Brasenose Alternative Prospectus







INTRODUCTION

Hello!

Thank you for picking up our alternative prospectus! Everything you read here and all of the photos you see have been supplied by undergraduates at Brasenose.

We understand that choosing a college can be difficult and we also know that plenty of people associate Oxford with academic work alone. We want to dispel this myth by giving you an insight into what life at Brasenose is like, from the point of view of real students who have first-hand experience.

I'm Erin, and I'm a second year studying History. I'm the Access Rep for the JCR Committee (undergrad student body - think school council but at uni). This means that I spend my time promoting Brasenose to potential applicants - a job that I love since I can honestly say I've never been happier than I am at uni. As a first-gen student myself, it's important to me to help spread the word that Oxford is attainable regardless of your background, and that everyone is welcome here! There's definitely a strong sense of community in Brasenose; we're like a little family, and this really helps to foster an atmosphere that's friendly, welcoming and appreciative of

I hope that, after you've read our prospectus, you'll get more of an insight into what being a student in Oxford is actually like. If you're considering applying then our door will always be open for you to come and see for yourself why we all love it so much!

everyone's differences.





Profiles



Geography

When I was applying, I saw Brasenose ran an Arts Festival every summer which was the main reason I applied here. Little did I know, a few years later, I would end up organising this Arts Festival! Running a week full of arts events- from pottery, to life drawing, to concerts, to outdoor plays- was one of my highlights of my time here so far. Brasenose is fantastic at introducing people to such varied forms of the 'arts'; where else can you go to a poetry reading brunch in the morning, and a stage-combat workshop just after lunch?

Aside from being the Arts Representative for Brasenose and running Arts Week, I've also been involved in loads of other drama productions. The incredibly vibrant drama culture in Brasenose is so much fun to be a part of- I've met so many like-minded people who love being a part of theatre in many different ways. Everyone has always been very supportive of my numerous forays into theatre- whether it be acting, directing or producing. Brasenose has provided me with so many opportunities within drama, and arts in general, and it's one of my favourite parts of life here.





Economics & Management

Before uni, sports and I did not get along. Now we're best friends. The college system means that anybody of any ability can give sports a go. I started with college football then added netball, dodgeball, American football, hockey, squash, rugby and rounders. This year I stepped my commitment to sports up a gear, taking on the roles of College Sports Rep and football captain, as well as joining the university women's lacrosse and novice cricket teams. My participation in these activities would not have been possible without the generous grants from college's sports fund which ensure that anyone is able to afford to play sport at the university level. Sport at Oxford, and particularly in Brasenose, has been the highlight of my time here so far – I have made many great friends playing it and the socials after matches are guaranteed to be fantastic!



The Diversities Rep



Medicine

When I joined Brasenose, the friendliness and inclusivity of the college was something that struck me as completely different to what I was used to at school and I knew I wanted to contribute to what makes Brasenose such an open and accepting place.

Now, as the JCR Diversities and Equalities rep, I work with the dedicated D&E committee (currently comprising BAME, Women of Colour, International, Religion and Culture, LGBTQ+, Disabilities, Mental Health, Socio-Economic Equality and Floating Reps) to organise events that support and celebrate the diversity of our student body. These events include themed welfare teas, JCR movie nights, and socials, as well as an annual D&E week in Autumn during which the D&E committee hosts two events per day.

The importance of diversity and inclusivity is evident in all aspects of Brasenose life; from flying the rainbow flag for the whole month of February and introducing gender-neutral toilets to internationally-themed formals. LGBTQ+, BAME and consent workshops in Fresher's week ensure that everyone is on the same page about the importance of equality as soon as they join our college, earning Brasenose its title as one of the happiest colleges in Oxford.

JCR

The JCR (Junior Common Room) is a nice place to go to relax and is a lot more casual than many of the other college JCRs with its big comfy sofas and huge TV with a subscription to Sky. The pool table, quiz machine and several different games consoles also mean that our ICR is well used. Fortnightly meetings for the undergraduate student body occur in the JCR, usually over free pizza or snacks, and these ensure that students have a say in the running of college via motions which can be voted for. Sunday film nights, (again, with free snacks, popcorn and sweets) welfare teas and any major sports event also mean that the ICR is usually packed out!



