Dear Undergraduate Fresher

I am writing to welcome you to Balliol, to inform you of the arrangements for the beginning of term, and to provide you with some information about the College. There are several things required of you – some online and two forms to be returned by post as soon as possible – so I would be grateful if you would read carefully the remainder of this letter and the documents that are on the freshers’ e-guide at http://www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/current-members/freshers-e-guide.

ARRIVAL

As a Fresher you may arrive any time after 10.00 a.m. on Monday 7 October. Students from overseas (non-EEA/Swiss) must also bring their passports with them. The porters on duty in the Lodge will tell you about the reception arrangements. If you are travelling a long distance or if, for some other reason, it would be more much convenient for you to arrive earlier than the Monday, please email me: academic.administrator@balliol.ox.ac.uk giving your reasons and informing us of your plans. Similarly, if you know that you will be unavoidably prevented from reaching Oxford on 7 October, please let me know by 30 September. In either case please email so that your message reaches me not later than 20 September without fail.

If, unavoidably, you arrive late you should first check in at the Porters’ Lodge; second, look in your pigeon hole for any messages for you personally (the pigeon holes for students are in a room right next to the Porters’ Lodge); third, read carefully the notice boards in the Lodge looking especially for information concerning students reading your subject, and fourth, call to see me in Room 3 of the College Office.

ACCOMMODATION, PARKING, KEY COLLECTION & LUGGAGE

Entrance for vehicles is via the Back Gate, which is accessed from St. Giles (almost opposite Martyrs’ Memorial). You will have 30 minutes to unload, and then your car needs to be parked off-site. A 5 mph speed limit applies. When parking your car, please respect our beautiful lawns and do not drive over the edges. Do not park in the main drive as others need entry and access; nor in front of the Hall steps, Buttery and SCR (Senior Common Room) area as this is an Emergency Escape Area. Once parked, could you please report to the Porters’ Lodge to collect your room key and parking permission slip. The Porters’ Lodge telephone number is + 44 (0)1865 277777.

In making your plans for arrival at Balliol you should be aware that the traffic in and around Oxford is heavy and parking in Oxford is notoriously difficult. There is also always a certain amount of congestion at the main gate in Broad Street. However,
second and third year JCR members will be on hand to help with unloading and carrying luggage into College.

You will have been allocated a room in College. Because storage space is at a premium, luggage cannot usually be accepted in advance. In special cases, however, e.g. for overseas students, arrangements can be made, and applications should first be made to the Domestic Bursar. If it is agreed to accept luggage in advance, it should be addressed clearly. The College cannot accept liability for loss or damage to luggage sent in advance and suggests, therefore, that it should be adequately insured.

You are asked to complete by **Sunday 1 September** an online form giving your College accommodation preferences at: [http://www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/current-members/undergraduate-freshers-college-accommodation-preferences-form](http://www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/current-members/undergraduate-freshers-college-accommodation-preferences-form).

Once your room has been allocated, you will be sent and asked to sign a Licence Agreement: you can preview this.

**FRESHERS’ WEEK**

Freshers’ Week for all undergraduates begins on **Monday 7 October**. If your travel arrangements necessitate arriving on Sunday 6 October please bear in mind that rooms will be available AFTER 2.00 pm only. Events for undergraduate Freshers are scheduled over the course of Freshers’ Week. The **JCR Timetable** for Freshers’ Week is available on the e-guide and updates may be posted to the JCR website ([http://www.ballioljcr.org/](http://www.ballioljcr.org/)).

You are also asked to the Freshers’ Reception on **Monday 7 October** in the Old Common Room opposite the Porter’s Lodge on the Broad Street site to collect your arrival envelope containing your welcome pack. **Students from overseas (non-EEA/Swiss) must bring their passport along to the Reception.** You can pick up your welcome pack from 10.00 a.m. onwards. The porters on duty in the Lodge will be able to direct you to the Old Common Room and to Lecture Room 23.

**Formal dress**
You are expected to attend the Freshers’ Dinner which is held in Hall on **Wednesday 9 October** at 7.30 p.m. (and at which the standard dress is smart/suits).

**OVERSEAS STUDENTS**

In case you have yet to prepare for travel to the UK, see: [http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/international_students/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/international_students/).


**OVERSEAS & EUROPEAN STUDENTS: MEET AND GREET SERVICE**

You may wish to avail yourselves of the Meet and Greet Service, which welcomes students arriving in September/October at Heathrow Airport: it will be available from **Saturday 28 September 2013 to Sunday 6 October 2013** from 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. each day. Booking is necessary and details are available at: [http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/meet](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/meet).
STUDENT CONTRACTS & UNIVERSITY REGISTRATION

The University requires you to register before you take up your place. In order to register, it is essential that you first complete and return the student contract, which is sent to you in hard copy. As an undergraduate Fresher, you should please return your completed University and College Student Contracts to the College Office address (at the top of this letter). The Student Contract can be found at: http://www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/college-and-university-student-contracts.

The next mandatory step is online registration: the process is explained in the guide from the University’s Student Self Service (and accessible via the links below). You will receive notification of your Single-Sign-on Credentials by email, so please keep an eye out for this. Non-registration has serious implications for the beginning of your course: you will not, for example, receive a University Card, be able to open an email account, nor be permitted to matriculate as a member of the University. Cards are issued automatically and sent to the College by the University Card Office once the student contract has been received and the online registration process has been completed: your Card will be distributed to you on arrival. Links: http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/ and http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/.

