FRESHERS’ EVENTS: ORGANISER SUPPORT PACK
1. FRESHERS’ EVENTS

PURPOSE OF FRESHERS’ EVENTS

Many Alumni Groups host pre-arrival Freshers’ Events in August and September for students starting a course at the University in Michaelmas Term. Freshers’ Events provide an opportunity for incoming students to make new friends, ask questions and get an idea of what to expect when they arrive. Attendees can benefit greatly from speaking to current students, recent graduates and alumni offering information and advice about living and studying at Cambridge.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2017

- 53 events were hosted: 22 in the UK and 31 across 14 other countries
- Events were attended by 689 incoming students – an increase of 30% from 2016
- 97% (28) of organisers and 90% (131) of attendees that completed a follow-up survey were either very satisfied or satisfied with the event they either hosted or attended
- The organiser of the Cambridge Society of Oxfordshire’s Freshers’ Event won a University-branded sweatshirt in the prize draw, having submitted her Group’s Attendee Registration Form promptly

WHY HOST A FRESHERS’ EVENT?

- They are fun and easy to organise
- You will make a direct and considerable difference towards helping new students prepare for university
- They provide an opportunity for your Group to engage with students and keep in touch with the University
- You can rally organisational help from other Group members and involve current students and recent graduates to help out on the day
- You will be supported every step of the way by the University’s Alumni Engagement team

NOT SURE WHETHER TO HOST A FRESHERS’ EVENT?

Why not contact one of last year’s organisers with your questions, or attend one of this year’s events for inspiration? Simply email us to be put in touch with an organiser, or visit www.cam.ac.uk/freshers in late July/early August for the schedule of events and contact an organiser directly.

TESTIMONIALS FROM LAST YEAR’S ORGANISERS

“We had a fantastic turn-up from freshers, current and old students which proves that the event was fantastically organised!” – Hellenic Cambridge Alumni Association

CHECKLIST FOR ORGANISERS

Whether you are new to organising Freshers’ Events, or have enjoyed hosting them for years, please use this checklist to ensure you have covered everything for this year.

REGISTERING THE EVENT

☐ Check this year’s eligibility criteria for support (see section 2)
☐ Decide which services and resources you would like from the Alumni Engagement team (see section 2)
☐ Make a note of the key dates (see section 3)
☐ Ensure your event meets the guidelines (see section 3)
☐ Consider co-hosting with another alumni or student group (see section 3)
☐ Choose a suitable date (see section 3)
☐ Decide how attendees should book (see section 3)
☐ Register the event by Friday 20 July for maximum publicity (see section 4)

PREPARING FOR THE EVENT (see section 5)

☐ Read up on event accessibility
☐ Promote the event
☐ Recruit current students and recent graduates to mingle with attendees
☐ Involve your Schools Liaison Officer (UK only)
☐ Involve the Group’s equivalent student society in Cambridge (if applicable)
☐ Decide upon a structure for the event
☐ Organise refreshments
☐ Source up-to-date orientation information
☐ Order ‘Party in a box’ supplies
☐ Prepare a welcome speech
☐ Prepare documentation (such as an Attendee Registration Form)
☐ Prepare name stickers and badges
☐ Contact the Alumni Engagement team for updates on numbers (if using their online booking system)

ON THE DAY OF THE EVENT (see section 6)

☐ Set up a registration table
☐ Dress the event
☐ Brief volunteers
☐ Station someone at the door to greet attendees
☐ Register attendees
☐ Help attendees to mingle

AFTER THE EVENT (see section 7)

☐ Submit the completed Attendee Registration Form to the Alumni Engagement team
☐ Circulate an attendee list to attendees
☐ Complete the organiser survey
☐ Share your event photos
☐ Keep in touch with students and recent graduates
“It was very satisfying to see the students gel into a group and leave as friends.” – Manchester Association of Cambridge University Women

“The branded items (party in a box) were great.” – The Oxford and Cambridge Club of Nigeria

“The event went very well. We had about a dozen incoming students attend.” – Cambridge Society of Washington DC

“The support and publicity from the Alumni Office was fundamental to the Event.” – Berkshire Cambridge Society

TESTIMONIALS FROM LAST YEAR’S ATTENDEES

“I loved meeting the alumni and hearing about their experiences while at Cambridge.”

“The atmosphere was so relaxed and the alumni members were so friendly.”

“The unique opportunity to talk with former students gave me a better insight of what to anticipate from the college system and generally, what is like to live in Cambridge.”

“Met a very supportive alumni group, who have given some great advice on what to do and see at uni and how to cope with it.”

