

ST. CHAD'S COLLEGE MIDDLE COMMON ROOM



**FRESHERS'
HANDBOOK
2020-21**

1-2

A Warm Welcome

3

What is the MCR?

4

Practical Stuff

5-6

How is the MCR run?

7-8

Know Your Way Round

9-10

College Life

Dear fellow Chadsian,

Congratulations on getting an offer to study with us! Freshers' Week is almost upon us, and we can't wait to meet you and welcome you into the Chad's Postgraduate family. If you've studied at Chad's before, welcome back! If you're new to our college and to Durham, we wish you a very warm welcome.

We're sure you all have received a letter from our Exec members, Greg and Michael, and we hope you're excited about joining the MCR as we are about meeting you all!

- All postgraduate students are automatically members of the MCR. However, if you wish to opt-out of membership, please e-mail the MCR Exec [stchadsmcr.president@durham.ac.uk] and the Bursar [chads.bursar@durham.ac.uk] by the end of the second week of October. If you opt-out, you will not be able to participate in any MCR-led events. However, you may opt back in at any time, if you pay the requisite fees.

- Upon your arrival, there will be a number of MCR members around to help you settle in during freshers' week. If you have any questions, they are the best people to ask and are happy to help! Do come along to our freshers' week events: they are a great way to meet new people and to find out about Durham and Chad's. If you have any burning questions, please do get in touch.

*"Welcome to St Chad's College!
As the smallest of Durham's colleges, we are proud of
our warm, welcoming community, and we'll sure you'll
feel right at home in no time!"*

President's Opening Welcome



What is the MCR?



St. Chad's College may be the smallest in Durham, but we have three common rooms. The Junior Common Room (JCR) is for undergraduates; the Middle Common Room (MCR) is for postgraduates, and the Senior Common Room (SCR) for the Principal, Fellows, Governors and Tutors.



Academic

The MCR acts as a wonderful way to meet other postgrads, both from your own field and from other departments ('interdisciplinarity' is the new buzzword!). In addition, we organise regular "Research Forums" where students have the opportunity to present their research to a non-specialist audience, in a friendly and relaxed setting (IE: complimentary glasses of wine!) and to hear about the work being done by other students.



Sports

Sport plays an important role in college life, and it is a great way to meet new people. You can join any college team, irrespective of past experience. It's all about taking part, having fun and going along to socials! Come along to the Chad's Freshers' Fair on Sunday 7th October to speak to the club captains. To participate in college sport, you'll need to pay the £10 Sports Levy, which is a one-off payment that covers the whole year. Additionally, we also have a small Gym below the Dining Hall. It is £15 per term, or £35 for the whole year. You can access it with a Livers-out key 24/7. During Freshers' Week, the University-wide sports teams (organised by Team Durham) also have a Freshers' Fair. If you want to try out for a University team, then do go along. Every team organises socials, and it's a good way to make friends outside of college.



Welfare

We are here for you when you need us (and even if you don't, come for a cuppa!). We are mainly here as a first port-of-call for any issues you have. The Welfare Team provides free contraceptives and sanitary products, promotes campaigns we also organise Café crawls (first drink on us!) and Welfare walks. Also look out for the Welfare Summer Garden Party in July or August!



Practical Stuff

THESE ARE THE THINGS PAST STUDENTS WISHED THEY HAD KNOWN ABOUT CHAD'S BEFORE STARTING THEIR COURSE:

You can come to Chad's at any time of day

The MCR is always open for you 24/7. You can come in at any time, and it is not just a space for social events that have been organised by college or the Exec. It is YOUR common room, and you can study here, bring your lunch, relax or play Mario Kart on the Switch!

Accommodation

At this stage, all college-owned accommodation has been filled, but don't worry! There is always enough supply of houses and flats.

If you're still searching for accommodation, you can go onto Facebook and join the group DURHAM FIND A HOUSEMATE (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/162824307101648/about/>) or log on to www.spareroom.co.uk

Feel free to e-mail Ashley, the Postgraduate Director, if you have any urgent questions about accommodation [ashley.wilson@durham.ac.uk]

Check your e-mails regularly

E-mail is the main way we keep in touch with you. The University and Departments; Students' Union, clubs and societies; College and MCR Exec will all flood your inboxes with useful information, so check your e-mails regularly.

