TEDDY HALL

alternative prospectus

written by students, for students
First things first, ‘Teddy Hall’ is our pet name for St Edmund Hall. Somewhere down the line, somebody shortened Edmund to Ed, which then became Teddy, and now you’ll never hear anyone call it by its proper name.

We like to think that the name suits the College. Its buildings are often described as ‘cute’ and a far cry from the towering walls you might find elsewhere in the city. The Front Quad (the grassy rectangle just beyond the entrance), with its colourful flowers and quaint architecture, is more reminiscent of a village green than your conventional image of an Oxford college – and despite its size, it’s considered by many to be one of the prettiest in the university. As soon as you walk in you get the sense that this is a place where you’d be as happy to live as you would to work.

However, buildings don’t make a college, and it’s the community spirit that really sets Teddy Hall apart. From the moment you step in – whether that’s on an open day, for an interview, or even at the start of your first term – you’ll find current students on hand to offer friendly conversation and advice. It’s a sense of camaraderie known as ‘Hall Spirit’ which stays with you long after you’ve left – as demonstrated by the many ‘Aularians’, or past students, who return every year to reminisce about the time they spent here.

**Doing a degree at Oxford is a challenge no matter which college you go to, but being part of a friendly and inclusive community like this one can make things a whole lot easier - and hopefully over the next few pages you’ll see what makes Teddy Hall so special!**
The JCR, or Junior Common Room, is the collective term for the undergraduate student body. We have a student committee which organises everything we do and communicates with the college, so we get our say on how it’s run.

It’s also a common space which has a TV, pool table, quiz machine, and a free coffee machine!

Teddy Hall has one of the most welcoming JCRs in Oxford; you get to know everyone as soon as you arrive because of our small site and fantastic community spirit. Right from first setting foot in the College during Freshers’ Week there are loads of current students waiting to meet you and help you move in, and the JCR puts on loads of events throughout the year which everyone gets involved in. We even have pizzas at our committee meetings, which are held every two weeks and involve the whole College coming together to discuss upcoming things such as fundraisers, movie screenings, sports matches and concerts.
Freshers’ Week
Your first week as a student in Oxford. There are lots of social activities to help you get to know everyone, from quizzes to film nights, and nights out to sports matches. You also get the opportunity to sign up to clubs and societies both within Teddy Hall at the College Freshers’ Fair and university-wide equivalents at the main Freshers’ Fair.

Matriculation
The ceremony in which you officially become a student of the University. You wear the University academic dress, known as ‘sub fusc’, and go as a College year group to attend the ceremony in the Sheldonian Theatre. Everyone migrates back to College for brunch, this is then followed by a Matriculation BOP (‘big organised party’) in the evening.

Oxmas
The Oxford equivalent of Christmas, held on the last weekend of term. We have to celebrate early because we’re not in Oxford for most of December! There are several festive events, such as the JCR formal, Christmas BOPs and Carol-singing in the front quad around the Christmas tree with mince pies and mulled wine. It’s a lovely way to end the term by getting into the festive spirit before saying goodbye to friends for six weeks.

A Year at Teddy Hall
**Hilary Term**
(January – March)

Teddy’s Got Talent
The annual talent show (no talent necessary). This is hosted and judged by students, postgraduates and academic staff and is organised by the Arts & Culture Representatives within the student body.

Freshers’ Parents Dinner
A chance for first years to bring their parents along to a formal meal in College. (There’s also one for parents of all other years in the Winter.)

Teddy Hall Ceilidh
Every Hilary term we host the Oxford University Ceilidh band who run a ceilidh for us. This is a great opportunity to learn some folk dances and meet new people!

**Trinity Term**
(April – June)

Teddy Hall Ball
The biennial College Ball sees College transformed into another time and place for the evening. Copious food, drink and entertainment is included in the ticket price! Recent themes include ‘Camelot’, ‘Chroma’, and ‘Road to Rio’.

Parents’ Garden Party
An outdoor gathering held for students and their families in Teddy Hall’s beautiful graveyard. A lovely experience and a chance for parents to meet tutors and other families!

Cuppers
Summer term means summer sports competitions! Cuppers is the intercollegiate sports tournament at Oxford. Even if you don’t play a sport, Teddy Hall students always turn out to support the College in droves, and the JCR provides refreshments at matches!

Prelims
Prelims are end of year exams for first years. When they finish, all your friends come out to celebrate with you!

