



**ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-21  
COVID-19 GUIDELINES AND POLICIES**

Updated: 12 March 2021

*Please note:*

*This document should be read alongside*

[www.osapabroad.com/covid-19](http://www.osapabroad.com/covid-19), which details our latest updates.

To OSAP Applicants, Accepted Students, and College/University Administrators:

After what was an unprecedented start to 2020, the University of Oxford welcomed all new and returning students to Oxford for the Michaelmas (Autumn) 2020 Term. Accordingly, OSAP also welcomed a large group of students to Oxford in September 2020 and January 2021, all of whom are studying for one, two, or three terms in the 2020-21 Academic Year.

Understandably, several of you have made enquiries with respect to the Covid-19 situation. The purpose of this document is to outline OSAP's current preparations, guidelines, and policies in light of Covid-19.

There has been a lot of planning and preparing going on across the University of Oxford, its constituent colleges, and OSAP, taking account of UK Government guidelines and public health advice. As you know, the situation is constantly changing, and we mean to adapt with it.

Know that OSAP is intent upon providing the most enriching term possible, whilst ensuring the safety of our staff and students by adhering to UK Government guidelines. Whilst upcoming terms will be different in some ways, we look forward to them with anticipation and are certain they will be rewarding. Oxford has a long history and has overcome many odds over the centuries; there is, then, no doubt that it—and we—will adapt and weather the coronavirus storm as well.

Please read the following sections carefully and do contact us with any questions you might have. We look forward to welcoming you (or your students) to Oxford very soon!

Best wishes,

The Oxford Study Abroad Programme

**OSAP APPLICATIONS**

The University of Oxford welcomed all new and returning students to Oxford for the start of the 2020-21 Academic Year. Accordingly, OSAP welcomed a large group of students to Oxford in September 2020 and January 2021 for the start of its Michaelmas (Autumn) Term and Hilary (Winter) Term, respectively.

All OSAP programmes for the 2020-21 Academic Year (Michaelmas Term 2020, Hilary Term 2021, and Trinity Term 2021) are scheduled to continue, and online applications are open ([www.osapabroad.com/apply](http://www.osapabroad.com/apply)).

Given current postal delays, applicants should note that all application components (letters of recommendation, transcripts, etc.) can be emailed to [academic@osapabroad.com](mailto:academic@osapabroad.com) for convenience and to save time.

### **APPLICATION DEFERRALS**

OSAP is committed to being as accommodating and flexible as possible during these unprecedented times. Therefore, any OSAP applicant, whether in-process or accepted, can defer their application or acceptance to any future OSAP term. Any tuition or fees already paid can also be deferred to a future term. For more information on deferrals, please contact the OSAP Academic Office at [academic@osapabroad.com](mailto:academic@osapabroad.com).

### **US STATE DEPARTMENT / CDC ADVISORY LEVEL**

The UK Government's policy is to follow the advice of, among others, the Chief Scientific Advisor and the Chief Medical Officer of England.

The current US State Department and CDC Travel Advisory for the United Kingdom is Level 4. International students may travel to the UK to study, provided they follow the relevant quarantine policies upon arrival.

### **ONLINE LOCATOR FORM**

At present, if students are a resident or visitor traveling to England from any country except Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland or Ireland, they must complete an online locator form in advance of their journey. Students can complete this online form 48 hours before they travel:

<https://www.gov.uk/provide-journey-contact-details-before-travel-uk>

We will provide each student with their Oxford accommodation address, which is the address they should provide on the form.

Note that at present students cannot complete this form until 48 hours before they are due to arrive in the UK.

