

Hi, how's it going?

Are you standing in front of the Carfax Tower? That's the tall, medieval tower on the corner. There's a red phone box near the entrance, and probably a load of tourists milling about as well. If you're near the phone box, then you're in the right place.

I'm Alex Beukers, and today I'm going to take you around the University. I'm studying English and I'm in my third year. I'll be showing you some of the places you'll need as a student, and along the way you'll hear about the people who keep those places running – as well as some history about the city.

Carfax Tower has an important role in University life. Undergrads at Oxford must live within six miles of this tower during term time, and graduate students within 25 miles. There are exceptions, of course, but most students live within a set distance of this spot.

Now, I want you to look up at Carfax Tower, right to the top. You're looking at one of the tallest buildings in Oxford. No new building in central Oxford is allowed to be any higher than it. So if you fancy the climb to the top then you get a brilliant view. All it takes is a few pounds at the door and a willingness to ascend ninety-nine, very narrow steps.

But you'll have to come back and do that another time, because you're about to start walking. I want you to turn so you are standing with your back to Carfax Tower. HSBC should be on your left, and the Santander should be across the road on your right.

Ready? Time to start walking. Go straight ahead, and immediately turn left, onto Cornmarket.

This street is the main shopping street in Oxford, and it's a great place to come for all your stationery, banking and late-night fast food requirements.

Cross over to the right-hand side and walk up the street.

You're going to turn right, off Cornmarket Street and into a small passageway. Keep an eye out, it's easy to miss. The passage you're looking for has a big sign above it, which reads "Golden Cross". It's a black sign with bronze lettering. That's where we're turning.

Turn right here, into Golden Cross Walk. Head into the tight alleyway and keep walking.

This little courtyard was once a traditional coaching inn, where travellers could stable their horses and refresh themselves at a tavern. It's said that one of those travellers was William Shakespeare, and that his troupe performed *Hamlet* right here in this courtyard.

OK, at the end of the courtyard, turn left. You're going to enter Oxford's historic Covered Market, a great place for lunch or something sweet.

Follow the alley round, past the nail bar on your left, and then past the bubble tea shop with all the post-it notes on the windows. You'll soon reach the market's main courtyard.

Once you're there, turn left and keep going straight ahead until you're back out on the street.

If you would like to pause the audio and check out some shops, then go ahead. I recommend Ben's Cookies, it's delicious. It's now a big chain, but the first ever Ben's Cookies is in this market.

Whether you stop the audio or not, just make sure you leave by the exit on your left. That's where I'll be waiting for you, out on the street. See you there!

Hello again. Are you back out on the street? Good. Now, with your back to the market, turn right and start walking.

The building on your left, across the street, is part of Jesus College. For many students, life revolves around your college. I'm in Merton College. It was a bit daunting when I first arrived, but to ease the process, I was assigned a set of college parents, who are students in the year above – usually with one who studies your subject. They make you feel at home, and show you where everything is. I've made a lot of friends there now. Like other colleges, we have a great JCR, which stands for Junior Common Room. It's really the hub of college life – there, we have weekly meetings, where students can voice their opinions on life at college. Normally, the JCR is a great place for students to come together – to chat, chill out, even play table tennis! If you're a graduate student, MCR, or Middle Common Room, is the equivalent. They also have their own room.

OK, follow this road around to the left. So when it's safe, cross over to the left-hand side of the street.

Stop here for a moment.

See the building directly ahead of you? The one with the red post box built into the wall? That's Lincoln College. Brasenose College is to the right, a bit further down the road. There are more than 30 colleges so I'm not going to point them all out, but look out for them, and I'll tell you more about them later in the tour.

All right, let's keep walking. Turn left onto Turl Street.

This street is home to the Turl Street Arts Festival, which happens every February. It's the largest arts festival in Oxford and it's entirely student-run and student-funded. The exhibitions, screenings, and workshops are always well worth a visit.

Ok, there's a left-hand turn coming up. Walk along that street until you hear more.

