

Induction FAQs

Please note: during the academic year 2020/2021 some of the arrangements detailed here may be subject to change so that we can ensure Covid-19 compliance

Q: What is a college?

A: Durham University prides itself on its collegiate system. Within the university, there are 17 colleges. All first-year students are offered accommodation in their college. However, whether you choose to live in college accommodation or not in your first year, you are still assigned a college and have full access to events, facilities and mentors. There is no formal teaching at Durham University colleges, however there are mentor or tutor systems in place designed to support students in a myriad of ways. Each college offers their own social spaces, such as lounges and bars, as well as sports, societies and committees to get involved with. Every college welcomes students from all nations, ages and backgrounds, offering personal support in all areas of life.

Q: What is St Chad's College like?

A: Chad's is one of the oldest and smallest colleges in Durham. Chad's was established in 1904 as an Anglican foundation however, became a mixed college in 1988 and today welcomes students of all faiths and none to study at Durham University. The college is named after St Chad, an early bishop of the church renowned for his humility, who died on the 2nd March 652. As a result, we celebrate 'Chad's Day' near that time of year.

Despite our size, we are known for being vibrant, international and enthusiastically kind. Our main buildings are on the North Bailey, a few hundred meters from Market Square, right opposite the cathedral. We are one of 14 fully catered colleges in the collegiate system and excel in all areas of college life: sporting participation, academic achievements, music...the list could go on!

The JCR (Junior Common Room) runs the non-academic side of undergraduate student life at Chad's, meaning that almost all of our events, opportunities and welfare services are run by our own students. From running our own bar, to community volunteering and even painting decorations for our college balls, Chad's prides itself on being incredibly accessible and welcoming to everyone regardless of experience or ability. As our college motto says: "non vestra sed vos" – "not what you have but who you are".

Also, our college mascot is the goat.

Q: What is the JCR, MCR and SCR?

A: The JCR is the Junior Common Room – undergraduates are members of this common room.

The MCR is the Middle Common Room – Postgraduates are members of this common room as well as mature students (a mature student is 23 or older by the end of their first academic year). Fourth year undergraduates also have the opportunity transfer their membership from the JCR to the MCR.

The SCR is the Senior Common Room – this common room is made up of College fellows, officers, academic staff and tutors in College.

The common rooms elect a President and Executive Committee for the day-to-day running and representation of the members in the Common Rooms. The term ‘common room’ not only refers to a specific body of people but is used to refer to the JCR/MCR/SCR Lounges – spaces where you can meet friends, fellows and staff, watch TV, play pool and use the JCR vending machine (!).

You will need to pay a small membership fee called "Battels" for your Common Room at the start of your course, which will go towards financing student experiences such as sports equipment, music for college bands, and subsidising events such as Candlemas Ball, and anything else people feel the College would benefit from. Unless you exercise your right to opt out, then the charges will appear on your first College Bill. This fee will be billed automatically to students living in college.

Q: Can I opt out of JCR fees? What does this mean?

A: Students can opt out of JCR membership by notifying JCR president, and the College's Director of Finance & Operations before the end of the second full week of October each year (the opt-out applies only to the current academic year and needs to be renewed in subsequent years).

This means that you are unable to 1) stand for office (i.e. run for positions on executive committees), vote in elections, or attend meetings of the common room, (2) use the college bar (except as a guest – up to a maximum of four times a year), (3) join clubs or societies organised and run by the JCR, (4) attend any event that is funded by membership except at the discretion of the common room and on payment of an appropriate fee or (5) use any Common Room facilities that are funded by membership.

Q: What costs should I be expecting?

A: Please visit our ‘What does all this cost page?’ for an in-depth insight into the cost of studying at St Chad’s. Although we are an independent college, across all Durham University Colleges, our accommodation fees are similar to the rest of the collegiate system. However, the occupancy periods may differ. The residence charges are subject to review each year – information is available here: <https://www.stchads.ac.uk/admissions/what-does-all-this-cost>

First year students in our Bailey buildings have a term-time catered let which includes the occupation of a room the Sunday before induction week until the Saturday at the end of Easter term excluding the Easter vacation period. The charge includes all meals during freshers’ week and during academic term, energy and water costs and Wi-Fi connection.