### **COVID-19 TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAVELLING TO THE UK**

#### **Pre-Departure Testing Requirement:**

All travelers to the UK must retain proof of a negative Covid-19 test taken within 72 hours prior to departure. Please see the link below for more information, and always check with your airline to make sure you have met their particular pre-departure requirements prior to your journey.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-people-travelling-to-england>

## **Post-Arrival Testing Requirements:**

Prior to your departure from your home country, all travelers to the UK are required to pre-book two Covid-19 tests to take during your ten-day quarantine period (see section below) in England (these tests are in addition to your pre-departure test, mentioned above). These two at-home tests must be taken on Day 2 and Day 8 after your arrival in the UK, and must be booked in advance (prior to your departure for the UK) using this online portal:

<https://quarantinehotels.ctmportal.co.uk/Quarantine/Home.aspx>

## **QUARANTINE REQUIREMENT**

Currently international arrivals to the UK are required to quarantine for 10 days. Some students may choose to order groceries online; if so, OSAP can provide appropriate websites.

See this website which helps explain what activities are permitted whilst quarantining:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-when-you-travel-to-the-uk/coronavirus-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-when-you-travel-to-the-uk>

Current UK Government guidance only requires those who are traveling to quarantine. Students may, then, be in accommodation with students who do not need to quarantine. Rest assured this is permitted under Government guidance: the people students are staying with do not need to self-isolate (unless, of course, they are also an international arrival).

Some students may make arrangements to arrive early so that their quarantine requirement does not interfere too much with OSAP's orientation programme. Though OSAP intends to stream the orientation lectures online, if students do choose to arrive early, OSAP will make every effort to accommodate them. If students decide to arrive early, please contact OSAP directly to update their arrival date; otherwise, OSAP will assume students are arriving and moving into OSAP accommodation on term start dates as published on our website.

For those students who are required to quarantine, OSAP is committing to supporting them in every way possible. OSAP's full-time staff reside in city-centre Oxford, within easy distance of both the OSAP offices and student residences; as such, they are on call and available 24/7, and students are encouraged to contact OSAP with any question or problem, large or small. A full list of OSAP's emergency and support contacts can be found at the end of this document.

## **FACE MASKS**

Face masks are now mandatory in many public areas in the UK, including shops, stores, indoor shopping centres, etc. They are also required in airports and on public transportation, so students should be sure to bring at least one face mask, and that it is on their person (i.e. not in checked luggage). Students may also need to wear a face mask on their flight, and should consult with their airline for specific guidance and regulations.

Face masks are required in the OSAP offices (during orientation, etc.), so students should again please make sure they travel with a face mask. Note that there are several shops and pharmacies in city centre Oxford where students can purchase a mask should they need a

replacement once in Oxford.

### **PASSPORT CONTROL**

If students do not hold a UK passport, they should not use the e-gates when they enter the UK as they will need to receive a stamp in their passport (this stamp serves as their visa to remain in the UK to study). Note that when students pass through passport control they should have at least two documents on their person (i.e. not in checked baggage): a) their passport (and any visa if you were required to apply for one), and b) their OSAP acceptance letter (please contact us if you do not have this).

### **ARRIVAL & TRAVELING TO OXFORD**

The OSAP website provides detailed arrival instructions, including bus services from London Heathrow and London Gatwick to Oxford:

<https://www.osapabroad.com/students/arrival-and-orientation/>

Arrivals should report to the OSAP office (the address for which is detailed on the website above) to collect their keys, welcome packet, orientation schedule, etc.

### **ORIENTATION**

The OSAP Orientation Programme is intended as a swift introduction to Oxford academically, socially and culturally. Students will be given information that will be of real use to them in academic and social life in Oxford.

When permitted by Government regulations, for those who do not (or no longer) need to quarantine, OSAP intends to hold the orientation lectures and sessions in our offices, following Government guidelines and ensuring face masks and social-distancing where necessary. These lectures will be streamed online for the benefit of those who do need to quarantine.

Some sessions, for example the Bodleian and Oxford College inductions, need to take place in University or Oxford college facilities. As OSAP will not be able to stream these, we will schedule repeat sessions during 1<sup>st</sup> Week for those unable to attend the first sessions because of the quarantine requirement.