The busy street just ahead is called 'Cornmarket Street'. It's always full of tourists and students. Look to your right – do you see the medieval-looking tower on the corner? It's called the Saxon Tower and it's the oldest building in Oxford, dating from about 1050. It's even mentioned in the Domesday Book!

Now, just go straight across Cornmarket, and onto the street opposite. It's called St Michael's Street. Just keep walking straight down it, towards the impressive-looking church steeple at the end of the road.

When you reach the end, stop walking and look down the street, to your left.

Can you see a honey-coloured stone building? It's to the left of the church. Stay here while I tell you about it.

Remember I told you about the college system? Well, this is St Peter's College. I'm going to introduce you to the porters here who'll tell you a bit about what they do.

Now, you can stand here, or walk up for a closer look. You could even go in and say hello, they're very friendly!

(Ernie: Hello Margaret...

Margaret: Hello.

E: oi, it's a weekend!

M: It's not!

E: It is for me!)

E: My name's Ernie Crawford, I'm a porter at St Peter's College

P: My name's Paul Irons. I'm the head porter at St Peter's College.

E: Day starts at 7 o'clock in the morning, and you're sat at the desk, giving keys, first aid, ice packs, pens and things like that, bolt cutters... anything, we're good!

P: Students asking varying questions...

(E: Hi, can you tell me where the bar is?

P: Yes, if you'd just like to go through the door...)

P: Best part of the job is actually meeting all the people that come into the job. Guest speakers, visitors, ex-members of the college.

(E: Look through every window, what do I see? Smiling faces.)

P: It's very good to see the students as they arrive as freshers. All very, very nervous and then they start to find their feet, they start to find friends and then they start to blossom in themselves.

E: I think I treat them as my own. If they needed coffee at 3 in the morning, I'd make it.

P: Never be afraid to ask questions. You know, anything they need to know, they should come to the porters' lodge because if we don't know the answer, we know who does know the answer.

E: Yeah, work hard and play hard, but you must do your work!

(E: That'll do you... You know where to go don't you? OK cheers. It's party time now!)

Listening to them makes me think of the porters in my college, Merton. They're a lovely lot and, if you're a student, I really recommend making friends with the porters in your college.

Now, orient yourself so St Peter's College is on your left, and walk up New Inn Hall Street, leaving the college behind. Make sure you're walking on the left-hand side of the street.

Going to bars in different colleges is a great way to meet new people outside your college. Another great way to socialise is by joining clubs and societies. I'm in one of the University's tennis teams, and have also been involved in the Oxford University Poetry Society. Besides joining clubs, it's worth looking out for free talks and lectures – there's always something going on! Usually, they have free drinks and snacks on offer, too – and that's never to be missed!

Turn left here and keep on going.

Round the corner you'll see a long bike rack on the pavement. Walk to the end of it. When you can, cross the road and take a right then left and head up to St George's Place.

You're now entering Gloucester Green. If it's a Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday, then you're about to walk through a busy market. I advise you to walk right through the middle of it, as there are masses of stalls selling delicious food from all over the world.

You're aiming for the opposite corner. That's the corner diagonally across the Green. So it's ahead and to the left.

If there's no market today, let me give you a little taster... And remember you're heading for the opposite corner, over to your left.

José: Have you tried this before?

Boy: No

J: So it's your first time? You're going to eat it now?

B: Yeah, yeah.(Takes food)

J: How is it? You like it? I can tell you what the judges said.

B: Tastes fabulous. Divine. Mindblowing.

Auntie Lula: His food is yummy.

José: It is a good market.

Ash: Craft market, antiques, and the fruit market...

José: Where you can find food from everywhere in the world.

(Cherries out the front now! £2.50!)

Yannos: I have of course, everybody knows, the beef goulash.

Sri Lankan: Chicken curry...

Greece: Halloumi with a veg

Violet: Every spoon is with character. Just like us.

Yannos: This is the best place to be... I believe that every good country representing itself with all the freshest, healthiest food... everything prepared on site. Fresh. Can't beat that.