“Speaking to alumni has helped in learning from their experiences and speaking to prospective students has been helpful in building connections.”

“It helped me to feel less anxious about moving to university and meeting new people.”

Read more attendee testimonials, at www.cam.ac.uk/freshers.

2. SUPPORT AVAILABLE FROM THE ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT TEAM

ELIGIBILITY FOR SUPPORT

In order for us to register and support your Freshers’ Event, we ask that you:

› Endeavour to respond promptly to our messages and requests for information, which might involve you deputising the event organiser role to another Group member to cover any periods of unavailability
› Follow the event guidelines (see section 3)
› Collect your attendees’ names, Colleges and email addresses and provide us with this information within two weeks of the event (see sections 6 and 7)

CONTACT US

Please contact the appropriate team with any questions or requests for support.

Groups based in the USA and Canada: Please contact Elizabeth Healey from our Cambridge in America office, by emailing liz@cantab.net, or telephoning 212.984.0975.

All other Groups: Please contact Bridget Van Emmenis or India Thompson from the University’s Alumni Engagement team, by emailing networks@alumni.cam.ac.uk, or telephoning +44 (0)1223 332288.

SERVICES AND RESOURCES

The Alumni Engagement team offers the following services and resources to support you in the running of your Freshers’ Event. Full details are provided within this pack, where indicated.

› General and tailored guidance
› Event registration (see section 4) and publicity (see below)
› Promotional materials and event supplies (see section 5)
› Online booking system for attendees (see below)
› Potential funding through the Alumni Groups Award Scheme (see below)
› Help to recruit current students and recent graduates to attend your event (see section 5)
› Introductions to your Group’s equivalent student society in Cambridge and (UK only) Schools Liaison Officer (see section 5)
› (UK only) Contact details for local schools and colleges (see section 5)
› Incoming student numbers for your Group’s country (see below)
› @cam email addresses for event attendees (see section 7)
› Collecting and sharing organiser and attendee feedback (see section 7)

EVENT PUBLICITY

We will promote your event as outlined below (see section 5 for guidance on how you can promote your event).

Online: Your event will be listed on our dedicated Freshers’ Events web page, at www.cam.ac.uk/freshers, and promoted through our social media channels. Adverts for all Freshers’ Events will be placed on a number of central University pre-arrival and orientation web pages, such as www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/new-students/arrival, and posted to popular Cambridge Facebook groups for offer holders and freshers, such as www.facebook.com/groups/cambridgefreshers.
**Alumni Groups Resources | Freshers’ Events: Organiser Support Pack**

**Colleges**: College Admissions and Tutorial Offices will be asked to promote events registered by the first deadline, Friday 20 July, in their welcome information to freshers. Schools Liaison Offices, College Communications Offices, Alumni/Development Offices, and JCRs/MCRs will also be asked to promote the events.

**International Student Office**: If you are hosting an event outside the UK and register it by the first deadline, Friday 20 July, the University’s International Student Office will send a direct invitation to your event to incoming postgraduates from the country in which the event is taking place. Additionally, an advert for all Freshers’ Events will be placed in the ‘International Student Guide’ which is available to download, at [www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/files/international_student_guide.pdf](http://www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/files/international_student_guide.pdf).

**Events in the USA and Canada**: Our Cambridge in America office will promote events taking place in the USA and Canada.

**Across the University**: A number of teams will be asked to promote the events, including:

- Schools Liaison Officers: [www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/colleges/area-links](http://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/colleges/area-links)
- Student societies in Cambridge: [www.societies.cam.ac.uk](http://www.societies.cam.ac.uk) and [www.cusu.co.uk/groups](http://www.cusu.co.uk/groups)
- Cambridge University Students’ Union (CUSU): [www.cusu.co.uk](http://www.cusu.co.uk)
- CUSU International: [www.international.cusu.cam.ac.uk](http://www.international.cusu.cam.ac.uk)
- Graduate Union (GU): [www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk](http://www.gradunion.cam.ac.uk)
- Students’ Unions’ Advice Service: [www.studentadvice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.studentadvice.cam.ac.uk)
- Gates Cambridge and Gates Cambridge Scholars’ Council: [www.gatescambridge.org](http://www.gatescambridge.org)

**ONLINE BOOKING SYSTEM**

If you would like attendees to book in advance, there are several options available to you for managing bookings:

- [Development and Alumni Relations’ online booking system](http://www.networks@alumni.cam.ac.uk)
- Email the event organiser
- Group’s online booking form
- Group’s Doodle poll

We recommend using our online booking system to make the process quick and simple for attendees and reduce your event administration. If you choose this option, we will register your attendees and email you a registration list approximately one working day before the event. Prior to this, you can contact us regularly for numbers. On request and time permitting, we can provide you with a set of pre-written University branded name stickers for attendees to wear at the event.

