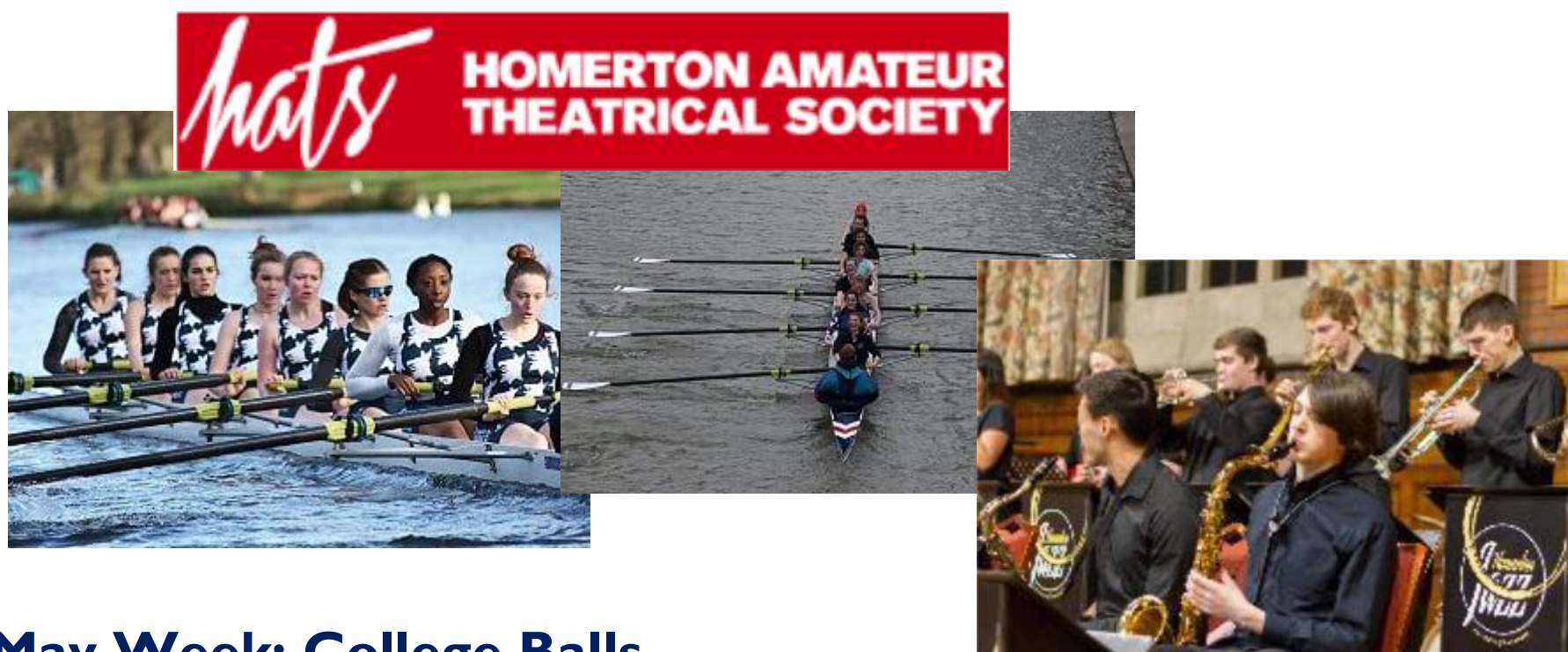
The MCR is card-accessible to all postgraduate students, including those who live out, and you should feel free to use it at any time! All we ask is that you leave it in a clean and tidy state. Students are allowed to bring guests to the MCR with them (e.g. friends or family, including from other Colleges or undergraduates), but please be aware that you are responsible for any mess or damage caused by your guests. Private bookings are sometimes possible at the discretion of the committee, e.g. for meetings of student groups, and the committee will notify grads that an event is happening, to give you some privacy. However, as the space is a common area for everyone, it’s not possible to book the space on weekends and we ask that you be aware that some students may still come in and out of the space. Contact the committee ([MCR-President@homerton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:MCR-President@homerton.cam.ac.uk)) if you’re interested in booking the MCR.





## Sports & Societies

Postgraduate students are welcome to join sports teams and societies both within College and more widely within the University. Within College, there's a music society (HCMS) and two choirs, football, rowing (HCBC) and numerous other sports clubs, an allotment society, and many others! More widely in the University, there are "Blues" (uni-level) sports teams, and a society for anything else you can possibly imagine. In your first few weeks here, there will be both a Homerton and a Cambridge Freshers' Fair, where all the societies, teams and committees will have stalls so that you can meet them and sign up. The committee will post details of these Fairs on Facebook.



## May Week: College Balls

After exam season is over in early June, many of the Colleges hold all-night May Balls or June Events during a period known as "May Week". (This used to be in May, and no one could be bothered to change the name when it moved!) The Balls are often black-tie dress code, and all food, drink and entertainment is included in the ticket price.

Homerton runs its own event every year, and tickets typically go on sale in late January. You can also buy tickets to other Colleges' events, depending on their availability. May Week events are absolutely not compulsory, but like formal dinners, they are a fun part of Cambridge culture and can be a great way to blow off steam at the end of the year. If you're interested, postgraduate students can also join the organising committee for their College's event, including at Homerton.



## Facilities in College

### Porters' Lodge

Located at the reception desk in the Mary Allan Building, the “Plodge” is home to Homerton’s Porters. Porters are a first port of call in case of any kind of emergency, to collect your post, or just for a nice chat if you’re having a bad day, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – they are some of the loveliest people in College!

