



# A Welcome for Postgraduate Students

As you will know, the College has admitted you for your graduate/postgraduate study in Cambridge, subject to you being unconditionally accepted by the Board of Graduate Studies, and meeting the financial conditions of your offer.

We would like to welcome you to Cambridge and to the “Queens’ Family”. We hope that your time in Cambridge will be academically fruitful and that the people that you meet will enrich your lives. We wish you a successful and happy time here.

This is undoubtedly going to be an exceptional year. Covid-19 is creating restrictions that are causing everything we do to be rethought. This will impact on your educational and social life. However, these changes are not without cause: we ask for your help and your inspiration in keeping Queens’ and the University safe, while continuing to seek ways to lead the world in teaching learning and research. **We especially ask you to read and bookmark the University Stay Safe campaign website:**

**<https://www.cam.ac.uk/coronavirus/stay-safe-cambridge-uni>, where new information will be posted.** Given the fluid nature of the global pandemic please check this site regularly.

Queens’ has also developed a Community Agreement and you may already have been sent this. This will be a key component in our efforts to lower the risks of a viral outbreak in Queens’ and the wider University and community. We are requiring you to sign this as a record of your commitment, with us, to make Queens’ a successful place to live and work. You can be instrumental in this and we are relying on you.

The following pages provide you with important information regarding your membership of, and arrival at Queens’ College.

The Tutorial Office is responsible for the administration of postgraduate activities. It is a busy office at the heart of Teaching and Learning in the College. You will get to know individual staff members with special responsibility for Postgraduates and you will have already received communications from them. Their email is [Graduate.office@queens.cam.ac.uk](mailto:Graduate.office@queens.cam.ac.uk). You will also be allocated a College Graduate Tutor.

The Tutors are Fellows of the College, usually in a different subject area to your own and will often be the best first point of contact for you if you need help and advice.

The Faculty or Department to which you are attached will appoint a Supervisor who will be responsible for overseeing and guiding you with your academic work. You should keep in regular contact with your academic advisors and ensure that your study in Cambridge is an exciting and fulfilling experience.

As in other Universities, a person accepting admission to a College thereby accepts an obligation to obey the rules of the College (see [Student Handbook](#)) and of the University, and to pay such fees, dues and charges as the University or the College may lawfully determine. In becoming a member of Queens' College and the University, you must fulfil your academic and financial requirements.

There are now various things that you should do:-

### **Administration**

If you have not already done so, please complete and return to The Graduate Administrator the [FORMS TO COMPLETE AND RETURN](#). I must also ask for the customary deposit of £300 Caution Money (£150 for part time courses), which must be paid before you begin your course (**regardless of whether you intend living in College accommodation or private accommodation**). Caution Money may be used to cover any outstanding debts before graduation. It will otherwise be repaid at the end of your time in Cambridge by a credit on your final College bill. **N.B. We cannot consider you for College accommodation until we have received your Caution Money.** The College Financial Office will email you with details of how to make this payment via the Queens' Payment Portal which you will also use in the future to make payment of your Tuition and Fees invoices.

### **University Card/Photograph**

Please ensure your photograph has been uploaded as part of your original application or your University card will not be ready when you arrive. If you are unable to upload, please send a high-quality passport-style photo, to only include you – no hats, scarves, sunglasses or pets please!

### **Financial Matters**

You will be, or have already been, told by the Board of Graduate Studies (or other University Office) in your conditional offer letter how much financial support you will need for your

course. The amount quoted includes fees and normal living expenses for a single graduate student, (unless otherwise stated). You must also budget for the effects of inflation over the duration of your course. Students from overseas should make allowance for possible changes in currency exchange rates during their course.

**You will receive two invoices as follows:-**

**1. Tuition Fees Invoice** - this covers just your fees for the first year, charged termly. The Fees Invoice for your first year will be sent to your email address in mid/late September and must be paid by early October (details to be found on the invoice). If you do not receive the invoice please contact Fees@Queens.cam.ac.uk. Students who are in arrears will not be allowed to continue their course.

**2. College Bill** - this covers your accommodation (in living in Queens' accommodation) and other living expenses and is emailed to you quarterly. The first College Bill will be sent to you during the first two weeks of term and must be settled without delay. Students must arrange their finances accordingly. The College Bill is fully explained in the [Student Handbook](#).

Fees and College Bills must be settled within 21 days of the start of each term. Failure to pay within this period may result in you being withdrawn from residence (and your course) and you will not be able to continue until the next term that you can pay. **Students who expect money from overseas government agencies, banks, etc, should realise that it can take several months to get hold of this money. It is your responsibility to make arrangements sufficiently far in advance to ensure that your sponsoring body can pay on time.** If, for whatever reason, your sponsoring body does not pay your College or University fees, then you remain personally liable for paying those fees, and if you are unable to do so, you may be required to withdraw from your course.

