

Sarah  
Lawrence  
College  
At Oxford

2019-2020

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## Introduction

This handbook has been designed to help you prepare for next year. Please read it thoroughly and be sure to bring it with you to Oxford.

You are about to embark on one of the most rewarding and challenging years of your life. We hope that you will enjoy it immensely.

We are delighted that you are joining the Sarah Lawrence Programme at Oxford.

Best wishes,

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**2019 - 2020 CALENDAR**

**The terms run for eight weeks. Students should arrive back in College in the week before the term begins, Noughth Week. The week after 8th Week is used for completing the term's tasks and for consultations about the following term. Students are to be in Oxford for all ten weeks.**

Students arrive, orientation begins	Wednesday, 2 October 2019
Michaelmas Term begins:	Sunday, 13 October (beginning 1 <sup>st</sup> Week)
Michaelmas Term ends:	Saturday, 7 December (end 8 <sup>th</sup> Week) 9 <sup>th</sup> Week you are expected to be in College
Winter Break starts:	Sunday 8 December 2019
Students return by:	Monday 13 January 2020 (0 <sup>th</sup> Week)
Hilary Term begins:	Sunday, 19 January (beginning 1 <sup>st</sup> Week)
Hilary Term ends:	Saturday, 14 March (end 8 <sup>th</sup> Week) 9 <sup>th</sup> Week you are expected to be in College – we will have our overnight trip in this week.
Spring Break starts:	Sunday, 15 March
Students return by:	Monday 20 April (0 <sup>th</sup> Week)
Trinity Term begins:	Sunday, 26 April (beginning 1 <sup>st</sup> Week)
Trinity Term ends:	Saturday, 20 June (end 8 <sup>th</sup> Week)
Farewell Party	Wednesday 24 June 2020
Students must vacate rooms by	Sunday, 28 June, 2020, in the morning

Students may not arrive before opening day, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019, because housing cannot be prepared before that date. **You should arrive and collect your keys from Merifield between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October.** If you are unable to arrive in Oxford at this time, you must email the SLP Office at Oxford in advance.

Personal effects may be shipped to arrive at Merifield on 2<sup>nd</sup> October or after. Mail for you may be sent to Wadham College to arrive after 2<sup>nd</sup> October and throughout the year. Parcels and packages should be sent to:

*Merifield,  
Ferry Pool Road,  
Summertown,  
Oxford, OX2 7DU,  
United Kingdom*

## **WELCOME TO OXFORD**

Welcome to the Sarah Lawrence Programme in Oxford - we look forward to your arrival in this beautiful and stimulating university city. As a member of the Programme you are enrolled as a member of Wadham College and a Visiting Student of Oxford University. This status gives you access to all University facilities, including sports venues, clubs and societies, lectures, and of course libraries, ranging from specific subject collections to the world-famous Bodleian Library.

Oxford is unique in that students often identify more with their individual college than with the University. The University is made up of 39 colleges and Wadham is central and one of the most beautiful. Students are encouraged to become part of the College's community – an active engagement with events and activities in College will enhance your experience of Oxford considerably. You will have access to all the academic, social and dining facilities enjoyed by Wadham undergraduates, including the College library, common rooms (both Junior ie: undergraduate and Middle ie: graduate), computer rooms, bar, dining hall and informal refectory and the Moser Theatre. You may also use Wadham's sports facilities which include squash and tennis courts, a croquet lawn and a fully equipped boathouse and you are encouraged to play for Wadham in inter-collegiate competitions which take place on a number of skill levels ranging from the fun-seeking amateur to the fiercely competitive! Do get involved whatever your own level: beginners are more welcome than would generally be the case in US colleges.

Additionally, you will benefit from the practical and pastoral support provided by Wadham, ranging from the porters to the Chaplain (who is available to speak to those of all faiths and none), and including the various student organization officers who can offer advice on many issues and help to integrate you with the college community. The Wadham – SLC Exchange students will be important in developing the links between Programme students and Wadham students.

Please note that you will be considered a full member of the Wadham College, a full member of the JCR and an associate member of the MCR community with voting rights in the Student Union. However, you may not be able to stand for or vote for the Oxford Student Union. When you leave, you will be eligible for Associate Status as an Oxford Alumnus.

### **The Sarah Lawrence Programme Office**

Experienced administrators staff the Programme Office in Wadham College. With their expertise in academic, social and practical matters, they provide an invaluable source of information and advice during Orientation and throughout the year, as well as arranging the students' tutorials which are the centerpiece of their educational experience during the year. The Programme Director meets with students on a regular

basis to plan and review their academic programme. The Office works with the University, Wadham College, Sarah Lawrence College and the other home institutions of Programme members to create an effective network of communication and support. Operating during regular business hours, the Office also provides a full emergency back-up service during evenings, weekends and vacations.

### **Oxford University: A Brief Introduction**

Oxford is the oldest English-speaking University in the world. Its origins are Saxon, dating back as far as the 8th century to the nunnery of Saint Frideswide, now the site of Christ Church Cathedral. While there is no clear date of foundation, teaching existed in some form in 1096 and developed rapidly in 1167 as a result of a royal dispute when Henry II banned English students from attending the University of Paris. By 1200, Oxford was providing a structured course of study and Oxford's first University Charter was granted in 1214.