Lula: (mwah!)

OK, hopefully you're through the market now. If you lost your bearings in all the excitement, make sure you leave Gloucester Green via the path next to the board game cafe called Thirsty Meeples. The path you want has a large, white security camera directly above it.



Now, go through the covered passage, under the big, white security camera, and I'll meet you on the other side.

Once you're out of Gloucester Green, slow down. You'll see Oxford Bus Station on your left. Ahead of you there's a brown, wooden noticeboard in the middle of this paved area, and the Old School Building is on your right. Stop when you reach it.

Stop here. Straight ahead of you, you can see a three-storey, redbrick building. Here you'll find the Oxford Student Union, commonly known as the SU.

If there's a place to stop and sit, feel free to do so, while I hand you over to the President of the SU, who will tell you more about it.

Nikita Ma: Hello, my name's Nikita Ma and I'm the President of the Oxford SU, the Oxford University Student Union. We represent over 24,000 students at the University of Oxford.

As an organisation, we fight to improve the experience of students and amplify student voices. With the college structure we have here, it can often be difficult to coordinate the amazing work being done by students in different colleges so we help to coordinate between common rooms to unite them and increase their influence.

There are lots of opportunities to get involved with the SU. We have various liberation campaigns, such as the Disabilities Campaign and the International Students Campaign, that work to improve the student experience. We also work to improve equality and diversity in Oxford, as well as on initiatives to combat climate change, and to decolonise the curriculum.

If there's a project you'd like to set up and you require funding, you can come to the Student Council, which is the democratic decision-making body of the SU, and pitch your idea.

If you're interested in raising money for charity, you can also get involved with Raise and Give, or RAG, which fundraises for various charities. We even have a RAG charity ball every year!

As you can see, there's a lot going on here at Oxford SU. We're just here, at 4 Worcester Street, so feel free to pop in any time – we'd love to meet you!

AB: This red brick building is also where you'll find some very important University services, like the Counselling Service, the Disability Advice Service, Graduate Accommodation Offices, and Student Fees and Funding.

When you're ready, go ahead and walk past the Student Union, with it on your left. So you should be going the same way as before I stopped you.

Turn right onto Worcester Street and keep walking. Across the road on your left is Worcester College, which has some of the largest and most beautiful gardens in Oxford. They even have a lake inside the college!

If you carried on up that way, you'd end up on Walton Street in Jericho. It's a great place to discover new restaurants and pubs. And if you continued walking straight, a little over a mile, you'd get to Port Meadow – a beautiful wild space that the River Thames flows through, which is grazing ground for cattle and even wild horses. It's a much-loved spot for students, especially in the summer.

But we're turning right soon. I'll let you know when.

Now turn right, onto Beaumont Street. We're walking towards the Oxford Playhouse, so I'm going to introduce you to someone on the way.

Alasdair: I'm Alasdair Linn, and I'm the president of the Oxford University Dramatic Society. Student drama is huge in Oxford. Usually, there are over 20 plays that are put on every term, and these range from new writing to adaptations to big scale musicals – so there's lots of opportunities to get involved. There is also more to it than just acting, you can direct or produce shows, work behind the stage with the tech team, or even write your own script. We are passionate about making drama accessible to everyone, whatever your background and experience – it's so much fun, and definitely worth getting involved! So, if you have questions or queries, my line is always open at [president@ouds.org](mailto:president@ouds.org). Looking forward to seeing you around!

Now, I want you to cross straight over Gloucester Street, the small road in front of you. When you're across, turn to your left and cross again. So you're going over the main road. Be sure to use that traffic island in the middle of the road, when you cross.

Once you're across, turn to your right and continue walking, the same way you were going before.

Stop here on the pavement and look to your right. Don't cross over, just stay where you are. From here you have a nice view of the Oxford Playhouse.

Now, you're going to continue the same way as before, along this street. So off you go – and while you're walking, Alasdair will tell you a little more about the Playhouse.