Please note that if you intend to charge a ticket/entrance fee (though please avoid doing so, if possible), the fee will not be taken via the online booking system. Instead, attendees will be asked to pay the Group directly on arrival.

**ALUMNI GROUPS AWARD SCHEME**

If your Group would like to host a Freshers’ Event but is unable to do so because of a shortage of funds, why not consider applying to the Alumni Groups Award Scheme for a one-off grant to subsidise event costs? The Scheme is administered by the Alumni Engagement team, with applications being reviewed and awarded by the Networks and Volunteers Working Group. For full details about the Scheme, please email networks@alumni.cam.ac.uk.

**STUDENT NUMBERS**

**Applicant data for 2018–19**: If you would like to know how many new students from your Group’s general area have applied to Cambridge for entry in 2018–19, please email us and we will ask the appropriate University office for the data. Requests are dealt with case-by-case and the provision of data is not guaranteed and could be limited. The summer period is an exceptionally busy time for staff dealing with admissions, therefore please give us plenty of notice and anticipate a delayed response.

**New entrant and current student data for the last three years**: If you would like to track how many students from your country go to Cambridge year-on-year, please visit [www.prao.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-analysis-planning/student-numbers/snapshot-nationalitydomicile](http://www.prao.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-analysis-planning/student-numbers/snapshot-nationalitydomicile). The data goes back three years and is updated annually in March. Groups in larger countries and the UK should note that the data is presented by country only, and is not broken down further, such as by city, state, region or postcode.

**SHARING STUDENT DATA FOR DIRECT INVITATIONS**

We are sometimes asked by organisers for the names and contact details of incoming students from their country or region for the purpose of the Group sending personal and direct invitations to them. University data protection policy prevents us from obtaining student data to pass to Groups for this purpose, nor does it permit the Alumni Engagement team to send direct invitations to students on behalf of Groups.

**3. GUIDELINES FOR FRESHERS’ EVENT**

**KEY DATES**

- **Thursday 5 July**: International Baccalaureate results published
- **Friday 20 July**: Deadline for registering your Freshers’ Event for maximum publicity (see section 4)
• Monday 30 July to Tuesday 7 August and Friday 10 August to Thursday 16 August: UCAS results embargo (see below)
• Tuesday 7 August: Scottish Qualification Awards published
• Thursday 16 August: A-level results published
• Friday 17 August: Deadline for registering your Freshers’ Event for limited publicity (see section 4)
• Within two weeks of your event: Deadline for submitting your Attendee Registration Form (see sections 6 and 7)

GUIDELINES

Purpose of guidelines: This section sets out an approach so that ‘Freshers’ Events’ hosted by University Alumni Groups are welcoming and accessible to incoming students. It aims to advise Alumni Group representatives on:

• Good practice in planning, promoting and prioritising the wellbeing of undergraduate and postgraduate students attending Freshers’ Events; and
• Hosting events that support the Collegiate University in tackling myths and misconceptions about Cambridge

Freshers’ Events that fall within the guidelines will be supported and promoted by the Collegiate University.

Guidance on venue: The Collegiate University encourages Freshers’ Events that are accessible and inclusive and that make attendees feel comfortable and safe. Despite best intentions, some venues may have the effect of making some attendees feel daunted or demoralised and even worried that Cambridge might not be for them. The guidelines also seek to safeguard students and alumni alike by reducing any perceived or actual risks associated with minors being in the company of adults, on private property, who have not had a Disclosure and Barring Service check. Holding an event in a public environment does not remove that risk, but it does reduce it.

• It is recommended that the venue is neutral, public and accessible
• Traditional private members’ clubs (such as the Oxford and Cambridge Club, London) are best avoided, but can be considered if no other venue is available, provided that there is no dress code and that it is made clear to attendees that they are not required to become members of the club, or pay an entrance fee over and above any small charge associated with attending the event
• Other types of private members’ clubs or associations (such as private sports clubs) are suitable venues, on the same provisos as for traditional private members’ clubs
• Please do not hold the event in a private house (such as a Group member’s home)

Guidance on charge: It is recommended that there is no charge. If a venue operates a dress code, it is suggested that the Group seeks to arrange with the venue a concession to the code for the duration of the event

Guidance on serving and drinking alcohol: If a Group is considering providing alcohol at the event, it is important to bear in mind that attendees could be under the legal drinking age for their location. There are risks associated with serving alcohol and Groups should take measures to keep attendees safe. The guidance below seeks to address this.