## **Accommodation**

Queens' normally aims to accommodate all of its single one-year postgraduates; commencing postgraduate students from overseas, are usually given priority when allocating rooms. At the present time, Covid-19 related restrictions have meant that we are not able to use all the rooms that are usually available in the College and thus we cannot presently guarantee accommodation. Students are advised to contact the University Accommodation Service (add contact details) and Letting Agencies in Cambridge. **We are unable to offer suitable accommodation for those with children, and couples accommodation is generally oversubscribed and cannot be guaranteed.** Information

regarding accommodation at Queens' and how to apply can be found by going to the GFI [Accommodation page](#). Queens' does not have accommodation for postgraduates, suitable for quarantine restrictions.

As soon as you have a permanent Cambridge address you should inform the College by updating your **term-time address** via your CamSIS self-service account. Please keep this, as well as your contact details updated at all times.

### **Arrival in Cambridge**

The sooner you can settle into your accommodation the better, but the appropriate date of arrival to take up residence does depend to some extent on your course. In any case you should be settled in to your accommodation and be ready for matriculation on Friday 2 October. **If you will be travelling from outside the UK, you should be prepared to undertake a period of quarantine outside Queens' before this date.**

**All** new students may be required to show their ID documents, but further guidance will be provided in due course. Overseas students studying on a visa will receive an e-mail from the Tutorial Office with instructions on how to upload their immigration documents, prior to starting their course. If they have opted to collect their visa from College, these should be available for collection from the Porters' Lodge as from 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

Graduate Matriculation will take place on Friday 2 October. More information about this and other induction events will follow. In view of Covid-19 restrictions, some events will be virtual and all events will be subject to change, so be sure to keep a watch for updates

You will also have a meeting (virtual or in person) arranged with your College Tutor. Further details of the date and location will be emailed to you in October. You should also check with your department if you are required to be in Cambridge any earlier for any Pre-sessional courses.

**Please note we are unable to accept/store any items ahead of your arrival in Cambridge. Please ensure any items you wish to ship are not due to arrive until after you have moved into your accommodation.**

If you are in main-site accommodation or in Owlstone Croft, your keys and university card will be waiting for you. If you are moving into a college house, you should collect your room key and university card from the main-site College Porters' Lodge (known as the 'plodge'). If you are moving into private accommodation you will need to collect your university card from the same location.

You will have a pigeon hole for mail in the main college Porter's Lodge, and also at Owlstone Croft if you reside there. The main and most important way of communication in Cambridge this year will be via email. Your University card will provide access to the College gates, staircases, University Library, College Library, the Computer Room, Launderette and importantly (subject to Covid-19 restrictions) the Woodville Room (The Postgraduates Common Room, MCR). In this area you will normally find notices for postgraduates as well as newspapers, TV and coffee etc.

### **Staying Safe**

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, College life will be different than usual. With a view to protecting the health and safety of our staff and students and minimising the risk of infection, there will be in place measures regarding social distancing, wearing of masks, and limitations in the way accommodation and other College facilities are used. The College is preparing its own COVID-19 guide, which will take into account the features of our community and buildings, and students will be kept up to date with these plans as they are made. In the meantime, please familiarise yourself with the University's coronavirus information at the following websites:

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) information page](#)
- [#StaySafeCambridgeUni](#)

### **Registering with a doctor (GP)**

**It is essential for full-time students to register with a Cambridge GP upon arrival in Cambridge.** Please see the [NHS website](#) for a list of local surgeries, and once you have registered you will need to inform the College by completing the online [form](#).

### **Council Tax**

Students who live in College accommodation or in accommodation wholly occupied by students will not be liable for Council Tax since the property will be exempt. Any student who chooses to live in accommodation out of College which includes occupants in that accommodation other than students will be liable for a share of the Council Tax levied on that property. If you will be living in private accommodation and require a council tax letter, please complete the following request form, your letter will be emailed to you - [Council Tax Letter Request](#).

## College Nursery

Although the College is unable to offer accommodation for students with children, the College does have a Nursery for pre-school children. It is currently full but is accepting entries for September 2021. If you would like further information, please contact the Nursery Manager directly on [gcdn@wigwamnurseries.co.uk](mailto:gcdn@wigwamnurseries.co.uk)

N.B. There is frequently a waiting list in place, so enquire early!