In the University's early days, students lived in private lodgings. Before long, licensed academic Halls were established, presided over by 'Masters'. Students were young men who needed 'book learning' - potential monks and priests, as well as 'clerks' destined for royal or civic administration. They would 'come up' or enroll around the age of sixteen and would study liberal arts for a first degree, the *trivium* of grammar, rhetoric and logic. The Master's degree would follow, with the *quadrivium* of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music. If they went on to take a Doctorate, they could spend up to sixteen years studying. Teaching and examination were conducted orally in Latin.

Colleges gradually evolved from academic Halls. University, Balliol and Merton Colleges, established between 1249 and 1264, are the oldest. New College, founded in 1379 by William of Wykeham to educate clergy, depleted by the Black Death which began in 1348, was the first to be planned in what became the traditional manner - quadrangles with 'staircases' for living accommodation, a hall for eating and a chapel for worship. The arrival of the Colleges marked the beginning of the takeover of the city centre by the University. This evolution was not without its struggles. In the thirteenth century, rioting between 'town and gown', townspeople and students, spurred the establishment of halls of residence, followed by the fortress-like colleges (and exile of some scholars, to found Cambridge University).

By the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Oxford had achieved eminence above every other seat of learning. In 1355, King Edward III paid tribute to the University for its invaluable contribution to learning; he also commented on the services rendered to the state by Oxford's many distinguished graduates. Famous alumni over the centuries include the Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, philosopher Thomas Hobbes, biochemist Dorothy Hodgkin, a long list of writers, from poets John Donne and T.S. Eliot to novelists Monica Ali and Helen Fielding to playwright Oscar Wilde, and many actors and comedians including Michael Palin and Rosamund Pike. 46 Nobel prize-winners, and 26 UK Prime Ministers are or have been Oxonians.

Only men could attend Oxford until 1879 when Lady Margaret Hall and Somerville College opened. Women were properly admitted to the University in 1920 but not granted equal status with men until 1952. During the 1970s and 1980s, the men's colleges accepted women students, Wadham being one of the first. Six of the colleges are for graduate students only and one - the illustrious All Souls College - has no students at all. For a more extensive history of Oxford and a list of distinguished alumni, please see Oxford's website: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/about>

The University has no campus in the manner of an American institution. The Colleges, libraries, departmental buildings and lecture halls are scattered around the city, mixed in with shops, offices and even homes. Strolling around the centre is like stepping back in time such is the beauty and age of the architecture: the Sheldonian Theatre, where matriculation and graduation ceremonies take place (designed by Wadham alumnus Sir Christopher Wren, and completed in 1669); the Old Bodleian Library; the Radcliffe Camera, a rotunda reading room in the city's main square (1748); and the Examination Schools (1876-82), where students report to sit exams dressed in the traditional uniform of black & white 'sub-fusc'.

The Colleges themselves are focal points, each with its own history, traditions and atmosphere. Each student is affiliated to a particular College which provides tutorials, supervision, social activities, eating facilities and accommodation. Colleges vary in size and character: Wadham has just over 600 students, and is one of the larger and livelier. There are in all over 11,000 undergraduates and 10,000 graduate students at the University.

### **Wadham College**

Wadham was founded in 1610 by Dorothy Wadham. Now in the centre of bustling Oxford, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century it was built just outside the old city walls on a site which had been used by a monastery before the Reformation. The original buildings were designed by a famous master-builder from the west of England, William Arnold, and these (the front Quad, the Hall and Chapel) remain almost unaltered to this day. Twentieth-century buildings have been erected behind these older edifices and include a new library, student rooms, and lecture and drama theatres.

Wadham's history includes the proud entry in the College Register in 1619 recording the admittance of Carew Raleigh, son of Sir Walter Raleigh whom James I had just executed. In 1648, the Warden of Wadham was the scientist John Wilkins. Wilkins designed a number of flying machines and wrote two books on reaching the moon. He brought together an impressive group of scientists and philosophers who, after Wilkins' retirement, established the Royal Society in London. One of the group was Sir Christopher Wren, whose first commission at Oxford was the Sheldonian Theatre. He went on to design many of the churches in London after the Great Fire and St. Paul's Cathedral is considered his masterpiece. Isaac Newton became the first president of the Royal Society.

One of the College statutes stipulated that the Warden, the head of Wadham College,

be unmarried and so he was until 1806 when the statute was repealed. Wadham was one of the first Colleges to become mixed and admitted women in 1974. Nowadays, a high percentage of Wadham's 450 undergraduate students are from state schools and Wadham claims no affiliation with any region or group of schools, preferring a diverse student body. It is consequently one of the most mixed of all the Colleges and has the reputation of being progressive – friendly, left-wing and politically active.

Sarah Lawrence Programme students are welcomed and integrated into the College during Orientation. They are encouraged to join in with all College and University activities open to Oxford undergraduates (except for sitting examinations). There are many opportunities for political and social involvement: Programme Members elect a SLP Representative Officer to Wadham's Student Union (SU) Committee and all students are entitled to vote at Wadham SU meetings. Visiting students are encouraged to involve themselves in different aspects of College life and by doing so become part of an engaging community and a continuing tradition. Those who have the best Oxford experience are often those who become the most involved.