MATRICULATION

Matriculation will be held on Saturday 19 October: this ceremony marks the formal admission to the University and (with exceptions for graduates of Cambridge and Trinity College, Dublin) attendance is compulsory, since no person is permitted to reside as a member of the University unless they have been matriculated. HOME/EU STUDENTS’ FEES MUST HAVE BEEN PAID PRIOR TO MATRICULATION.

DRESS CODES

Matriculation ceremony (formal admission to the University) and University examinations. The required dress for these occasions is known as sub fusc: a dark suit with dark socks, or a dark skirt with black stockings or trousers with dark socks and an optional dark coat; black shoes; plain white collared shirt; a black tie or white bow tie. You are also required to wear a gown and mortar board or soft-cap. It is possible to obtain the headwear, tie and gown on arrival at the College, and academic dress can also be loaned or hired from the following outfitters in Oxford: Shepherd & Woodward and Walters of Oxford at: (http://www.shepherdandwoodward.co.uk/); and the Varsity Shop (http://www.varsityshop.co.uk/).

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COLLEGE ID CARDS

The completion of these ID cards is compulsory and online (follow the link to http://www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/current-members/online-id-card). If you are unable to submit online you may complete paper versions on arrival in Oxford, or request me to send them to your current address prior to arrival.

BEDDING

The College does not supply pillows, blankets/duvets, or linen: please bring your own.
MEALS OPTIONS & DINING BEFORE THE START OF TERM
The College’s catering services are outlined in the e-guide. The online pre-payments are due by Monday of 1st Week.

Dining arrangements in Hall will start in 0th week of term.

MEDICAL ARRANGEMENTS
The e-guide includes information about medical arrangements.

Students are instructed to register with the College Doctors in 19 Beaumont Street, Oxford, by completing and returning to the College Office a registration form and medical questionnaire (enclosed with this pack). The information you give to the doctors will be confidential. (Please note that meetings with the College Doctors and University Counselling Service are scheduled in the Freshers’ Week Timetable.)

MUSIC ROOM
There is a Music Room in which instruments are routinely stored and entry to which is controlled first by virtue of joining the College Music Society and second by signing out the key to the room. You are advised to insure your instruments.

NOTICEBOARDS and EMAILS: IMPORTANT
I would like to emphasise the importance of reading the noticeboards regularly and checking your emails daily. Notices which concern both graduate and undergraduate members, relating to academic affairs and general College arrangements, are posted on the relevant noticeboards in the front Lodge of the College, in the junior members’ post room and the noticeboard at Holywell Manor. It is very important that you consult these noticeboards regularly and read carefully what they say. This is true at all times, but it is especially necessary near the beginning and end of each term when tutorial arrangements are being made. Notes addressed to individuals, both graduates and undergraduates, are placed in the individual pigeon holes and these too should be checked frequently. There are separate pigeon holes for large envelopes, packets, etc.

GENERAL

BANK ACCOUNTS
It is essential that you open a student bank account for use in Oxford. Banks strongly recommend that students enquire at their regular bank whether it is possible to arrange a transfer of their account to an Oxford branch. The College does not endorse promotional material from any organisation and you may open an account at any bank of your choice when you arrive in Oxford. By clicking on: http://www.ox.ac.uk/feesandfunding/prospectiveugrad/finances/bank/ and http://www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/information-for-international-and-european-freshers you can learn about the banking facilities available to incoming students, both UK and international, some of which allow you to apply online for an account. You will find that banks require documentary evidence proving your identity, your correspondence address before and after admission to the College, and confirming your status as a student. Banks do not accept your University Card as proof of identity and students who are not normally resident in the UK will need to have their passport with them. The original offer letter from the Tutor for Undergraduate Admissions is no longer regarded by the banks as proof of your student status, so you should contact me (academic.administrator@balliol.ox.ac.uk) for a letter, giving the name and address of the bank at which you intend to open an account. Students not normally resident in the UK may also be required to provide a copy of a bank statement less than three months old which covers a minimum period of one month, and which must be officially translated into English. Documentary evidence of your address will be
required; banks will accept your battels bill if you are living in College but will require a copy of your tenancy agreement if you are living out.

**BRINGING MONEY INTO THE UK**
You may read about the new regulations on bringing money into the UK at the Student Funding and International Office’s “Before you leave home” pages. These can be found at: [http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/customs/arriving/declaring-cash.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/customs/arriving/declaring-cash.htm).

**INSURING YOUR BELONGINGS**
Insurance, if required, is your own responsibility. [Endsleigh](http://www.endsleigh.co.uk/) are the official insurance service of the National Union of Students and offer a policy for international students.

**COLLEGE PARENTS**
You will soon be hearing from the JCR, who will be emailing you letters from your ‘parents’, general and subject. College parents are students in their second year or above; general parents usually have between 3 and 6 children and, in liaison with the Chaplain, Tutors, the Senior Tutor and other member of staff, help to look after your welfare. Subject parents help to look after the fresher children in their subject and, in liaison with the Tutors and the Senior Tutor, give guidance over academic matters.

**Could you please let me know by 23 August if you do not wish your email address to be passed to the JCR. Letters from your parents will be sent to you by the JCR soon after this date, unless you instruct otherwise.**

I hope you find the information in this letter and all that follows in the E-Guide helpful and not too daunting. It should enable you to settle in to Balliol as quickly as possible. I look forward to meeting you at the beginning of term.

Yours sincerely

*Glynis Price*

Glynis Price
Academic Administrator