Alasdair: The Oxford Playhouse was established in 1938. It seats over 600 people and has 5 student slots per year, so there are lots of ways you can participate – either backstage, or onstage. It also manages the nearby Burton Taylor, or “BT” Studio, which is another popular venue for student productions. Back during World War II, the Oxford Playhouse attracted actors and directors who could no longer get work in London, where the theatres were closed. Since then, it has nurtured the careers of a number of actors – like Rowan Atkinson and Rosamund Pike, to name just a few.

Keep walking until you reach the amazingly grand Ashmolean Museum, which is coming up on your left.

OK, the main gate to the Ashmolean Museum is here on your left. Here's someone who can tell you about the Ashmolean. You can go up and up have a look while you're listening.

E: Hello everyone, I'm Elizabeth Coyle, I'm a third-year classics student at St. John's College and you are standing outside the Ashmolean Museum, which is quite possibly the first public museum in Europe.

So, the Ashmolean Museum was founded in 1683. It was built to house the collection of Elias Ashmole who was an antiquary, politician, astrologer and also a student of alchemy. So, he donated his collection to the University on condition that a suitable home be built for it and that it be made open to the public which it has been ever since. Elias himself was a student of the University and his collection, which has been added to by numerous donations over time, is now an integral part of the university itself.

Here you have a world-class museum where you can see and touch what you read about in books. If you're lucky, you get to have object-handling sessions where you go behind the scenes with some of the curators to learn more about the function and meaning of objects and how these interact with issues of belief, aesthetic and social expectations.

I would really recommend a visit to the Ashmolean either now or later. If you want to go in now, admission is free. And if you're a student with a Bod card, you can also get into the exhibitions for free.

AB: A Bod Card is the student ID Card and it gets you access to libraries, exhibitions, gives you discounts in certain shops and all kinds of other good stuff. You should definitely check out some of Oxford's other museums. There's also the Museum of the History of Science, the Natural History museum, and loads more. You may even go to the museums as part of your course – whether you study arts or sciences. I once had a Victorian literature class in the Natural History Museum!

When you're ready, go back out of the gates and onto the pavement. Turn left when you get there and continue walking.

As you walk, look across the street, to your right. See the impressive-looking hotel? That's the Randolph, and I advise you to go for afternoon tea there at some point in your Oxford career. It's pricey, but worth doing once!

We're turning right at the traffic lights. See the stone monument that looks like a church spire, straight ahead? That's called the Martyrs' Memorial, and I want you to head towards it. So once you've crossed the road, turn left, cross the road again and head towards the Martyrs' Memorial. Stop when you reach it.

I've heard students sometimes tell tourists it's the top of an underground church and charge them an entry fee to go down some nearby steps. But if you find the steps, don't go down! They only lead to public toilets, I'm afraid. No underground churches around here.

Now, remember. Once you've crossed the road, turn left, cross the road again and head towards the Martyrs' Memorial. Stop when you get there.



OK, are you standing in front of the memorial and facing it?

The Martyrs' Memorial was built 300 years after the English Reformation, and it commemorates the executions of three Anglicans by Mary Queen of Scots. One of them was the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer.

Before he was burned at the stake, the bailiffs charged him for his expenses in prison. It wasn't a bad life on death row; his bill included wine, figs, oysters, veal, and almonds, as well as his barber and laundry charges. But the last items on this list were the wood bundles used to build his pyre...

Now, if you turn around, and look up the road, you can see that further down, the road splits into two. If you go up the Woodstock Road on your left, you'd get to Somerville College and St. Anne's College, two of the first women's colleges. And if you take the Banbury Road on the right, you'll find more colleges, and the all-important IT and Careers Services.

Now turn back around, towards the memorial. If you head down the road on your right, Magdalen Street, you'll find a Tesco Metro and a Sainsbury's, where I go all the time to stock up on food!

But you're not going down any of these streets. Instead, go down the road on your left. It's called Magdalen Street East. That's where you're headed.