Get a Liver's Out Key (if you don't live in college accommodation)

As soon as possible when you arrive, make sure you pick up a Liver's Out key from Main College Reception. This key gets you into the various Chad's buildings, the Libraries and the Gym. If you live in Trinity, Main College or Hallgarth, your room key should get you into these places as well. You pay a deposit of £25, which you'll get back when you return the key.

The Libraries are for all Chad's students

We are proud of our seven (!) libraries, and they provide ample space for studying, as well as books covering nearly all degree subjects. We also have a small Reading Room, exclusive to MCR members for quiet study.

College events are organised by different people

There are a wide variety of events held in college throughout the year, and they are organised by different groups. Some are college-wide events open to all, like Tutors' Formals. Some are organised by the JCR (the undergraduate community), but most of these events are open to postgrads too.

For more information, please do 'LIKE' the Facebook page CHAD'S SOCIAL EVENTS, and check your e-mails! (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/109887342425897/>)

Some events are organised by the MCR, and these will be advertised by e-mail and also on our Facebook page at the same time (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/267738130391038/>).

How is the MCR run?



The Middle Common Room is run by an elected Executive Committee of officers with specific roles. The President and Treasurer are usually elected in June, and the rest of the Committee elected just after Freshers' Week, so do run for a position if you're keen to get involved!



The Committee has a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and Chairman, and the other Executive positions are the chairs of the MCR sub-committees: Domestic, Welfare, Social and Academic Affairs. More details about the different officers and their roles can be found on the website:
<https://www.stchads.ac.uk/college/common-rooms/mcr/officers/>



We also have a number of non-Executive Officers who help keep the running of MCR life smooth and efficient. The Domestic, Social and Welfare Officers are assisted by a committee made up of MCR members, so there are plenty of ways to get involved straight away!

We also have elections coming up in October for the really important positions of LGBT+ and POC (People of Colour) Representatives. We aim to make the MCR a rich and diverse community, irrespective of creed or colour, and these officers are here to ensure that absolutely everyone feels at home.



College Staff

Although we're here to help you have a positive and successful time at Chad's, the real credit in keeping college running in the grand scheme of things is by and large down to the people below. You'll get emails from them throughout the year, with updates on post to book sales.

Principal – Dr. Margaret Masson

Vice Principal and Postgraduate Director – The Revd. Dr. Ashley Wilson

Vice Principal and Senior Tutor – Dr. Eleanor Spencer-Reagan (on maternity leave)

Assistant Senior Tutor – Jeanna Spencer

Vice Principal and Bursar – Alastair Jenkins

Financial Controller – Catherine Theobald

Accountant – Marjorie Brough

Librarian – Jenny Parker

Chaplain – The Revd. David Rushton

College Secretary – Linda Hyde

Admissions Secretary – Susan Mather

Assistant to the Bursar – Vicki Hinds

Head of Maintenance – Ian Henderson

College Tutors

St. Chad's is proud of its Tutorial system. We have nearly fifty Tutors, from all walks of life, and they are here as an extra source of pastoral support for members. They are not academic tutors, but are here to support you through your studies. You can ask them for advice, or even a CV reference if you meet with them regularly. Hopefully you can meet your tutor soon – they usually get in touch during Freshers' Week but if you'd like to get to know them, drop them an e-mail! Every term we have a Tutors' Formal, which are free of charge and come with complimentary bottles of wine. These formals are more relaxed evenings without all of the formal processing and bell-ringing, and often comes with a cheese course at the end! If you would like to know more about the tutor system before you arrive then feel free to contact the MCR President, Secretary or the Assistant Senior Tutor, Jeanna Spencer.

NB: Postgraduates are not obliged to take part in the Tutorial system.

General Meetings

We like democracy and unrigged elections, but we bribe you to participate with free pizza, drinks and snacks! During these meetings, big decisions are made so everyone is encouraged to attend first one will be held soon after the term starts and there will be plenty of elections taking place.