OSAP will provide more information on the orientation programme before the start of term. Please, though, be as patient and flexible as possible as the orientation schedule will require substantial coordination with several University and college departments and is likely to require adjustments.

### **TRACK AND TRACE**

In order to facilitate UK Track and Trace, the National Health Service (NHS) has released an app (available in both the Apple and Google app stores) which, when installed, allows students simply to scan a QR code when entering businesses. This then registers their presence at said businesses, and allows the NHS to contact them should someone in close proximity test positive for Covid-19.



OSAP recommends students download and install the NHS Covid-19 app right away to avoid any delays in “checking into” stores and businesses.

Students can download and install the NHS Covid-19 app from this link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/nhs-covid-19/>

### **OSAP OFFICE GUIDELINES**

One advantage of OSAP is its large, central Oxford offices, which includes a library, lecture room, tutorial rooms, and free printing for students.

In order to comply with UK Government guidelines, please note the following requirements when using the OSAP office:

- Students must use the NHS Covid-19 app (see section above) and scan the QR code when entering our offices
- Face masks must be worn at all times
- Please use hand sanitiser
- Wherever possible, please maintain social distancing

### **TUTORIALS**

As the term approaches, an OSAP staff member (or, if students are Visiting Students, the Tutor for Visiting Students at their respective Oxford college) will contact students to confirm their tutorial choices. OSAP is working hard to secure tutors who are open to teaching face-to-face, as the one-to-one Oxford tutorial system, very helpfully, allows for social distancing where required. Some tutors may decide to teach some tutorials online via Zoom or Skype or Microsoft Teams; again, if this is the case, we ask for students’ patience and flexibility during these unprecedented times.

### **OXFORD COLLEGES AND LIBRARIES**

As you may know, the University of Oxford is a collection of 40+ independent colleges and halls. As such, each may operate slightly differently with respect to Government coronavirus guidelines. Students’ Oxford colleges may have different rules than other colleges.

Overall, though, rest assured that though terms may operate slightly differently than previous terms, the University of Oxford and its colleges are committed to ensuring the best terms possible in light of the current situation.

The Bodleian Library (the University of Oxford’s central library system) is also planning provision of its extensive resources to students.

## **MEDICAL CARE & HEALTH INSURANCE**

OSAP has made a special arrangement with 28 Beaumont Street, a medical practice in central Oxford (only a 5-minute walk from the OSAP offices) that offers a full range of medical services to OSAP students. Through our arrangement, students' visits are partially subsidized, and OSAP will pay half the normal fees for any needed consultations.

During the OSAP Orientation Programme, one of the doctors from 28 Beaumont Street will speak to students and advise on making appointments and the medical services offered, handling major and minor illnesses, the National Health Service (NHS), confidentiality, requests for home visits, emergencies, and other important aspects of medical care whilst studying in Oxford.

Should students become ill with coronavirus symptoms, OSAP would again look to the guidance issued by the Oxford colleges. The John Radcliffe Hospital, which is a leading hospital in the UK, is only about 3 miles east of Oxford, so medical care, when needed, is quite close. Helpfully, too, the NHS published this guidance with respect to free treatment for Covid-19 patients:

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/visiting-or-moving-to-england/visitors-from-outside-the-european-economic-area-eea/>

Other than the NHS resources and subsidized care detailed above, OSAP does not provide health insurance for its students. OSAP encourages students to secure their own international/travel health insurance for the duration of their time in the UK; they should first check with their home institutions, though, as often colleges and universities can provide health insurance for its students studying abroad.

## **COVID-19 TESTING**

The UK has established several in-person Covid-19 testing sites and at-home, remote Covid-19 testing for those experiencing symptoms.

It is important to note that both of these options are free to anyone in the UK (including students).

Central Oxford has several in-person testing sites (including one maintained by the University of Oxford). Students are also able to order an at-home Covid-19 test free from the NHS.