New Quad

A separate quad which you're allowed to walk on (shock!) and in the summer is host to the arts festival. This area is great for picnics, croquet and eating ice cream on a hot day.





Chapel

Our beautiful chapel is home to Oxford's largest non-auditioning choir meaning that anybody who enjoys singing can get involved (they also get free formal meals once a week!). There is a service every Sunday which is completely optional and open to everyone. Musical concerts are also held here every term featuring Brasenose students and staff. There are also carol concerts in the chapel at Oxmas time (the week leading up to the 25th November) and if you play a musical instrument you can go practice in the chapel, for example the Jazz

Lodge

The Lodge is where our friendly porters work who are happy to help in any way they can and where you can check your 'pidge' for mail. They even collect your parcels for you!



Smith Reading Room

A more relaxed reading room with desks and collaborative work spaces – a nice alternative if you're sick of the main library.



Old Quad

A typical Oxford quad that you're not allowed to walk on but does look pretty!



Dining Room

Brasenose's dining hall has informal meals every day and formal meals three times a week. Inside, the walls are lined with portraits of ex Brasenostrils and the 'Brazen Nose' door knocker which gave the college its name. Our food is some of the best in Oxford, very cheap (£1.50 for a full English around £8 for our three course meals at formal!) and operated on a pay as you go system. This means you only pay for the meals that you eat in college, unlike paying a lump sum at the start of term for all meals that some colleges prefer. The dining hall holds big events on special occasions such as Burns Night, our 'Ale Verses' on Shrove Tuesday, the Christmas dinner and Chinese New Year dinner. The Hall is also the venue for and the annual Christmas Pantomime, written by the second year students about the going-ons of that year.



Library

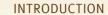
Our well stocked library is open 24 hours a day - great for anyone who leaves their work until the last minute! As well as having a separate law library known as the Stally and another holding modern history, politics and geography books, the main library has collections in all subject areas covered by the college. The main library has over 55,000 books and unlike many libraries has lots of natural light and space. Our friendly librarians are happy to help if there is a book you can't find and if Brasenose doesn't already have a copy, they will buy it for you! If this library isn't your thing, you don't have very far to get to the Bodleian library which is opposite college!



Bar

The bar is at the centre of college life. It plays host to pre drinks for Bops (college parties), open mic nights and pub quizzes. It has a table football table, quiz machine and darts board as well as providing drinks at very reasonable prices, all served by Brasenose students and run by our bar manager, Julie, making it the perfect place to hang out in the evening.





Accommodation

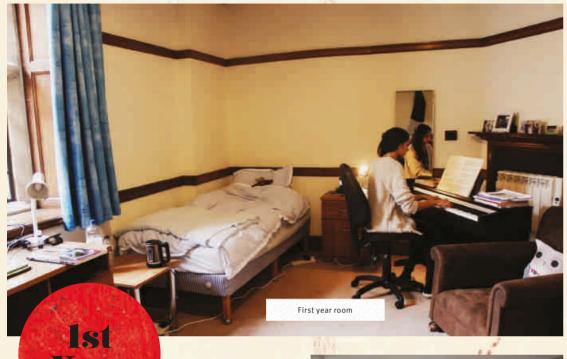
Unlike many other colleges, Brasenose can accommodate all undergraduates in the central city and can do so for all years of study which means you don't have the stress of finding a house of your own! The location is second to none: as well as being the only undergraduate college in the beautiful Radcliffe Square, the college is situated on the high street, placing us right next to the main university library, the Bodleian, the lecture halls known as Exam Schools and all the best pubs, restaurants and clubs in Oxford.

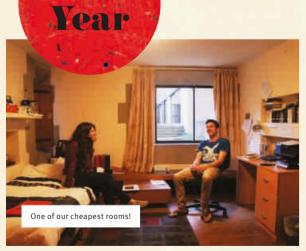
Each year you will be given the choice of different price bands of room, with some HUGE 'A band' rooms being priced at £6,043* a year all the way to 'F band' rooms being priced at £3,532* a year – very reasonable when compared with other colleges and other universities, and definitely cheaper than having to find your own house. The college is able to accommodate students with physical disabilities in specially equipped rooms. All rooms and bathrooms are cleaned regularly by college staff.