Graduation
Final-year students return to the Sheldonian Theatre to attend their graduation ceremony, then usually come back to enjoy a lunch in College.
Skye
First year
History and Politics

What does a normal day look like for you?
I usually start my day off with breakfast in the College dining hall. I’ll then head off to the library or a lecture, depending on my schedule and how much work I have! History and Politics have fewer lectures than some other subjects but we have quite a few essays to work on instead, which I do in the library as I’m most productive there. I don’t spend the whole day working - often I’ll go out for a walk in the afternoon, or go to my friend’s room for a chat! About twice a week I have a tutorial where we discuss an essay and I get to ask any questions I have. In the evenings I have College dinner and then go out if I feel like it or relax in college.

What do you do to relax?
It depends on how energetic I’m feeling! I’m involved with the History Society and activism groups for example, but I like trying new things and going to as much as I can, such as folk dancing, debates, concerts, plays and life drawing! There’s always loads of things going on in Oxford, so whatever you like to do, there’s something for you!

Why did you apply to Teddy Hall?
Whilst wandering around on an Open Day I ended up on a tour of Teddy, partly because of the free sweets, and the student ambassador showed me into the library, which was what hooked me! The library is slightly odd but very special, and it remains my favourite part of college. As it’s a deconsecrated 12th century church, it has stained glass windows, a graveyard which has snowdrops in the spring (and some quirky gravestones), and a spiral staircase lined with books leading up to my tutor’s office, which is beautiful. It’s a lovely place to learn in!

James
Second year
Engineering

What does a normal day look like for you?
A normal day for me begins with College breakfast followed by 2 hours of lectures at the Engineering department. This is followed by labs once a week but on other days I’ll go back to College and do some work on my problem sheets for my tutorials, of which I usually have 2 a week. After this I would get dinner in College with mates and then either do some more work, go to gymnastics training or go to the College bar for a drink with friends.

What do you do to relax?
I often do sports to relax including gymnastics and College football. I enjoy the social side of the sports as well as playing them and have met a lot of people through getting involved in various College sports. I also enjoy playing the guitar and going into town with mates.

What do you think sets Teddy Hall apart from other colleges?
Teddy Hall has quite a small physical site and so you’re always bumping into friends around college. This means the College has a real sense of community.
Shariz
First year
Economics and Management

What does a normal day look like for you?
Most weekdays I start with breakfast in College, after which I head to the library to do some work. The work depends on what's due next, but each week I usually have a problem sheet for my Economics tutorial, an essay for my Management tutorial and set work for Financial Management classes. The problem sheets I do in my room but for all the reading required for essays I find it easier to grab a library desk. Some days I also have some College sports fixtures during the week too, such as football. After this I go to dinner in college, and then evenings are usually for social stuff!

What do you do to relax?
Teddy Hall has a brilliant College sports scene, so a good chunk of my spare time is getting involved with that. This ranges from field sports like rugby and football to more casual ones like darts and pool. If I want to relax on my own I'll work on producing music in my room.

Why makes Teddy Hall special?
People always talk about the 'Hall Spirit' or the sense of community, but it's mentioned so often because it's true! Across all the years and subjects people socialise, and the smaller College site means you're always running into people. A lot of the staff here are also very friendly and supportive, and the food is great.

Izzy
Second year
Materials Science

What does a normal day look like for you?
Like most sciences, Materials Science has a fairly high number of contact hours. Most days we would have two or three lectures and sometimes a tutorial in the morning. Lunch could either be in College or in the café in the department depending what is going on that afternoon. During the afternoons we would usually either be in labs, tutorials or doing tutorial work. There's also time for fun activities during the day – I like to play College netball which happens in the middle of the day. Evenings are very dependent on how much work we have and what is going on socially in College – sometimes they are spent working and sometimes socialising!

What do you do to relax?
To relax I enjoy taking part in both sport and music. I play College netball, kayak with OUCKC (Oxford University Canoe and Kayak Club) as well as taking part in orchestra once a week. As well as all of these things it is important to spend time with friends – I definitely enjoy catching up with friends to relax!

