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EXETER
COLLEGE
OXFORD

Welcome from the Rector

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Dear new Exeter postgraduate

Welcome to Exeter College! We are very much looking forward to your arrival here. This is one of Oxford's oldest colleges – 2022 is the eighth year of our eighth century – and one of the most beautiful, with a lovely garden right in the centre of town. It is extremely friendly, with lots of interesting activities going on.

Because of the lingering aspects of COVID-19 Exeter, like all other Oxford colleges, is having to make some special arrangements – though many fewer than two years ago or even a year ago! - to ensure the safety and health of all concerned. But my colleagues and I, and the leaders of our postgraduate representative organization, the Middle Common Room (MCR), are determined to create (as we managed to do last year) as normal an atmosphere as possible in College despite the pandemic.

Our MCR, the focus of Exeter's postgraduate life, is very experienced (having celebrated its 50th birthday in 2015) in serving as a lively centre for social and intellectual interaction. Also, you will have (in addition to the supervisors/teachers that the University provides) a College Fellow as an advisor and will be able to participate in special college dinners and other events particularly for postgraduates. You will also have access to the full range of the College's extracurricular activities.

We have a very substantial number of postgraduates, both doctoral and master's students, in a very wide variety of academic disciplines, and they play a major role in college activities.

I do hope that you will enjoy your time with us. The work may seem very demanding, especially at the start, but remember that everyone else will be in the same boat (even if they don't show it). One of the best reasons for coming to Oxford is the enormous amount of personal attention you will get, from those who supervise and teach you and from other members of staff, including those in College whose particular concern is the general wellbeing of our students, very much including postgraduates. Work must always come first, but do please try to make time for the sporting, cultural and social activities that are also an important part of both college and university life. You will have more opportunities to try things out, whether rowing or acting or debating, than will ever come your way again.

I arrived at Exeter as Rector (i.e. Head) of the College in the autumn of 2014 after many years as an academic historian and academic leader in other UK universities. I was once an Oxford postgraduate, so I have some idea of what lies in front of you! I work and live in the College, and you should feel able to come to see me if you have a problem that you can't sort out elsewhere, or a suggestion that seems particularly appropriate for me.

If by any chance your parents or guardians or other family members bring you to Oxford or visit you while you are here, I would be delighted to see them. For example, there is a tea party for the families of new students on Sunday 2nd October between 2 and 4.30 pm in the College Hall (on Exeter's historic site, on Turl Street), at which members of your family would be very welcome.

I look forward to seeing you when you arrive, and to getting to know you throughout your time at Exeter.

With all good wishes

Rick Trainor

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