Student Welfare: full guide

This full guide provides information and advice about welfare and disability issues that may affect students and how students can access support.

Key information about finding support is also summarised in the 'Where to go for help' leaflet.

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Our approach to student welfare

Univ's welfare team is here to support all our students throughout their time with us.

Univ takes students' wellbeing seriously. We believe that a positive working environment in which people may flourish and find appropriate support is itself a positive goal. We know also that a student's general health and wellbeing often has a bearing on their ability to make good academic progress.

Everyone runs into welfare problems at one point or another – big and small. Sometimes it can feel as though everything is fine for everyone else but you. People don't always shout about their welfare issues, but don't be fooled: if you encounter difficulties, you are not alone and Univ has a range of people who can help to support you.

Often, friends or family can give support when it's needed, but there are lots of reasons why friends or family members might not be able to help. This is why the College and the University have people with designated welfare roles. The welfare team at Univ, and other welfare professionals within the wider university, will listen to any concerns you have and will offer you support. Details of some of them are given in the "Where to go for help" section in this document, and also in out short 'Where to go for help' leaflet.

Students sometimes do not mention a difficulty because they think it is not serious enough. **If it's bothering you, it's serious enough to mention. The sooner you seek support the better.** There are two important reasons for this:

- Most problems are easier to manage at an early stage, before they turn into much bigger problems. We can support you to manage an issue if you tell us about it.
- If things do worsen, your academic performance may be affected. If you are worried about your academic performance, make sure that your tutor knows. If this seems impossible or inappropriate, make sure that another college officer is aware of your circumstances. Those whom you might contact in these circumstances include the Senior Tutor, Chaplain and Welfare Fellow, the Student Disability and Welfare Officer, Adviser for International Students, Nurse and the College Doctors.

The person best able to help you will depend, to some extent, on your own personality and the nature of your problem. If you don't feel you are getting the help you want from the first person you approach for help, there is nothing wrong with approaching someone else.

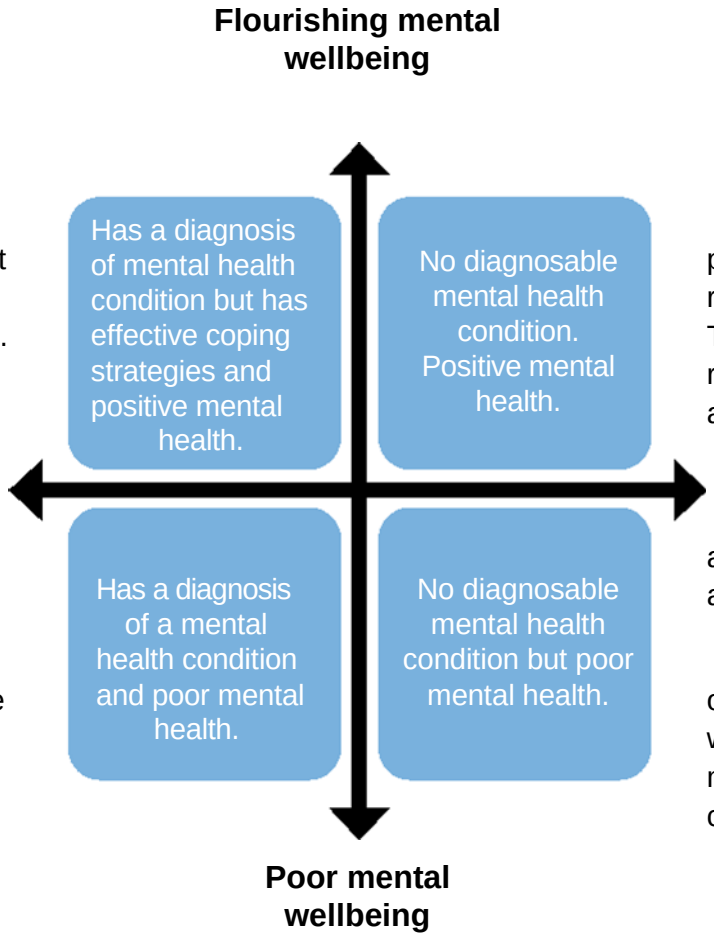
Mental health is everyone's business.

Being mentally healthy doesn't just mean that you don't have a mental health condition. According to the World Health Organisation, if you're in good mental health, you can:

- make the most of your potential
- cope with life
- play a full part in your study community and among friends.

The Mental Health Foundation point out that mental health is everyone's business. We all have times when we feel down or stressed or frightened. Most of the time those feelings pass. But sometimes they develop into a more serious problem and that could happen to any one of us. Everyone is different. You may bounce back from a setback while someone else may feel weighed down by it for a long time.

Your mental health doesn't always stay the same. It can change as circumstances change and as you move through different stages of your life. The Mental Health Continuum is a useful way to visualise our changing mental health. This is a matrix model of mental health and we are all somewhere on the Continuum.



The Continuum shows that people can move between states of mental wellbeing regardless of any diagnosis of mental illness. They can flourish or languish, depending on a range of factors and how well an individual feels able to cope with those factors.

We encourage you to be aware of your own mental health and to seek appropriate support when you need it.

Think about where you are on the Continuum today and compare this with where you have been on the Continuum in the last month. Has your position on the Continuum changed? Are you aware that you have been in the "poor mental wellbeing" quadrants more than once, or for a long time?

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Asking for help when you are feeling low can be a challenge and some students worry about what people might think of them.

Remember:

- If you experience any mental health issues while you are at Oxford, we want to help support you.
- Even relatively common mental health challenges, like stress, can affect your wellbeing.
- Talking to someone who is experienced in supporting people can help you to manage your symptoms and to start to recover.

Sources of support

You can talk in confidence to

- your doctor,
- the College Nurse,
- the College Counsellor or the University Counselling Service,
- the Chaplain and Welfare Fellow,
- the Student Disability and Welfare Officer and
- other members of the welfare team

If you are concerned that your mental health is starting to affect your studies, please talk to

- the Chaplain and Welfare Fellow, or
- the Student Disability and Welfare Officer, or
- your tutor, the Senior Tutor, the Tutor for Undergraduates, or the Tutor for Graduates.

The University Disability Advisory Service offers specialist support to students with disabilities, including those with ongoing mental health issues. There is more information in the "Students with disabilities" section.