*Based on 2023 prices.



Accommodation







All first years live on the college site in the centre of Oxford. There are a variety of rooms ranging from those built in the 1960s to those built in the 17th century. Before coming to Oxford you will be given the choice of the different price bands and college does its best to assign rooms accordingly. Even the very smallest rooms are a good size with plenty of space for the bed, wardrobe, desk and bookcase that comes with every room.





The third years get the first pick of college and Frewin rooms so that they have the best rooms for their final exams. Many of the third year rooms are sets rather than single rooms, which contain a bedroom and study/ living room and en suite facilities in some.

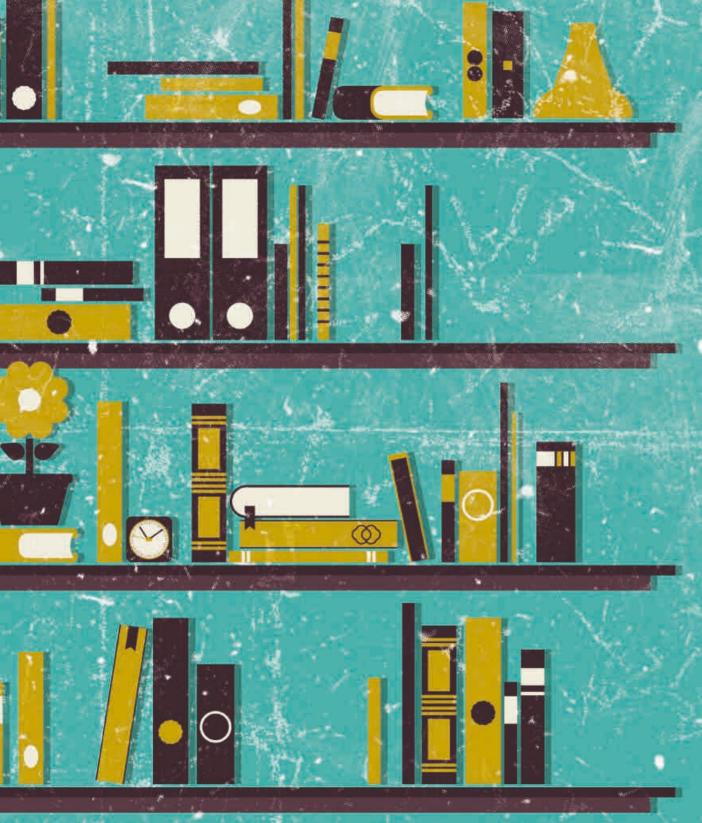
In second year everyone lives in our college annex,
Frewin. Unlike most of the other colleges our annex
isn't miles out of town - in fact it is practically more
central than the main site! It is just behind the Oxford
Union building, off Cornmarket street and less than a
five minute walk away from the main college site.



Second year room



As well as this, the best third year rooms have incredible views over Radcliffe square so you can look at the dreaming spires as you work!



Welfare

It's no secret that Oxford can be a pretty stressful place, but Brasenose prides itself on being one of the most inclusive, supportive colleges in Oxford, and we have a brilliant student welfare team that works tirelessly to make sure it stays that way!

There are three Welfare Reps, a great team of extensively trained Peer Supporters, a Diversity and Equalities Rep and a Women*'s Officer. The whole team's goal is to make sure everyone's getting on just fine. We hold weekly Welfare Teas in our common room, where everyone is invited to come along for some free snacks and drinks. They're really social occasions and it's a great opportunity to meet and re-connect with people from different years and subjects, as well as get to know the welfare team itself.

Alternatively, if you're busy during these teas or big group things just aren't for you, you can always message one of the welfare reps and we'll be happy to have a quiet chat over a cuppa one-to-one. Two of the best-loved members of the welfare team are the enigmatic Freddo and Flower fairies. Around 5th week, people can fill out a form to send a Freddo or flower, along with a personal message, to a friend in order to combat the "5th week blues".





We also love to team up with various other reps to provide welfare and fun. With the Arts Rep, we hold crafting sessions such as pottery or 'Drunk Bob Ross', and we've teamed up with the Environments Rep to provide houseplants to members of college. In the past, we've also worked alongside Femsoc to run sexual health and feminism talks.

