Welcome

From the Welfare & Rights Officer (and Acting President)

Welcome to the University of Cambridge, and to the Graduate Union!

I hope that your time here will be fulfilling and valuable, and the Graduate Union is here to try and facilitate this. This handbook is here to assist you in your transition to Cambridge, acting as a resource for you to access the enriching experiences available at this University as soon as possible!

But first, let me introduce you to the GU. Based at 17 Mill Lane, we offer student-led support, feature a shop, where you can find services including printing, binding, stationery and gowns, and provide an accessible social and meeting space, host events including yoga and parent/toddler coffee mornings. In partnership with CUSU, of which you are also a member, we provide the Students’ Unions’ Advice Service, which delivers confidential, non-judgmental, non-directive information and advice to anyone who seeks it.

We are elected to our positions, and are a democratic organisation. We advocate for you and your opinions to the University, on topics ranging from inclusion of partners, to national student campaigns. We sit on numerous University committees, at which it is up to us to raise the issues that are important to any identities within our membership. Please do get involved with the Grad Union, whether that’s through our representational and campaigning activities, by attending our events, or simply getting your dissertation bound or picking up a newspaper from our lounge!

Have a fantastic time, and I hope to see you soon!

Poppy
Acting President

About the role

CUSU and the GU share a Welfare Officer who works full-time in a sabbatical position to represent and campaign across the University on issues related to student welfare, and to be available to support any students who need it. I am an Advice Officer within the Students’ Unions’ Advice Service, which means that I am trained to provide advice, guidance, and support on personal and academic issues.

All Students’ Unions’ Advice Service information is confidential within the Service. We offer expertise relating to the University’s structures, standards and systems, as well as non-judgemental, non-directive support, and information about all matters of welfare including sexual health, mental health, disability, culture shock, homesickness, childcare and so on. No issue is too big or too small, and your concerns will always be taken seriously.

Outside of supporting students through SUAS, I help empower students with the means to achieve positive change, geared towards improving the student experience at Cambridge. This can include a lot of things, from campaigning, to speaking out on committees, to training MCR Officers and other support officers.

Remember, the Welfare and Rights Officer is elected in Lent Term, and begins their sabbatical year in July. If you are interested in running for the position, look out for further details and get in touch with any questions you may have!
...and a very warm welcome

From the Vice-Chancellor

I am delighted to welcome you to the University of Cambridge. Graduate students are a vital and valued part of this wonderful, transformative place. Cambridge provides a unique and thrilling environment for research and for advanced study, and fosters both academic achievement and personal development in our students.

I encourage you to take advantage of Cambridge’s rich academic community – through involvement in your Colleges, the many University societies, and by becoming an active member of the Graduate Union. This handbook is an excellent resource for information about the Graduate Union and contains helpful tips to better equip you to enjoy your time here.

I wish you all the best for your studies at Cambridge, and hope to meet as many of you as I can.

Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz FRS
Vice-Chancellor of the University
The Graduate Union offers a range of services to students from its city centre location. Normal opening hours are 9.30am-1pm and 2pm-4.30pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Any changes to these times are publicised on the GU website.

**Binding**
We offer hard case binding, suitable for PhD submission and to University Library specifications, from an easily accessible location. Orders can be placed at and collected from the GU, with the binding carried out off-site by JS Wilson and Son, and if orders are with us by 10am, they will be returned in two working days. The company can also offer cloth or channel binding.

Soft binding is also available, using plastic comb binding. This can be self-service, or the binding can be done for you while you wait.

**Printing and Copying**
We offer affordable black and white or colour printing and copying, as well as laminating. Have a look at the GU website for information on prices.

**Shop**
We sell a range of cost-effective, quality stationery supplies, including branded Cambridge notebooks, academic diaries and folders, as well as postcards. Come by the GU to have a look at our range.

**Gown sale/hire**
We hire out and sell both BA and MA gowns - this can be useful for one-off events such as matriculation or graduation. We also buy graduate gowns that are in good condition from students - great if you are leaving Cambridge and have no space to store your gown!

For the first time, the two university Students’ Unions (CUSU- Cambridge University Students’ Union, and the GU) are based in the same building!

This means that, as a graduate student, you can find both unions (and of course, you are a member of both) under one roof. Students will be able to access the shops and services of both unions, as well as room booking facilities, a lounge space, and the opportunity to talk to elected officers. Do drop by 17 Mill Lane next time you are in the town centre!

Entrance is via the main entrance to 17 Mill Lane - found between Mill Lane and Silver Street. There is currently some construction work going on at the usual entrance. Once this is complete, the entrance will be just off Silver Street, and will contain a fully accessible lift.