If you are not ready to talk, there are many places where you can find reliable information about mental health issues, and how to access support. These include national resources, such as the NHS and charities like Mind and Student Minds. You can also access a range of self-help resources via the University Counselling Service, and via the links at the end of this document.

Taking care of your own wellbeing

Being aware and taking care of your own wellbeing is important and we encourage you to do this.

Taking positive action to promote your wellbeing and supporting yourself in moving towards the flourishing mental wellbeing section of the Mental Health Continuum is possible.

In the short terms of Oxford, you will be busy. There are essays and reports to write, tutorials and lectures to attend, exams to revise for, friends to keep in touch with, emails to reply to, and any number of other urgent tasks to do and deadlines to meet.

In all this, your own wellbeing may slip to the bottom of your list of priorities. Often, students don't realise that their physical or mental wellbeing is affected until they encounter difficulties. However, it is possible to take some regular positive steps to take care of your wellbeing and to avoid some of those difficulties. Those who take time to do this often find that they become more effective students as a result.

Five ways to wellbeing

The NHS and mental health charities recommend the five ways to wellbeing

1. **Connect:** connect with the people around you: your family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. The charity Mind suggests talking to someone instead of sending an email; try speaking to someone new; or put five minutes aside to find out how someone really is.

2. **Be active:** find an activity that you enjoy and make it a part of your life
   If you don't enjoy team sports, try to go for a walk each day instead and do some 'easy exercise', like stretching, before you leave your room in the morning.

3. **Keep learning:** learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence. These skills need not be limited to your course of study.

4. **Give to others:** even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Larger acts, such as volunteering, can improve your mental wellbeing and help you build new social networks.

   According to Mind, research into actions for promoting happiness has shown that committing an act of kindness once a week over a six-week period is associated with an increase in wellbeing.

5. **Be mindful:** be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, and the world around you. Try taking different routes to your lectures or the library and notice the environment around you.

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Taking time for your own wellbeing

We also recommend that you schedule time each week when you will do something that you value and that you enjoy. You can use this as a reward for meeting a deadline or as a break in the week's work that you can look forward to. Why not try some of the following ideas:

- Plan a movie night, just for you or with friends
- Join a university society or go to a public lecture given by another faculty
- Plan an outing to somewhere that interests you. For ideas, go to www.experienceoxfordshire.org/things-to-do
- Spend time sitting in the park when the weather's fine, or take a picnic
- Go for a walk. For ideas, go to www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/walks-and-rides
- Volunteer. Volunteering can have a positive impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of volunteers. It can be an opportunity to do something that you value and that is valued by others, to feel that you are making a positive difference, to broaden your perspective and to meet new people. The Oxford Hub is a student-led organisation that arranges volunteering opportunities in and around Oxford. You can find out more at www.oxfordhub.org

Wellbeing resources

There are a number of resources available to help support your wellbeing:-

- Free resources from the Counselling Service

  These resources may be helpful when thinking about any challenges that you may be facing and what you can do to address these.
  https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling/self-help

- Wellbeing podcasts

  The NHS offer wellbeing podcasts to help boost your mood. Topics covered include low mood, anxiety, sleep problems, low confidence and unhelpful thinking. You can find the podcasts at https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/moodzone-mental-wellbeing-audio-guides/

  The Mental Health Foundation offer their own range of podcasts on wellbeing topics at https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/podcasts

- Mindfulness

  Professor Mark Williams (Founding Director and Honorary Senior Research Fellow at the Oxford Mindfulness Centre in the University's Department of Psychiatry) has created a three-minute mindfulness podcast. Some people find it useful to listen to the podcast once a day to help maintain their wellbeing.

  If you would like to try mindfulness, find somewhere quiet and comfortable to sit and then listen to the three minute podcast at http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/guided-meditation

- Help with managing workload

  You can find guidance on how to manage your workload on the University's website at https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/time

  There is also support in College through the Academic Development and Mentoring Scheme (AcaDeMe): https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/UNIV-AcTS

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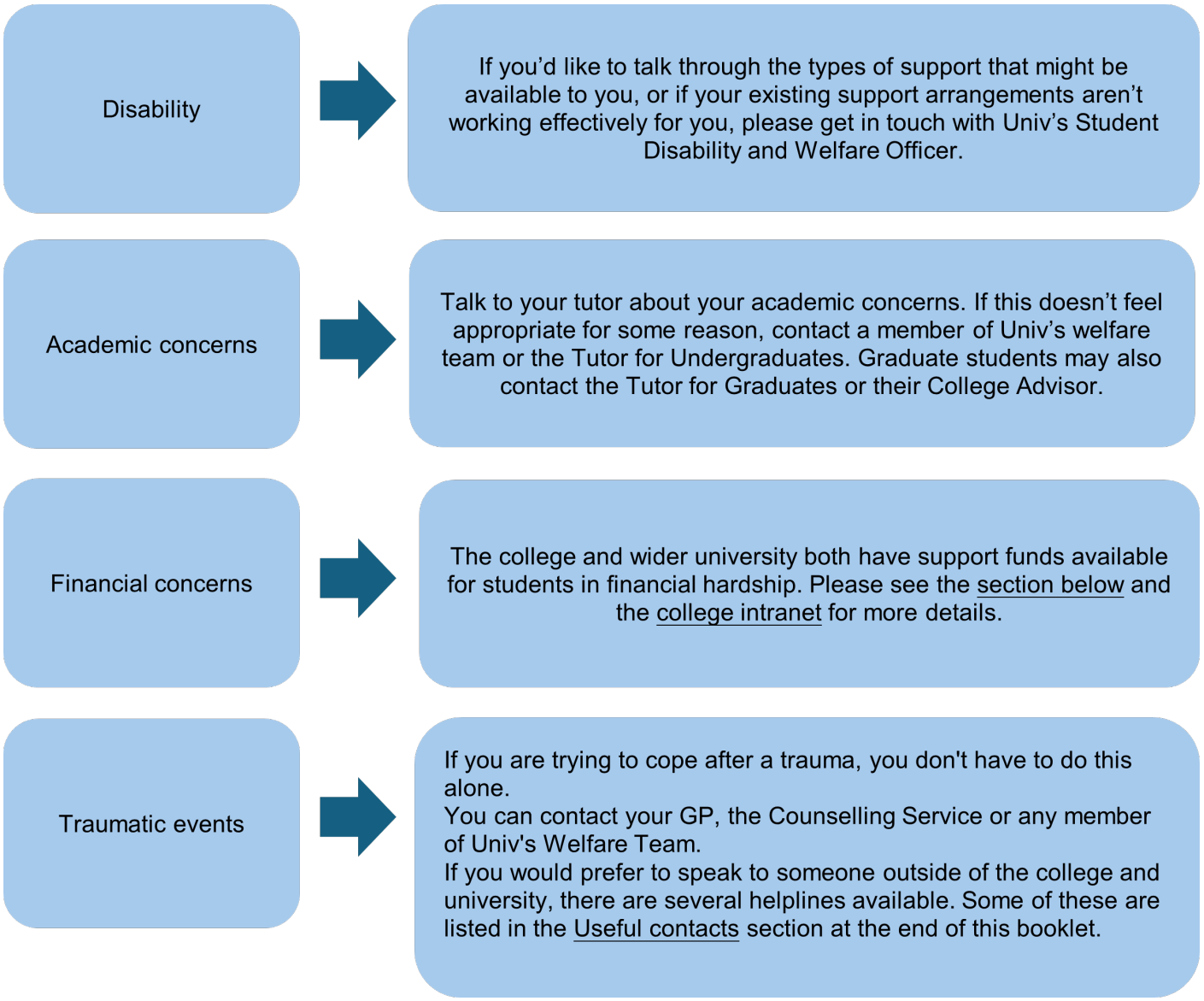
Where to go for help

