

August 2007

Dear Fresher,

Congratulations on being accepted to study at Oxford – and welcome to Worcester College! You don't know me but hopefully you will in a few weeks' time when Worcester becomes your home away from home. We are lucky enough to have some of the most beautiful college grounds in Oxford and based on my experience, it won't be long before you are fielding requests from your friends at other colleges for guided tours and dinner invitations (Worcester's food is also one of Oxford's best-kept secrets). When I arrived from Australia in 2006, I found Worcester a very welcoming place and I really hope that you will find the same.

Following the idiosyncratic terminology of Oxford and Cambridge, the words Middle Common Room (MCR) refer both to a facility and a community. Thus, the MCR is a two-storey building tucked away in an area of the college very close to most of the graduate accommodation, containing computing facilities, a comfy TV room and a bar where we host various events and which has room for pool, table football and darts. It is also a group of nearly 200 graduate students from all walks of life, whom you will be able to meet at the dinner table, on the football field, or anywhere in between, and some of whom will probably become your friends for life. It is my hope that the Worcester MCR – in both its incarnations – will be central to your life at Oxford; have a look in the Graduate Handbook for more information about our facilities and activities, and always let me know if you have any questions, requests or suggestions.

When you arrive, Freshers' Week will be your crash-course in life at Oxford. Both the university and the college will hope to see you at various inductions and meetings, freshers' fairs to introduce you to the glut of extra-curricular activities on offer, and a packed schedule of welcoming social events to boot! As gruelling as this timetable may seem, I heartily recommend that you attend as many of these events as possible, since this is one of the best times for you to meet your fellow graduate students. Once Michaelmas Term is underway, the social events continue apace and you will hopefully get to know the other members of the MCR very well.

Many graduate students live in Oxford with a spouse or partner; if you will be joining their number we would love to see both of you at MCR events. Associate Membership of the MCR is available (in return for the same facilities fee and returnable deposit that full members pay) and this would entitle your partner to dine in college at the same subsidised prices that you will enjoy, as well as all the other facilities and activities the college has to offer. If you are interested, please contact our wonderfully helpful Graduate Officer, Cath Fraser (cath.fraser@worc.ox.ac.uk) or myself.

If you have any other questions or hesitations, please get in touch with me by email. If your course requires you to arrive early in Oxford and you need any help, advice or even just company, the rest of the MCR committee and I will all be around, so please do drop me a line.

I look forward to meeting you in October!

Best wishes,

Jonathan Webb
MCR President

jonathan.webb@worc.ox.ac.uk