

Dear incoming Queens' students,

Welcome to Queens! I'm Tomos, an incoming fourth-year engineering student from Ynys Môn, in the north of Wales. As JCR President, it's my absolute pleasure to congratulate you on your place at Queens'.

There's a joke in Cambridge that everyone thinks their college is the best. It's funny because everyone except Queens' students is wrong? Blatant bias aside, we are a big, friendly and inclusive college and you will meet lifelong friends here, who will enhance your life immeasurably. I firmly believe that it's the people and the community, not the beautiful grounds or rigorous academic experience, that will best define your experience here. It will change your lives as it has changed mine.

You will have faced more uncertainty and stress than any cohort before you. However your experience of the last few months has been, know that every one of you deserves your place here. You are brilliant, interesting and talented people, and we are looking forward to welcoming you to our community.

As undergraduates of Queens', you are members of the JCR (the 'Junior Combination Room'), the undergraduate community at Queens'. The JCR Committee (often abbreviated 'the JCR', confusingly) is elected to represent you to the College, organise student initiatives, entertainment and events. We are also your first port of call with questions or for advice (my contact details are below!). Every year we will organise events in Freshers' Week, push new initiatives and respond to trends and changes.

The last few months have been more demanding than any before, and you will matriculate at a time of seismic shifts in the Queens' undergraduate community. Residency over vacation, the use of new accommodation blocks for second and third-year students, the biggest ever first-year cohort, laundry at no additional charge, and of course the division of rooms into "households"; all of these are new this academic year.

We have been determined to make the best of these new circumstances, and we JCR Committee members have been working with Queens' for the last few months thinking about the term ahead. Not everything is worked out yet and circumstances may change over the course of the term and the year. There may be times when you are frustrated with or unclear on COVID restrictions in Queens'. Nevertheless, you have Queens' in all its glory to look forward to, and we will make it work.

Study, extracurricular activities and social life at Cambridge are all full-on. There are endless opportunities here. COVID restrictions or not, you're going to be busy. You might really struggle with study for the first time in your life. It's hard to tell you not to compare yourself to others when I didn't listen when I was a first-year. Cambridge is a big pond. Just remember that if you ever feel in awe of others around you, they're probably feeling the same way back. Everyone here

is brilliant. If you are struggling, you are learning. You will have support in each other, in older years, and in us, and you should never ever hesitate to reach out.

Freshers' Week

Bree and Iz, the freshers' representatives on the JCR Committee, as well as the rest of the JCR, have been working to organise a first week that is a unique and enjoyable experience. While you and all the other Queens' members will be organised into households to comply with governmental restrictions, there will be plenty of opportunity for interaction with the whole cohort, and we refuse to organise a Freshers' week that's all on Zoom!

As in every year, we will be allocating you to 'college parents'. These will be two second years who have paired up and volunteered to look after a handful of you. They will be a point of contact and a friendly face ready to introduce you, and a handful of your peers (your 'siblings') to life at Queens' and Cambridge, albeit this year at a safe distance.

Some important notes:

1. Nothing that doesn't come from Queens' or the University is 'official' or 'unmissable'.
2. No events require drinking. Plenty of students don't drink at Queens', and plenty do.
3. Make sure you're clear on the COVID guidelines in Queens' while you're here. It's going to be new and interesting for all of us, and it's all to keep students and staff safe.

Contact & Social Media

We will be sharing some information and introducing JCR members on our freshers' Instagram account in advance of term - **@queenscollegefreshers2020**. Students have also set up a WhatsApp group for your year ([accessed at this link](#)). Information and useful links will also be posted on our JCR website, <https://qjcr.org.uk/>, over the next few weeks. You'll find that Facebook is used heavily in Cambridge for student activities, and we have a [Freshers' Facebook group](#), a [Queens' JCR Facebook group](#), and a [Facebook page](#).

Remember to get in touch with questions. You're all awesome.

With best wishes,
Tomos



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