• Groups offering alcoholic drinks are requested to do so in line with local licensing laws and to observe the minimum legal drinking age for their country or region
• Where alcohol is offered (for example, a glass of wine on arrival or as a toast), Groups are asked to safeguard attendees from alcohol misuse and peer pressure to drink alcohol
• Please ensure that non-alcoholic drinks are readily available

Guidance on charging attendees: Many students are on a tight budget and might be unable to afford to attend the event if they are to be charged. Groups are therefore encouraged to waive, or at least cap, any fees in order to make their events inclusive to students on all budgets. The following guidelines seek to address this.

• It is recommended that attendees are not charged an entrance fee or for refreshments
• If charging is unavoidable:
  – it is recommended that a venue offering low or concessionary rates for hire and refreshments is booked
  – it is recommended that the charge is capped at £5 (or local equivalent) per attendee and covers any reasonable costs (such as for venue hire, first drink and nibbles) that will enable the attendee to participate fully in the event
  – the charge is to be advertised up front to prospective attendees
  – charges are to be used only to recoup the Group’s outlay for hosting the event, or to cover venue hire or refreshments (these events are not intended to generate a profit)
• To keep costs down, some Groups hold their Freshers’ Events in a member’s place of business. Many Groups use any profits generated from other events to subsidise their Freshers’ Events and some Groups split the costs among members
OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

1. **Consider co-hosting:** Why not team up with another individual or group to co-host the event? Working with others offers several advantages, including providing a bigger pool for resources and potential attendees, offering a more diverse perspective of Cambridge to those attending, and building fruitful collaborations with stakeholders. Potential co-hosts could be your Schools Liaison Officer (UK only), a student society, or another Alumni Group. An example of successful co-hosting is the Freshers’ Event in Cyprus, which is organised collaboratively by the Cyprus Cambridge Society (an Alumni Group) and the Cambridge University Cypriot Society (the equivalent student group in Cambridge). Feel free to email the Alumni Engagement team to be put in touch with a potential co-host.

2. **Choose a suitable date:**
   - We recommend hosting international events between late August and mid-September, because many international students arrive in Cambridge two or three weeks before the start of term.
   - We recommend hosting UK events between mid and late September.
   - UCAS provides the University with results information prior to publication under strict contractual obligations and any contact with offer holders during this period is a breach of contract. UK Groups are therefore not permitted to hold Freshers’ Events, or contact offer holders or their schools/colleges during the ‘JCQ embargo period’, which runs from 2pm on Friday 10 August until 6am on Thursday 16 August. Groups based in Scotland are not permitted to hold Freshers’ Events, or contact offer holders or their schools/colleges based in Scotland during the ‘SQA embargo period’, which runs from 6pm on Monday 30 July until 9am on Tuesday 7 August.
   - Consider combining your event with the Group’s monthly social, annual or new alumni event, so that students can meet lots of members and your efforts will feel worthwhile if the student turnout is small. Combining events should also reduce event administration.

3. **Ensure the event is accessible:** (see section 5)

4. **Structure the event:** (see section 5)

5. **Don’t worry about numbers:** There is no ideal number of attendees to aim for and you should not feel disheartened if only a few students turn up. Last year’s attendance levels varied considerably across events, with numbers ranging from one to 184 attendees and the majority being eight or less.

6. **Keep it simple:** An informal and low-key gathering in a reserved section of a café or bar, in a central location with good transport links, is ideal. It works well to have sole use of a space and to keep within the confines of one area rather than spreading over several rooms. Do check there will be enough room for mingling and that attendees will be able to hear one another.

7. **Provide refreshments:** Attendees will appreciate a few free drinks and some nibbles. They will not expect or require lavish catering. It is worth checking dietary requirements at the time of booking and, where possible and relevant, label food so that attendees know what is, for example, vegetarian, vegan or gluten free.

8. **Make booking easy:** Students will often book late or turn up without booking, even if asked to do so, which can present challenges for event organisers. They will expect booking to be straightforward and online and will appreciate getting an idea of who else is going to the event in advance. With this in mind, our recommendations are:
   - Use our online booking system (see section 2)
   - Promote your event on Facebook so attendees can see who else is going (see section 5)
   - Try not to have a booking deadline
   - Accommodate students turning up at the door without pre-booking
   - Avoid venues requiring numbers in advance and avoid pre-ordering catering

9. **Allow attendees to bring a guest:** Some students will want, or even need, to come with a parent, guardian or friend in order, for example, to provide practical assistance and support. This could be particularly relevant to students with disabilities. Please be flexible and endeavour to accommodate such requests.