We also provide free and discreet contraception drops on request. The welfare reps and peer supporters complete a term-long training course specifically so we are in the best position to help you out with anything that might be on your mind, no matter how big or small, in a completely confidential way. Together we try and make college the warmest, most supportive place to live it can be.



Formal Hall

If you are worried that you won't be getting the all-round 'student experience' at Brasenose do not panic! ENTZ are here to dispel that myth and help you have some fun!

We organise a variety of events for the students of Brasenose, and are here to make sure that Oxford is as much fun as it is rewarding.

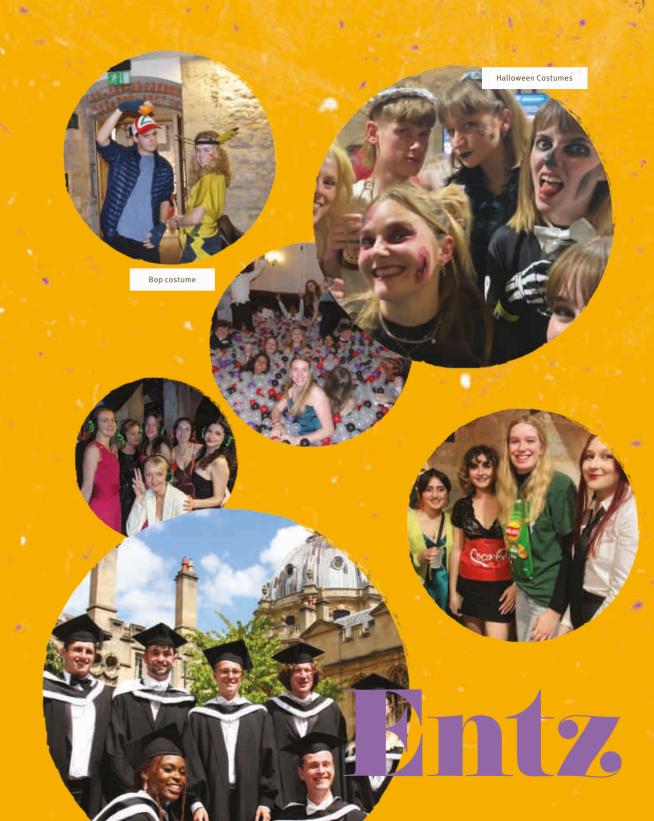
We are given a budget each term to spend on you guys and use it for both non-alcohol and alcohol events. We have film nights, where everyone collects together in the JCR (Junior Common Room) and gets free sweets and popcorn while watching. We have one of the nicest and most used JCRs in the University and it's a great place to gather together to watch sporting events or popular TV shows or even to wind down with a game of Mario Kart, Articulate or pool. Often these are in conjunction with our helpful and loving Welfare team and we will often share events.

We also run a lot of events down the bar, for example the hugely popular open mic nights and charity pub quizzes. Again, our bar is well used, cheap and a great place to be (it's underground!). Indeed, many people who don't drink are happy to go down the bar because of the friendly atmosphere and wide range of non-alcoholic options.

There are also Entz run club nights called bops. These are where we rent out a club and have a big fancy dress night. Previous examples include 'famous couples' for Valentine's day, Halloween and the annual BNC bop during Freshers' week-come as anything beginning with these hallowed letters. They take place down the bar (DTB) and then everyone heads to the club.



So whether you fancy a chilled night in the JCR, munching snacks and watching one of the many classic films we put on, or you want to fulfil the 'work hard, play hard' type and go all out, ENTZ will be able to keep you happy.





Black and gold. The team colours of Brasenose College.

24 hours

24 hours, the amount of time the library is open a day.

10.9m

The distance in metres between Brasenose and the Radcliffe Camera Library,

350

Number of undergraduates in the college.

1509

The year the college was founded.

BNC

We are commonly known as BNC.

Brasenose Facts

1815

When our boat club was founded, the oldest in Oxford and said to be one of the oldest in the world!

32

The number of plays and other events put on during arts week!

2019

The year Brasenose last won women badminton Cuppers.

£1.50

£1.50, the cost of a small fry up at breakfast!

3

Formal meals a week and 3 quads.

Punts to use in trinity term!