First year students In Trinity Hall have a term-time catered let which includes the occupation of a room the Sunday before induction week until the Saturday at the end of Easter term including the Easter vacation period. The charge includes certain meals during freshers’ week but meal tickets during academic term must be purchased from College Reception. Energy, water costs and Wi-Fi connection are included.

As a Collegiate University, there are certain charges that we ask you to pay which help us to support our students within the college environment and beyond. The JCR is a student representative body and all the college events, groups and campaigns are funded by the college. As such, we do ask our students to pay £30 JCR Battels as explained under '*What is the JCR, MCR and SCR?*'. Battels helps us put on our amazing events throughout the year, including Freshers' Week, Chad's Day and our Summer Ball. It also helps to fund our groups and campaigns, such as buying in equipment for sports and societies and helping towards welfare supplies and campaigns. Even as a liver-out this fund can help improve your experience of the college.

Alongside JCR fees, we ask that to get involved with college sport, students pay a £15 Sports levy to the JCR (both the JCR membership and the sports levy are charged on an opt-out basis). This is to be paid annually. We also charge £10 'unattributable damages - this annual additional payment is levied to all College residents for any unattributed damages (i.e. damage for which no one in particular is to blame). Any surplus is returned if unused, to fund student activities. To wash in our onsite laundry room costs £2.50 per wash and the dryers are free.

At Chad's our dress code at formals (see '*What is a formal?*') require gowns. These can be bought on the first day of freshers' week. New gowns cost £55 and second-hand gowns cost £25.

During Freshers' week, our JCR Executive Committee and Social Committee aim to put on a busy schedule of events. Everyone involved in this week will do their best to make it hopefully not only one of the most memorable weeks of your life, but also one where you can start to feel at home in Chad's. To help fund the cost of the events organised for you during this week, we will be asking for a payment from each of you. Normally, this is around £63, but this year, with Covid restrictions, it is likely to be less. We will let you know the cost once we have finished organising this year's Freshers' Week events. In cases of genuine financial hardship it may be possible for this price to be subsidised. Please contact our JCR President: james.f.burton@durham.ac.uk.

Gym membership is optional and costs £15 per term or just £35 for the whole year. The gym will be operating in a socially distanced and Covid compliant way.

Q: Can I receive financial support from college?

Yes. At St Chad's we pride ourselves on accessibility and inclusivity. St Chad's College offers a number of annual scholarships and bursaries for undergraduate and continuing postgraduates to encourage applications to Durham and St Chad's from students from less affluent economic backgrounds and under-represented communities, and to provide support, as required, to help our students who find themselves in financial need. These awards are funded through the generosity of St Chad's College alumni, fellows and friends. Please refer to Vice-Principal Ashley Wilson ashley.wilson@durham.ac.uk or the JCR President for further advice.

For prospective undergraduates applying to St Chad's please refer to our bursaries and awards application page on our website: <https://www.stchads.ac.uk/admissions/scholarships-bursaries/>

Q: What do I do if I have any special needs or disabilities?

A: If you haven't already notified the University and College about any special needs or disabilities through your application, please get in touch with Durham University's Disability Support Service for Students with Disabilities. If you have already notified through application, Disability Support should have been informed automatically. They provide a wide range of support for students with disabilities, so everyone gets the most out of their time at university. The term 'disability' is used to cover physical disabilities, learning difficulties (such as dyslexia), medical and mental health conditions. They provide both advice and practical help; if you believe this is relevant to you please get in touch with them directly (disability.support@durham.ac.uk), or our Senior Tutor (chads.seniortutor@durham.ac.uk).

All information provided will be treated in the strictest of confidence.

Q: What is the accommodation like?