If you're not able to attend, you can still send questions, raise points and stand for elected positions in absentia.

Battels

As with the College's JCR, SCR, and all other Common Rooms across Durham, we charge an annual subscription fee (known as battels) for all members of the MCR. This is a fee of £35 for the year, and enables the MCR to provide social events, parties, trips and for purchasing items for the common room for the whole year, as well as funding other initiatives to benefit postgraduates in the College. Nearly all of the events held by the MCR are free of charge for members so it's great value for money. You'll get invoiced for it during the Michaelmas Term.



KNOW YOUR WAY AROUND

Durham is a beautiful city, with so much to offer. It might seem a little overwhelming at first, but we'll be taking you on a tour of the city and the university. Here's a quick overview of university sites to get you started.



Main College (20) This is the main hub of the College. Located at 18 North Bailey, all major events take place here. The Gym, Dining Hall, Bars, JCR, MCR, College Officers, Post, Libraries (all 7 of them!) and Wine Cellar can be found here.



Trinity Hall is located next to Durham School and Hallgarth Street is next to the Science Site. Chad's Postgraduates live here, and both are within a 10 minute walk of Main College.



- The SCIENCE SITE (13): Its official name is 'Lower Mountjoy' but everyone calls it the Science Site. Located about a 10 minute walk away from college, you can find all the science departments here (including Mathematics, Computer Science and Engineering); Anthropology; Geography and the Bill Bryson Library here.
- The PALATINE CENTRE (15): This is located just at the back of the Science Site, and is where you'll find lots of official University offices and the Law School, too.
- The 'HILL' (10,9,3,4,2) : Head up Elvet Road and you'll find the Hill Colleges: St. Mary's, St. Aidan's, Grey, Collingwood, Trevelyan, Van Mildert, John Snow and Josephine Butler. You can also find the Politics Department next to Mary's at the Al-Qasimi Building, and the Oriental Museum is also here. Head past Mildert, down Mill Hill Lane and you will also eventually reach the Business School.
- MAIDEN CASTLE (33): If you're the Sporting type, head here for several playing fields, sports halls and exams, which are held here too.
- The 'BAILEY' (22, 21, 18, 20, 17) Located on the Wear peninsula, the Bailey is home to us, St. Cuthbert's; St. John's; Hatfield and University Colleges. Full of historic buildings, including the Cathedral and Castle, which are a UNESCO World Heritage Site. History, Classics, Theology and Music have their Departments here.
- ELVET RIVERSIDE (26): Head down the side of Chad's, over the river, and you'll find the DSU building, as well as the Elvet Riverside lecture rooms. Lots of humanities and arts subjects have offices here, or on Old Elvet.
- SCHOOL OF EDUCATION (30): At the top of Claypath, you will find the Education Department, as well as the College of St. Hild and St. Bede.
- UPPER MOUNTJOY (11): Head up Cardiac Hill to find the Psychology Department.
- DSU (27): You can't miss the brutalist wonder that is the DSU. Behind the copious slabs of concrete, you can find a fairly large bar, a Ballroom and rooms where you can study. Lots of societies use the DSU, and they hold weekly pub quizzes and the annual Freshers' Fair. The elected DSU officers hold regular Assembly meetings here, and student policy is shaped here too. As with the MCR, you are NOT obliged to take up membership of the DSU, and are allowed to opt-out.
- TOP TIP: Visit the DSU (and Elvet Riverside) Freshers' Fairs on BOTH days, to ensure you don't miss out on the huge number of societies. Some will only be able to advertise on certain days.



College Life

Chad's (and Durham colleges in general) has a lot of facets to discover. They all add to the rich tapestry of Chad's life, and here's a guide to a few of the most important elements.

