

Tips for your Welcome Speech Cambridge University Freshers' Events

David Peace (St Catharine's 1966), Chairman of the Cambridge Society of London and Alumni Advisory Board member, shares some ideas and tips for your welcome speech below.

(Please note for the London event: 120+ students, large room, cash bar, two/three Society members and ten second and third year student volunteers. Will be different at other events.)

Timing	Speech given when all or most have arrived, so perhaps 30 minutes after start. I generally have a card with trigger words for the following:
Set the tone	<p>Welcome.</p> <p>Congratulations on going to the best university in the world! (Always raises a cheer and puts nervous teenagers in a good mood).</p> <p>And special congratulations to those going to St. Catharine's, the best College in the best university in the world! (Cheers and boos).</p> <p>I'll explain shortly what this is all about.</p>
Domestics	<p>Make sure you've signed the registration form, which you'll find</p> <p>Advise of timings for the evening. Finishing time. You'll be thrown out at 9pm or I'll be sending in heavies!</p> <p>Point out toilets, cloakroom and emergency exits. If there's an emergency just follow me – I'll be the first one out!</p> <p>Arrangements for food and drink.</p> <p>What to do with glasses and rubbish.</p>
Purpose	<p>What's it all about?</p> <p>Just what they're already doing: meeting each other, making friends and getting info about the University and the Colleges.</p> <p>You're probably excited, nervous and have lots of questions. This is an opportunity for you to get answers, tips and advice by speaking to current students (if attending) and alumni.</p> <p>It will continue without more speeches or any other interruption till throw-out time.</p>
Introductions	<p>Alumni Group</p> <p>Who am I and the other 'adults'? Not professors, not masters, not directors of studies or tutors. The bad news is that we are <i>you</i> (some many decades on!) – now graduates, who do this for the University out of goodwill.</p> <p>We are members of the Cambridge Society of London – which is an Alumni Group for graduates in London. Please can Group members wave now to make yourselves known?</p> <p>This Group does other things too, for example: ... (give brief examples of activities that will appeal to students).</p>

	<p>Network of Alumni Groups The University of Cambridge has a global network of over 460 volunteer-led Alumni Groups. With a presence in over 116 countries – from Algeria to Venezuela, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe – we believe no other university has such a wide-reaching and extensive network. As Cambridge students, you can make use of the network throughout your studies for careers advice, mentoring, events and international hospitality whenever you're travelling.</p> <p>Development and Alumni Relations office Alumni Groups are independent and self-financing, but recognised by and affiliated to the University and linked to it via the University's Development and Alumni Relations office, which will stay in contact with you throughout your studies and beyond.</p> <p>Current student volunteers (if applicable) Talk to the current students that are here to share their experiences of living and studying in Cambridge. They are the real experts of life in Cambridge now (unless you want to hear from me what it was like in the 1960s!) and will be very happy to answer your questions. Introduce them giving their name and College.</p> <p>Equivalent student society in Cambridge (if applicable) Introduce any members attending and suggest attendees contact the society when they arrive in Cambridge – they should be at the Freshers' Fair Freshers' Week (early October) and are likely to be hosting their own welcome event for new students give details on ... (give details), so do go along if you can.</p> <p>Guests (if applicable) Introduce any guests.</p>
To get the most out of the evening	<p>Meet each other and stay in contact afterwards.</p> <p>Chat to the current students that are here.</p>
Finally	<p>Enjoy your time at Cambridge. Work hard. Play hard. Don't forget to get a degree!</p>