Cross the road so that you're walking on the left-hand pavement, and watch out for buses. Keep going until you reach the end of this street.

In front of you, you can see Waterstones, the building with the pillars. Now turn left into Broad Street. Mind the bikes whizzing past, and look out for a brick cross cut out of the tarmac in the centre of the road. Just under your feet is where they say that the three Reformation martyrs were burnt at the stake.

On your left is Balliol College. It's been here since 1263 and is therefore one of the oldest colleges not just in Oxford, but in the English-speaking world!

Now, here's something I want to show you, something that most of the tourists on this street will have missed. Do you see Blackwell's Art and Poster shop up ahead on your right? Look directly across from it, to the other side of the street. From there, look up, to the roof. Can you see him? He was made by the famous sculptor Anthony Gormley and took his place up there in 2009.

'What is that naked iron guy doing up there?' You might realistically be asking. To which Anthony Gormley once replied, 'It's a good question, and one for which I hope there will never be a single satisfactory answer.'

Now keep walking till you reach Blackwell's Bookshop on your left. I'm going to introduce you to someone when we get there.

Stop walking when Blackwell's Bookshop is on your left. This bookstore is an important part of student life and you should feel free to go in and check it out while you hear more about it. Or you can wait out here, of course, if you prefer. I'm going to introduce you to someone who's studying at the Department for Continuing Education.

S: My name's Sophia Holme, I'm a second-year student at Oxford, I'm studying creative writing. I've worked at Blackwell's for a few months now.

So you're now standing outside the flagship branch of Blackwell's. You may recognize Blackwell's because it's a nationwide chain now but this was the very first branch opened in 1879 by Benjamin Henry Blackwell.

Downstairs we have the Norrington Room which was founded in 1966 by Basil Blackwell. The Norrington Room has long been the largest room dedicated solely to selling books in the world. It has comfortable seating and soft acoustics which make it particularly nice to sit in and study and I often spend my breaks just reading there.

As a student I know that the cost of textbooks can be particularly daunting. On our second floor we have a second-hand department which can be brilliant for this. I've gotten some books there myself and they're at a much better rate. You're also more than likely to sell your textbooks to them after you're done using them, which can be an amazing way to get some funds back. Whether you're looking for second-hand textbooks or new, or something special ordered in, or you're simply looking for a brilliant new read, please come on in, there are people on every floor who are passionate about their subjects and would love to have a chat with you.

AB: There's another Blackwell's in the Westgate, which is a shopping centre near Carfax Tower. Now, with your back to Blackwells, turn left and start walking. You're not going far – just a bit further along this street.

You're really entering the heart of historic Oxford now. I have so many beautiful buildings to show you around here!

There should be a set of stairs leading up to a patio and a sandstone building on your left. Stop when you reach this patio.

The modern, sandstone building on your left is the Weston Library and it's a great place to know. Find a spot that's out of the way and I'll tell you about it.

The Weston is part of the Bodleian Libraries, a series of libraries that holds every book ever published in the UK since the seventeenth century. So, needless to say, you need quite a lot of space for all these books.

This extension was built in 1940 to accommodate the overflow, but instead of books, it was Second World War operations that moved in. From here, the Blood Transfusion and Intelligence Services operated, and the entire bottom floor of the Weston even served as a large air-raid shelter!

When the war ended, King George VI finally came to inaugurate it. But the silver key got stuck and broke in the lock! A bit awkward. After a bit of fumbling around, they finally managed to open it, and enter the library.

Today, a lot of books are stored in warehouses, and are brought here in vans for people who order them, or delivered to one of the University's many reading rooms. The Weston still holds lots of special items – it even has a First Folio of Shakespeare's plays.

There's usually a free exhibition on, so if you're feeling up to it, pause the audio and go and check it out. While we're here, I should also say that if you're looking at the Weston Library and you take the road to the right of it, you'd eventually come to the science area, where some of you will have your lectures. The University Parks are also up there – it's another lovely place where students play sport and relax.

Now, turn around so your back is toward the Weston Library.