CHAD'S DAY

This is the day we celebrate all that is best about St. Chad's College. Expect an early start with a 7am champagne reception, a Bailey parade (bring pots, pans and whistles) and a festival service in the Cathedral. Don't forget your green face paint, green clothes and college stash. There's also a midday run around Palace Green (rumours are afloat about a midnight run too, which is somewhat more dressed-down...), a Silent Disco and several other events throughout the day. #BleedGreen

COLLEGE BALLS

You've come to the right place if you like dressing up in black tie! We have four balls throughout the year. The Winter Ball is organised by the Boat Club, and usually hosted at Durham Town Hall. The Hope Ball is organised by the Charities Committee, and is hosted in college, and followed by a cruise down the River Wear on the Princey B. The Candlemas Ball is #BiggestNightOfTheYear and the Summer Ball is held on the last week of the Easter Term at Beamish Hall. These are black tie events so get your gladrags on!



Chapel and Chaplaincy

David Rushton is the College Chaplain and Outreach Officer. He is responsible for the life of the chapel as well as co-ordinating chaplaincy events to engage with the range of world beliefs and views of our College community. You'll often see him around College during the week, often alongside his dog Eddie, who LOVES VISITORS!

The College is committed to being a place of inclusive, radical hospitality and the Chapel offers a place of welcome, irrespective of your religious beliefs or background.

During term-time there are regular services including Choral Evensong before formal on Tuesdays or Thursdays, and Sunday Eucharists followed by coffee and cake in the SCR! All are welcome!

Special services are also held throughout the year, ably accompanied by our chapel choir, and highlights include Nine Lessons and Carols, Ascension Day, All Souls and Ash Wednesday. The choir often sings over the road in the Cathedral - be sure to come along to the annual Advent Procession in December!



Formal Hall

Twice a week, on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, Chad's hosts Formal Hall. These are three-course dinners, and you wear suits (or dresses) alongside your academic gown. You can sign-up on your own or as a group, and make sure you get to college early to join the queue! Once everyone has found a seat, the High Table process in and there will be a Latin grace.

To get a place, you need to sign-up on this website:

<https://community.dur.ac.uk/stchads.jcr/password/> Sign-ups usually open on Sunday evenings at 7pm, and popular formals fill up in minutes! Don't be late!

An e-mail with formal rules, as well as a full sign-up guide, will be sent out in due course, and we're in the process of putting up a page on the MCR website about formals and the sign-up system. Formals are fantastic evenings and, at £5 for three courses, great value for money. Meal tickets can be purchased from Reception, and formals are free for livers-in in Main College.

Mega-formals

During the last week of each term, we host a college mega-formal. These are just like formals but MUCH bigger, and are black tie events too. We open up the Quad as well as the Dining Hall, and they are always brilliant evenings.

Post

College has pigeon holes on the first floor where letters and magazines are delivered, and you are also allowed to send parcels to the College's main address which is:

St. Chad's College
18 North Bailey,
Durham,
County Durham,
DH1 3RH

Reception will look after your parcels and e-mail you when it is delivered. It is a great way to avoid having to stay at home all day waiting for an Amazon delivery!

Stash

Anything with a Chad's crest on it is Stash - from t-shirts, hoodies, sweatshirts, fleeces and sweatpants to socks and onesies. There will be at least one order per term and plenty of items/colours to choose from.

The Bar

The Bar is run by the JCR but you can put your name down to work bar shifts. You get paid in bar tokens, which means free drinks, and this makes you very popular with friends! You can also put yourself down to do door shifts, which involves verifying ID and collecting Campus Cards from patrons who do not go to Chad's. OPENING TIMES: The bar is open from 7:30 - 11:00pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays. It is open from 8:00 - 11:30pm on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

The Wine Cellar

The JCR's Wine Cellar Committee run a small but well stocked cellar, located by the foyer, that is the envy of many other Colleges. It is open before every formal and at certain other times at the discretion of the Steward, with a range of wines (and non-alcoholic alternatives) sold at reasonable prices.

The Toastie Bar

On Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays (when the Quad Bar is not open), then the Toastie Bar swings into action! It is run by the Charities Committee, and all takings are donated to the College's Charity of the Term. You can volunteer to help run the toastie bar, and this means you get free toasties on shift!



**ST. CHAD'S
COLLEGE
M.C.R**

CREATED IN 2018 BY N.
BEGANOVA, M. ASPIN AND
Y.ZHUCHEN

UPDATED IN 2019 BY M.
ASPIN