Univ has a team of people who are there to provide support to students. They are keen to do so, they have time to do so, and they have a great deal of experience – as well as appropriate training – in working with students and the issues which students may face. They can provide advice and guidance, practical help, or a referral to someone better placed to support you. They can also simply be a sympathetic person with whom to talk.

The type of support you choose to access may depend on the nature of the issue you have encountered, its impact on your studies and day-to-day life, and who you feel most comfortable talking to. If appropriate, that person can refer you to someone else who may be better placed to help.

No problem is too small to share with someone else. If it's bothering you, talk to someone about it.



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Sexual harassment and violence

All members of Univ's community are expected to treat each other with respect. Any student who has been subject to harassment or violence is very welcome to discuss their experiences with any member of the Welfare Team.

The College's Code on Harassment sets out our definition of harassment and the process that students may follow to submit a complaint of harassment to the College. All complaints will be handled sensitively, and you will be supported throughout the process.

Students should also be aware of other reporting routes and sources of support, including the Sexual Assault Referral Centre, Thames Valley Police, Oxford Sexual Health Services, and the University's Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service.

Please see the Contacts section of this booklet for further information.

Suicidal thoughts

With support, the vast majority of people who have felt suicidal go on to live fulfilling lives.

If you begin to think about suicide, please access support as soon as possible. Contact your GP, Counselling Service or any member of Univ's Welfare Team.

In an emergency, please go to the Lodge, call 999 for the emergency services, or go to the A&E department of the John Radcliffe Hospital.

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All members of the welfare team work according to the College's Code of Practice on Confidentiality, which can be read at bit.ly/univpolicy (see non-academic policies and procedures). They are not required to maintain absolute confidentiality and may at their discretion share information within the welfare team. However, they will not pass on information elsewhere without permission to do so unless they believe that there is a risk that an individual may harm him/herself or another person. Even in such rare circumstances, information will be shared only on a strict 'need to know' basis, preserving strict confidentiality in relation to other third parties. The Student Welfare Office operates independently of the Academic Office and information is only passed from the former to the latter with the consent of the student involved.

Student-led support

Students may wish to talk first to their peers when discussing any difficulties or issues that they may face. Often they will turn to friends but sometimes they will wish to turn to peers who have a formal pastoral role. These include the various **JCR and WCR Welfare Officers**, the **JCR and WCR Presidents**, and the **College's peer supporters**. These students are able to offer a listening ear or to suggest other people to whom students might wish to speak.

For more information about student welfare officers, peer supporters and other support options, please see the JCR or WCR web pages and the intranet.

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Univ's Welfare Team

andrew.gregory@univ.ox.ac.uk,

01865 276663

Main Quad, Staircase 6,
Room 6

Chaplain and Welfare Fellow

Dr Andrew Gregory is the Chaplain and Welfare Fellow and leads the Welfare team

Dr Gregory is readily available to all members of the college and to its staff who are welcome to contact him about any matter of concern. The College has a very diverse community and most of Dr Gregory's work takes place in a context of pastoral support in which no assumptions are made as to whether individuals hold to any religious beliefs or to none.

If you wish to do so, you are welcome to call in socially, or talk to him in confidence about any matter of concern.

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andrew.bell@univ.ox.ac.uk

Senior Tutor

Dr Andrew Bell is responsible for the academic aspects of College life, including academic support and academic discipline. He is also Univ's Disability Lead and can offer advice on appropriate support for students with disabilities and for those experiencing welfare issues which are affecting their studies. He will try to see you as soon as possible if you have a matter that you wish to discuss with him.

To arrange a mutually convenient time to meet with the Senior Tutor, please contact either the Academic Services Administrator (academic.office@admin.ox.ac.uk), or Dr Bell directly (andrew.bell@univ.ox.ac.uk)

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tutor.undergraduates@univ.ox.ac.uk

Tutor for Undergraduates

Dr Richard Ashdowne is the Tutor for Undergraduates. He is the first point of contact for undergraduate students on matters of academic progress and academic welfare. Please email Dr Ashdowne directly (tutor.undergraduates@univ.ox.ac.uk) to make an appointment.

Student Disability and Welfare Officer

Jo Hoskins is Univ's Student Disability and Welfare Officer. She assists the Senior Tutor in making reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities and also works as a member of the welfare team. Jo is available as a first point of contact for students who might want to talk about any issue affecting their welfare.

Joanne.hoskins@univ.ox.ac.uk

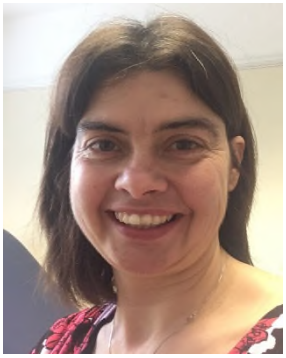
01865 276662

10 Merton Street (Academic Office corridor)

Advisor for International Students

Mrs Jing Fang is Univ's Adviser for International Students, with particular reference to students from China. Mrs Fang teaches at the Chinese Institute, but is usually in Univ two or three days each week. She will be glad to hear from international students and is reached most easily by email.

