April 2017

Dear academicadmin,

Congratulations on receiving an offer from the University of Oxford. Whether your offer is unconditional or conditional at this stage, it is a real achievement to be offered a place to study here. The University is a diverse community of students and academics united in a commitment to education and research; we are proud of our international reputation for excellence in teaching and learning.

This is the first in a series of monthly newsletters which will include information about funding and scholarships, welfare and support, and advice to help you make the most of the wide range of opportunities available at Oxford.

We wish you every success with your studies in the coming months.

Best wishes,

Nadia Pollini
Director of Graduate Admission

Professor Sarah Whatmore
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Your University contract

Your offer letter outlines any conditions you need to satisfy, any actions you need to take and the associated deadlines, and provides a link to the University contract.
webpage on the Oxford Students website which contains three documents you will need to read:

- University Terms and Conditions
- University Student Handbook: Applicant edition for entry 2017/18
- Course Information sheet – as relevant to your course.

Your offer letter constitutes your formal offer of a place at the University of Oxford. If you accept the offer you will enter into a contract with the University.

### University Student Handbook

The University Student Handbook (Applicant edition) provides the general information and guidance you may need to help you make the most of the opportunities on offer at Oxford. It also gives you formal notification and explanation of the University’s codes, regulations, policies and procedures. When you arrive at Oxford either your college will give you a copy of the University Student Handbook 2017/18, or you can pick one up from Student Information, in the Examination Schools. The student edition you receive when you become a student will replace this applicant edition. In addition, you may get a Course Handbook from your faculty or department which covers information relevant to your course of study. Some colleges provide a College Handbook.

### The University’s student website

Visit the Oxford Students website before you arrive; it contains lots of information to help you prepare for life at university and to refer to during your studies. If you are unable find what you are looking for, the ‘Ask a Question’ facility will help you in your search.

### Scholarship opportunities

Some applicants may have already heard about the outcome of their scholarship applications. If you have not heard yet, note that decision-making is underway for the majority of graduate scholarships offered by the collegiate University. Most scholarships are awarded by the end of June. You can find out more about scholarships and the relevant dates in the A-Z Scholarship listing of the Fees, Funding and Scholarships search or, for department and college awards, via their respective websites.

The External scholarships webpage has information about major sources of funding provided by external organisations. For information on student loans for graduate study, including UK Master’s Loans, see the Loans webpage. The ‘Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding’ is an external resource listing alternative funding
opportunities. If you are a PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate in Education) student the Department of Education website has information relevant for you.

If you are an international student studying on a Tier 4 visa, you can find information about your financial requirements on the Oxford Students website.

**Managing your finances**

You should make sure that your basic funding provision is in place before the start of the academic year. Taking the time to think about your spending each academic year can make a real difference to your financial situation. Courses usually consist of three eight-week terms, but you may wish to **budget** for spending nine months in Oxford to ensure you can also cover essentials during the holidays. The Living costs webpage provides estimated costs of living in Oxford which should help with budgeting, while external resources, such as the Brightside Student Calculator, are also very useful.

You might not be able to rely on taking on a job while studying. The Skills and work experience webpage of the Oxford Students website provides information on work opportunities as well as the University’s paid work guidelines.

**Work guidance for Tier 4 student visa holders**

If you are studying in the UK on a Tier 4 student visa and want to work during your course, you must make sure that any work is permitted under your visa conditions. It is a criminal offence to do any work outside the conditions of your visa. You can find further information on the Working while studying webpage of the Oxford Students website. This information is only about visa restrictions on working. You will also need to adhere to University guidelines on employment while studying, and ensure any work does not negatively impact on your studies.

**Be aware of phishing scams**

Phishing scams targeting prospective students are very common, so please be mindful whenever you are contacted about finances or asked for your personal details. If you have concerns about a potential scam you may contact the relevant team at the University (eg Student Funding; Student Immigration). To read more about phishing and how to stay safe online, visit the University’s Information Security website or the Student Loans Company website.

**Finding accommodation**

There is a wide range of accommodation options available, both privately and within the University, to suit a variety of needs and living arrangements. Your college will contact you to confirm whether they can offer you accommodation during your studies. If college accommodation is not available, or right for you, the Graduate
Accommodation Office can help find a suitable property for you and, where required, your partner and/or children.

**Welcoming partners and children**

Your college and department will provide information on events at which your family members will be welcome. The [Newcomers’ Club](#) provides a meeting point for partners of newly-arrived students, while the [Student parents webpage](#) contains links on childcare, schools and other useful information.

**Insights into Oxford life**

Find out what Oxford is like by watching students talk about their experiences of studying on the [Wall of Faces](#). There are over 5,500 hours of material on the University’s YouTube and iTunesU channels, including sample lectures, so you can experience teaching at Oxford before you arrive! To find out more about everyday life at Oxford, the [social media hub](#) provides an overview of some of the activity happening on Facebook, Twitter and blogs from across the collegiate University, including on the [Oxford Students Twitter feed](#).

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Student News is produced by [Academic Administration Division Communications](#), Examination Schools, 75-81 High Street, Oxford OX1 4BG.

Note: this email has been sent to conditional and unconditional University of Oxford offer holders. This email does not mean your place is confirmed.

All images Oxford University Images.