### **What to bring**

#### **Important Paperwork (bring these items with you in carry-on luggage):**

- All documents required for entry into Britain and your arrival in Oxford
- A valid passport and visa for the duration of your stay in Oxford (it is a good idea to make two photocopies of important documents such as these; pack one separately from your passport and leave the other somewhere secure, such as home, in case you lose the original)
- Any supplementary visa documentation which you have received. Please note that your initial visa is valid for 30 days only. You will need to collect a Biometric Residence Permit from the St. Aldates Post Office or another designated place. Full instructions on this will be given during the initial orientation period.
- A letter from Sarah Lawrence College certifying your status as a student on the Programme

#### **Money**

Please bring enough money, in the form of cash or available to you by accessing an ATM machine upon arrival, to cover the first two weeks in Oxford. You will need easy access to about £500 to cover the Orientation period and the first few weeks. You can use your debit card in most ATMs or cash machines. **Expenses during Orientation will be higher than in subsequent weeks as you will be purchasing domestic items and books, shopping for food, joining University and College societies and taking part in a number of the social events which launch the academic year.**

See below for information re banks and money transfer.



### **Clothing and Personal Items**

- Please plan on purchasing a cell phone or SIM card soon after arrival as there are no telephones in the flats. There are a variety of providers to choose from. Most students buy a pay-as-you-go phone.
- Bring sufficient personal items and clothes to see you through the first term or until any luggage that you may have chosen to send via a carrier arrives in Oxford. Hopefully, you will be able to bring everything you need on the airplane but be sure to check weight restrictions with your airline.
- Be sure to pack waterproof shoes for walking around Oxford and some rainwear.
- Bring at least one smart outfit. During the first week of Orientation, there will be a formal dinner in Wadham College, for which students should wear something smart (e.g. a suit (not tuxedo), jacket and tie, dress, or smart pants and top etc).
- The temperature in late September/early October can be warm enough for short sleeves during the day but also chilly enough to require sweaters and a warm jacket. Winter in Oxford will be cold and is often wet. Clothes in Britain are expensive: we recommend wearing layers to keep out the winter dampness and chill.
- Please bring bath and hand towels.
- Hairdryers and other such appliances will require a voltage conversion plug (British voltage is 240), which you can purchase in Oxford. You may prefer to invest in inexpensive British equivalents. The cheapest hairdryers start at £8 and clock radios at £10. Students often play music from their laptops or invest in speakers for their iPod. Please refer to the section 'Bringing Electronic Goods from the US' (page 15 below).
- Computer - please plan on bringing a laptop with you. See below for further details.

### **How to Bring It**

- Check weight limitations for luggage with your airline. If you are a light traveler, you may be able to carry all that you require for the year on your flight. Otherwise, you may arrange to have extra items sent by air or sea carriers.
- Do not pack anything valuable in your checked baggage.
- Make copies of any important documentation and carry these separately.
- Be sure that you are properly insured.
- Anything irreplaceable should be carried with you at all times.
- If you are bringing a musical instrument, call your airline for full instructions about packing and checking it through.

### **Shipping Items**

Consult each company for specific size limits, costs for packing, taxes, insurance and any additional costs for retrieval of luggage at point of destination. Ask for advice on customs tax and filling out customs forms. Keep copies of all the forms you complete.

Always read your shipping agreement closely and bring all documents with you. Declare any used belongings that you send by carrier as 'personal property,' to avoid paying customs duty. Do not send trunks: they are unwieldy, may not fit in your room, and cannot be stored. Two services you may want to investigate are the US Postal Service and DHL Worldwide Express. ALWAYS declare items as gifts.

## **Your Arrival in England**

The Programme asks that all participants arrive in at Merifield in Oxford between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm on Wednesday, 2 October 2019. Please contact the SLP office if this is not possible.

You are likely to arrive at one of the two major London airports: Heathrow or Gatwick. **Please go through the staffed emigration gates and NOT the e-gate. You may need proof of entry on your temporary visa.**

### **Heathrow Airport**

Heathrow is served by a regular coach service (blue and yellow buses called 'the Airline') to and from Oxford. If you arrive at Terminals 1, 2, or 3, exit Customs and follow signs to the Central Bus Station and go to Bay 15. If you arrive at Terminal 4, take the free transfer to T1, 2, and 3 and then get the bus at Bay 15. From Terminal 5, go to Bay 10. Buses to Oxford run approximately every 30 minutes between 4.00 am and 10.00 pm, less frequently during the night. A one-way fare costs £23, a period return (round trip), valid for 3 months, costs £29. The ride should take about an hour, perhaps a little longer in heavy traffic.

### **Gatwick Airport**

Gatwick is also served by 'the Airline' coach service to and from Oxford and leaves once an hour during the day. The coaches to Oxford leave at quarter past the hour from the upper forecourt of the South Terminal Bus Station and at twenty minutes past the hour from Bay 4 / 5 of the North Terminal Bus Station. A one-way fare costs £28, a period return (valid for 3 months) costs £37. The ride will take 2 to 2 ½ hours, depending on traffic.

