

Personal Safety

Oxford is generally a safe place to live and work. It is no more dangerous than any other similarly sized city in the UK. However, you should take care of your personal safety when in Oxford, especially if you are out after dark, if you are tired, or have been drinking alcohol:

In general...

- Always carry enough change and/or a telephone card to make a call or to get a taxi (even if you have a mobile)
- Stay safe and alert, don't listen to iPods or personal stereos or have long conversations on mobile phones
 - When using a public phone, stand facing outwards, so that you can see what's going on around you.
- Be aware of others around you at cash point machines and try not to use them at night or in poorly lit areas.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash with you when you are out.
- If you cycle, ensure that you have taken adequate safety precautions, including wearing a helmet, investing in a decent lock, and ensuring that lights are fitted and working (you can be fined for cycling without lights after dark). It is illegal to cycle when under the influence.

Walking at night...

- Avoid taking shortcuts for example through badly lit places such as parks or alleyways
- Walk on the pavement, facing oncoming traffic, so that you are visible
- Be alert and brief when using a mobile phone, and try to conceal it when not in use
- Carry an attack alarm
 - If you think you are being followed, cross the street (more than once if necessary), and if you are still unhappy move as quickly as possible to a public area, such as a restaurant, bar or late opening store, and telephone for help.
- Carry your bag close to you with the clasp facing inwards or strap it over your shoulder. Use a bag that has a zip or properly closes. Keep the bag closed when walking home.
- Shout and scream as loud as you can if you're being attacked, are threatened, or at risk of being attacked. This will alert people who may be able to help. It is also likely to cause the offender to run off. Using transport at night...
- Keep the number of a taxi company that you know handy - never use an unlicensed company.
- Confirm the driver's details when they arrive - is it the taxi you ordered?
- Make sure the taxi driver has a photo ID and the vehicle has a licence displayed on the inside and outside of the vehicle with Oxford City Crest on.
- Always sit in the back of the vehicle and carry your mobile phone in your hand so it is easily accessible

Arriving home...

- Make sure no strangers follow you when you enter College/HBAC
- Call the Lodge if you suspect there is a stranger on the premises

On a night out...

Know your limit

- Make sure you have something to eat before a night out – never drink alcohol on an empty stomach.
- Decide in advance how much you are going to drink and stick to your limit. Only take enough money for the drinks limit you have set and the cost of getting home.
- Drink water regularly before, during and after a night out. Alternate alcoholic drinks with soft drinks or water, and use mixers to dilute your drinks.
- Avoid 'rounds' – they can encourage you to drink more than you want to. Keep an eye on your drink
- Both men and women are at risk of having their drink 'spiked' (this is when a drug or extra alcohol is added to your drink without your knowledge).
- Don't accept drinks from strangers and never leave your drink unattended.
- Make sure you see a member of bar staff open / pour your drink.
- If you feel ill or are worried about drink spiking, inform a friend that you trust and a member of staff at the venue.

Talk to FRANK

- You are strongly advised to avoid risking your health by taking drugs (both those that are illegal as well as 'legal highs').
- If you take drugs on a night out tell a friend what you have taken and ensure you do not get split up from your group.
- Never mix drugs – there is no way to predict how they'll react together (this includes alcohol and prescribed medication). If you do take more than one drug, remember that the effects are cumulative and can mount up over time.
- For support and advice on drugs, visit Talk to FRANK <http://www.talktofrank.com/>