For the time being, platform lift and ramp access is available at the side of the building, via the car park of the 16a Mill Lane site - the entrance to which is opposite the Mill Lane lecture rooms.
The Students’ Unions’ Advice Service offers free, confidential and independent advice, information, support and representation to all Cambridge University students.

We can discuss your concerns with you whatever the issue. We can help you explore your options and provide support in resolving matters. We can also represent you within your college or the University.

You can come to the Students’ Unions’ Advice Service with any issue, whether it’s the first time you have a question or as a last resort. If we can’t help you directly, we will find someone who can.

**Students often come for advice on:**
- Academic-related issues
- Homesickness and culture shock
- Disciplinary issues
- Bullying/harassment
- Mental health issues
- Welfare concerns
- Intermission
- University and college complaints

Our friendly Advice team includes two full-time staff members and three sabbatical officers. **If we can’t help you directly, we will find someone who can.**

**Appointments**

The Students’ Unions building is accessible to disabled students. Please let us know if you have any additional requirements, so that we can ensure that these are in place for your visit. Support can be provided in person, by phone/skype or via e-mail.

**Contact us**

The Students’ Unions
17 Mill Lane
Cambridge
CB2 1RX

Monday - Friday
9am - 5pm, all year round

t: 01223 746999
e: advice@studentadvice.cam.ac.uk
www.studentadvice.cam.ac.uk
As well as the two sabbatical officers, the work of the Graduate Union is also carried out by the Executive Committee. This comprises a team of volunteers who commit time to serving and working on behalf of graduate students.

The current committee’s term of office will expire in November 2015 - so keep an eye open for information about the elections on the GU website, facebook page, and in the GU e-mail bulletin. If you are interested in standing for one of the positions below, get in touch with us, at president@gradunion.cam.ac.uk. Have a look at the different roles, and what the priorities of the committee members over the last year have been.

International Officers

Simon Engelke
Grown up in Germany and as a student in the Netherlands and USA, I know what it means to start in a new country and environment. This year I started at the EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) in Graphene Technology and I am a student at Christ’s College. During my undergraduate in the Netherlands I was active in student representation and gained valuable experience which I am hoping to apply during my time at the Graduate Union. I am looking forward to connect with the truly international graduate student body and the various international societies and to help making Cambridge a wonderful experience.

Wei Liu
Wei Liu is a Ph.D student from Churchill College, and has rich experience with organising and managing student activities and events. She has previously been the president of a University Student Union and played leading roles in many international activities, such as chair of international Ph.D conference and team leader in a student world forum. She was a Visiting Fellow at Harvard University and engaged in several international activities abroad, and can speak Chinese, English and German. Together with Simon and Viktor, she aims to reinforce the connection among GU, university student societies and those in other universities, hoping to build a vivid international community at Cambridge.

Victor Stoll
Viktor has years of experience as an international expat in Turkey, Germany and the UK, and is eager to assist other international postgraduates in settling into their new “home-away-from-home”. A doctoral candidate in the Faculty of History and resident of Hughes Hall, Viktor has prioritised increasing postgraduate student access to international cultural events and support services. Moreover, as a North American, Viktor hopes to bring a unique perspective and voice to the Graduate Union from across the "pond".
**Hi, I’m Katharina**

I am serving on the GU Executive Committee as Communications Officer since Michaelmas term 2014. I am part of the lovely Newnham College and just completed my first year as PhD student at the Institute for Manufacturing. My PhD is concerned with service innovations that are jointly created by customers and firms in physical and virtual living labs.

**About the role**

I am extremely passionate about student welfare and representation. In the role of Communications Officer, I am contributing to the excellent reputation and smooth running of the Graduate Union by providing relevant, up-to-date information that is accessible to all students. Also, I partner with external stakeholder to secure sponsorships, and raise the visibility of the Graduate Union through publicity. Especially at the University of Cambridge, communication across colleges is vital to give all graduate students access to the information and services they need in order to strive and enjoy their time here in Cambridge. Therefore, I would like to put forward some social media pages and groups that a Cambridge graduate should know about:

**University of Cambridge Graduate Union**
https://www.facebook.com/GraduateUnion

Here you can find our latest event updates, announcements, photos, information on GU services and much more.

**Cambridge Formals Marketplace**

This group allows you to exchange and negotiate your tickets to formal dinners at another beautiful college. Many students aim to dine at least once at all Cambridge colleges before graduating.

