



University of Oxford  
**St Edmund  
Hall**

**FROM THE TUTORS IN PHYSICS**

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On behalf of the St Edmund Hall physics community, we would like to welcome you to the College.

Over the four years of your course, the whirlwind of October's Freshers' Week is likely to stand out. You will be inundated with new faces, information, and opportunities, and that is before you even get to the course itself with its lectures, practical laboratories, research projects, seminars, classes, and tutorials.

In order to get ready for Oxford, we suggest the following:

1. **Prepare:** amongst other material, you should have received some vacation work in mathematics and mechanics, and an "Introduction to Computing in the Oxford Physics Course". You should work through the mathematics and mechanics problems in the coming weeks, identifying areas where you may need pre-arrival revision. We also recommend that you start with the programming course material, especially if you have never programmed a computer before.
2. **Pace yourself:** your course is one of the most intellectually demanding and stimulating in the University, and will take up most of your time. A hobby or extracurricular activity is worthwhile for periods of relaxation, but you may need to choose one out of many clamoring for your attention. (And, remember, academic obligations always come first.)
3. **Pay attention:** this means your new University e-mail account, which will be your primary means of hearing from your tutors, the College, and the University. Current circumstances may entail changes at short notice, and notifications are usually sent via e-mail.

If you feel you need more exercise in certain areas of mathematics, students have found the Flexible Learning Approach to Physics (FLAP) self-study modules, developed by the Open University, to be helpful. The mathematics modules have been published as two books, *Basic Mathematics for the Physical Sciences* and *Further Mathematics for the Physical Sciences*.

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We anticipate that early in Freshers' Week there will be a Freshers' Dinner, before which we hope to meet with you in person. We will also meet with you on Friday afternoon, after your Department inductions, to discuss teaching in more detail and to schedule tutorials.

As your tutors, we oversee your academic progress but also take an interest in how you get on. If you have questions or concerns, or are running into difficulty, you are encouraged to approach either one of us. There are also many others in the College and student (JCR) welfare teams who will be glad to bend a listening ear.

Finally, we would like to welcome you to the study of physics at the University. Whether your interest is in planetary exploration, quantum computing, the physics of living systems, or that of subatomic particles and forces, physics is eye-opening and sometimes mind-bending – and Oxford one of the best places for starting this journey. We look forward to seeing you very soon!

Kind regards,

**Jeff Tseng**

**Carly Howett**