### HUS Office

The HUS (Homerton Union of Students) office is located in the Cavendish building, in the JCR. The office caters to all students in Homerton, including undergraduates. From here, you can buy stash and small items like stamps and cards, hire airbeds, or pay for basic binding services e.g. for your thesis. They’re really friendly and available for advice or a nice chat as well! Opening hours are: Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm & 5pm-7pm.

### The University Card

You will receive your university card or “cam card” when you arrive. It functions as your key card for the electronic doors around College, including into your accommodation block and the MCR common room, your library card for all the libraries in the university system, and your EPOS card, which means that you can use it to pay for food in the Griffin, Buttery or the Dining Hall.

### College Library

The library is located right next to the Porters’ Lodge in the Mary Allan Building. It’s open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for you to work and take out books from the self-service check out, and is staffed on weekdays during normal office hours if you need any help or want to ask about ordering an item in. To search the library’s online catalogue, you can log in to iDiscover, the university’s library portal, using your Cambridge “Raven” log in details.

### Pigeonholes

Every Homerton student has a numbered pigeonhole, located along the ground floor corridor around the corner from the Porters’ Lodge (or upstairs above the Porters’ Lodge for PGCE students). All your mail will be delivered here, and any parcels will be held at the Porters’ desk for collection.

### College Gym

The College has its own fully equipped gym, free to all students living in College and at a reduced fee to those living out. Find out more about gym access at [www.hus-jcr.co.uk/college-life/the-gym/](http://www.hus-jcr.co.uk/college-life/the-gym/) . Other gym options in Cambridge include, Kelsey Kerridge, Parkside pools and gym and pure gym (which is just around the corner from Homerton). We also have our own dance studio, that can be booked for personal use. Find out more about how to book, along with other college facilities at <https://www.homerton.cam.ac.uk/current-members/students/facilities> .





# HOMERTON COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

## Map of College

For a map of the University (very detailed and interactive) go to: <https://map.cam.ac.uk/>



# Cambridge Slang Dictionary!

**Academic rigour:** what we all strive to maintain (a COVID specific meme following the use of this term in emails from Stephen Toope)

**Bops:** A themed College-run party. Costumes are advised!

**Boatie:** An affectionate name for a rower

**Bumps:** A form of rowing race where competing boats start simultaneously but at fixed distances from each other. The aim is to bump the boat in front before being bumped by the boat behind. If neither happens, you are said to row over. A significantly dangerous pastime, and therefore an excellent spectator sport.

**Bursars:** The Senior Bursar and Domestic Bursar are responsible for the College's finances.

**Buttery:** The College canteen, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner to College Members. During term the Buttery is also open in the morning and afternoon to serve snacks, tea and coffee. Wi-Fi access is also available.

**Catz:** A shortened name for St. Catherine's College

**Emma:** An abbreviation for Emmanuel College, not to be confused with our lovely HUS member Emma!

**Ents:** Refers to the 'entertainment' being organised and also the officers on the JCR and MCR that help to organise them

**Fitz:** An abbreviation for Fitzwilliam College

**Formal:** A dinner that occurs regularly during term time where students can purchase tickets for a sit down meal in suits and dress (some Colleges require gowns)

**Griffin (Griff):** The Homerton College bar is called the 'Griffin'.

**Hall:** 'Hall' refers to the dining Hall, which is reserved for student dining in College and other special events.

**Homertonian:** Affectionately used to describe a student of the College, past and present.

**JCR:** Short for the Junior Combination Room of which all junior members are joined to, it refers to a common room in which they are able to relax. It is also the colloquial term for the committee that is elected by the student body, in which they work to improve the students' experiences here by providing support and entertainment.



# Cambridge Slang Dictionary!

**Kings Affair (KA):** King's College alternate may ball! One of the hottest nights in May week (make sure to bring your glitter!).

**Matriculation:** When you formally join the University, accompanied by a photo and a formal dinner!

**May Ball:** Taking place during May Week, although actually held in June, this is the end of year formal Ball which is held by many Colleges. Ours is particularly spectacular and usually themed, leading to a high demand for tickets.

**May Week Sunday:** The Sunday immediately after the end of Easter Full Term, after exams have finished, but before the results have come out. Usually celebrated with cocktail parties.

**Michaelmas:** The first of three terms in the academic year, between October and Christmas. The other two are called Lent and Easter term.

**O\*ford (a.k.a. The Other Place):** A well known beta-test for Cambridge.

**Pidge:** This is your Pidgeon hole where you will receive all your mail to College, it is located next to the porters.

**Plodge:** Slang for Porters' Lodge. Porters are there to greet visitors and for members of the College to collect mail.

**Porters:** Porters ensure the security of College and man the 'Porters Lodge' at the main entrances. They are also who you go to when get locked out of your room. All in all they are just wonderful people, go say 'hi!'

**Punt(ing):** A long flat-bottomed boat where you move forward by sticking a pole in the river bed and pushing.

**Sidge:** An abbreviation for Sidgwick Site where lectures are held

**Spoons:** Short for Wetherspoons, also known as the regal. This is a normal spoons ... but at the weekend has a club night feel complete with a dance floor and the latest cheesy hits! Many a good night will end here!

**Stash:** Clothing with the brand of your College or sports team

**Swaps:** A formal where Colleges host other Colleges for dinner. It is the best way to experience all the different College formals of Cambridge!

**Tit Hall:** Is a shortened name for Trinity Hall College

**Yeah Hom!:** A cry of support for all our lovely sports men and woman, better warm up your lungs for Bumps!