A: Around the city centre of Durham, Chad's owns an unusually rich collection of Grade II listed properties. We own 9 accommodation buildings however first years are normally accommodated along the North Bailey in Ramsey, Queens Court, Main College, Lightfoot, Langford, Grads and Epiphany. Across these neighbouring buildings we offer around 130 first-year rooms that vary in character, shape and size. No one room is the same! The types of room available are:

- Shared twin room, shared bathroom
- Shared twin room, en suite
- Single room, shared bathroom
- Single room, en suite

Most first year students at St Chad's are allocated shared rooms – it has been like this for a long time. Whether you are in a single or twin room, each person gets (at least) a bed, a bedside table, a notice board, a bookshelf, a large desk and chair, a wardrobe, a set of draws, a desk lamp, and several plug sockets. You are, however, not allowed any appliances such as kettles, heaters or mini fridges in your room (unless for medical purposes). Students are required to bring their own bedding but bedding packs (duvet and pillows, plus cases, and a bed sheet) are available to buy for £35.00. Contact chads.housekeeping@durham.ac.uk if you would like to purchase a pack. You will find out your room type (including bed-type) by mid September.

Q: Is there any way I do not have to share a room?

A: You can request to have a single room on your Room Preferences and Roommates' form, but if there are more serious justifications other than preference, such as medical and mental health conditions, disabilities or special needs, please contact chads.support@durham.ac.uk asap. We cannot guarantee a single room to everyone who requests one but we will consider every request. You will find out your room type (including bed-type) by mid September.

Q: What facilities are there at Chad's?

A: Although we may be small, behind our green front door and beyond we have a range of facilities alongside our rooms and shared kitchens. In the coming academic year, all of these will be used in a Covid-compliant way according to prevailing local Covid Risk Level.

A favourite space for Chad's students is our own college bar managed and staffed by students. Our bar is open in the evenings, serving a range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks and acts as a relaxing evening space whether you chose to drink or not. We also have a recently refurbished bar upstairs in the Quad which is used on busy nights. The bar is home to our darts board and a quiz machine! Another chilled space is our JCR common room – open 24/7 and home to hallowed sofas, daily newspapers, a Sky TV, a pool table, a water fountain and a fully stocked vending machine! Chad's also has its very own wine cellar which is open twice a week before formals. It sells good quality wine, sparkling wine, port and non-alcoholic options.

The Cassidy Quad lies at the centre of college – it is a huge conservatory that operates as a multifunctional space all year round. It is used for anything from social events, to debates and a place to study during exam season. There are year round 24/7 study spaces around Chad's – we are the proud owners of 7 small but impressive libraries. Our reserve library is home to most of the core books for every subject. Within the Trounson Library, we have a small computer room, however there are other computers dotted around the other libraries too. They are connected to the university network and have access to a lot of programmes needed for science/data heavy degrees. Down from the reserve library are the pigeon-holes where you collect letters and post. Any parcels are to be collected from reception.

Our main laundry room is located in main college garden and has both washers and dryers. There are also a laundry facilities in each residence bubble. The rest of our gardens remain beautiful all year round – we even have our own croquet lawn and set which makes an appearance as soon as the sun comes out. Our gardens are lovely spaces to work, relax and eat in when the weather gets warmer. We also have a small student run allotment started last year. Adjacent to Main College garden sits our Chapel which is used for a range of services. As well as being used to explore and practice faith, it is a space for quiet reflection or piano practice and is open to everyone.

Our gym, like the rest of Chad's, is small but mighty. Located off Bow Lane, it boasts a selection of cardio machines and a weights room as well as a water fountain and sound system. Our boat house sits along the River Wear just down from Bow Lane and homes our well looked after fleet of rowing boats.

Q: What can I expect in my room? Are there things I am strictly not allowed to have in my room?

A: Each room includes a bed, desk, sink, closet, shelf, radiator, pinboard, desk lamp, and drawers. Students often bring plants, full length mirrors, home assistant devices, extension leads, instruments and rugs. **There are generally four electrical sockets per room.** College advises against anything that could possibly be a fire hazard, which unfortunately means no candles, plug-in string lights, kettles, etc.

Q: Is bedding provided?

A: You'll have to bring your own bedding with you unfortunately, but if you're struggling to fit it in the car or coming from abroad then college can sell you a full bedding set (duvet and pillows, plus cases, and a bed sheet) for the bargain price of £35.00. Complete the online form if you're interested. All beds are single beds unless specified otherwise. You will find out your room type (including bed-type) by mid September.

