

Did you know?



Freshers' Fair

It's the start of the university year in October and that means it's Fresher's Week – and there is sure to be a Freshers' fair.

Universities are topped and tailed by two important events – the ceremony at the end of the year for students who have successfully completed their degrees – the graduation ceremony – and the first week of term for new students: Freshers' Week.

Fresher's Week is a heady cocktail of events planned to help new students, the 'freshers' who are often living away from home for the first time, make friends and generally settle down into the place that will be their home for the next three years. Of course there are plenty of parties and lots of drinking is involved in the round of events on offer, but another staple of Freshers' Week is the Freshers' fair.

Freshers' fair is the place where student societies and associations peddle their wares. While most universities have between 200 and 300 societies, Cambridge University has more than 700, ranging from the traditional Mountaineering Society and Chess Club to the more esoteric Mindfulness Society and Tiddlywinks Club. Many cultures, religions, political groups and nationalities have their own society – and most sports and leisure activities are also represented.

Birmingham University has over 250 societies including not only a Film Society but a Bad Film Society; and there is also a Harry Potter Society. If you join the Art Society at Lancaster University (for the princely sum of £6 per term) you can express your artistic creativity for two hours every week and be guaranteed free cake! Fancy something more challenging? Then what about the Wilderness and Emergency Medicine Society.

At Edinburgh – with more than 250 societies to choose from – you could do worse than join the Chocolate Society (ChocSoc) or the Reeling Club, where you learn to dance the dashes and turns that make Scottish dancing so much fun. The Wine Society, which charges £12 for membership, has a list of wine tastings, masterclasses, blind tasting competitions and wine crawls.

Bildnachweis: © Shutterstock (Thinglass), New York

Did you know?

Whatever their predilections, students will find a society that suits them and their pocket. And what about the other events in Fresher's Week? It's an opportunity to get to know the other students in the hall of residence, register at the university itself so students can get their student loan, meet tutors, have a look around the department, have a guided tour of the library – and of course attend a few Freshers' parties.

Have a look at this clip from Oxford University's Freshers' fair in 2014 to get an idea <https://ousu.org/freshersfair/>

If you would like to use Freshers' Fair in your lesson, then we have provided you with an activity at B1 level:

Teacher's notes

Freshers' Fair (Level B1 and above, 15+ minutes)

- Make a copy of Freshers' fair, one for each student.
- On the board write *Freshers' fair* and ask students what they think this means.
- Explain that freshers are new students at university. One week before the university term starts there are events for the new students including *Freshers' fair* where all the university societies are presented. Most universities have more than 250 societies – Cambridge has more than 700.
- Ask students to think of some examples of societies. Examples: Rugby society, Catholic society, Maths society, English society, Labour society.
- Hand out the **Worksheet**, one to each student.
- Explain that there are seven descriptions of different university societies. Students should match the name of the society with the correct description.
- Go round and help with any unknown vocabulary.
- Check answers together in class.
- Key: 1) Mountaineering Society, 2) Chess Society, 3) Harry Potter Society 4) Film Society 5) French Society 6) Orchestral Society 7) Drama society - Not used: History society.
- In pairs students discuss which societies they would like/not like to join.

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Worksheet

Freshers' Fair

Write the name of the correct student society next to each description. There is one extra society.

Chess Society **Drama Society** **French Society** **Film Society**

Orchestral Society **Harry Potter Society**

History Society **Mountaineering Society**

1) _____ Every second weekend we go on trips to the hills and walk between 20 and 30 km each day. We also love camping. Why not come along and join in!

2) _____ Checkmate! Bring a board and pieces and you can play with us. We welcome experts and beginners: everyone is welcome!

3) _____ Love *The Goblet of Fire*? Excited by *The Philosopher's Stone*? Fan of Hermione Granger? Then come along to our Thursday night meetings and meet other crazy fans!

4) _____ Want to find out more about the movies? Then come along to watch a range of cinematic events twice a week on Monday and Friday.

5) _____ *Bonjour!* Even if you are not studying French, then you are very welcome in our society! We like to talk the language and enjoy French films and French-themed evenings.

6) _____ Do you play the violin? The tuba? The piano? Then why not come along and join us? We rehearse twice a week, on Tuesday and Thursday. We have three big performances every year and would love you to be a part of a great society.

7) _____ Have you always wanted to act? Think you are the new Benedict Cumberbatch or the young Judi Dench? Then come and join us and perform! This term's production:
A Midsummer Night's Dream

Talk to your partner. Which society would you like/not like to join? Why?