What do you think sets Teddy Hall apart from other colleges?
I think Teddy is a special College because of the people. There is huge enthusiasm for College events and vast love for the Hall that all the students have. Just looking at the spectators at a College sporting event shows how much the students enjoy being at Teddy Hall and that is what I think makes it so special!
Accommodation

First Year
First year undergraduates are guaranteed on-site accommodation with breakfast and dinner included, something which can be rare at other colleges! All the rooms have plenty of storage space and a sink area, and every floor has kitchenettes, toilets and showers. One of the best things about living on-site in first year is that everyone is so close together, so you very rapidly get to know your whole year!

Second Year
Everyone ‘lives out’ in their second year, renting privately or renting houses from College. Most people opt to live in Cowley, which is only a 15min walk or a 5min cycle from Teddy! Living out is a fantastic experience as you get the opportunity to have a lot more independence, to cook for yourself and to host house parties. This experience isn’t something you get in many colleges.

Third Year
Students tend to return to College accommodation or live in one of the College annexes which are just 5 minutes away from college.

Fourth Year
If your course has four years, it’s possible to live in Norham Gardens, an annexe which is right next to University Parks. Students may also choose to live out again.
Teddy Hall is a unique community...

Stash
Although stash is used by every college to refer to their college branded apparel, we like to think **Teddy Hall has the best of the bunch**! Because we’re so proud to be members of the Hall community and we love it so much, we wear our stash with pride. We have everything from bucket hats, scarves and fleeces to our iconic College puffer jacket (the original college puffer!).

Ming
Ming is the Teddy Hall word for dinner! **Teddy is known for having some of the best food in Oxford**, and all first years get all their breakfasts and dinners catered and included in their termly bills. The nickname originated a long, long time ago from the fact our food was terrible. But we have since replaced our chef, and the current Head Chef used to work in a Michelin-starred restaurant!

The Graveyard
Although it may sound a bit spooky, the Teddy Hall Graveyard is one of our favourite parts of college! It’s a **great place to chill in the summer**, and you can also study outside there too.

BOP
Teddy Hall BOPs are some of the best in Oxford. BOP stands for ‘Big Organised Party’; most colleges host them a few times a term and they’re always themed. Everyone dresses up and makes a big effort with their costumes. Teddy BOPs are unique because our dining hall is repurposed into the **biggest dancefloor in Oxford**!

Kelly
The Kelly building is one of our first year accommodation blocks and is often referred to just as ‘Kelly’. It’s one of the tallest buildings in the university with no lift! But despite its many stairs, **the views from a Kelly room are the kind tourists would usually pay for**, and it has amazing social areas on every floor, something which you don’t often get in college accommodation at Oxford.

...and as a result we have our own lingo!
Welfare Officers

As welfare officers we take care of the JCR, providing support for students in the shape of fun events throughout term and by giving students friendly faces they can talk to if they are concerned about anything. We’re helped by a team of peer supporters, who are fellow students who give up their time to be trained to support others and are happy to talk about any problem, however big or small! We organise events throughout term such as regular JCR Teas (free food and a chance to catch up), relaxing sessions (like yoga and even a welfare puppy visit), as well as coordinating charity-run welfare workshops on wellbeing and mental health.

International and Visiting Students Officer

At Teddy, we have a very diverse and warm environment that welcomes new international (including EU) and visiting students from a variety of backgrounds every year. To keep up this tradition, bridge cultural gaps and make life that little bit easier for students who did not grow up in the UK, we have an International and Visiting Student’s officer. Getting settled in a new country can sometimes be a big concern, so the College and I will do everything we can to make it as pleasant an experience as possible. I try to make heard any wishes and thoughts from this community, raise cultural awareness, and help Visiting Students become more integrated into our community. After all, Oxford, and especially Teddy Hall, are about fostering a community where we can learn from and with each other.

Disabilities Officer

I’m Sophie, the JCR Disabilities Officer. I’m here to look after the interests of disabled students at the Hall, and help to improve accessibility in College. I provide advice and information on any disability-related issues that you may encounter during your time at Oxford. This also applies if you don’t have a formal diagnosis, are struggling to get one, or if you are supporting someone who has a disability. I want to make sure that everyone at Teddy Hall is aware of all the amazing resources out there to support you!
BAME Officer

One of my biggest fears before coming to Oxford was that I wouldn’t meet anyone who looked like me or had similar experiences to me. This couldn’t have been further from the truth when I came to Teddy Hall. Every year, our BAME community is growing in numbers and while we aren’t the biggest college BAME group, our presence and community is unparalleled. We come together for socials, to celebrate with events such as our Equality and Diversity Week and to act as a support system for one another. If you identify as BAME or any other minority, know that there is a community here at Teddy that is more than excited to meet you!