Jing.fang@chinese.ox.ac.uk



College Nurse

The College Nurse, Victoria Manellari, offers regular surgery hours during term-time. Students are welcome to consult her, in confidence, on all matters of health and wellbeing. Students may contact Victoria by email in the first instance and she will endeavour to reply within 48hours.

The nurse sees students by appointment only.
Surgery hours (term-time only, weeks 1-8) are usually
Monday 9am - 12 noon,
Wednesday 1pm - 3.30pm,
Friday 1pm - 3.30pm.

The Nurse works for other colleges during term-time and may be able to offer appointments at alternative times at one of these other colleges.

victoria.manellari@univ.ox.ac.uk

01865 276605

Ground floor, Kybald House

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College Counsellor

Cath Arakelian is the College Counsellor. Cath is a psychodynamically trained psychotherapist and is a current staff member of the University Counselling Service. She will be on-site and available to see Univ students, for pre-booked appointments during term-time.

During term, students can contact Cath directly by email to arrange an appointment on Univ.Counsellor@admin.ox.ac.uk

The college counsellor inbox is not monitored during the vacations. Requests made prior to the start of term should be sent to Counselling@admin.ox.ac.uk so that a member of the university counselling service team can book an appointment there if required.

At any time of year, students are very welcome to make use of the University Counselling Service, where there is a large team of professional counsellors, and where there is also provision of group counselling, psychoeducational workshops, and other types of support. The university counselling service also has some appointments available in the early evenings, Saturday mornings and vacations if this is required.

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Junior Deans

The Dean is assisted by the Junior Deans who are usually graduate students at Univ. Their main role is to assist the Dean in maintaining non-academic discipline. They are also able to offer welfare support to students who are experiencing difficulties. At least one Junior Dean is always on duty overnight and at weekends and may be contacted through the Lodge if there is an accident or emergency in college or if other welfare assistance is required. In non-emergency situations, a Junior Dean can be contacted by emailing junior.dean@univ.ox.ac.uk

The current Junior Deans are:

Erik Vanegas Muller
Main site

Jack Jacobs
Main site

Sameer Bhat
Stavertonia

Eszter D Kovacs
Stavertonia

Nawara Alaboud
Stavertonia

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Harassment Advisors

Any student or member of staff who feels he or she is, or may be, being harassed may contact one or more of the Harassment Advisors. The current Harassment Advisors are:

Elizabeth Adams
Elizabeth.adams@univ.ox.ac.uk

Aneurin Ellis-Evans
aneurin.ellis-evans@univ.ox.ac.uk

Please see the College's Code on Preventing and Responding to Harassment document here for an explanation of what constitutes harassment and a summary of the options open to those who feel they are victims of such behavior (in non-academic policies and procedures).

You can approach any of the advisors listed above for an informal and confidential discussion if you are in any doubt about whether you are being harassed, or simply to discuss your options.

Additional officers available to graduate students

Tutor for Graduates

Professor Polly Jones is the Tutor for Graduates, with general responsibility for ensuring that graduate students achieve their maximum potential. They are available to graduate students for academic advice and pastoral support.

You can contact Professor Jones at Polly.Jones@univ.ox.ac.uk

Graduate Advisers

Every graduate student has a Graduate Adviser who is available to discuss academic problems and academic progress. In most cases, the Adviser will work in an area related to the graduate student's own subject area, and so should be well-placed to understand difficulties faced by the student. Graduate students should not hesitate to contact their Advisers for academic advice and pastoral support.

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University Counselling Service

The University Counselling Service is a free, confidential service, staffed by professional counsellors. They can help with personal, emotional, social and academic problems.

They are at 3 Worcester Street, T: 01865 270300, E: Counselling@admin.ox.ac.uk.

The Counselling Service is open every weekday during term and for much of the vacations. You do need an appointment: it is not a drop-in service. The Counselling Service aims to see students for an initial assessment within five working days and then to offer counselling soon after this. If your problem is more urgent than this, you may approach your GP, the College Nurse, or another member of the College's welfare team for help.

The Counselling Service also produces a range of useful leaflets covering subjects like exam stress, bereavement and depression which can be accessed on their website at ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling/self-help

Oxford Nightline

Oxford Nightline is a confidential information and listening service run by students for students. It can be reached every night during term from 8pm to 8am, by phone 01865 270270 and they offer an instant messaging chat service too.

Students with disabilities

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Univ strives to be a diverse and inclusive environment in which all students can succeed.

What is a disability?

Any student who is diagnosed with a substantial and long-term physical impairment, a social or communication impairment (such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder), a mental health condition, and/or a Specific Learning Difference (such as dyslexia or dyspraxia) may fall under the definition of disability. Such students may be eligible for and benefit from disability related support.

What support might I receive?

If you tell us that you have a disability, we will make appropriate reasonable adjustments to support your individual needs so that you are able to access both your studies and other aspects of College life. We work in liaison with the University's Disability Advisory Service to ensure that the support offered is right for you.

Reasonable adjustments might include adjustments to the way you are taught, adjustments to your accommodation, study technology, changes to the way you sit exams, or support from a specialist mentor. You can find more information on the types of support available on the University's Disability Advisory Service website.

How will you handle my disability-related information?

Should you provide information about a disability, it will be treated on a confidential basis. This means that it will be shared within the College on a need-to-know basis within the terms of the College's confidentiality policy.

You are not under any obligation to disclose details of your disability either to the College or to the University's Disability Advisory Service, but we can only provide you with appropriate support if we are made aware of any particular needs that you may have.

How can I disclose that I have a disability?

You can tell us about a disability at any time, whether it's before you join Univ or during your course of study. The earlier you let us know about the disability, the sooner we can start to put support in place to help you to fully access study and other aspects of college life.

If you're not sure whether you would be eligible for support or if you'd just like to talk through the types of support that might be available to you, please get in touch with Jo Hoskins, Univ's Student Disability and Welfare Officer. Jo coordinates the implementation of support for disabled students in college. She will talk to you about your situation and help you to decide if you would like to make a formal disclosure of disability and will also help guide you through the disclosure process.