## Cars in Cambridge

If you are planning to come to Cambridge by car, you should note that the College has only limited facilities for short-term unloading, and no facilities at all for parking beyond the period of unloading. On-street parking (pay & display) is available in Queens' Road and there is a short-stay public car park in Corn Exchange Street (Grand Arcade car park). If you are going to be accommodated in College or in a College House, you should not bring a car to keep in Cambridge. Some parking is available at Owlstone Croft and at Maids Causeway. All students require the permission of the Head Porter to park at these properties. Those without MA Status (i.e. under 24 years of age) also require the permission of the [University Motor Proctor](#) to keep a car in Cambridge. For this, a clear need for a car must be demonstrated.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS FROM OVERSEAS

### Entry Visas

If you require a visa to study in UK and haven't begun this process, it will now be too late for this coming Term. The process may be complicated for some countries and **can take several months**, so it is essential to contact the appropriate UK Embassy or Consulate in your home country well ahead of planning to come to UK. **The Tier 4 (Students) Points Based Immigration legislation has been introduced by the UK Borders Authority. This applies to all students who wish to enter the UK as a full-time student.**

Information relating to student visas can be found on the University's International Student Office website at the following link - [International Student Office](#). **All visa queries should be directed to the International Student Office.**

## **New Termly Reporting Requirements for Tier 4 Students**

Under the new Tier 4 PBI legislation, once you have received your visa and permission to enter the UK as a student, **you will be required to comply with specific legislative reporting requirements. This reporting procedure is a condition of your student visa and failure to comply could result in your visa being revoked and your expulsion from the UK. Termly reporting will not operate for new students in Michaelmas 2020, but is expected to continue from Lent onwards, and you will receive further guidance nearer the time.**

## **Climate**

The English weather is notoriously unpredictable but it is fairly safe to say September/October is usually somewhere between very mild and very cold! It is the start of winter and warm clothing is therefore essential. Our recommendation to students on a small budget is that it would be wise to invest initially in just the essential items - a warm, waterproof coat and warm, waterproof footwear to get you through an English winter at its worst.

## **Arrival in the UK**

Once you arrive in the UK you will need to make your own way to Cambridge. There is a direct coach service to Cambridge from Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and Luton airports (journey time and costs will vary depending upon which airport you arrive at - check with your Travel Agent). If you are coming from central London then the journey is relatively simple (Cambridge is approximately 50 miles from London). You have a choice of train, coach or taxi to get you here. The most direct route to Cambridge is by train from Liverpool Street Railway Station or from Kings Cross Railway Station (approximate journey time 1 hour). The coach runs from Victoria Coach Station a short distance from Victoria Railway Station. The coach is cheaper than the train but the journey time is longer (approximately 2 hours). The coach also brings you into the centre of Cambridge whereas the Cambridge Railway Station is on the edge of the City and you will need a bus or taxi to bring you to College (it would take approximately 20 minutes to walk) or your accommodation.

Should you decide to come all the way from London or any of the airports by taxi - BEWARE! Taxi drivers are able to charge what they like. Don't be afraid to ask how much the journey will cost before you get into the taxi. It is impossible to say how much the journey should cost, but you must expect a price well in excess of £100.00. If you intend to arrive at another airport or at a seaport, ask your Travel Agent to find the best route from there to Cambridge for you.

The University [International Students portal](#) will provide you with a great deal of information regarding life in Cambridge, travel arrangements, international student orientation meetings and a great deal more

### **Banking**

Students who are not receiving funding from UK organisations should try to arrange banking facilities prior to their arrival in this country. Your own bank should be able to arrange this for you and to transfer funds ahead of you. Some banks are now allowing on-line applications. Students whose maintenance is to be paid by a UK organisation should not have any difficulties in opening a bank account in this country. Banks will ask for identification to set up the account. If you need a Status Letter from the College in order to open a bank account please complete the online [Bank Letter Request Form](#). Please note it can take up to ten days for this letter to be written as there are a great many requests at the beginning of term.

### **Driving in the United Kingdom**

Everyone from abroad must, within one year of becoming resident here, take out a provisional driving licence if he or she wishes to drive (unless he or she has previously passed a UK driving test). You may not drive here using an International Driving Permit for more than 12 months. (See paragraph [Cars in Cambridge](#)).

We hope this tackles most of the questions you have at this stage. If you have any further queries, do not hesitate to contact the Graduate Office on [graduate.office@queens.cam.ac.uk](mailto:graduate.office@queens.cam.ac.uk)

We look forward to meeting you at the beginning of the next academic year.

Professor Lisa Hall, Chairman of the Postgraduate Committee

Dr Federica Paddeu, Deputy Senior Tutor