Will I be the only one?
Absolutely not! Every year Teddy Hall is becoming increasingly diverse and we have students from so many different backgrounds. Beyond Teddy Hall, you will also find so many university wide societies that exist to make Oxford a more welcome space for people from a minority background.

How can I get involved?
Before you even arrive at Teddy Hall, you can join the BAME Facebook page where we keep you updated on all socials, events and opportunities open to BAME students in Teddy Hall. Once you arrive in Michaelmas (first) term, you will also be made aware of freshers’ socials and have the opportunity to sign up to a buddy system.

Is there someone to speak to if I have any concerns?
There are a number of people to support you if you have any concerns. As your BAME Officer, I am here to support you with any concerns and help you to get through them. You can also turn to a peer supporter, welfare officers, or academic staff such as your tutor. Everyone in College is incredibly friendly and more than willing to make this space as inclusive and welcoming to all. If you have any concerns prior to arriving about room allocation, specific dietary needs etc, don’t hesitate to contact the College as they are more than willing to accommodate specific cultural/religious needs.

- Iqra

Gender and Sexual Diversity Officer

Teddy Hall has a large and diverse cohort of self-identified LGBTQ+ students which is growing larger every year. Prospective students sometimes come to the College through a perception of its (historic) sporting reputation, which can be a deterrent to some. However this idea isn’t representative of what is really a very varied, inclusive and welcoming community across both students and staff. The College LGBTQ+ society holds regular social and educational events for its members, such as brunches, drinks and talks, as well as providing access to an excellent welfare system for all LGBTQ+ identifying students of the College and university.

- Beth
College Families

Once your place at Oxford is confirmed after A-Level results day you will receive an email from the JCR secretary (this year it’s me!) letting you know who your College parents are. Your College parents will be Teddy Hall second years and a useful point of contact throughout your time here. One of your parents does the same subject as you which means they can provide great informal academic help and you can ask them questions you wouldn’t ask your tutors! Adjusting to Oxford can sometimes be difficult so if you need a hand with notes, problem sheets or essay structures they may be able to give you a few helpful hints. You and your siblings will be invited to a dinner during freshers’ week where you will meet your families as well as others. In order to continue this College family tradition, most people will get ‘married’ during their first year so that they and their spouse can ‘have children’ in the next academic year.

-Izzy

Arts and Culture Officers

Hi, we are Tass and Willow and we are the Teddy Hall JCR Arts and Culture reps. Our job is to run cultural events around College, which can include anything from talent shows to film screenings and competitions. We aim to work in conjunction with the BAME and GSD officers to offer a diverse range of events that create an inclusive cultural atmosphere.

- Tass and Willow

EVEN MORE WELFARE!
Every Friday afternoon we get a huge order of snacks delivered to college. Everyone can come into the JCR and help themselves to as much food as they want! This is a great way to take a break and spend some time relaxing with friends, as well as an excellent source of motivation to finish some work when you know endless amounts of pitta, hummus and biscuits are waiting for you. We’re one of the colleges with the biggest budget for these welfare teas, so there’s always plenty to go around!

Each term the ‘Women of the Hall’ (WOTH) have a big themed gathering where we play games, and all get to know each other! It’s really good fun, and past themes have included ‘Where’s WOTHly’ (pictured), ‘WimbleWOTH’ and ‘WOTHsp’. This happens alongside a lot of other events that the women’s officers organise every term such as self defence classes and talks.

* asterisk is used to denote women and minority gender identities

On Wednesdays and Sundays we have our own free yoga classes. They’re open to people of any level and are a great way to wind down and relax in the evenings. In the summer they’re held outside in the graveyard!

In Trinity term, every member of the JCR has access to a punt completely free of charge! It’s so much fun to be able to float down the river in the sunshine. Punting is also a great way to celebrate finishing exams, or to take a short revision break and get outside.

Oxford can be seen quite an expensive university to attend, in the sense that rent is quite high here and living costs are quite high too. However, because terms are so short and you are only charged for the time you’re in Oxford, I’ve found that my rent costs work out as the same or lower than those of my friends in cheaper cities.

As well as their fantastic and extensive bursary and grant schemes, the university also provides a hardship fund, which will award you money at any point that your financial burden becomes too great. I first received hardship on my year abroad from the modern languages faculty which help to relieve living and travel costs on my year abroad as well as hardship from the Teddy Hall fund this year.