10. **Involve current students and recent graduates:** (see section 5)

11. **Provide up-to-date orientation information:** (see section 5)

12. **Help attendees to mingle:** (see section 6)

4. REGISTERING YOUR FRESHERS’ EVENT

**HOW TO REGISTER YOUR EVENT**

Please register your event with the Alumni Engagement team by completing an Event Registration Form online, at [https://is.gd/etaquh](https://is.gd/etaquh).

Please email us if you are unable to complete the form.
DEADLINE FOR REGISTERING YOUR EVENT

To guarantee the maximum publicity for your event, please register it by **Friday, 20 July 2018**. Events registered by this date will be:

- Listed on our website
- Promoted on social media
- Included in the printed schedule of events
- Promoted by the Colleges
- Promoted by the International Student Office and other teams across the University

If you cannot make this deadline, please register your event by **Friday, 17 August 2018** and we will promote it on our website and social media pages. From **Saturday, 18 August 2018**, we might not be able to promote your event and any publicity we can offer will be limited.

MAKING CHANGES TO YOUR EVENT ONCE REGISTERED

We ask that you avoid making changes to your event (such as the date or venue) after it has been registered, because it will not be possible to amend publicity materials that have already been printed or circulated, such as the schedule of events, publicity via the Colleges and direct invitations from the International Student Office.

If changes are unavoidable, please email us with the amendments as soon as possible and we will do our best to accommodate them. Please also notify/remind attendees of any changes at the time of booking.

5. PREPARING FOR YOUR FRESHERS’ EVENT

MAKING YOUR EVENT ACCESSIBLE

Your goal, no doubt, is to assist all attendees, including those with disabilities, to feel welcomed and able to fully participate in the event. When planning your event, it is important to consider what barriers to participation might be in place and to address these where possible. Some excellent guidance on event accessibility and disability etiquette can be found on these sites:

- University Disability Resource Centre: [www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/about-drc/etiquette](http://www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/about-drc/etiquette)
- Voluntary Arts Week: [https://is.gd/NEbi5f](https://is.gd/NEbi5f)

PROMOTING YOUR EVENT

Here are some ideas for how you can promote your Freshers’ Event. (See section 2 for details of how the Alumni Engagement team is going to promote the event.)

Please do not contact the Colleges directly: The Colleges have requested that Groups do not contact them directly to promote their events, as they do not have the capacity to respond to individual requests.

Facebook: Facebook is the go-to place for students, so be sure to use it to promote your event by creating a public event posting. You can email us for a bespoke post if you are unsure of what to write. Additionally, there are hundreds of Cambridge Facebook groups for new and continuing students that you can search for and then join, message or post to in order to promote your event. If your Group does not have a Facebook account then now is a great time to get one up-and-running. You might like to visit another Group’s page for inspiration, such as the Oxford and Cambridge Society of India’s page, at [www.facebook.com/oxfordcambridgeindia](http://www.facebook.com/oxfordcambridgeindia).

Previous attendees and volunteers: If you have hosted a Freshers’ Event before, why not ask previous attendees and volunteers (current students and recent graduates) to promote your event? You could also invite them along.

Local schools and colleges: You can contact the schools and colleges in your Group’s region or city and ask them to promote your event to students with an offer or confirmed place. If you would like assistance with writing a letter for this purpose, please email us. UK Groups can also email us for the addresses of the schools and colleges in your area and seek assistance from their Schools Liaison Officer (see below). Think about the timing of the letter. For UK schools, summer is not a good time because in May and June there will be exams and, over the summer vacation, the head teacher might be away and the general focus will be on results and university places. Contacting head teachers after offers are made in mid to late January and before May is likely to be better.

RECRUITING CURRENT STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES

The vast majority of attendees tell us that speaking to current students is by far the best thing about Freshers’ Events (especially when they are from the same College or course) and the main incentive for going. Therefore, we recommend inviting current students and also recent graduates from a variety of Colleges and courses to the event to mingle with attendees. Current students will give a credible, relatable and up-to-date exposition of what it is currently like to be at Cambridge and how to prepare for the endeavour. It might be helpful for Group members to step back for a while to let the students chat among themselves.

Current student and recent graduate volunteers can also provide an extra pair of hands for setting up, registering attendees and clearing up afterwards. You will also have the benefit of staying in touch with these potential Group members of the future.
Some ideas for recruiting volunteers are listed below:

- Invite back last year’s attendees and volunteers
- Ask Group members if they are in contact with current students or recent graduates to approach
- (UK only) Ask the Schools Liaison Officer (SLO) for your city or region to promote the opportunity to current students, including those holding College Access Officer roles
- Request our help using the Event Registration Form. We will advertise the opportunity and put anyone that comes forward in touch with you. You might find it helpful to read the volunteer role profile, at www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/get-involved/cambridge-university-freshers-events. Please note we cannot guarantee the recruitment of volunteers

See section 6 for guidance on how to brief volunteers on the day.