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You can email Jo (joanne.hoskins@univ.ox.ac.uk), phone on Teams or on 01865 276662, or drop into her office for a chat. Jo's office is in the Academic Office corridor on the ground floor of 10 Merton Street (first door on the right).

There are other people in college who you can contact regarding disability support. Univ's Disability Lead is the Senior Tutor, Dr Andrew Bell (andrew.bell@univ.ox.ac.uk); Andrew can talk to you about any barriers to study that you may be encountering as a result of health or disability issues. If your disability means that you are likely to require a particular type of accommodation, or proximity to a kitchen, please contact the Head of Accommodation, Shane Pledge (shane.pledge@univ.ox.ac.uk).

If you would like to formally disclose a disability without first speaking to someone in college, you can contact the University's Disability Advisory Service directly. The Disability Advisory Service works with students to determine the individual reasonable adjustments needed, and they will create a tailored Student Support Plan for each student that can be shared with the college and/or department.

The Advisers at the University's Disability Advisory Service provide advice and guidance about any aspect of the disclosure process. Their contact details are:

T: +44(0)1865 280 459
E: disability@admin.ox.ac.uk

Funding for study-related costs

Funding may be available to pay for additional study-related costs that a student may incur as a direct result of a disability. The funding body to whom you should apply will depend on your status (e.g. if you are an undergraduate or a graduate; or if you are from the UK or elsewhere).

A UK student with a disability who requires specialist support (e.g. specific computer software or hardware, or the support of a mentor or note-taker) will almost certainly need to apply for a Disabled Student's Allowance (DSA) or equivalent. You should do so as soon as possible so that funding and support can be in place for the beginning of your course. The University's Disability Advisory Service will be able to guide you through the process of applying for your disability-related funding.

The funding body to whom you apply may ask you to go for a Study Needs Assessment (SNA). The purpose of this is to determine what support you may require. Again, the Disability Advisory Service can offer guidance on what is involved.

What will happen after I arrive in Oxford?

Soon after your arrival, you will be introduced to Univ's Disability Lead (the Senior Tutor) and the Student Disability and Welfare Officer. You are warmly invited to contact either one if you would like to discuss a possible disability disclosure or the support arrangements in place following a previous disclosure.

Once you start your course, you may find that you need additional support that is not included in your Student Support Plan. If this is the case, contact either the Disability Advisory Service, the Student Disability and Welfare Officer or the Senior Tutor as soon as possible so that your needs can be reassessed, and the appropriate support can be arranged for you. Throughout the academic year, the Senior Tutor and Student Disability and Welfare Officer are available to meet with students if problems or concerns arise, as are the Advisers at the Disability Advisory Service.

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The College will apply for any alternative examination arrangements for students who are eligible for extra time in exams, use of a computer, or an amanuensis. Reasonable adjustments can also be made for the arrangements for Collections (College exams at the start of term). If you have any questions or concerns about your exam arrangements, please contact the Student Disability and Welfare Officer in the first instance.

What happens if I'm already at Univ and think I may have a disability not previously diagnosed?

If you think that you may have a disability, your first step should be to speak with your General Practitioner (GP), the Student Disability and Welfare Officer, the Senior Tutor or the Disability Advisory Service.

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Support for students with some particular circumstances

The College recognises that no two students are the same, and that each person may face particular challenges arising from circumstances in their lives, or in the lives of other people around them. We also know that some students may face more difficulties or pressures than others, including students who are care-experienced, estranged from their families, young carers, or young parents.

Students at Univ who are in any of these circumstances are encouraged to talk to the Senior Tutor, to the Disability and Welfare Officer, or to the Chaplain and Welfare Fellow, who can give information on particular support that might be available for them.

You can also find more information online (see links below).

Care-experienced students

Students who are care-experienced are eligible to apply for the University's Care-Experienced and Estranged Student Bursary.

The non-repayable bursary is available to those who incur additional costs because of their care experienced or estranged status. Eligible students can apply in each year of study.
In addition to the University's Bursary, all students may apply to the College's Student Support Fund if they are in financial difficulties.

The College can offer year-round accommodation to students who are care-experienced, and who wish to stay in College accommodation during the vacations.

Students who would like to apply for the University's Care Experienced and Estranged Student Bursary and / or who would like to request year-round accommodation should contact Andrew Gregory (Chaplain and Welfare Fellow). Andrew is available to talk through your situation with you and support you in accessing appropriate support.

See also: Further student support for care-experienced students

Estranged students

Students who are estranged are eligible to apply for the University's Care Experienced and Estranged Student Bursary.

The non-repayable bursary is available to those who incur additional costs because of their care experienced or estranged status. Eligible students can apply in each year of study.
In addition to the University's Bursary, all students may apply to the College's Student Support Fund if they are in financial difficulties.

The College can offer year-round accommodation to students who are estranged, and who wish to stay in College accommodation during the vacations.

Students who would like to apply for the University's Care Experienced and Estranged Student Bursary and / or who would like to request year-round accommodation should contact Andrew Gregory (Chaplain and Welfare Fellow). Andrew is available to talk through your situation with you and support you in accessing appropriate support.

See also: Further student support for estranged students

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Student parents

Whether you already have a child or are about to become a parent, a wealth of services are available to support you in Oxford - from the University and Oxford Student Union to the County Council.

Further student support for student parents

Young adult carers

The College and the University are committed to supporting students who are young adult carers to ensure you receive the help you need for a successful university experience.

Further student support for young adult carers

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Healthcare

The College Nurse

The College Nurse, Victoria Manellari, may be reached by email or by phone to arrange an appointment: there is no drop-in service. Students are welcome to see her during surgery hours or can ask her to come to see them in their room in College if they cannot come to the surgery.

Email	victoria.manellari@univ.ox.ac.uk
Phone	01865 276605, or 76605 from the College internal phone
Surgery	Ground floor, Kybald House
Surgery hours	(term-time only, weeks 1-8) are *usually*: Monday 9am - 12 noon, Wednesday 1pm - 3.30pm, Friday 1pm - 3.30pm. The Nurse works for other colleges during term-time and may be able to offer appointments at alternative times at one of these other colleges.

The College Doctors

The College requires all its students to register with an Oxford GP during their time at Univ to ensure that medical care is available in Oxford should it be required. We strongly encourage students to register with the Beaumont Elms Practice, whose doctors and other staff are familiar with the needs of students at Oxford.