Please see this page for more information on securing a Covid-19 test whilst in the UK:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

## **ACADEMIC CONTINUITY / REMOTE LEARNING**

OSAP is committed to ensuring academic continuity for its students in every way possible, irrespective of any current or potential disruptions arising from Covid-19.

Very helpfully, the one-to-one Oxford tutorial system, which is the crux of academic programmes in Oxford, easily allows for social distancing where required, as students are not required to gather in large numbers in seminars or lecture halls. OSAP's large, central-Oxford office also provides adequate space where tutors can meet students safely, if required. Some tutors may decide to teach some tutorials online via Zoom or Skype or Microsoft Teams; again, if this is the case, we ask for students' patience and flexibility during these unprecedented times.

At present, many OSAP students are meeting their Oxford tutors face-to-face in a Covid-secure, socially-distanced manner. If mandated by UK Government guidance, face-to-face meetings can easily switch to online (remote) tutorials, whilst still ensuring all students still receive the same high quality, one-to-one tutorials with Oxford teaching faculty.

Should students, for whatever reason and at any point in the term, decide (or need) to return to their home country, Oxford tutorials could still be continued remotely.

Whether OSAP students are taught in person or remotely, they will, at the end of their term(s), still receive the same transcript recommending US semester credits for their work with their Oxford tutors. These transcripts will be accompanied by a cover letter, signed by a representative of the student's Oxford college, stating they were taught in the same way and to the same degree as an Oxford degree candidate.

### **DEPARTING OXFORD (END OF TERM) AND TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS**

In the extremely unlikely scenario that, at the end of term, students are affected by a travel ban, they will be able to stay in OSAP accommodation for as long as is necessary.

All travelers departing from England for an international destination must complete a declaration form stating that you are travelling for essential reasons (e.g. returning to your home country after completing a semester studying abroad). See this page for the form and for further instructions:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-declaration-form-for-international-travel>

### **UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD GUIDANCE**

The University of Oxford and its constituent colleges intend to be open to all students for the 2020-21 Academic Year.

Similarly, the Bodleian Library opened in July 2020, well in advance of the Michaelmas (Autumn) Term.

Please consult the website below, maintained and updated regularly by the University of Oxford, for useful coronavirus advice for University colleges, students, and staff:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/coronavirus>

### **PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND GUIDANCE**

Public Health England and the UK Government have published the guidelines below for anyone

in any setting, chief among which is covering one's mouth when sneezing or coughing, wearing a face mask, disinfecting surfaces, and frequent and thorough hand-washing.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

### **COVID-19 REFUND POLICY**

OSAP will continue to offer a full refund (less a \$300 administration fee) of any paid tuition and fees to any student who withdraws up until 30 days before the start of their term.

In the extremely unlikely event that UK Government policies change in such a way that students are banned from travelling to the UK (and thus prevented from starting their terms) in Oxford, OSAP will adjust its refund policies accordingly, and will offer refunds for all tuition and fees paid (less a \$300 administration fee).

### **EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

In case of serious accident, illness, or emergency, students should dial 999 from any phone. This will put students in touch with the Ambulance service.

For non-emergency queries, students should email [info@osapabroad.com](mailto:info@osapabroad.com). This address is monitored by all OSAP staff members, including senior management.

In the interest of safety and reassurance, OSAP also provides these direct phone numbers for students to contact in case of any emergency:

#### **OSAP Oxford Office Phone:**

From UK: 01865.201132

From Outside UK: +44.1865.201132

#### **Tim Moore, Academic Director:**

From UK: 07766 250141

From Outside UK: +44.7766.250141

#### **Adam Brown, Administrative Director:**

From UK: 07766 250142

From Outside UK: +44.7766.250142

#### **Judson Alphin, Senior Academic Advisor:**

From UK: 07901 620300

From Outside UK: +44.7901.620300

#### **Leah Wilson, Academic Advisor:**

USA Number: +1.970.485.1925

(Leah is OSAP's USA representative and will be available especially as students are traveling.)