(UK ONLY) INVOLVING YOUR SCHOOLS LIAISON OFFICER (SLO)

Every College employs an SLO to build relationships with schools and colleges across the UK. Each Officer is assigned to several UK regions or cities and a London Borough. SLOs can be a great resource to UK Groups and could potentially:

- Co-host the Freshers’ Event with you
- Help to promote the event in local schools and Colleges
- Attend the event to mingle with attendees and give a presentation about life in Cambridge (note that head teachers are likely to be reassured by the presence of a University representative at the event)
- Help with recruiting current student volunteers to attend the event

Support from an SLO is not guaranteed and will vary across SLOs, but it is certainly worth seeking. Please email us to be put in touch with your SLO.

INVOLVING THE GROUP’S EQUIVALENT STUDENT SOCIETY IN CAMBRIDGE

We are keen to encourage Groups with an equivalent student society in Cambridge to keep in regular contact with them. Why not look into the possibility of co-hosting the event together? You could ask them to promote your event to new students and invite members of their committee along to mingle with attendees and give a presentation about an aspect of student life. You could also find out if they will be hosting an orientation event for new students in Cambridge in October to promote at your event.

To find out if you have an equivalent student society, please visit, www.societies.cam.ac.uk or www.cusu.co.uk/groups, or email us.

STRUCTURING YOUR EVENT

A tip from previous attendees is to give your Freshers’ Event a structured format. You could, for example, include some brief presentations, hold a question and answer session and facilitate a mingling session (see section 6 for guidance on the latter).

A suggested itinerary for a two-hour event is presented below and can be amended to suit your event. It is recommended that you print and display the itinerary at the event.

18.00 Event starts. Free drinks and snacks and general mingling
18.30 Welcome and introductions from the organiser
18.40 Presentation by a student volunteer: What to expect in your first week
18.45 Presentation by a Schools Liaison Officer (UK only): Support available at Cambridge
18.50 Presentation by a Group member: Support available from the Alumni Groups network
19.00 Facilitated mingling: break off into Colleges
19.15 Facilitated mingling: break off into courses/Faculties/Schools
19.30 Question and answer session
19.45 General mingling
20.00 Event ends

SOURCING UP-TO-DATE ORIENTATION INFORMATION

It is common for participants to feedback to us that they attended a Freshers’ Event for lots of relevant and up-to-date information about Cambridge, such as what to expect and how to prepare, so be sure to make this information available. This can be achieved in a variety of ways, for example:

- Invite current students, recent graduates and your Schools Liaison Officer (UK only) to mingle with attendees and give short presentations on different aspects of student life
- Have a question and answer session
- Hand out a leaflet promoting University orientation information. You can order a supply of leaflets from us (see ‘Ordering ‘Party in a Box’ supplies’ below for guidance), or download and print it from our website, at www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/get-involved/cambridge-university-freshers-events
- Familiarise yourself with new student orientation information, which is available, at www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/new-students and www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/arriving

ORDERING ‘PARTY IN A BOX’ SUPPLIES

Recognised Alumni Groups are offered a range of event supplies, including promotional materials, branded items (such as banners and bunting) and name stickers. For details, visit www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/get-involved/cambridge-university-freshers-events, and email your completed order form to
networks@alumni.cam.ac.uk. Please give us as much notice as possible.

PREPARING A WELCOME SPEECH

We recommend preparing a short welcome speech to give about 30 minutes into your event. Some suggested points to include are listed below:

- Introduce Group members and any guests in attendance, such as current students, recent graduates, your Schools Liaison Officer (UK only) and any representatives from the Group’s equivalent student society in Cambridge.
- Highlight the purpose of the event and give an overview of the event structure.
- Promote the Alumni Groups network as a resource.
- Highlight the Group’s activities for students.
- Promote the Group’s equivalent student society in Cambridge (if there is one), highlighting any orientation events they will be hosting for new students in Michaelmas Term.
- Introduce any other speakers.

PREPARING DOCUMENTATION

Please prepare the following documents as they will be needed on the day, in addition to any other handouts you would like to provide.

Attendee Registration Form: (see sections 6 and 7)

Data Protection Statement: Please display the Group’s Data Protection Statement next to the Attendee Registration Form to advise attendees how the information collected on the form will be used. The statement should be available from the Group’s primary contact.