Do you see that large, circular building across the road, with a small white tower on top? That's the Sheldonian Theatre. Cross the road and head towards it. There are a couple of steps on the far pavement that lead to the Sheldonian. They're the steps guarded by all those Emperor heads. Stop when you reach them.

You should be safely across the road. Stand by the steps and look up at the Sheldonian Theatre. Isn't it spectacular?

This is where you will come for matriculation, a ceremony at the start of your time here, which officiates you into becoming an Oxford student. You'll also graduate here! Both ceremonies are entirely in Latin. You have to wear sub fusc, which in Latin, means "dark brown". You have to wear black (not brown) trousers or a skirt, a white shirt, black neckwear, and an academic gown.

As well as matriculation, the building hosts loads of concerts, plays and talks. Christopher Wren, of St. Paul's Cathedral fame, designed it, and the acoustics are incredible.

When you're ready, walk towards the Sheldonian and round to the left.

When you're part of the way round the building, stop walking. The Sheldonian should be on your right, and there's a large courtyard on your left.

In the distance, beyond the courtyard, you can see a lovely bridge that links two buildings over the street. Can you see it? I know it's tempting, but don't walk towards it just yet. Just stay here while I tell you about it.

That's the Bridge of Sighs. But that's just its nickname. Everyone thinks it was built as a replica of the one in Venice but it's actually just a covered bridge. You may recognise it from various TV shows, or even from *X-Men: First Class*.

If you were very thirsty, I'd advise you to go under the bridge, and to take your first left. You would then arrive at the Turf Tavern, which dates all the way back to 1381 and is very popular with students, as well as with the Australian ex-prime minister, Bob Hawke. In 1963, he set a world record there by drinking a yard of ale in 11 seconds!

Now, you'll see the courtyard has a path of flagstones running down the middle of it. I want you to walk along these flagstones, towards the middle of the courtyard. When you reach the middle, turn right, and follow the flagstones through the open door, all the way through to another, smaller courtyard.

This magnificent courtyard is one of my favourite parts of Oxford. The impressive stone façade on your right is part of the Bodleian Library. You should spot a statue of a bearded gentleman near its entrance. That's William Herbert, a former Chancellor of the University, who was closely connected to William Shakespeare! Go and stand by that statue while you hear from someone who works inside the Bod.

N: Hello, I'm Natasha Kennedy, the Reader Services Librarian of the Bodleian Library, and we are currently stood in the Old Schools Quad of the Bodleian Library.

It's called the Old Schools Quad because originally students used to come here and have their lessons in the rooms through all the different doors you can see around the quad. These rooms were used starting in 1610.

So now I want you to stay out here, and I'm going to go into the Briscolliam, which is the big gate at the entrance into the Bodleian Library and we're going to walk through the reading rooms. If you'd like to visit the reading rooms yourself, you can come on a library tour during the University open days. Or you can pay for a tour through our venue services through the ticket office underneath the great gate.

AB: Of course, if you're a student, you can come in whenever!

N: If you look up above the library entrance, you'll see a big window and that is where I am stood now. This is Duke Humfrey's Library, the oldest part of the Bodleian Libraries, and it was built in 1488. It is also extremely recognisable from being used as Hogwarts library in the Harry Potter films. There are floor-to-ceiling shelves of special collections, which are rare books. And the ceiling is decorated in the University of Oxford crests. I would recommend coming and visiting Duke Humfrey's Library, as only then can its full splendour be appreciated.

AB: When you're ready, stand with your back to the Bodleian Library, head to your right and exit the courtyard. So you're leaving via the door on your right.

Once you're out of the courtyard, it's hard to miss the large, circular building right in front of you. I expect you'll recognise it!

That's the Radcliffe Camera, often used as the symbol for Oxford University. It looks almost fantastical or untouchable but students can go and study in there. It's wonderfully convenient but I recommend you get there early – desks can go quickly!

Now, turn to your right and walk along the cobbles. The Rad Cam, as it's known, should be on your left-hand side. Just keep walking, while I tell you a bit more.