- The luggage allowance on both routes is two suitcases per person in the luggage compartment and small carry-on luggage inside the coach.
- The driver may ask for your destination. Your journey will end at Gloucester Green (pronounced 'Gloster'), the Oxford bus station.
- Neither of these coach services offers a student fare rate.
- You may also want to check the latest schedule available online at <http://www.oxfordbus.co.uk>.

Taxis from the airports are expensive. If booked in advance, Heathrow prices range from £75 to £100; Gatwick prices range from £110 to £125. If not booked in advance, these fares can triple in cost, so always prearrange such journeys. If you require further information on pre-booking a taxi from the airport, please ask Prema Samuel at Sarah Lawrence College.

If you are making your way to Oxford from Central London, trains leave from Paddington Station (telephone 08457 484950 for timetable information, or visit <http://www.thetrainline.com>), and a one-way ticket will cost £10.50 - £26.00, depending on the time of travel and can be cheaper if booked well in advance online. Coaches (the X90 and Oxford Tube) leave from Victoria coach station and other central

London stops every 15 minutes or so. The coach services offer a student ticket one-way for £8; £13 for a period return valid for three months. Information is available online at: <http://www.oxfordtube.com/>.

### **Arrival in Oxford**

If you have taken a coach from the airport, travel to the last stop, the central bus station in Oxford, known as Gloucester Green. From here you will need to find the taxi stand or 'taxi rank' (ask or follow signs) and take a taxi to Merifield in Ferry Pool Road, Summertown. The fare from Gloucester Green to Merifield is about £10.00, with a possible charge of 50p for each item of luggage. Tipping is not expected. If you have taken the train, you will find the taxi rank outside the main entrance to Oxford rail station. The fare is about £10.00 with a possible charge of 50p per item of luggage.

### **Arrival at Merifield**

When you arrive at Merifield you will need to use the buzzer at the front gate to contact the Manager, Lindsay Kennedy. You will be met by Exchange students and SLP staff who will show you to your room. Please feel free to call Merifield (01865 432 259) if you have difficulties en route.

As many of you will have flown overnight to reach England, procedures on arrivals day will be kept to a minimum. We will have prepared information to help you settle in, including maps, housing information and an Orientation schedule which provides introductory and essential information for your year in Oxford.

Your first day will be a quiet one and a time for you to settle into your flat and meet your flat mates. We will get together for our first meeting, with a pizza dinner, at 4.00 pm at the Merifield sports pavilion behind Merifield. While you may feel tired after 'losing' a minimum of five hours, it is a good idea to try and keep awake until at least 9.00 pm. Otherwise, you may prolong jet lag and delay adjustment to local time.

### **Orientation Week**

The week (actually ten days) is designed not only to introduce you to many aspects of your life in a new place but also to fulfill the registration requirements of the University. You will be busy with talks, tours, enrollment at the Bodleian Library, registration with the College medical practice and various social events.

During Orientation, every student will meet the Director to discuss their course of study over the first term and the remainder of the academic year. You will also use Orientation time to organise your finances, explore your surroundings, and orient yourselves within Oxford.

Families and friends are welcome to accompany you to Oxford, and they are invited to coffee at our first formal Orientation meeting at 10.00 am on Thursday, 3 October. A tour of Wadham will be arranged for parents that morning. For the rest of Orientation, your time with them will be limited due to the demands of the University and the Orientation timetable. As Wadham Freshers' Week coincides with the second week of Orientation, and you will be attending many of the events, this will be a very busy time.

## **Academic Structure of the Programme**

### **The Academic Year**

The academic year at Oxford is divided into three eight-week terms: Michaelmas (fall), Hilary (winter), and Trinity (spring). Officially, all lectures and tutorials take place within each eight-week term but students are also in Oxford for the week preceding Full Term (0<sup>th</sup> Week) and the week following Full Term (9<sup>th</sup> Week). In individual meetings in 0<sup>th</sup> Week of Hilary and Trinity Terms, you will discuss your studies with the Director.

### **Course Structure and Credit**

Students pursue two courses of study each term and they will have seven tutorials for each course. Students receive a written evaluation and a grade from each tutor at the end of each term which is then placed on their transcript. Guest students must consult with their home institution advisors to ensure that their credit requirements will be fulfilled during the year in Oxford.

### **Tutorials**

Tutors for the Programme are drawn from throughout the University, not just from Wadham College, and sometimes beyond if we wish to take advantage of an expert in the field who is not affiliated with the University. Students meet seven times over the course of term with their tutor in each subject and in most subjects they write a paper, or 'essay', for each tutorial based on assigned reading. Sometimes the tutor expects the paper to be delivered or e-mailed in advance of the tutorial; sometimes the tutor will only receive the paper in the tutorial; sometimes a tutor will ask a student to read a paper aloud. Tutorial discussion centres on the ideas contained in the paper.

Like all Oxford students, we may suggest you experience a double tutorial. This means that one of your termly tutorials may be shared with another Programme student or an Oxford undergraduate. Double tutorials allow for lively discussions with a fellow student in and out of tutorials.