Photography Notice: If you are going to take photographs during the event, please display our template Photography Notice to make attendees aware of this and give them the opportunity to inform you if they would like to be excluded from photography. You can download and print it from our website, at www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/get-involved/cambridge-university-freshers-events.

Registration List: Attendees often tell us they would have appreciated receiving a registration list, either in advance or on arrival, so as to see who will be attending and identify who to prioritise speaking to. The most helpful information to provide is name, College and course. Please do not include contact details on the list unless you have written consent from each individual to do so. If you ask for name, College and course at the time of booking, you can draft a registration list and email it to attendees the day before the event. Alternatively, you could provide everyone with a printed list on arrival, or keep a list on the registration table for reference.

PREPARING NAME BADGES AND STICKERS

We recommend providing everyone with a name badge or sticker to wear at the event with their name, College and course clearly displayed. Badges/stickers will provide attendees with an easy way to identify people from their College and course and can act as a useful ice-breaker. You can instruct individuals to write their own sticker on arrival, or provide them pre-typed.

We suggest providing your current student and recent graduate volunteers with name badges or stickers in a different colour or style to those for attendees. You could write ‘CURRENT STUDENT’ or ‘RECENT GRADUATE’ at the top of the sticker to make the wearer’s role clear. Group members in attendance (including you) should also wear stickers or badges to clearly identify them as alumni.

You can order stickers and badges from us (see ‘Ordering ‘Party in a Box’ supplies’ above for details).

SOURCING FREEBIES

A number of Groups hand out freebies to attendees to take away, such as a product, sample, voucher or something fun. Why not ask Group members for ideas? It might be possible to seek sponsorship for your event, which could result in the sponsor providing branded giveaways for attendees. Please note that you are not expected to organise freebies.

FINDING A NEARBY VENUE FOR POST-EVENT SOCIALISING

A suggestion from previous attendees is to provide details of a nearby venue that attendees wishing to carry on socialising after the event can go to (assuming you will need to vacate your space). Therefore, it is worth locating some nearby venues to signpost attendees to.

6. ON THE DAY OF YOUR FRESHERS’ EVENT

REGISTERING ATTENDEES

Within two weeks of your event, please provide us with the name, College and email address of each of your attendees. We recommend using our template Attendee Registration Form for this purpose, which can be downloaded from our website, at www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/get-involved/cambridge-university-freshers-events.
Guidance for completing the Attendee Registration Form:

› Ensure you have enough copies of the form for your event
› Assign a Group member or volunteer to register attendees on arrival and ensure no one is missed
› Ask only new Cambridge students starting a course in Michaelmas Term to complete the form (no other attendees or guests should complete it)
› Although it is not compulsory for attendees to complete the form, please encourage them to do so in order to hear about opportunities to connect with alumni

See section 7 for guidance on how to submit the completed form to us.

SETTING UP A REGISTRATION TABLE

We recommend setting up a designated table or area (ideally by the entrance, if possible) for registering attendees, which includes the following items:

› Attendee Registration Form (see above)
› Data Protection Statement (see section 5)
› Photography Notice (see section 5)
› Registration List (see section 5)
› Name stickers and badges (see section 5)
› Pens
› Leaflets promoting University orientation information (if ordered from us)
› Any handouts you would like to provide

DRESSING YOUR EVENT

‘Party in a Box’ supplies: If you pre-ordered ‘Party in a Box’ supplies from us, please use them to dress your table, area or room to create a stronger sense of Cambridge.

Signage: Please help attendees find their way to your event by displaying lots of signage with clear directions in and around the venue. If you ordered signage from us, it will be in your ‘Party in a Box’ delivery. We also recommend displaying the event itinerary (see section 5).

BRIEFING VOLUNTEERS

Please ensure your current student and recent graduate volunteers feel welcomed, valued and supported by taking these easy steps:

› Introduce the volunteer to fellow volunteers and Group members
› Give them a name badge to wear that clearly identifies them as a current student or recent graduate
› Gauge their level of experience by asking if they have volunteered at a Freshers’ Event before
› Outline their responsibilities and brief them on timings
› If they are to man the registration table, run through the ‘Registering attendees’ section above
› Check in with them regularly and be available to answer questions
› Offer them a free drink or two, if possible
› Thank them at the end of their shift
› Reimburse them for any expenses before they leave and encourage them to volunteer again next year

PROVIDING A FRIENDLY WELCOME

Students are likely to feel nervous about attending the event because meeting new people can be scary, but a warm and friendly welcome on arrival is bound to help settle those nerves. Why not station a current student volunteer at the door to welcome attendees, get them a drink and introduce them to someone to talk to?