Q: How does being catered work?

A: Chad's is one of 14 fully catered colleges in Durham. For students on the catered package in the Bailey buildings, this means that within the cost of college accommodation for academic term time, you are given all three meals a day. All meals are served in Mouldsdale Hall (the dining hall) in Main College. We have a good selection of hot and cold options for breakfast; lunch always has a daily soup and fresh deli bar and at dinner you have the option of having three courses. We cater for all dietary requirements (vegan, vegetarian, coeliac etc.), allergies, religious requirements and schedules as best as we can. Our catering team are wonderful and work around the clock to make sure that every student is fed and happy. We encourage you to get to know the kitchen servers and chefs well and keep a dialogue going all year. If you have any questions, contact our catering team: chads.catering@durham.ac.uk

Also, in every house there are (basic) kitchen facilities and utensils if you want to cook independently or make yourself a cuppa without walking down the Bailey.

Q: What are 'formals'? What should I wear?

A: Formal dinners are a regular and popular feature of Chad's life although the detail of how these will work within the constraints of Covid is yet to be worked out. The dress code is formal wear (more smart than smart-casual) with gowns – typically this consists of suits, dresses, smart trousers and skirts, smart jumpsuits. On formal days, dinner is served as usual at 5:45pm, before the dining room is cleared and places are set for formal. Livers-in can go to formal at no extra cost, however livers-out will need to purchase a meal ticket. Formal is great for celebrating a birthday or just catching up with friends. There is a specific etiquette and timeline of events during a formal dinner that is explained once you arrive.

Q: How do I go about getting a gown?

A: Gowns for first year undergraduates can be bought from the JCR exec. You can either buy a new gown for £55 or a second-hand gown for £25 (check with the JCR President or Vice President for details). There is something special (and friendly for the planet) about owning a gown that has seen an ex-Chadsian through their University career!

Q: What are college families?

A: Everyone is adopted by 'college parents' upon arriving to Chad's. These will be students in the years above, and often at least one will be studying the same subject as you. College families are truly what you make of them – they can provide guidance, and can be some of your closest friends in college. Please also note that your parents may be of the same gender, or you may have more than two parents, or you may get adopted into another family altogether. Your whole college family may include parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins... although this sounds confusing, the 'Keeper of the College Family Tree' keeps track of all of this, so check that out and see who your ancestors are!

Q: What are college tutors and how do they differ from academic advisors?

A: College tutors, also known as mentors, take on a pastoral role. It is hoped that through regular contact you will develop a friendly relationship, and feel that they are someone you can talk to about any issues, both personal and academic. Meetings with your tutor can range from private chats to events with your entire tutor group. They may be able to offer you advice on academic-related problems, but are here to provide you with as much guidance as you need throughout your time in Durham.

Q: Can I bring my car?

A: Parking in Durham is a bit of a nightmare and students are discouraged from bringing cars into the city. The city is small, the roads are narrow, and the city are committed to reducing emissions. There is a congestion charge in the city centre, and all parking spots either require a permit or are pay and display. As Chad's is situated on the Bailey and in the congestion zone, there is nowhere to permanently park immediately nearby.

However, if you do intend to bring a car to Durham whilst you live in college accommodation in your first year, you need to have permission from the University to do so.

Students who wish to apply for a University parking permit are advised to refer to the Frequently Asked Questions and the University's Parking Policy before applying here:

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/estates/transportparking/applications/>

Once you have received permission from the university, Chad's has limited parking available at Trinity Hall, a 5-minute walk from Main College. Please see the Chad's College Parking Policy before you apply [here](#). The College will consider each request and will inform students of the outcome. If you have any questions, please contact chads.support@durham.ac.uk.

Q: Can I post anything to college before I arrive?

A: Yes. If you are sending (very) large parcels, or international deliveries please email (chads.porter@durham.ac.uk OR chads.asstbursar@durham.ac.uk) or ring reception (+44191 3343358) to coordinate this at a suitable date near to the beginning of first term.