The contents of tutorial courses are modelled on the tutorials followed in Wadham and the rest of University. The following website shows how the University's Departments design their respective degree courses:

<http://www.admissions.ox.ac.uk/courses/>

The Director will meet with students during the term to ensure that the tutorials are progressing in a satisfactory manner and to provide support where necessary. The Director will also liaise directly with each tutor before and during term. **Do not contact any Oxford tutor directly before your academic year begins** unless the tutor or the SLP office has told you to do so. If you have not heard from your tutors by 0<sup>th</sup> week, consult the Oxford office. The Director is always available to discuss any issues that may arise in relation to tutorials or tutors.

## **Core Programme**

The Core Programme is designed to introduce students to British culture and society, and to broaden their intellectual horizons. Consisting of lectures, field trips to sites of historic and cultural interest and other events, it runs through all three terms. Core Programme events are not compulsory but they do provide a good opportunity for the group to come together on a regular basis and we expect you to attend when possible.

## **University Lectures and Classes**

As Visiting Students, everyone on the Programme is entitled to attend normal University lectures. These are offered in the full range of academic disciplines and are often given by world experts in the field. They are an excellent means of extending the scope of tutorial work. Full lecture lists are published at the beginning of each term, and are also available online at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/lectures>.

Additionally, you may be able to pursue University classes in modern languages to complement your tutorials. Places at the University Language Centre are limited and priority is given to those studying the language for an examinable tutorial course. If a language course is oversubscribed, students have to enter a lottery for available spaces. You may be required to pay for these classes.

Please see <http://www.lang.ox.ac.uk/>.

## **Programme Housing**

Students live in the housing provided by the Programme. We are fortunate to house all SLP students in Merifield, Wadham College's housing for graduate students and some senior undergraduates. This enables both the creation of a Programme community as well as ample opportunity for mixing with Wadham students.

Merifield is in Summertown, North Oxford, a ten minute bus or bike ride or 25 minute walk from town. It is right next to a fully equipped sports centre with a gym and swimming pool. You will generally be sharing a flat with other members of the Programme, although you may share with other University students. Housing assignments are carefully thought out and are made on the basis of the information you convey in your housing questionnaire. While we cannot promise you everything you ask for, we do our very best to ensure a comfortable and congenial environment. You will find out about your housing assignment when you arrive in Oxford. Please do not expect to have access to your flat before 2 October 2019.

In all the flats there is a single bedroom for each student as well a shared kitchen, living room and bathroom facilities. Each bedroom is furnished with a bed, dresser, desk and chair, and lamp. One set of linen, a comforter and pillow with covers will be provided. Each kitchen has a fridge and oven and is equipped with crockery, cutlery, and cookware. All flats have central heating and access to the Internet. Washing machines are available on site. You are responsible for keeping your flats clean and tidy.

## **Residency**

As a Visiting Student, you are entitled to University privileges and subject to University regulations. The University stipulates that, during Full Term, permission needs to be sought for absences from Oxford of more than three consecutive nights. Except in an emergency, all requests for leave of absence must be made in advance to the Director. Allowing for occasional weekend excursions, students are expected to remain in Oxford throughout the term.

## **Visitors**

In order not to violate any safety or insurance regulations, **visitors are not allowed to stay in your flat.** Under exceptional circumstances you may make an application to the Director and, if permission is granted, you must then get clearance from the Housing Manager. Please speak with members of your household about the proposed visitors before approaching the Office for permission. Parents are not permitted to stay in flats at any time.

## **Damage**

You will be responsible for looking after your flat during your residency and will therefore be charged for any damages incurred during your stay. A schedule of damages will be conveyed to you upon departure. This may delay refund of your bond.

## **Banking, Finance and Budgeting**

Many students choose to open bank accounts upon arrival in Oxford, while some simply use ATMs (cashpoints) to draw money from their US bank accounts. British banks offer the same sort of accounts as in the US. You will have the chance to investigate the various options when you arrive. Please be sure that you have at least enough cash to get from the airport to Oxford, allowing extra for food and contingencies.

Before you leave for the United Kingdom, ask your home bank for advice. Ask about cash transfers and any services that may help you during your year abroad. Can you access your account details via the Internet, for example? A letter of recommendation from your bank may prove useful if you decide to open an account in Oxford but is not necessary. The Programme will also write you a letter of support. If you wish to bring a credit card, bear in mind that Visa and MasterCard are far more widely accepted in the UK than American Express. The best way to get money into your UK bank account is to get someone to transfer it across or ask your US bank to do so. Even cashier's cheques can take weeks to clear.

## **Your Home Bank Account: Points to Bear in Mind**

- It is a good idea to inform your bank in writing of your travel plans so that your account record is up to date. You should do the same if you have a credit card so that overseas use of your card for a year is not seen to constitute 'abnormal usage'.
- Make a note of your bank's routing number as well as their procedures for transferring and depositing money.
- Consider adding a parent or sibling to your account so that deposits can be made on your behalf while you are away, obviating the need for you to mail checks to and

from the UK. This is the best way to get money to the UK.