The Radcliffe Camera was funded by John Radcliffe (no surprises there), and houses mostly English and History books. So it's a really useful place for those of you who will be studying those subjects. Every department has its own library, and that will be where you will find the majority of the books you need. You can search for books easily on the internal catalogue online called 'SOLO', and that will tell you which libraries have that book, and if they're available. Some may need to be called up from storage, or the stacks, as they're known, and you can do that either online or in person at the library.

Every college also has its own library (Merton even has two!) and although they are smaller, they are often the most convenient. College libraries are sometimes open 24 hours – but hopefully you won't need to be staying up all night to meet deadlines!

Now keep walking straight on. There's a church straight ahead, with a very tall steeple. If you can't see it yet you soon will. That's the way you should be going.



Keep walking straight on, towards the end of this street.

As you go, look ahead of you to the church. That's the University Church of St Mary the Virgin and was once the epicentre of Oxford. All kinds of talks and concerts happen in here, and the café is a great place for a cup of tea.

Keep walking straight on towards the end of this street, and keep on the right-hand side of the Church. Head down the lane called St Mary's Passage. As you go, I want you to look out for a door that has a lamp-post, a fawn and a lion-shaped knocker. The door and lamp-post is thought to have inspired CS Lewis and the Narnia Chronicles.

As you come out onto the High Street, turn left, and walk down to the crossing at the traffic lights. Cross the road there when you reach them, in front of the restaurant Quod. Once you've crossed, continue walking down the High Street.

As you walk, I'm going to introduce you to someone who will tell you about an Oxford society that has a link to Christian Cole, the first black graduate at Oxford, who you'll hear more about on this street later.

Sean: My name's Sean Sinanan. I am a PPE student at Mansfield College and I'm also the President of the Oxford African and Caribbean society.

The African and Caribbean society is a student run organization. One of the main reasons why we exist is to ensure that African and Caribbean students are well-represented within the Oxford space.

It's often easy to feel like you have to negate a certain part of yourself to fit in, to match the Oxford stereotype. But we're here to show you that this stereotype does not exist, that you have value in your differences, and what you bring to the table will ultimately make you successful.

Central to our mission is to facilitate Access and Outreach initiatives to motivate and inspire African and Caribbean students to apply to Oxford. We aim to do this through our flagship Annual Access Conference and numerous other schemes. We also hope that our Access work continues to have an impact on these students throughout their time at University, so they can have the unforgettable Oxford experience that they deserve.

If you are a new student looking to get involved with Oxford ACS, drop us a message as we'll happily welcome anyone to our inclusive and loving family!

AB: All right, keep walking. I'll let you know when it's time to stop.

A: Stop here for a second and look to your right. The building we've just walked along is University College. And you can see there's a narrow lane next to it. Do you see it? That's called Logic Lane. Cross the road and head towards it. When you get there, turn left and continue along the High Street. Here's Sean again to tell you something about University College and Logic Lane.

S: So the reason I wanted to speak to you here is because you're standing outside University College, which is the college of Christian Cole, the first Black graduate from Oxford University. He graduated in 1877 and again in 1880. After he was called to the Bar in 1883, he also became the first Black African to practise Law in English courts.

S: So in 2017 a plaque was placed in Logic Lane honouring Christian Cole and his contributions to life at Oxford, when he was a student at University College, and also his contributions to society as a whole.

AB: Come back another time and see if you can find it. Let's keep walking.

Now can you see those awnings over on the left-hand side of the road? That's the Queen's Lane Coffee House. See it? And on your right is another coffee shop, with blue paintwork, called the Grand Café. They both claim to be the oldest coffee shops in England, and people joke that it's the fiercest rivalry in Oxford.

Keep on walking, we're almost at the end of the tour. When it's over perhaps you can come back to one of these coffee shops for a well-earned refreshment.

Now, keep going down this road.

AB: Now then, stop walking when you reach the entrance to the building on your right. The entrance has columns either side of it, and a large, wooden door.

You are now outside the Exam Schools, our top candidate for most dreaded building in the whole of Oxford. I'll leave you with Liam who'll tell you a bit more.

L: Hi there. My name's Liam Arbuthnot and I'm the Student Information Manager here at the University of Oxford. I'm based just inside this building, the Examination Schools on the High Street. In fact my desk is straight across from the front door, if you'd like to come in and have a look around.

Here at Student Information, we exist to answer any queries a student might have during your time at Oxford. It's quite a confusing place sometimes, with all our colleges and departments and ancient traditions and rules. However, if you need any help or guidance at any stage of your time here, or when you're applying, please feel free to come and visit us. We're also available by email or telephone.

AB: OK, as you face the Exam Schools, turn to your left and continue down the street, the same way as you were going before.

In first year, I sat my papers in the Exam Schools – and there's a lovely tradition you should know about. As well as wearing sub fusc, which I mentioned earlier, students also wear a carnation. For your first exam, you wear a white carnation, a pink one for the middle ones, and on your last one, you get to wear a red carnation!

Cross straight over the small street in front of you, and continue along the High Street. Keep going until you reach Magdalen Bridge, the final stop on this tour.

As well as exams, the Exam Schools is also used for lectures throughout the year and in noughth week, the week before the beginning of full term, it's used as the venue for Freshers' Fair, which is run by Oxford SU.

This is your chance to sign up to some amazing societies – sports clubs, hobby clubs, political clubs, clubs based on nationality, politics, religion, wine-tasting, historical re-enactment, Quidditch – basically if you have an interest in anything at all, there's probably a club for it at Oxford. The choice is unbelievable, and it can be tempting to sign up for everything that you see – not the wisest strategy, but definitely something I did as a fresher!

Soon you'll reach Rose Lane. Once you do, cross it, and stop there.

If you were to go down that lane, you'd arrive at Christ Church Meadow, a beautiful spot to have lunch or to take a library break.

Up ahead, you can see a tall bell tower. It's part of Magdalen College and it hosts a tradition that dates back to the days of Henry VIII.

Every year, on May Day, at 6 in the morning, the Magdalen College choir takes their place at the top of that tower, to bring in the new day with this:

(Extract of the Hymnus Eucharistus plays)

Hundreds of students will have stayed up partying the whole night before!

(Morris dancing music)

After the choir sings, both the Oxford City and the Oxford University Morris Dancers parade down the High Street. (You can sign up at Freshers' Fair if you want.) These days, a real mixed bag of bands play on after. We've had Brazilian samba bands, New Orleans brass bands, English folk bands – you name it.

On May Day, lots of the restaurants and cafés also open early, to welcome people for breakfast. (music plays out)

You've got all that to look forward to, come May Day. Let's keep walking, towards Magdalen Bridge. I'll meet you there.

Now, come and stand on the bridge and look over the edge, into the river. Stay on this side of the road.

May Day revellers used to jump off here to the sound of the choir, but it got banned when it was deemed too dangerous. The river's not as deep as they might have liked! If it's summer, you might see a punter wielding their pole like a Venetian gondolier. That's definitely an activity to try if you've got the time – just don't fall in!

If you fancy a drink, head to The Cape of Good Hope pub on the roundabout. From there you can explore the Cowley Road area, which is just up the road to the left of The Cape of Good Hope. There are some great restaurants, shops and bars, and Cowley is also where many Oxford students live outside of college. To the right of the pub is Iffley Road, where you'll find the Oxford University Sports Centre. The track there is where Roger Bannister ran the first mile under four minutes.

Now, can you see all those greenhouses on your right? That's the Botanical Gardens. If you fancy taking a peek, just head back the way we came, and the entrance is just on the left. It's free for students and is home to an amazing range of rare and exotic plants.

If you want to get back to where we started, just head back up the High Street, and you'll eventually get to the Carfax Tower.

I hope you enjoyed the tour and you're at least a little bit more equipped for your time here at Oxford! Goodbye!