Hardship is always there as a safety net should something change about your financial situation. When I had to go on my year abroad I couldn’t keep my job at home. I usually worked in the holidays, so my financial situation became more strained this year. However, Teddy Hall were able to provide hardship that saw me through the past two terms. It’s really good to know how much financial support is available in different forms across the university and in College!

- Gabriella
**Sports**

Teddy Hall is home to a thriving sports scene. We have something for everyone, including netball, hockey, rugby and even have teams for ultimate frisbee, rounders and chess! Most sports offer the opportunity to compete in an annual intercollegiate competition called Cuppers, in which we often do pretty well in. Our boat club is very strong, with the ability to participate at many levels. We have 4 men’s boats and our women’s side now has 3 boats. Having so many boats of different levels can be rare at other colleges!

Sport is a great way to make friends and is also a good way to relax. Ability isn’t an issue as our sports clubs accommodate everyone from student athletes to complete novices. If we don’t offer a sport you’re interested in, there is funding available to establish it. A huge aspect of the Hall’s success lies in our community and our willingness to get involved both as players and as part of the large crowds we bring to matches. Hordes of Teddy Hall spectators can often be seen flocking to sporting fixtures in support of the Hall. This shows Teddy Hall’s community spirit at its best and is something that many of our students are very proud to be a part of.

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**Drama**

It’s easy to get involved in drama right from the start of your first term, as the Oxford University Dramatic Society hosts a Drama Cuppers Competition exclusively for first years. Each college can put forward as many half-hour play entries as they want! It’s a great opportunity to meet people who you may have not already come into contact with in college, and try out a variety of roles in theatre in an environment which gives you a lot of support.

Teddy Hall itself has a fantastic drama scene – we have our own drama society, which puts on productions regularly, such as our recent production of The Importance of Being Earnest, as well as writing and performing our own plays for the Teddy Hall Medieval Mystery Cycle, which is held in the graveyard every summer. All the productions are open to participants of any level, no matter whether you have had any theatre experience before.
Masterclass Fund

There is no need to be concerned that you might not be able to continue a particular extra-curricular activity because of financial constraints once at university, as Teddy Hall students who have already attained a high level of achievement are eligible to apply for the College Masterclass Fund. This offers students up to £1000 in order to pursue further training to develop and hone their skills. These activities may include, but are not exclusive to the areas of writing, drama, sport or art.

Creative Writing

Teddy Hall is known for having a very strong creative writing scene. We have our own creative writing society, something which is unusual and not often found at other colleges. We meet on Wednesday evenings in the bar to share our writing and discuss it! You don’t have to be a writer to attend, listeners are welcome too, and the society has a very relaxed atmosphere. As well as this, our alumnus Stewart Lee sometimes runs writing workshops for Hall students, and the College offers many poetry prizes, including one exclusively for science students who excel at writing!

Student Ambassadors

Teddy Hall has a huge team of friendly student ambassadors, who run tours on open days, help out on school visits and run the Teddy Hall access Instagram, @sehaccess. We also host drinks and lunches where we can all spend time together!

Music

Although not offered as a degree, Teddy Hall has a lively and inclusive musical community. Regular lunchtime concerts are hosted by a range of performers from our Music Society. We sometimes hold evening chamber music concerts too. Students who play a musical instrument can also audition for an Instrumental Award. Teddy also has a well stocked music room with a variety of instruments, which is open for all students to use. There are also often open mic and acoustic nights in the College bar and Wolfson Hall!

Singers are welcome to join the Chapel Choir, which is non-auditioning and supported by Choral Scholars, as well as being able to audition for a Choral Exhibition, an award which includes three free singing lessons a term. The choir practise on weekends and perform at services and other special occasions; members get a free formal meal each Sunday and go on various tours both in the UK and abroad during the vacations. Find out more on their Instagram, @sehchapelchoir.

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WE CAN'T WAIT TO MEET YOU!

We hope this prospectus has answered some of your questions about Teddy Hall! If it hasn’t, check out some of these resources:

- Official College Prospectus: seh.ac/prospectus
- JCR website: teddyhall.weebly.com
- Get more student-made content or ask our ambassadors questions at @sehaccess on Instagram
- Visit on an Open Day: seh.ac/opendays