- Most overseas ATM machines cannot provide you with account balance information. Although most banks have toll-free information numbers, you are likely to have to pay if dialing from the UK. The easiest way to keep track of your accounts from overseas may be to view your accounts on-line.
- Most banks charge a conversion commission, either a fixed or a percentage charge. Be aware that some banks may charge you for each international withdrawal in addition to an exchange commission proportional to the amount withdrawn.
- Not all international ATM cards will work with UK ATM machines. ATM networks (e.g., NYCE, CIRRUS, PLUS) vary in availability. Ask your bank to look into this for you before you leave home. Any card with a Visa mark on it will be accepted in most places in Europe.

### **Financial Assistance**

If you are dependent on financial aid, it is crucial that you resolve any questions you may have about your package before leaving. If you are expecting a refund, bear in mind that it may not be issued until late October for the fall and late January to mid-February for the spring. This applies to most government loans and grants, particularly the Stafford loan.

Be aware of any restrictions on work stipulated by your visa. Also, Oxford University requires that students get permission to work even part-time during the term because of the academic intensity of each term. Part-time jobs can be difficult to find in Oxford. Therefore, when drawing up your budget for the year, do not, under any circumstances, rely on being able to earn money. You are not permitted to be self-employed or run a business. This will violate your visa conditions with serious consequences.

### **Budgeting for the Year**

It is essential that funds are available to you for the duration of your stay. Plan a budget – however provisional – before you leave for Oxford. Bear in mind that your expenses continue during vacations and that the academic year is a full nine months and runs through to the end of June. The cost of living in the United Kingdom is high.

After the Orientation period, which may entail higher expenditures, students find that they settle into a steadier pattern of purchasing by the start of Full Term. To give you some guidance, the average student then spends £60-100 per week on food, personal expenses, and entertainment. Weekly meal expenditures have ranged from £40 (this student was vegetarian) to £150 (this one chose to eat a number of meals at restaurants). Obviously, spending varies according to whether students choose to eat mainly in the college dining hall, at cafes and restaurants, or by cooking at home.

In Wadham, you have access to dining facilities, allowing you to purchase inexpensive breakfasts, lunches, and dinners during Full Term. **We have a happy arrangement with Wadham that entitles you to 10 free meals a term.** Eating in College is an excellent way of meeting Wadham students. More information is available on the Wadham website and will also be communicated upon your arrival.

Books are expensive. Most students choose to use the many libraries (lending and non-lending) that are open to them. If you intend to buy your textbooks, anticipate spending as much as £100 per term and between £10 and £40 per textbook. Remember that books are heavy and can be costly to transport home at the end of the year. There is likely to be a £50.00 book grant available.

### **Travel during Breaks**

Travel expenses for the two breaks can be minimal since students can stay in their flats throughout the academic year. However, many students choose to travel around Europe or the UK during at least one break.

Remember to budget for vacation travel. Check the cost of tickets and travel passes. Eurail passes must be purchased in the States; although you will be able to purchase a rail pass for travel within a single European country once you are in England, you will not be able to buy a full Eurail pass. Eurail passes must be validated for initial use within six months from the issue date. If you are not planning to travel in Europe until the Easter vacation, therefore, you should have someone in the States purchase the pass for you and mail it to you in Oxford. You can consult [www.railpass.com](http://www.railpass.com) for more information about rail passes. Many students also make use of the many inexpensive, no frills airlines operating in Europe. See [www.flylowcostairlines.org](http://www.flylowcostairlines.org) or [www.whichbudget.com](http://www.whichbudget.com) for details.

### **Communications**

#### **Mail**

It is most advisable that your mail be sent directly to you where you have a mailbox:

*your name,*  
Sarah Lawrence Programme  
Wadham College, Oxford, OX1 3PN, United Kingdom

You will also be able to use your flat address, which will be confirmed with you on arrival.

#### **Telephones**

As mentioned, most students choose to purchase a cellphone for the year. You will be able to find an affordable pay-as-you-go option to suit your needs. Information about mobile phones is easily obtainable upon your arrival.

**Please note: When in the UK, you must have a UK telephone number!**

#### **E-mail and Internet**

The flats are wired for internet connection. You are also permitted to take advantage of the computer facilities available at Merifield and Wadham College and at the University's Computing Services Building. You will receive information about your Oxford account before you leave. Please follow instructions and activate your account as soon as possible. From your arrival, all communication from the SLP office will be via your Oxford account. WiFi is available throughout Oxford.



## **Computers**

Bring your own laptop with you to Oxford. (Be sure you do so as carry-on luggage and check any rules for laptops on airplanes). Students are expected to write an essay for each tutorial each week so there will be lots of writing to do during your academic year. Having your own computer is therefore a real advantage.

The Computer Room in Wadham is open 24 hours a day and has its own Computer Officer available to help on a regular basis. It has 24 computer terminals (all IBM compatible, running Windows) for students to use, and one networked printer. A small note of warning: there are no Macs! The University also has a very well-resourced Computing Services building, which you may use, but hours are limited.

## **Bringing Electronic Goods from the US**

If you intend to bring your laptop computer with you, check with the manufacturer or place of purchase that it will function in the UK. Most new laptops are equipped with built-in adapters in their power-supply cords. If the AC adapter states INPUT: 100V-240V, it is compatible with the UK power supply. A plug adapter will be required, but not an electric transformer.