**Cambridge Second Hand Market**
https://www.facebook.com/groups/420482108058147/

You may have seen a lot of bicycles around. ‘Cambridge Second Hand Market’ allows you to purchase one from a fellow student. Electric blanket, toaster or hairdryer needed? You may find it here.

**Overheard at Cambridge**
https://www.facebook.com/groups/57139448815/

Last but not least, you may want to have a good laugh!

If you have any questions about the GU, my role as Communications Officer or experience as PhD student feel free to get in contact with me at communications@gradunion.cam.ac.uk
As an international student, you automatically become a member of the (iCUSU), an autonomous campaign that is affiliated with CUSU.

iCUSU is there to provide support from students for students, and has an exciting Fresher’s Week events timetable open to both undergraduates and graduates.

See their facebook page for more details: https://www.facebook.com/iCUSU
http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/internationalstudents/orientation/

Families Officer

Hi, I’m Simon
The GU Families Officer is here to ensure that you and your family feel at home in Cambridge. A number of graduate students bring their families to Cambridge every year, and the GU wants to be able to help you feel welcome within the university and within the town.

Your family is part of the GU. The Graduate Union hosts a weekly coffee morning for student parents, every Friday between 10.30 and 12.30 at the University Centre. Refreshments and toys are provided and are free for members. A large number of student parents turn up to these events, and it is a great way to meet new people- you can meet like-minded parents over a cup of tea, while the kids can play with others.

The GU also organizes various events for families from time to time. Keep an eye on our website and facebook page for information, or if you have any queries, get in touch with our Families Officer at families@gradunion.cam.ac.uk

At the University level, the Childcare Office provides information on various aspects of childcare. It contains information on University and College provision for student parents, advice on childcare for pre-school children (0–5 years) and school age children (4+ years), help with finding appropriate accommodation and health care as well as suggestions for places to visit and activities for children in the area. The guide is not exhaustive, but the information is useful as a basic guide to the facilities, services and help available for parents in the city and within the University. You can contact them regarding advice about the central University grants available to help meet the costs of childcare.

The Childcare office also sends out a Student Parent Newsletter. You can subscribe to the newsletter by emailing childcare@admin.cam.ac.uk

You can contact the Childcare office through their website, and they are based at 25 Trumpington Street, Cambridge, CB2 1QA. T: 01223 332249. www.childcare.admin.cam.ac.uk

The University Admissions Office has also put together some information about bringing your family to Cambridge. http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/gradadmissions/prospec/studying/family/
Environmental Officer

The Environmental Officer ensures the sustainability of the GU’s work, and liaises with College Green Officers to promote environmental objectives.

Hi, I’m Shreyashi

I have been serving on the Graduate Union committee as an Environmental Officer since November 2014. I am studying for my MPhil in Development Studies at Girton College.

As an Environmental Officer, my priorities for 2014-2015 were to ensure reduction of energy consumption, recycling as well as arrange interaction between environmental officers and other environmental enthusiasts from all colleges. This year we also organised a Photography competition on the theme of ‘Green Cambridge Mission’ that encouraged graduate and post-doctoral students to come up with imaginative interpretations about environment. The winning entries were displayed at a Photography Exhibition organised by the GU.

The GU Environmental Officer is also a student representative at the Environmental Sustainability Strategy Committee (ESSC) that provides strategic oversight of the University’s commitment to environmental sustainability. The GU Environment Office also worked closely with the Environment and Energy team by hosting a lecture and getting involved with the Green Impact programme.

I would strongly encourage you all to share your ideas for this year at environmental@gradunion.cam.ac.uk. We look forward to your active participation.

GU Treasurer

Khaldoon Bushnaq

The GU treasurer is responsible, alongside the trustee board, for administering the finances of the GU. They will assist with the preparation and auditing of the annual budget and accounts, reporting back to Council on progress made and key decisions taken.

Khaldoon is a member of Churchill College and moved to Cambridge in September 2014 to read for an MBA degree at Judge Business School.

He has previously worked with a number of non-profit organisations such as Carleton University Students’ Association in Ottawa, Canada as an elected Internal Affairs Executive. Khaldoon also served as a board member and client-liason officer with the Canadian Red Cross. He has worked in 5 different continents and brought a wealth of experience to the 2014-15 Executive Committee.
**GU Welfare Officer**

**Hi, I’m Ivory**

I am a student at Wolfson College who is studying an MPhil in The History and Philosophy or Science.

I ran for welfare officer because I see issues associated with welfare as being a key challenge that all students face, whether this is due to stress about finances, the pressure of workloads or pure loneliness and isolation. One key way to feelings of well-being is through exercise and I would like to see all colleges offering their students a variety of forms of exercise class for a very minimal price. In addition to this I would like to see a variety of activities aimed at including international students who are feeling isolated.