1868

Brasenose invented the coxless four in rowing when their cox Frederick Weatherly jumped out of their boat in the 1868 Henly Regatta. The crew went on to win the race and although subsequently disqualified, they had established a precedent from which the Coxless Fours were to develop.

Alumni

Famous alumni include Monty Python comedian Michael Palin, author and winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature William Golding, director of Amnesty International Kate Allen, physicist Michael Kosterlitz, travel writer Sara Wheeler, novelist Jessie Burton, William Webb Ellis who is often credited with the invention of rugby, senior officer during World War I Douglas Haig, Robert Runcie who was Archbishop of Canterbury, author Helen Dewitt and politician David Cameron.

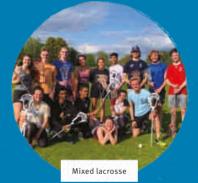
Sport



The best thing about sport at Brasenose is that it caters for any degree of ability and commitment: whether you're rowing



Brasenose has a great tradition of sporting success, consistently performing well in the intercollegiate competitions, commonly known as 'cuppers' and on the river rowing. There are cuppers tournaments for every sport you can think of, from football, netball and rugby to ballroom dancing, croquet and darts. There are also leagues for most sports with several different divisions, meaning that teams are guaranteed regular, evenly fought matches as well as being able to battle for glory in cuppers.



Brasenose has its own sports facilities with its own boat club, said to be the oldest in the world and its own sports ground (including tennis courts, cricket pitches and football/ rugby pitches) within five minutes of college. Brasenose also gives its members free membership to the University Gym and squash courts at the Iffley Road complex. The University Gym has facilities that far exceed that of any college gym, so it's a great option for those who





If you do want to take sport to a higher level, the college has a sports fund which will support anyone who represents Oxford University in any team. It isn't all serious though, and sport at Brasenose is open to people of all levels, meaning that often the emphasis is on having fun and keeping fit rather than victory.

The boat club for example always puts out novice boats so if you have never rowed before, it's the perfect place to give it a go. You can also try out being a cox or come to the boat club at the major events and enjoy the Barbeque we always put on.





Netball team



All in all, no matter what your ability, Brasenose will be able to offer an opportunity to play the sport you have enjoyed in the past, or give you the chance to try out new sports. The friendly nature of the college really shines through as college sport is very inclusive and at sports events the chant of 'BNC' is always the loudest!



In May every year Brasenose holds a week long bonanza of drama, art, film, music, dance, poetry, baking and even knitting, run entirely by students. Getting involved offers a great chance to catch up with people in other year groups and subjects and an opportunity to try your hand at directing, producing, marketing, or whatever else takes your fancy!

In recent years Arts Week has included open air Shakespeare plays, contemporary theatre productions, cabarets, open mic nights, Zumba and Swing workshops, live music, poetry, silent vampire movies, art and photography exhibitions, Indian classical dance performances, sketch shows, bake-offs, communal mural painting, film and documentary viewings, and much more.



Arts week











Brasenose has lots of different clubs and societies, and there's always scope for more if you want to set one up. Every interest is catered for.

They can be more traditional like the debating club (called The Addington Society) or the Ashmole society which gets in History speakers to come and talk and meet the students.

Then there are the more quirky societies such as the Creative Writing society and Sunday Night Film Club. Plus, across the university we proudly have students involved in nearly all the wider societies and organisations; such as in theatre and film productions, writing for student papers, speaking in debates at the Oxford Union, presenting on radio shows as well as being involved in a wide range of volunteering organisations such as RAG and OxHub. The college Arts scheme also has a subsidy programme where if you go see a play or concert that a Brasenostril is performing in then they will cover some of the cost of your ticket.

CIUS SSOCS

Finance

At Brasenose we acknowledge that the last thing you want to be doing when you get here is worrying about money and for this reason we try to make sure that this is never a problem. We have lots of measures in place for those experiencing financial hardship as well as subsidised living costs and a generous annual fund donated by alumni to provide student support.

Books

Oxford's world class facilities actually keep living costs down, not only is Oxford no more expensive than many other universities, it is in many cases cheaper! Wellstocked college and departmental libraries, along with the central Bodleian Library, means that students will often not need to spend money on books and other printed material.