HELPING ATTENDEES TO MINGLE

Mingling with strangers can be very daunting and attendees will appreciate your help to make it easier by organising ice breaker games or providing a facilitated mingling session during the event. A popular suggestion from previous attendees is to group students together, firstly by College for a set period of time and then by course/Faculty/School. Current students, recent graduates and Group members can then move from group to group offering information and advice. Another suggestion is to organise a speed networking session during the event. There are lots more ideas for facilitating mingling online.

Additionally, please ask Group members and volunteers to keep an eye out for anyone standing on their own to go and talk to.

7. FOLLOWING UP AFTER YOUR FRESHERS’ EVENT

SUBMITTING YOUR ATTENDEE REGISTRATION FORM TO US

Within two weeks of your event, please provide us with your Attendee Registration Form containing the name, College and email address for each of your attendees. You will hopefully have collected this information at the event (see section 6).

Guidance for submitting the Attendee Registration Form:

› After the event, please go through the form and cross out or delete anybody that is not a new Cambridge student starting a course in Michaelmas Term (so please delete alumni, current Cambridge students, new and current Oxford students and any other guests)
› Ideally please submit a Word document, rather than a PDF file or hard copy, to make it easier to process
› Please email the form to networks@alumni.cam.ac.uk
On receiving this information, we will contact attendees for their event feedback and keep in touch with them throughout their studies, such as to promote the network of Alumni Groups as a valuable resource, which will hopefully encourage future membership. We will also examine attendee data across all events, look for trends and use our findings to rally support for Freshers’ Events across Collegiate Cambridge.

ENTERING A PRIZE DRAW

If you submit your completed Attendee Registration Form to us within seven calendar days of the event, you will be entered into a prize draw to win a £50 voucher to use online or in store at Cambridge outfitters, Ryder & Amies (www.ryderamies.co.uk). Terms and conditions for the prize draw are available at: www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/get-involved/cambridge-university-freshers-events.

CIRCULATING THE ATTENDEE LIST TO ATTENDEES

In response to last year’s attendee feedback, we have added a column to the template Attendee Registration Form asking attendees for their consent to have their details circulated by the organiser to attendees after the event in order to help them keep in touch with each other. Therefore, please email the names, Colleges, courses and email addresses of anyone that has ticked the box to your attendees. Please do not include the details of anyone who has not ticked the box.

GIVING US YOUR FEEDBACK

We will welcome your feedback on all aspects of the Freshers’ Event series to help improve the guidance and support we offer organisers. After your event, we will email you a link to a short online survey to complete. We will also survey your event attendees and share the results with you to give you an idea of what went well and some suggestions for next time.

SHARING YOUR PHOTOS

We would love to see your photos and use them to promote future Freshers’ Events, so please share them with us, either by email, sending us a link, or via a file sharing platform such as Dropbox or WeTransfer. Landscape orientated photos sized 900 pixels x 450 pixels or bigger are ideal because they are more versatile for use in promotional materials.

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES

Attendees: You can use your Attendee Registration Form to keep in regular contact with the students that attended your event and inform them of the Group’s activities and events. Why not start off with a follow-up email thanking them for coming and inviting them to join your mailing list? You could follow this up with an invitation to your seasonal event in the Christmas vacation. If you would like to receive the University @ cam email addresses of your attendees, please email us after your event.

Current student volunteers: We recommend sending a follow-up message to your student volunteers to thank them for their help. You can continue to keep them informed of the Group’s activities and events and ask them to help again at next year’s Freshers’ Event.

Recent graduate volunteers: It is suggested that you send a follow-up message to your recent graduate volunteers to thank them for their help and invite them to join the Group as a member and/or sign up to the mailing list. Please signpost them to other Groups if they are not staying in the area, such as by giving them the link to the ‘Find an Alumni Group’ web page, which is, www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/group.

Student society in Cambridge: If your Group has an equivalent student society in Cambridge, you will hopefully have involved them with your Freshers’ Event. Going forward, it could be enjoyable and advantageous for you to continue teaming up on initiatives and co-hosting events. Working together could help to ensure a smooth transition for members from the student society to the Alumni Group when they graduate. To find out if you have an equivalent student society, please visit, www.societies.cam.ac.uk or www.cusu.co.uk/groups, or email us.

PLANNING NEXT YEAR’S FRESHERS’ EVENTS

In January, the Alumni Engagement team will review the year’s Freshers’ Events, provide Groups with feedback and start planning for the coming year. Groups will be contacted from March onwards with an invitation to run an event.