

# Insiders' Tips

Based on the work of Matteo, a previous JCR officer. I know you are given lots to read so I have tried to keep this document very clear, with bullet points. It should only take 5 minutes to read. *Actionable or important information is in italics!*

## Storage

Unless you're on a full-time contract, your room will need to be cleared every vacation. However, there is lots of storage space as international students:

- Every room has lockable storage – *bring a small (6mm) padlock!*
- You will be able to leave suitcases and boxes in international storage. *Boxes are provided! In previous years this has been in the squash court. You will get more information RE location and moving day before every vacation. Current information is available at <https://goo.gl/efaLh8>.*

## Health

EU nationals enjoy free medical treatment in the UK (for now). A Tier 4 Student Visa entitles you to National Health Service (NHS) treatment, but some nationals may need to pay a health surcharge. *You can calculate your health surcharge at <https://www.immigration-health-surcharge.service.gov.uk>. If you are not entitled to full NHS treatment you are advised to take out health insurance before you leave. See <http://www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/arriving/orientation/healthcare> for more.*

Cambridge has good health care with a major hospital and several General Practitioners (GP) surgeries and specialists. College will provide all the information required to register you with "Huntingdon Road Surgery", the nearest GP. Fitzwilliam also has a nurse for more immediate issues.

Fitzwilliam has two welfare officers that can provide contraceptives and sexual health advice, and Cambridge has university-wide programs for sexual and mental health.

## EU Citizens

The UK is still part of the EU. Rights that apply to you in other EU states apply here.

EU citizens have the right to vote at local elections and EU elections. However, you must choose whether you wish to vote for an EU representative from the UK or from your home country. *Cambridge City Council should send voter registration forms, however, you are advised to learn more and register at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote).*

## ***Food and Shopping***

As well as Fitzwilliam's buttry and cafe (which are quite British), there are a wide range of supermarkets:

- **Aldi** is the closest to Fitz (5 minute walk) and is very cheap. Most people can find what they need here.
- **Sainsbury's** is in the centre of Cambridge (20 minutes walk) and slightly more expensive, but provides items Aldi doesn't.

*Between Aldi and Sainsbury's, most people are satisfied.*

- **Mill Road** (40 minute walk, 15 minute cycle) has many international supermarkets, including:
  - Cho Mee, the biggest Chinese supermarket
  - Winfield Chinese Supermarket
  - Seoul Plaza, a Korean supermarket
  - Al Ameen, halal multi-cultural food shop
  - NotungBanglaBazar, halal butchers
- **Grafton Centre** (30 minute walk, 10 minute cycle) is a shopping centre / mall including a cinema. Near it is an Oriental supermarket called "Sweet Home".
- **Nasreen Dar** (5 minute walk) is an Indian supermarket.

## ***Welfare and Academic Support***

Fitzwilliam has a great structure to support you adapting to a new culture and living on your own. These are described in the Fitzwilliam Freshers' Guide and in the CUSU guide. In addition, I am always available to help you adjust to Cambridge in any way, as your international officer.

The Cambridge Language Centre offers help in English as a Second Language (ESL), information can be found <http://www.langcen.cam.ac.uk/lc/index.html>. In addition, CUSU has materials for academic writing and ESL at <http://www.international.cusu.cam.ac.uk/english/archives.html>. *If you would like to be paired with a native English speaker to help you improve your English and check your writing e.g in emails, please contact me at [jcr.international@fitz.cam.ac.uk](mailto:jcr.international@fitz.cam.ac.uk).*

## ***Mobile Phone***

You may find it useful to get a UK SIM card. These are often available in airports and local newsagents, and can be topped up as you go. You are unlikely to need a large data plan because of "eduroam", the university wifi network, which is available in most places. *I personally would recommend Three for their cheap pay-as-you-go if you are a*

*light user, and Lebara Mobile claims to have cheap international calls, although I have never tried them. I don't recommend a contract unless you get a new phone with it.*

## **Banks**

Book an appointment with your bank of interest before you arrive – it will be less stressful that way. *Make sure to check the perks of each account, such as student overdrafts international transfer fees (HSBC and Barclays don't charge for currency transfers below £100). A full comparison was put together in 2016 here:*

## **Bicycles**

"The lock should be worth as much as the bike" - Cambridge wisdom.

You should invest in a solid D-lock, and also a chain for your front wheel if your D-lock doesn't fit. You'll also need a helmet and bike lights – bike lights are a legal requirement. *Always lock your bike! You can register your bike with the police, and it is covered in the Fitz Insurance.*

Cycling on the left may be strange at first, but you will get used to it and there are good cycle paths around town. However, the roads around Fitz can get busy so *practice on near-empty roads first if you are not confident!*

## **Cultural References**

Sarah Anne [paraphrased]:

When in conversation, I asked a British student to explain who Stephen Hawking was. "You don't know who *Stephen Hawking* is?" she gawked. She later explained herself: she thought everyone would have heard his name in science class.

Although he is an important physicist, and a Cambridge professor, his name had never really popped up before Cambridge.

If you come from a different culture, these discoveries are part of the move. Don't worry too much about it, you'll learn as you go, and people will always be happy to explain their favourite cultural joke!