The Bodleian Library dates from 1602 and is globally acknowledged to be one of the greatest libraries in the world, holding 13 million printed items in 250 kilometres of shelving. As well as this, if there is a book that you need that the Brasenose library doesn't have, the librarians can buy it for you within a couple of days.



Travel Grants

Brasenose can also help you travel abroad via generous travel grants for charitable projects, academic research or just to broaden your cultural horizons.





Getting About

Oxford is a compact city, and many of the colleges, departments, libraries and other facilities are a short walk or bike ride away. There is no need to spend money on public transport in Oxford.



In college, most living costs are subsidised so it actually works out cheaper living here than it does at many other universities. Food and drink in college is subsidized, so students can eat well at low cost and Brasenose is able to provide rooms in College for all years of study, making accommodation relatively cheap. These rooms are much cheaper than living out of college, as students only need to pay rent for term time rather than the whole year.





College Support

The College itself also has an excellent range of support to supplement the University's. For instance, the college offers grants to those wishing to stay during the vacation for course related research and travel, and provides aid to those who encounter unexpected financial hardship.



Sports Fund

The sports fund is there to support anyone who represents Oxford University and reduce the costs which higher level sport often involves such as expensive equipment, transport and specialised training.

Financial Packages

The University offers an excellent means-tested bursary scheme, and there's also some scholarships available. See www.ox.ac.uk/funding for more information.



Events

When applying to Oxford it can be difficult to imagine that you will be able to do anything other than work! Well here are some of the annual Brasenose traditions!

Michaelmas Term (first term)

1 Freshers Week

We know that starting university can be terrifying so you will be welcomed into college by a big team of second and third years who will make you feel at home when you arrive. Activities will be put on in the day so everyone can get to know each other a bit better. At night there will be lots of activities including club nights, ice cream parlour trips, iceskating, pub quizzes, film nights and a ceilidh plus much much more for you to choose from!



Matriculation

2 Matriculation

Your matriculation ceremony is held after Freshers week and is when you become an official member of the University! Brasenose holds a brunch, an afternoon tea and a ball to celebrate.



5 Christmas Party

The Entertainment (or ENTZ) team hire out a swanky venue and undergraduates dress up in black tie for a champagne reception down the bar followed by food and a party. This is a lovely event and is very well attended every year!

3 Carol Service

Brasenose Ball

Brasenose choir, the largest non-auditioning choir in Oxford holds a carol service at the end of term which all members of college are invited to.

4 Christmas Dinner

Brasenose's great reputation for food can be seen in our Christmas Dinner – a three course traditional Christmas meal with Christmas crackers galore!

6 The Pantomime

Held in the last week of the first term, Brasenose students put on a pantomime featuring satire of college life. It features awful puns, badly made costumes and is above all hilarious and enjoyed by everyone in college.

Hilary Term (second term)

1 Ale Verses

One of Brasenose's oldest traditions! Ale verses is held every year on Shrove Tuesday and both undergraduates and postgraduates change the lyrics to popular songs to reference college before belting them out while standing on the tables! Last year's winner was 'Fairy Tale of Brasenose' (to the tune of 'Fairy Tale of New York' by the Pogues), but other entries included parodies of 'Bohemian Rhapsody', the Les Mis soundtrack and LMFAO's 'I'm sexy and I know it'.

Trinity Term (third term)



Ascension Day

May Day

An Oxford tradition for centuries.

People gather at sunrise on the first of
May to watch a choir singing on Magdalen
Bridge (optional all-nighter beforehand
as clubs stay open til 6am!)

2 Halfway Hall

This event is held half way through term for second years to celebrate being halfway through theirdegrees.

3 Burns Night

Brasenose celebrates this Scottish tradition every year with a Ceilidh (a dance) and Haggis in the dining hall.



Burns Night

- Spring Fling

This is the Hilary version of the Christmas party. ENTZ hire out a beautiful venue with live jazz music at the start and then student DJs later in the night. It's a really lovely way to end the term.

BrasenoseBall

Brasenose has its very own biennial ball meaning that everyone gets to go at least once during their time here! With unlimited food and drink the ball goes on until the early hours. Previous live acts and attractions include a ferris wheel and helter skelter, mini golf and Calvin Harris.