Phone	01865 240501
Surgery	19 Beaumont Street (about 10 minutes walk from Univ)
Website	Beaumont Elms Practice
Opening hours	Monday to Friday, 8.00am-6.30pm, and the telephone number is 01865 240501.

Dental Services

Information regarding dental services for students can be found on the University website.

Opticians

Information regarding opticians' services can be found on the University website.

Illness

The College Nurse is happy to give advice about managing minor illnesses. If you are ill, you are encouraged to let the College know. The College Nurse is well placed to advise on whether all you need is a quiet day in bed, or whether you should seek a doctor's opinion.

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Outside of surgery hours, students may access non-urgent medical advice through the NHS by calling 111. When seeking medical advice outside of normal surgery hours, it is essential that the patient (or someone who has personally seen the patient) speak to the doctor and has the patient's name, room number, mobile phone number and some details of the illness.

First Aid

Several members of staff are qualified in first aid and there are first aid boxes in many places in the College. Always contact the Lodge (276602) if you or someone else requires first aid.

Accidents and Emergencies

There is always at least one trained first aider on duty in College. All porters are first aiders, so the Lodge will usually be the first place to contact if you or someone else in College needs first aid or other assistance (01865 276602). A porter can offer immediate assistance, contact other people, and advise on whether it is appropriate to call an ambulance.

If you think that you or someone else in College needs emergency assistance and you call an ambulance yourself by telephoning 999, you need to be prepared to:

- give the patient's name
- give the patient's room number or other location in College
- give the College address (University College, Oxford, OX1 4BH)
- give your phone number
- give brief details of the problem

You must then contact the Lodge (01865 276602) to inform them an ambulance is on its way: they may need to help the Ambulance Service to find the patient or to get through locked doors.

In some circumstances you may wish to ring your doctor for advice or to go to the Accident and Emergency Department of the John Radcliffe Hospital in Headington. Use your own judgment, but feel free to ask for advice at the Lodge, from the College Nurse or from any member of the welfare team.

Contraception, sexual health and wellbeing

You can get reliable and confidential advice and help with a range of sexual health matters, including contraception and STI tests from your GP or the Sexual Health Clinic at the Churchill Hospital, Headington Oxford OX3 7LJ (01865 231231).

University College Sexual Health Clinic

Univ hosts a sexual health clinic on Main Site, Kybald House, every Wednesday during term. The clinic is for anyone asymptomatic (not currently experiencing symptoms) or looking for confidential advice about sexual health. Appointments can be booked online here.

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Using the National Health Service

Your GP will be able to deal with most problems. If you need a referral for specialist treatment, you should go through your GP who will be able to refer you.

Serious illnesses are treated quickly, but there may sometimes be a wait for a non-emergency specialist appointment under the NHS. You can see a specialist privately, but it is usually expensive.

International students

Students from the UK or Ireland, or those with indefinite leave to remain or those who have been granted pre-settled status or settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme are eligible for free treatment under the National Health Service (NHS). If you are in full-time education and under the age of 18 you may also be exempt from most NHS charges. You may also be entitled to help with charges on the grounds of low income. Students who require a visa (those not from the UK or Ireland, or those who do not hold indefinite leave to remain or pre-settled or settled status) and are studying full time for more than 6 months will need to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) as part of a visa application to access the NHS services free of charge. Further information is on the UKCISA website.

If you are unsure whether you are entitled to treatment under the NHS, check with the Department of Health, Room 4W04b Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds LS2 7UE. Tel: 0113 2545819 or email: overseasvisitors@dh.gsi.gov.uk.

Self-harm

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Self-harm is when somebody intentionally damages or injures their body. Self-harming does not necessarily mean that you have a mental illness, although some people who self-harm also have conditions such as depression and anxiety. Rather, it is a pattern of behaviour founded on overwhelming emotional distress. It can vary over time but often increases at times of stress.

Self-harm can be dangerous but those who harm themselves can find it very hard to break the pattern of behaviour. It can be difficult to ask for help but there is support available to help anyone who is at risk of self-harm.

You can talk in confidence to the College doctor or nurse, the College Counsellor or the University Counselling Service, or any member of the college welfare team. There are also a number of helpful websites which support the recovery of those who want to stop self-harming:

Mental Health Foundation: https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/

NHS: https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/feelings-symptoms-behaviours/behaviours/self-harm/

Suicidal feelings

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If you are feeling suicidal, you might be scared or confused by these feelings. The feelings may build over time or might fluctuate from moment to moment. It's common to not understand why you feel this way and to feel as if you'll never be happy or hopeful again.

But with support, the vast majority of people who have felt suicidal go on to live fulfilling lives.

If you begin to think about suicide, please access support as soon as possible. Talk to a member of the welfare team; we will always have time to listen, we will take you seriously and we will offer non-judgmental support. Alternatively, you can make an appointment with the University Counselling Service or the college doctor to talk through your experiences. You can also call one of the helplines dedicated to listening to and supporting people who are experiencing thoughts of suicide:

Samaritans: call 116 123 (24 hours a day, every day, calls are free)

Papyrus: call 0800 068 41 41 (24 hours a day, every day, calls are free)

Oxford Nightline: call 01865 270270 (8pm to 8am during term-time weeks 0-9, reverse charges accepted, or free from a University phone).

If you have reason to believe that someone in College is in an immediate life-threatening situation, you should call the emergency services on 999 and then contact the Lodge immediately on 276602.

Sexual harassment and violence

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Oxford is a very safe place to live and to study. Nonetheless, sexual harassment and violence takes place in many contexts and university cities and universities are no exception.

The College takes this risk very seriously. It has staff who are trained to support people who have been subjected to sexual violence or unwanted sexual behaviour of any form, and it encourages any student who has experienced sexual violence or harassment to report her or his experiences to the College.

Why report sexual harassment, violence or assault?

The College's priority will be to help the student to receive appropriate support and to be aware of what options are available. That support may be provided from within the College, from elsewhere in the University, or from outside agencies in Oxford or elsewhere.

Who can I speak to in College?

Suitable people include the College Nurse, the Harassment Advisers, the Chaplain and Welfare Fellow, the Junior Deans, the Domestic Bursar, the Student Disability and Welfare Officer and the Senior Tutor. Students may also contact their own tutor, any other member of staff in whom they might wish to confide, peer supporters, or JCR and MCR welfare or other officers.