Other electric goods will need a transformer and / or a plug adapter. Again, you should check with the manufacturer or a retailer before purchasing or bringing over goods. If you are concerned about compatibility, you may find it easier to buy a cheap stereo, hairdryer, or radio alarm clock on arrival. Computers are much more expensive in the UK so it is best to purchase them at home.

## **Health**

**Medical Insurance and Services.** All students will be covered while abroad by a policy administered by GeoBlue Worldwide Insurance. A pamphlet regarding this coverage is in your application portal. **Please note, however, that students still need to have their own medical insurance through the Sarah Lawrence plan or through their parents. This is to ensure they have adequate health insurance before they leave the US and upon their return.** You will receive information on the Sarah Lawrence plan from our Business Office. Included will be a waiver form if you have your own insurance. This can also be found at <http://www.slc.edu/offices-services/student-accounts/health-insurance/>.

## **National Health Service**

As residents in Britain for more than six months, you are entitled to use the National Health Service (NHS). Under this system, all consultations (whether routine or emergency) are free of charge, although you pay a nominal sum (currently £7.65) for any medication you may be prescribed. You will pay £300 as part of your visa application to enable you to use this service.

Oxford is well provided with hospital emergency services. It has a number of clinics and hotlines. Under the NHS, you are entitled to free contraception: this can be obtained

from the College medical practice, the College nurse, or various clinics in Oxford.

### **Wadham College Doctors and Nurse**

As a Wadham student, you will need to register with the College medical practice, Beaumont Street Doctors, who are affiliated with the NHS. Please do this as soon as you receive the relevant information, before you leave the US. Except in an emergency (when you should go straight to the hospital or call an ambulance), your first port of call with any illness will be with your practice doctor (or 'GP', 'general practitioner'), whose surgery is in the centre of town. The surgery offers an appointment service which will be available to you after registration. You can also request a telephone consultation.

Consultations with your GP are free of charge and generally brief. If necessary, your GP will refer you to a specialist. Wadham also has a resident (part-time) nurse who can deal with any minor ailments and help to arrange appointments with the doctor.

### **Private Medical Care**

If you prefer, you may register with a private practitioner while you are in Oxford. Fees for private consultation start at £35. Names can be provided by the Office or nurse. Be sure to keep all receipts if you intend to submit a claim to your insurance company.

### **Prescription Drugs**

In Britain, prescription drugs often have different names from those in the US. **It is important to bring a sufficient supply of your medication for the first few weeks.** Any medication you bring with you should be clearly identified in its original packaging. Please also bring a letter from your doctor giving full details of any medication you require, including generic name and chemical profile. This should assist you in obtaining your prescription in Oxford. However, you are strongly urged to check with your own doctor for any restrictions that may apply.

If you discover that your prescription medication is not licensed in Britain, it is essential that you address this with your physician before you arrive. The SLP Office can arrange for further advice from a health-care professional in the UK. It is not advisable to arrange for non-licensed medication to be shipped into Britain.

### **Dental Care**

You may want to have a thorough dental check-up prior to leaving the US, as it is hard to access dental care that is subsidized by the NHS. You will generally have to pay for dental work in Oxford and it may take some time.

### **Mental Health**

Every College has Fellows and students who volunteer to act as student welfare supporters. Wadham has a dedicated Welfare Advisor, and Wadham's Chaplain is a trained counsellor and is available to speak to students of all faiths and none. There is an excellent University Counselling Service which all Visiting Students are entitled to use but it offers problem-based counselling rather than long-term therapy. Your GP will be able to refer you for more specialist help, if necessary, and it is also possible to access private therapists for a fee. The Director is always available to help any student in

setting up appropriate support.

### **Other Health Practitioners**

There are plenty of specialists in Oxford: opticians, chiropractors, physiotherapists, osteopaths, acupuncturists, homeopaths, psychotherapists, etc. You will have to pay for such services. The College medical practice and the Programme Office will be happy to investigate on your behalf: full listings are also available online.

### **Traveling in Europe (beyond Britain)**

Once you leave British shores, you are no longer entitled to state-funded (NHS) health care. If you are intending to travel within Europe during vacations, you must have appropriate medical coverage. You should therefore ensure that your US medical insurance remains active for your entire year abroad. You can also purchase short-term travel insurance packages from a range of banks and travel agencies in Oxford or online.

### **Visiting Students and the Law**

As Visiting Students, members of the Programme are subject to English law and the Wadham College disciplinary code. If a student commits a serious offence which is open to police action such as physical assault, sexual assault, drug abuse, computer misuse, theft, fraud, or harassment, the College's policy is to refer the matter to the police. The College also has the right to deal with any offences under its own internal disciplinary procedures.

