My fellow Antonians,

You are almost there! From application to acceptance, it is a long road, but I assure you it will all be worth it. I am sure you are getting congratulated far and wide about your acceptance to Oxford, but I would like to specifically focus on why being accepted to St Antony’s will be one of the most important (and fun) parts of your Oxford experience.

Starting at St Antony’s is not nearly as difficult or complicated as it may seem (I remember the form filling and emails). In fact we are lucky to have some of the nicest administrative staff and active GCRs to make your transition to Oxford as smooth as possible for you. There is a particular Oxford vernacular and special St Antony’s lingo, and it can be confusing at times.

To help you clear up some of the questions you may have, I have put together some top tips about Orientation, the GCR, and moving to Oxford.

**Orientations and inductions: why are there so many?**

You have probably received information/timetables about inductions and orientations from many sources, including the University, your department, and St Antony’s! Oxford is a wonderful place but is also a decentralised one. You will receive a lot of information in the first weeks and might feel a little overwhelmed, but don’t worry - it will all come together:

**Top Tips:**

- Make sure you attend all of the mandatory induction events on the St Antony’s timetable and keep an eye on your emails for the details of the department ones (maybe print it in advance or put it in your phone calendar).
- On the timetable where it is marked “New Student Registration”, note that it says you need to **only attend one of your choosing**. It only takes a short time once there isn’t a queue and I recommend going as soon as possible in order to get it out of the way and to get your student card (Bod Card in Oxford slang).
- One of the most important things you need to do when you move to the UK is to figure out how the NHS (National Health Service) works. This will be explained briefly during Welcome Week, but the GCR will organise a longer meeting in the first week of term which I recommend you to attend. (Location and time TBA)
- The International Students’ Orientation is a good introduction to the University if you are able to attend. All the banks are there so it is also a very easy way to set up a bank account
- The Freshers’ Fair on Thursday 5th at 3pm will be helpful if you want to get involved with societies/campaigns with students across the university.

**The GCR:**

In case you didn’t see my last email, the GCR is essentially the student council of the College; we work as a liaison between the students and the College and we try to enrich the lives of the students of St Antony’s College by coordinating a variety of social, academic, and welfare events. To get you off to a good start, we have organised a variety of activities for Welcome Week, which you can see in green on your timetable. All are optional (except the BME/Consent workshop) but I encourage you to attend as many
as possible in order to make new friends and make a network here. (I met some of my best friends through welcome week)

Top Tips:

- Join our Facebook page if you haven’t already.
- Don’t feel nervous about coming to any of the events by yourself. Everyone is in the same boat and other GCR members and I will be there to greet you all.
- There are several vacant GCR positions (including Charities, Women, Environmental, LGBT, and BME Officers), so if you’re looking to get involved with us (I hope you are, obviously), email me.
- If you’re going to be at St Antony’s for more than one year, consider applying to be a Peer Supporter (peer support is for students to be able to rely on their peers to talk about personal issues that they might have at College. Selected students receive thirty hours of training by the university’s Counselling Service, as well as bi-weekly supervision sessions throughout the academic year. You can also train to become a Rainbow Peer or a Peer of Colour. Contact peer.supporters@sant.ox.ac.uk for more information.

Moving to St Antony’s/ Oxford:

Aside from getting to attend the best College in Oxford (I may be a little biased) you are also getting the opportunity to live in one of the most beautiful places in the UK. Make sure to make use of the many libraries and also visit other Colleges (you can enter any of them for free and bring two guests). The GCR has organised various tours so you can get accustomed to College life.

Top Tips:

- If you are living in St Antony’s Accommodation, they will make the process will be quite easy for you. Make sure to enter the gate on Woodstock Road (not Bevington) and the Porters’ Lodge is the first building on your left. One of our lovely porters will give you your key and a fellow student will show you to your room.
- If you are living out of campus (like me) please join this Facebook group. Also please don’t let living off campus make you feel that St Antony’s is any less your college. We have arranged various tours of the areas you might be living (eg Summertown, Jericho, Cowley) which I encourage everyone to go on to see all the great places that you have close by.
- If you are struggling with some of the terms, the Oxford Glossary may help but please don’t memorize this list: I’ve never even heard some of these, and I’ve been here a year!
- There are no cash machines (ATMS) near St Antony’s so try to have cash on you (especially for our student bar in the Buttery where we sell a variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks).
- If you are worried about setting up a bank account- don’t worry, it is quite simple. There are banks around Oxford with staff very well accustomed to helping students with this exact exercise every autumn and the University has a helpful guide here.
- We would strongly advise you to get a UK mobile phone as soon as you can. There are phone shops around Cornmarket Street (one of the main streets in Oxford). You’ll need a bank account to set up a contract for a phone, but you can also buy a pay as you go SIM card from a phone network and then take out a contract with whomever once you have a bank account.

I hope this email answered more questions than it created! If you are worried about anything, you can always email me. I look forward to meeting you all here in Oxford soon!

Claire Dowling, GCR President ‘17

https://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/prospective-students/newly-admitted-students/new-students-newsletters