What happens if I tell someone in College?

Students who confide in any of these people can expect a sympathetic and non-judgmental response. Any person in whom they confide will listen to what they are told. That person may discuss with the student what sources of support are available, and what the student's options might be, or may suggest that the student speak to someone else who may be better placed to help.

Members of staff who have been specially trained to offer support in these circumstances include

- Andrew Gregory (Chaplain and Welfare Fellow) Andrew.Gregory@univ.ox.ac.uk
- Sameer Bhat (Junior Dean) Sameer.Bhat@univ.ox.ac.uk
- Elizabeth Adams (Harassment Advisor) Elizabeth.adams@univ.ox.ac.uk

Any information that is given will be treated on a confidential basis. This means that it will be shared within the College only on a need-to-know basis within the terms of the College's guidance on confidentiality in student health and welfare.

The College may sometimes need to act to protect other students, as well as any student who reports an assault. The Dean has authority to do so under the College's Non-Academic Disciplinary procedures, or a student may initiate an investigation under the College's Code for preventing and responding to Harassment

Who can I speak to outside College?

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The University offers a Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service. This is an all-in-one service for any student, regardless of age or gender, who has been affected by sexual harassment or violence. The service provides free support and advice, along with a safe place to be heard independent of your college or department. The service supports students in all situations, whether the experiences of sexual harassment or violence happened in Oxford or elsewhere, and whether it was recent or in the past. The service also supports students who have been reported for sexual misconduct at the University.

Sources of information and support outside the University include the Survivor Space Oxfordshire and Thames Valley Police.

The nearest Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC) are in Bicester and Slough. They provide 24 hour / 7 day a week acute trauma-informed healthcare and support, immediate over-the-phone rape and sexual assault support, forensic medical examinations, referrals and follow-up.

College can book a taxi for any journey to the SARC, or will reimburse the cost of taxi fares. Taxis may be booked or fares may be reimbursed through a third party (e.g. a JCR or WCR officer, or a member of the welfare team) in order to protect the identity of the survivor.

How can I get more information before I decide what to do?

You can explore your options with a specialist caseworker at the Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service.

Some other issues that people may face

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Here are a few of the other issues that the welfare team at Univ and elsewhere in the University sometimes help with. You might find some useful pointers here, but everyone's problem is unique and this section is not exhaustive. Please remember that you can talk to any member of the welfare team about particular issues that may be troubling you.

Alcohol and substance abuse

Excessive consumption of alcohol can cause health problems for individuals, affect social relationships with other people, cause disciplinary problems and have a negative impact on academic performance.

Non-prescription drug use and possession is illegal. The possession or use of any class of illegal drug on College property is a serious disciplinary offence, as well as being a serious risk to your health and wellbeing. Prescription drugs too can cause serious difficulties if used inappropriately.

If you are concerned about your own use of alcohol or drugs, or that of a friend, seek help at an early stage. You may wish to contact your GP, the College Nurse, or any member of the welfare team.

Information and advice on drugs can be found at Talk to Frank, which also offers a confidential and non-judgmental phone, text, email and live chat support service for anyone who wishes to access support relating to substance misuse.

Bereavement

When someone close to you dies it can cause all sorts of unexpected feelings, as well as having significant practical consequences both immediately and in the longer term. Every situation is different, but this is definitely a situation in which you should receive understanding and support from everyone at Univ.

There are (at least) two things with which you may need help: practical arrangements, for example if you need to take some time out from your studies, and emotional support. Let your tutor or the Senior Tutor know and consider if you might benefit from accessing support from any of the other College or University welfare providers.

Disciplinary proceedings, including academic discipline

Being involved in disciplinary proceedings is almost always distressing. It is a very good idea to seek out some welfare support if this is going on, from someone independent to the disciplinary process who can simply give you some support. You can bring someone along to formal hearings for support if you wish, and you may want to arrange for someone to represent you too. If you have welfare-related reasons for academic underperformance, it is crucial that you let someone know as soon as possible.

Disordered eating

Any student who experiences disordered eating or any other issue with food is encouraged to consult the college nurse or doctor for advice and support. These sites also have useful information:
BEAT
NHS

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Family issues

Many students have to cope with difficult family issues during their time at university. It might be parents' separation, a family member's health problem, financial difficulties, or some other problem or difficulty. Sometimes it will be something very private and difficult to talk about. Occasionally it can start affecting your academic work, which won't make things feel any better.

Do find someone to talk to about what's going on, if only because dealing with things on your own, without any emotional support, is a heavy burden. And if it's affecting your work, talk in confidence to your tutors, the Senior Tutor, or another college officer or member of the welfare team.

Financial difficulties

You can find up-to-date information on living costs on the University website here.

As well as having practical consequences, financial difficulties can be difficult to talk about. However, if you are having financial problems, the very worst thing you can do is bury your head in the sand. If you are building up debts, act sooner rather than later and it is normally possible to come to some sort of arrangement.

Univ has a number of funds available to support eligible students, including a generous Old Members' Trust Bursary Scheme, as well as book and equipment grants and various other provisions. If you are finding it hard to make ends meet, a good person to approach for confidential advice is the Domestic Bursar, Fran Wright (frances.wright@univ.ox.ac.uk) or the Chaplain and Welfare Fellow, Andrew Gregory (andrew.gregory@univ.ox.ac.uk) who can advise you on any funds for which you may be eligible.

Harassment and bullying

Although rare, these can happen in even the healthiest of communities. When they do, they can be distressing and can do great damage to your confidence and self-esteem.

If you feel you are being harassed or bullied by anyone at Oxford, there is a Harassment Advisory Network comprised of people who are trained to offer impartial and confidential advice on support and reporting options. You can expect the College and the University to support you strongly and sensitively. Univ is strongly committed to equal opportunities and will not tolerate harassment or bullying of any kind.

Homesickness

Homesickness can affect anyone who moves to a new environment. For some, homesickness will only last for a few weeks; for others, homesickness can trouble them for a long period of time. As well as a feeling of loss for family and friends you no longer see so often, homesickness can include more general issues with adapting to change, whether to a new environment or new routine. In short, it is the feeling that some people experience when they lose what is familiar and secure. Homesickness can be both unsettling and upsetting.

The University Counselling Service offers advice on managing transition and homesickness.