**Academic Affairs Officer**

The Academic Affairs Officer is responsible for events, projects and issues that relate to the academic interests of the GU’s members.

The Academic Affairs officer over the past year has been Kate Crowhurst, who is an MPhil student studying Education and Politics (PDDE) at Newnham College. Hailing from Melbourne, Australia her priorities have been to:

- provide more opportunities for students to share their research including the introduction of the 3 minute thesis competition
- highlight the diverse University services available to Grads
- increase the effectiveness of student feedback on course delivery so that needed changes can be made with an immediate impact

The Three Minute Thesis competition, running for the first time this year, was a huge success—it was won by Henrike Resemann, who beat 11 finalists to the prize.

The final is available to watch on youtube, for all those interested: [https://youtu.be/hmeJ0v8gP6c](https://youtu.be/hmeJ0v8gP6c)
The Events Officers are tasked with organizing social events throughout the year, and helping the GU fulfil one of its aims which is contributing to the social wellbeing of its members.

**Hi, I’m Claire**

I have recently moved to Cambridge from Canberra, Australia, where I completed my undergraduate degree at the Australian National University.

I am a member of Clare Hall and am working towards an MPhil in Social and Developmental Psychology. As part of a team of Events Officers, I look forward to organising a wide range of exciting events, from parties to movie nights to networking evenings. As an International student, new to Cambridge, I am particularly interested in organising events that will appeal to a diverse range of people, ensuring all Graduate students feel welcome and supported.

**Hi, I’m Tando**

I’m an Australian/Zimbabwean completing a MPhil in Innovation, Strategy & Organisation (ISO) at The Judge Business School. In this programme I am researching various strategies to assist socially innovative ventures in accessing investors and private equity. Previously I worked in marketing and advertising, and have extensive event management experience. Over the next few terms we will be throwing events that create memories you can’t forget!

The Women’s Officer is responsible for ensuring that the GU supports the rights and welfare of female students.

**Hi, I’m Catherine**

I’m from the Netherlands and I’m at Magdalene College. I did an undergraduate degree in physics and astrophysics at the University of Amsterdam and I am doing part III maths here in Cambridge this year. I ran for the Graduate Union executive committee because I wanted to organise all kinds of events for women, ensure there is enough support for female graduate students and give the women in the graduate community a voice.

Have a look at the work of the CUSU Women’s campaign too!
http://www.facebook.com/CUSUWomen
In your college

Tutor

In spite of the name, your tutor provides pastoral support on non-academic matters. Your Graduate Tutor will be responsible for offering pastoral support, and this could be to do with a range of issues, including finance, accommodation, or other health and wellbeing issues. The tutorial system varies from college to college but there will always be tutorial support- and you can usually approach the Senior Tutor or any other tutor at the college for assistance.

College Nurse

Most colleges have a nurse who runs a surgery at set times each week within the college. You can talk to your nurse about any problem (including physical and mental health), and the college nurse can be a great source of continuing support. They will be able to help you register with a GP and signpost you to other sources of help if you need it.

College Chaplain/Dean/Advisor

Most colleges have a Chaplain, or equivalent. The chaplain offers pastoral and spiritual support, a listening ear and guidance for all students on any issue, regardless of your religious affiliation or belief/non-belief.

College Welfare Officer

Your college will have its own students’ union - and most colleges have one for undergraduates and one for graduate students. Your MCR (Middle Combination Room) has a Welfare Officer who will be able to listen to any problems you have, provide support, and direct you to other appropriate sources of help. Your MCR may also have committee positions such as Womens’, LGBT+ or Equality and Diversity Officers who may also be able to provide support.
In addition to the Students’ Unions’ own Advice Service, there are a number of places you can turn for support around the university. They all have their own website, so you can find out more about what they do and how you can access them.

**University Counselling Service**

The University Counselling Service provides free, confidential counselling to all students. Counsellors are experienced in helping students at Cambridge, and are offer non-judgemental support. You can make an appointment by filling in the form on their website, and they will be in touch.

The Counselling Service also offers a range of group sessions and workshops, aimed at helping students manage a range of issues. There is a long-term group for graduate students, as well as short courses on areas such as self-esteem and learning to be assertive.

[www.counselling.cam.ac.uk](http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk)

**Disability Resource Centre**

The DRC provides information and advice on for disabled students. They can assist with assessment for dyslexia, guidance on assessments for disabilities, help with funding applications, and the provision of specialist equipment and human support (eg note-taker or mentor. They help disabled students get the most from their studies by ensuring that everything is in place in order to make academic life accessible. The DRC also administers several bursaries and publishes an online guide containing practical access information to most University buildings.

[http://www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk](http://www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk)

**University Accommodation Service**

The Accommodation Service can help students find accommodation across Cambridge. It has a directory of available properties, as well as advice and recommendations for those looking for short or long term accommodation.

[www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/](http://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/)

**University Careers Service**

The Careers Service can provide guidance and support as you apply for jobs, such as interview practice and CV-writing tips, as well as maintaining a list of current vacancies.

[www.careers.cam.ac.uk/](http://www.careers.cam.ac.uk/)

**International Students’ Team**

The International Students Team offers guidance to students who have been accepted to Cambridge or who are currently in residence, as well as providing inductions and orientation information for new students.

[www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/](http://www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/)

**University Language Centre**

The Language Centre supports the teaching of languages across the university. It offers its own language programmes, as well as Academic Development and Training for International Students (ADTIS).

[www.langcen.cam.ac.uk/lc/index.html](http://www.langcen.cam.ac.uk/lc/index.html)
How the Graduate Union is Run

The GU is a Students’ Union. It is a democratic, student-led organisation, as well as being a charity. This means that there are three main aspects to how it is governed and run.

**GU Council**

Council is the main democratic decision-making forum of the GU, and is where student input is at its strongest. Representatives from all college MCRs (usually the President, Vice-President or External Officer) and a graduate representative from each faculty have the opportunity to attend Council, where they will receive reports from the GU Officers, and can ask questions about the union’s work. These representatives also have a vote at Council, and can use that vote to influence the GU’s policy and its activities. Any graduate student at the university is invited to attend Council and ask questions, even if they do not have a vote.

Student trustees are appointed at the start of each academic year - so if you are a graduate student and expect to remain as such for the next year (the length of a term in office for a student trustee), keep an eye out for information about being a trustee. It is great experience, and a meaningful way in which you can contribute to the lives of students at Cambridge.

**GU Trustee Board**

The GU is an independent charity, and like all charities, its trustee board exists in order to ensure that the GU is accountable, operates within relevant legal and regulatory frameworks, and to ensure it is achieving its aims. The board comprises the President and Welfare Officer (as two sabbatical officer trustees), two external trustees, and an alumnus trustee, and two student trustees drawn from the GU’s members.

**GU Constitution**

The constitution is the governing document of the GU, setting out the rules in accordance of which it should be run. It is available to view on the GU website


**Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee carries out the day to day activities of the GU - by organizing events and campaigns.
Some Useful Links

Below are some of the main sources of support and guidance that are on offer to Cambridge students. If you would like to discuss any of these resources further, please do contact the Student Advice Service, who will help you explore what’s on offer.

**Academic**

University Student Information  
www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk

University Guidance on Good Academic Practice  
www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism

Code of Practice for Graduate Research Degrees  
www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/files/gradcoprevised_for_15_16_final.pdf

Cambridge Colleges – a guide for graduate students  
www.graduate.study.cam.ac.uk/colleges

Researcher Development Programme – training and development for Cambridge researchers, including the management of research projects and management of research time. Much of this provision is available to all research students and postdoctoral researchers in Cambridge, but there is also specific courses for PhD students (including those at particular stages of their PhD), and also specifically for postdocs.  
http://www.training.cam.ac.uk/gdp/

**Listening and Support**

Linkline – an anonymous and confidential listening and support service run by students, for students, every night during full term.  
www.linkline.org.uk/

University Counselling Service – provides professional, free, and confidential counselling to all Cambridge students. Counsellors are friendly, non-judgmental and very experienced in issues facing students in Cambridge.  
www.counselling.cam.ac.uk

Samaritans – source of confidential emotional support to people facing difficulty.  
www.samaritans.org/cambridge

Citizen’s Advice Bureau  
www.cambridgescab.org.uk

Students’ Unions’ Advice Service  
www.studentadvice.cam.ac.uk/

**Health**

Addenbrooke’s – the local hospital for Cambridge is Addenbrooke’s Hospital, with an Accident and Emergency department open 24 hours a day.  
www.cuh.org.uk/cms/addenbrookes-hospital

University Dental Service  
www.dental.cam.ac.uk

**Support for Disabled Students**

Disability Resource Centre (DRC) – information and advice on issues such as study skills, disability issues, assistance with funding applications, and liaison with colleges and departments.  
www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/disability

Disabled Students’ Campaign – exists to support and advance the interests of students through advocacy, campaigning, and the sharing of information.  
www.disabled.cusu.cam.ac.uk