

What's it like to study at Oxford and St Anne's as a Muslim student?

St Anne's College is known for its welcoming atmosphere, which includes welcoming students from diverse backgrounds. The college is a short walk from the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OCIS), which offers a hub for Muslim community life as well as prayer facilities. Muslim students may be eligible for the COSARAF Charitable Foundation Scholarship, which supports Muslim students from disadvantaged backgrounds at leading UK universities. In addition, in partnership with the Leg-Up Charity for Kids (LUCK), St Anne's has introduced the Tikvah Scholarships to support Jewish and Israeli undergraduates, including Muslim Israelis, aiming to foster intercultural understanding and provide financial aid.

St Anne's College library holds a strong collection of books on Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, making it a valuable resource for students in related fields — and the College welcomes Muslim students to connect with welfare support and Diversity Points of Contact for advice and guidance.

This FAQ provides a wider overview of Muslim life in Oxford for prospective students. It covers daily life, safety, food, prayer, and community, so you can get a realistic picture of what to expect.

1. What is daily Muslim life like as a student?

- Active and welcoming community.
 - o The Oxford University Islamic Society (ISoc) is student-run, with regular events including Friday prayers, study circles, social activities, and iftar gatherings during Ramadan.
 - o Festivals such as Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are marked with communal prayers and celebrations.
 - o The Muslim student community is diverse, including British, Middle Eastern, African, Asian, and international students.
 - o Many students balance religious observance with full academic life, and the community is supportive of varying levels of practice.

2. Is it safe to be openly Muslim at Oxford?

- Yes, generally very safe.
 - o Oxford is a welcoming city, and Muslim students are visible and active in university life.
 - o The University has clear policies against Islamophobia and discrimination.
 - o Incidents are rare, but when they occur, they are taken seriously by both the University and the local community.
 - o Students are encouraged to report any concerns to ISoc or college welfare officers.

3. How do prospective students get in touch with the Muslim community?

- The best first contact is the Oxford University Islamic Society (ISoc):
president@oxisoc.org.uk
- The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OCIS) also welcomes student members and visitors: enquiries@oxcis.ac.uk
- The Diversity Point of Contact for Muslim students at St Anne's College can also help you make connections with other Muslim students: samina.khan@admin.ox.ac.uk

4. Are there resources for Muslim students during Ramadan and exam times?

- Yes.
 - o Colleges and the University make efforts to accommodate religious observance, including rescheduling exams if they clash with Eid.
 - o ISoc and OCIS provide resources during Ramadan, including daily iftar gatherings and arrangements for tarawih prayers.
 - o Many Muslim students choose to remain in Oxford during Ramadan, where communal provision is strong.

5. What about daily prayers?

- Possible, with support.
 - o The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OCIS) has a prayer hall and holds Friday Jumu'ah prayers.
 - o Many colleges, including St Anne's, provide prayer rooms or spaces that can be booked for daily use.
 - o ISoc also helps students find places to pray near their colleges.

6. Is halal food available in Oxford?

- Yes, with a good range of options.
 - o Several restaurants and takeaways in Oxford serve halal food, and supermarkets (Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda) stock halal meat and products.
 - o Halal butchers can be found in Oxford and nearby areas.
 - o ISoc often organizes communal meals, especially during Ramadan.
 - o College dining halls usually provide halal or vegetarian/vegan options on request.

7. Are there mosques in Oxford?

- Yes.
 - o Central Oxford Mosque (Manzil Way): The main mosque in Oxford, offering daily prayers, Jumu'ah, and services during Ramadan and Eid.
 - o Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OCIS): Hosts prayers, lectures, and community events.
 - o Many students attend Jumu'ah either at the mosque or OCIS, both within walking distance or a short bus ride from St Anne's College.

8. Is there an Islamic centre in Oxford?

- Yes.
 - o The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OCIS), located on Marston Road, is a major

academic and cultural hub. It combines scholarly resources with prayer facilities and events for the wider community.