Imposter Syndrome

Imposter Syndrome is not a medical or clinical condition and was defined by social psychologists in the 1970s. It is very common for most people when faced with new and challenging situations. A common

definition of Imposter Syndrome is being consistently anxious you'll be 'found out' and convinced you don't really deserve success.

Feeling that you're out of place or not 'clever enough' to be at Oxford are common features of Imposter Syndrome for students. There is often an accompanying belief that you must attain impossibly high standards to avoid being 'found out'.

If this pattern of thinking sounds familiar to you, please take a look at the Counselling Service advice on overcoming Imposter Syndrome.

Low self-esteem

Self-esteem is the value we place on ourselves, whether we consider ourselves to be worth as much as others. If you have thoughts about being not good enough or inferior to other people in some way, then you may have low self-esteem. You might criticise yourself or put yourself down and may not recognise the good qualities you have to offer. In this way, low self-esteem can contribute to social withdrawal, as well as to depression and anxiety.

Learning to accept yourself, and to be as kind to yourself as you would be to a friend, is an active process and it is something that you can learn to do. You can find advice on improving your self-esteem on the University Counselling Service website.

You are also warmly encouraged to speak with any member of the college Welfare Team if you are struggling with low self-esteem.

Other people's problems

The most often-used welfare service at Univ is informal support from friends. You will lean on others from time to time and, if you are concerned about someone you know, or if a friend approaches you for support, you will probably want to do whatever you can to help.

Occasionally this can cause difficulties: it can be a big responsibility, it can cause awkwardness about things like confidentiality, and occasionally it can cause distress or other problems for the person providing the support.

If you are concerned about someone else, there are two important things to remember. Firstly, don't take too much on. You aren't going to do your friend any favours if you do and, when there are plenty of other people (with considerable expertise) who can provide support, it's important that you look after yourself too. Secondly, all of the people available to provide support are available to you too, if you want to get advice about how best to help a friend. You can talk to anyone in the welfare team about someone else's problem, and you can do this without identifying the other person.

Physical health and wellbeing

It can be easy to neglect both new and longstanding physical health problems when things get hectic, but few things are more important than your health.

If there is anything that Univ can do to help, or if your health is affecting your academic work, you should speak to your tutor, a member of the welfare team, the College doctors or College nurse. They are all caring professionals, with much experience and a strong commitment to student welfare.

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Relationship problems

Many lifelong relationships start at Oxford but it can be a small and intense community and, if things go wrong, it can hurt badly. It can also feel like no-one has ever been through quite what you are experiencing. There is no magic wand but this is certainly a situation where having people to talk to, and give you a bit of moral support, makes a big difference. Friends are important here; if they aren't around or aren't the right people, you will find a sympathetic ear in any member of the welfare team.

If you think you might be being harassed, please see the Harassment and bullying information above.

For advice on sexual health, see the Sexual health section above, or speak to your GP or the College nurse.

Social anxiety

Social anxiety is an overwhelming fear of social situations. It is often linked to fear about what might happen in those situations, such as concern about not having anyone to talk to or being rejected by a social group. These fears can be difficult to overcome. You might experience feelings of anxiety, fear of and withdrawal from social situations, and loneliness as a result. To start to address those fears, set some small and achievable social goals and remember to give yourself credit when you achieve them.

To help you do this, you might like to try out some or all of the following, as recommended by the University's Counselling Service:-

- Set aside 30 minutes to learn more about anxiety
- Read the NHS self-help leaflet on Social Anxiety and try to implement some of the ideas to tackle your symptoms.

Useful contacts

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Further information about the welfare resources available to students can be found on the College's website www.univ.ox.ac.uk

Our annual reminder of our welfare provision is available as a PDF here.

Anxiety	https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z-topics/anxiety
BEAT (disordered eating support)	beateatingdisorders.org.uk/
College Doctor	https://www.beaumontelmspractice.co.uk/
College Nurse	https://intranet.univ.ox.ac.uk/nurse
Counselling Service	www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling
Disability Advisory Service	www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability
Disabled Students Allowance	https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability/studentfunding
Homesickness	https://www.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxford/field/field_document/Transitions%20and%20Expectations.pdf
Imposter syndrome podcast	https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/keywords/imposter-syndrome
International students NHS information	https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Studying--living-in-the-UK/Health-and-healthcare
Managing workload	https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/time
Mental Health Foundation	https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/
Mental Health Foundation information on self-harm	https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z-topics/self-harm
Mind	http://www.mind.org.uk/

Mindfulness podcast	https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling/self-help/podcasts
NHS disordered eating support	nhs.uk/mental-health/feelings-symptoms-behaviours/behaviours/eating-disorders/overview/
NHS information on self-harm	https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/feelings-symptoms-behaviours/behaviours/self-harm/
NHS mental health support	https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/
NHS wellbeing podcasts	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/moodzone-mental-wellbeing-audio-guides/
Oxford Nightline	oxfordnightline.org/talk
Oxford University Student Union (OUSU)	http://www.oxfordsu.org
Papyrus	https://www.papyrus-uk.org/
Samaritans	https://www.samaritans.org/
Sexual Assault Referral Centres	https://www.solacesarc.org.uk/
Sexual Harassment and Violence Service	https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/supportservice
Sexual Health Clinic, Churchill Hospital	https://www.sexualhealthoxfordshire.nhs.uk/clinics/oxford/
Sexual Violence: Response and Prevention webpage	www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/sexual-violence
Social anxiety	https://selfhelp.cntw.nhs.uk/
Student Minds	http://www.studentminds.org.uk/
Study Guidance (including advice on effective study strategies)	www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance

Survivor Space Oxfordshire (formerly Oxford Sexual Assault and Rape Crisis Centre)	https://www.survivorspace.org.uk/
Talk to Frank	https://talktofrank.com/
Thames Valley Police	https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/ro/report/rsa/alpha-v1/advice/rape-sexual-assault-and-other-sexual-offences/
Univ bursaries and grants	https://intranet.univ.ox.ac.uk/financial-support.
Univ college policies, including Guidance on Confidentiality in Student Health and Welfare, Harassment Policy and Disciplinary Procedures:	bit.ly/univpolicy
Univ JCR	https://www.univjcr.com/
Univ WCR	https://wcr.univ.ox.ac.uk/
Welfare website	www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare