

Frequently asked questions (FAQs) - College residences

Moving into College

- 1. What can I expect from living in a college residence?**
 - a) A great location in North Oxford, close to all the facilities of the college
 - b) A safe, secure environment with support from our dedicated team 24 hours a day.
 - c) Welfare support from our Accommodation & Welfare Officer during the working day and from porters day and night
 - d) No hidden charges - fees include utility bills, Wi-Fi, basic contents insurance, maintenance and communal cleaning and room cleaning once a week
 - e) Each room is equipped with bed, pillow, desk, chair, lamp, closet/cupboard; bed linen and towels are provided and changed once a week
 - f) Residences have kitchen facilities (either kitchenettes in room or communal kitchens). We provide basic cooking utensils and plates, toaster, microwave, fridge/freezer, oven, iron/ironing board and washer/dryers.
- 2. How do I book a room in college?**
 - a) Contact us directly or book online.
 - b) You must complete the booking form, read the Agreement for Residences carefully, tick the box to show you understand and make a deposit of £500.
 - c) We then assign a room to you according to your preference and the availability.
- 3. Why do I need to sign a formal agreement?**

The Agreement for Residences is a legal document and explains the relationship between You and St Clare's while you are living in our accommodation.

 - a) It is a 'standard' document used by most UK universities and colleges.
 - b) It states what you can expect from us and what is expected of you and other residents and visitors.
- 4. What information do I receive before I arrive?**

When you have completed all the booking conditions we give you access to our student portal. This provides lots of helpful advice.

5. When can I check in and when do I have to check out?

You should check in between 14:00 to 18:00 on the Sunday before your course begins.

If you arrive before or after these times, you must let us know as soon as possible.

You must check out before 10:00. Please vacate your room and remove all your belongings.

6. What happens when I arrive?

Whatever time you arrive, someone will meet you to show you to your room. Full details will be sent to you in an email during the week before your arrival.

7. What happens if I am delayed on my arrival day?

You must contact us on this number as soon as you get through customs: +44 771 951 856. We can then arrange to meet you promptly on your arrival at college.

8. What do I need to bring with me on arrival?

Your room is fully furnished, kitchens well-equipped and linen for your bed and a towel are also provided. There is central heating but you might need to bring warm indoor and outdoor clothes, waterproof clothing and an umbrella. We strongly urge you to bring a laptop. You can bring toiletries, notebooks, pens, etc. but all of these can be purchased locally. You can also bring or purchase an adaptor for your electrical equipment. You can use your own cell/mobile phone from your own country but calls can be expensive. Alternatively, you can purchase a cheap phone in the UK with pay-as-you-go credit.

9. Can I bring a car with me?

Unfortunately no. The city of Oxford does not permit students who live in student residences to have a car in Oxford. If your family or friends drop you off by car, short-term parking spaces are general available nearby.

10. How can I get around Oxford?

Oxford has excellent public transportation and there are bus stops near each residence. There are bicycle lanes across Oxford and every St. Clare's residences have bicycle racks or shed for safe storage. Information about bus passes and buying/using a bicycle in Oxford is available on the student portal.

11. Can I change rooms if I am not happy with my allocated room or roommate?

In most cases it is possible, however, this is subject to availability. If an alternative room is not available, you may have to wait until an appropriate alternative room does become available.

Allocating rooms

12. How do you decide who I share my room with?

Rooms are allocated on a first come, first served basis. As an International College, we are committed to promoting international understanding and as far as possible we seek to ensure all residences include an appropriate nationality mix.

13. Can I choose the Residence and/or the room I live in within the residence?

We cannot guarantee your choice of Residence and /or room; however, we will do our best to accommodate requests subject to availability and mix of students.

Living in a residence

14. How close are the Residences to the main teaching building, library and city centre?

There are 4 college residences and each is a short walk or bus ride away from the main teaching campus. See www.stclares.ac.uk/adult-accommodation for details. Summertown or North Parade (where you can find grocery shops, shops, restaurants are close by and the city centre is a short bus journey away.

15. How is my room furnished?

All rooms are furnished with a bed and mattress, desk, desk chair, desk lamp, shelves, waste paper bin, noticeboard, wardrobe and mirror.

16. What cooking and kitchen equipment is supplied?

Kitchenettes and communal kitchens have a cooker, microwave, fridge/freezer, kettle, toaster and kitchen bin.

The standard equipment includes: saucepans, frying pan, baking try, chopping board, mugs, cereal bowl, microwave bowls, plates, glasses, knives, forks, spoons, can and bottle openers and ladle. A full inventory list will be provided to you when you arrive. Please check it carefully and let us know if anything is missing.

17. Are bed linens and towels supplied?

Yes, we supply a mattress cover, duvet, duvet cover, pillow, pillow case, a bath towel and bath mat.

18. Can I bring my own electrical items/appliances?

Yes, you may bring standard personal items (e.g. hairdryers, curling irons, or shavers); however, they must be fit for purpose and bear a British Standard (BS) or European Standard (CE) mark. British voltage is 240 volts/50 cycles and sockets take 13 amp, 3 square pin plugs. You may need to buy a universal adapter for your own electrical items.

Please note: The College will test all electrical items within the residences and rooms to ensure the health and safety of occupants. You may not bring electrical appliances (for e.g., toasters, microwave ovens, etc.); only electrical appliances supplied by St. Clare's are permitted. If in doubt, please check before purchasing or installing.