3 Arts Week

A week in Trinity term where Brasenose is host to a variety of plays, concerts, films and other activities!

4 Garden Party

Members of college (undergraduates, graduates and members of staff!) all take a day off to enjoy the surroundings of new quad, food, drink and live music.

Ascension Day

One of Brasenose's stranger traditions!
Once a year a secret door that links
Brasenose to Lincoln College is opened
for five minutes. Brasenose students pile
through and drink free ale flavoured with
ground ivy (completely optional!), and
then take part in another tradition where
special pennies are thrown for local
school children to pick up in Lincoln's
main quad!

Profiles



PPB

My time at Brasenose has been spent pursuing a pretty varied set of activities. One of the main organisations I've become involved with is 'Giving What We Can', which evaluates and recommends charities based on how effectively they use donations. As a college representative it's my job to put on events to publicise the work done by the world's best charities, and just generally get people thinking differently about the concept of altruism.

Through this I've heard some truly inspirational and thought provoking speakers. Outside of volunteering, I've spent a lot of my time this year boxing, managing to make the university team and box in the varsity match against Cambridge, which was a pretty incredible experience. College has also given me the opportunity to take part in activities such as rap battling at open mic night and playing a role in the annual Christmas pantomime. I've had a wonderful experience here so far; Brasenose has totally blown away my preconceived notions of life at Oxford in the best possible way.



History & Politics

Whether or not you're a political news junkie, Brasenose and the wider University have a wide range of spaces for incredibly interesting debates and discussions. For example, the Oxford Union (which is only 5 minutes from Brasenose College and 10 seconds from Frewin!) hosts a parliamentary style debate every Thursday with motions discussing issues ranging from the UK's membership in the EU and the failures and successes of the Obama Administration to the ethics of organ transplants and the international reaction to climate change.

As I was part of the Union's committee, these debates were a weekly highlight (not just because there are free drinks for anyone who gives a speech!) However, the Union is not the only space for political debate. Somewhat less formally, the University's political societies all host weekly drinks and debates such as the Conservative Association's Port and Policy, the Liberal Democrats Spirited Discussion and Labour's Beer and Bickering. Closer to home is the Addington Society, Brasenose's own debating society, which holds several debates a term with free wine and plenty of opportunities to speak. Overall, there are a plethora of opportunities to test your thoughts and beliefs and convince others to do the same, all while making great friends!





Medicine

After spending most of first year convinced that I didn't have time for extra-curriculars - which turned out to be totally untrue, with good time-management - I decided that in second year, I wanted to pursue singing. In school I had sung with chamber choirs and jazz bands, but I wanted to try something new, so I joined an a capella group! The Oxford Alternotives are the oldest a capella group in Oxford, and with them, I have had so many wonderful experiences - I've found not only (cheesy as it sounds!) a brilliant group of friends from colleges all across the university, but I've also had the opportunity to perform at events ranging from Emmanuelle's (Regent's Park College's tortoise!) birthday party, to Brasenose Ball, and we even competed on BBC1's TV show Pitch Battle in the summer of 2017 - some of the best and most memorable moments of my university journey so far. In addition to university-wide a capella, I have done some singing in college, getting involved in the

annual college musical, and performing at our first college music festival, Frewchella, which were both incredibly fun. I am also a member of the Oxford African and Caribbean society (ACS), which puts on all kinds of events from club nights, to speaker events, to access events with prospective students, such as shadowing days and the Annual Access Conference (AAC) - the ACS is another avenue through which I have had the opportunity to meet lots of really cool people from other colleges, years and walks of life.

Although my degree (Medicine)
entails a lot of work and a few long
nights in the library, I think it's so
important to get involved with
extra-curricular activities,
because at Oxford, we are so
lucky to have an enormous variety
of experiences just waiting to be
had, and I think it's be a shame
not to take advantage of them!



Experimental Psychology

There is a myth that all Oxford students do is work, this is not true at all! I much prefer clubbing in Oxford than I do at home in Sheffield and have time to go out three or four times a week when I want to. A great thing about Oxford clubbing is that there is always a huge Brasenose contingent out – you'll always find someone you know in the club! Another thing I like is how casual the night life is; it's equally as acceptable to turn up in black tie as it is to go dressed as Smurf post-BOP.