**You will be issued with a copy of the Wadham College Handbook. Read it carefully, especially the section "Decanal Matters - Living in the College Community",**

**Sarah Lawrence College and the Sarah Lawrence Programme expect to be kept informed of any financial, academic, medical or mental health issues that challenge a student. Confidence will be strongly respected but the appropriate people may be informed of any difficulty facing a student.**

**It is in the discretion of the Director, in consultation with the Dean of Wadham and the Dean of Sarah Lawrence College, to suggest that any student who acts beyond the bounds of appropriate, reasonable expectations, legal or otherwise, be asked to leave the Programme.**

### **Information about Oxford**

#### **Internet Sources:**

*The English Tourist Board <http://www.visitengland.com/ee/>*  
*The London Tourist Information Service ([www.visitlondon.com](http://www.visitlondon.com))*  
*Welcome to the City of Oxford ([www.oxfordcity.co.uk](http://www.oxfordcity.co.uk))*  
*University of Oxford ([www.ox.ac.uk](http://www.ox.ac.uk))*  
*Wadham College ([www.wadham.ox.ac.uk/public](http://www.wadham.ox.ac.uk/public))*

*What's On In Oxford* ([www.inoxfordmag.co.uk](http://www.inoxfordmag.co.uk))  
*Daily Information Oxford* (<http://www.dailyinfo.co.uk/>)  
*Virtual Tour of Oxford* (<http://www.chem.ox.ac.uk/oxfordtour>)

## **Fiction**

Byatt, A S, *The Game*, - Cassandra is an Oxford Don, Julia, her sister, is a bestselling novelist. They share a set of disturbing memories of a strange childhood game and of Simon, the handsome young neighbour who loved them both.

Dexter, Colin, the Inspector Morse novels (from 1980 onwards) – contemporary crime classics, featuring Dexter's grumpy, opera-loving detective (as played by John Thaw in the long-running TV series).

Jeschke, Melanie, *The Oxford Chronicles*, - inspirational historical/romances set around The Inklings, the famous group of Oxford writers that included C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien. Book I in the series is called *Inklings*, Book II is *Expectations* and Book III, *Evasions*, is a "prequel" set in WWII Oxford.

Pears, Iain, *An Instance of the Fingerpost* (1998) – an intellectual thriller set in early modern Oxford.

Pullman, Philip, *His Dark Materials: The Golden Compass, The Subtle Knife, The Amber Spyglass* (2003) – a fantasy trilogy, set in a parallel universe based on Oxford.

Trapido, Barbara, *The Travelling Horn-Player*, - four narrators deal with an assortment of entangled plot-lines, a running theme of Müller's poetry and a lovely collection of cruelly perfect characterisations of various subspecies of Homo Oxfordensis.

Trollope, Joanna, *The Men and the Girls*, - Jude and Kate have apparently found true happiness with men old enough to be their fathers. When one of their partners knocks an elderly spinster off her bicycle in the centre of Oxford, a chain of events is triggered in which many suppressed discontents and frustration emerge.

Alderman, Naomi, *The Lessons*, A recent addition to the canon of Oxford fiction, Alderman's second novel gives a tip of the hat to "Brideshead Revisited", featuring its own version of a more contemporary gilded youth and an updated take on the grip of the church and its consequences.

Sayers, Dorothy L, *Gaudy Night*, Andrew Taylor: "She tried to use a detective story both as a vehicle for serious themes — the value of scholarship, and the price it exacts — and as a novel of character and manners with an attendant love story. It is a book that has given some of its readers their first glimpse of the intellectual excitement a university can offer."

Willis, Connie, *To Say Nothing of the Dog*, - Oxford's past is celebrated in fiction and non-fiction, but what about its future? Connie Willis' comic science-fiction novel from 1997 gives reader a picture of Oxford in 2057, when the history department uses time travel for research. The science-fiction element allows the plot to also jump back to 19th-century Oxford, offering a delightful contrast between the two eras. It's also a hilarious parody and homage to Victorian novels—think epigraphs, besotted young men, and cameo appearances by Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot, and Lord Peter Wimsey (from *Gaudy Night* above). For more time-traveling Oxford historians, read the other two books in the series, *Doomsday Book* and *Blitz*.

### **Non-Fiction**

Hudson, Sarah, *Insight Guide Oxford* (2000).

Tyack, Geoffrey, *The Blue Guide to Oxford and Cambridge* (1987), and *Oxford: An Architectural Guide* (1998).

Morris, Jan, *Oxford* (1988), and *The Oxford Book of Oxford* (1984).

Pursglove, Glyn (ed.), *Oxford in Verse* (1999).

### **Films**

*Shadowlands, True Blue, Harry Potter, Iris, The Golden Compass, The Oxford Murders.*

When you arrive in Oxford you will find current information in the following publications:

- \* *Alternative Student Prospectus* and the *Oxford Student Handbook*, both published by the Oxford University Student Union. Sections of these publications are available online; please see <http://su.wadham.ox.ac.uk/prospectus/> or <http://www.oxfordhandbook.com/>.
- \* Wadham Prospectus, produced by the college. The Wadham handbook is also available online at <http://www.wadham.ox.ac.uk/students/handbook.pdf>
- \* *Daily Information* is a large-format single sheet of paper that is posted up around the colleges and the city, giving listings of talks, theatre and cinema events, as well as maps and information about Oxford and classified ads for second-hand items. It is published daily during Full Term, otherwise weekly, and can also be consulted on the web: [www.dailyinfo.co.uk](http://www.dailyinfo.co.uk). You will also receive a weekly copy of the shortened version by email.
- \* Throughout the year, you will also want to check the events and lecture listings in the Oxford University Gazette: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/gazette/>

We are greatly looking forward to welcoming you to Oxford.  
Safe travels and see you soon!!