19. Can I personalised or decorate my room?

You may use the noticeboard but you are not permitted to apply decorative stickers to walls, doors, windows, furniture or ceilings in any residence.

20. Do I have WiFi in the residence?

Yes, all St Clare's Residences and buildings have WiFi. Instructions on how to connect to our WiFi are included in the Student Handbook and on the student portal. However, if you need help connecting, come to the General Office at 18 Bardwell Road during office hours.

21. Is a TV provided?

There is a TV in the common room of each residence.

However, you need to buy a separate TV licence if you want to use live streaming or BBC iPlayer on your laptop or mobile device! More information available at www.tvlicensing.co.uk

22. Who is responsible for cleaning my room, kitchenette and bathroom facilities?

The house-keeping team cleans all rooms and provide clean bed linens and a towel once a week. Please note: You are responsible for cleaning and putting away your personal belongings; for keeping your room, bathroom facilities and kitchenette tidy and clean; and for washing and tidying any plates, pots and pans that you use.

23. When is my room cleaned?

Rooms are cleaned every week according to the rota displayed on the noticeboard in your residence. Please check the times as these may change from one week to the next.

Please note: Housekeepers need access to rooms from 10:00 on cleaning day.

24. Who cleans the common areas?

The house keepers are responsible for cleaning the communal areas and facilities - any shared kitchen, shared lavatories and shower facilities, lifts and/or stairs, laundry area, common room, stairways, landings and lobbies daily.

Please note: the house-keepers are not responsible for tidying up after students. We need your co-operation in keeping the personal and communal spaces as clean and tidy as possible.

25. Are there laundry facilities?

Each residence has use of a washer and dryer, iron and ironing board. There is no charge to use these items but you will have to buy your own washing liquid/powder.

26. Do you give notice before you enter my room?

Yes, normally the day before access is required unless it is an emergency or you ask us to make a repair.

27. Must I vacate my room during the official College breaks /vacations?

Yes, at Christmas and Easter.

However, you do not need to vacate your room at half-term (in October and February).

28. Where can I store my belongings during the Christmas and Easter vacations?

You may be able to store your belongings in the residence if space is available. Please ask the Accommodation & Welfare Officer.

29. Where can I get my mail?

Use the main college address not your residence for all correspondence as below:

Your name

C/o St. Clare's International College

18 Bardwell Road

Oxford

OX2 6SP

UK

NB. You can pick up your mail or parcels from the General Office at 18 Bardwell Road from 11:00 to 17:00.

30. Can I smoke in College accommodation?

No, all areas of the residence (including bedrooms and balconies) are no smoking areas. This includes vaping and e-cigarettes.

Please note: some residences have a designated area for smoking in the back garden.

31. Can I have a guest stay overnight?

Unfortunately, we cannot permit overnight guests as this breaches our fire regulations and compromises the security of our residences. We can suggest local Bed & Breakfasts or hotels. You must make sure that any guests leave the premises by 23:00.

32. Can we have a party in my room or residence?

- a) You may not have a party in your room, communal areas, flats or corridors.
- b) Parties or special functions may be organised and held within the common room only with the explicit approval of the Accommodation and Welfare Officer in advance. In all cases, parties/functions must end by 22:00 and all guests must leave the residence. Organisers are responsible for tidying up the common room immediately after the event.

33. Can we use the gardens?

You are welcome to use the gardens between 07:00 and 22:00. You must respect the neighbours and other members of your community. This means that all games (football, Frisbee, etc.) music and large gatherings or group activities are not permitted.

34. Are there spare rooms for visitors to stay in?

Unfortunately, there are no spare rooms for visitors but the Office staff can suggest local guest houses or hotels.

35. Where can I buy food and drink?

There are supermarkets in nearby Summertown (within walking distance of all Residences) or go to the city centre (10-15 minutes bus ride from Residences) where two large supermarkets (Sainsbury's and Tesco) are located.

36. Are meals included in the accommodation price?

Residences: No. However, you may choose to pay in advance for lunch in College Monday to Friday for the period of your stay or you may choose to pay for lunch on a cash-basis when it suits you.

Lunch in College includes a main meal (meat, fish or vegan option), vegetables and sides, salads and desserts or fresh fruit. Free tea and coffee is available from 8:30-14:00 weekdays. All residences have self-catering facilities.

Mid June to End August: breakfast and dinner every day are available to book in advance

Homestay: Yes, breakfast and dinner 7 days a week are included in the fees. You may choose to pay in advance for lunch in College Monday to Friday for the period of your stay or you may choose to pay for lunch, in cash, when it suits you.

37. What is the difference between standard and superior accommodation?

- a) Standard rooms share bathroom facilities with up to 4 others.
- b) Superior rooms (single or twin which means shared with one other student) include bathroom facilities in the room or flat.

38. What methods of payment do you accept?

- a) Card Payments: Visa or MasterCard or Visa Debit or Delta

Please note that there is a surcharge of 2% on all credit card payments

- b) Bank Transfers payable in Pound Sterling to St. Clare's, Oxford,

Account No: 90965383

Sort Code: 20-65-18

Bankers: Barclays Bank PLC

Bank Address: Wytham Court, 11 West Way, Oxford, OX2 0JB

SWIFT ID: BARCGB22

IBAN NUMBER (EUROPE ONLY): GB94BARC20651890965383

Please make sure you put your full name and/or student number as a reference.

If you are making a bank transfer, instruct your bank that you will pay all bank charges.