



FOR UNIVERSITY STAFF

WEEK COMMENCING 10 SEPTEMBER 2018

ISSUE NO 155

SEMINARS

There are no seminars this week.



REMINDER :TRAFFIC ALERT: 14 SEPTEMBER

Approximately 8,000 visitors are expected in the city for the University's [Open Day](#) event on Friday 14 September.

With a further 1500 additional people expected for our Alumni Weekend on the same day traffic is likely to be heavier than usual.

The Undergraduate Admissions and Outreach (UAO) office has worked closely with the local councils and transport providers to try to minimise disruption to local residents and commuters.

Extra buses will run from the Park & Rides, but there may still be delays and you may wish to allow extra time for commuting. Please consider the potential impact of traffic delays when planning any meetings or events on this date.

For more information about Open Days please email opendays@admin.ox.ac.uk.

For news of travel disruptions Oxfordshire County Council's [live travel information](#) site provides up-to-date information at any time.

Festival tickets usually cost £21.50, which includes your first 11 wine samples and entry to a tutored tasting. Oxford University staff can receive 20% off by entering **OxStaff18** on the Eventbrite payment page, please ensure you use your ox.ac.uk email address for verification purposes.

For further details visit the festival website: www.oxfordwinefestival.org.



UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Newcomers' Club

FOR PARTNERS OF NEWLY APPOINTED
ACADEMICS, VISITING SCHOLARS, GRADUATE
STUDENTS AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Join us for Coffee!

Find us every
Wednesday
10.30 - 12.00 at
The University Club,
11 Mansfield Road,
Oxford OX1 3SD



Sign up for our Groups

- Newcomers with children
- Career Opportunities
- English Conversation
- Exploring Oxfordshire
- Singing • Needlecraft
- Book Club

MEMBERSHIP IS FREE

We offer advice, information and the opportunity to meet other Newcomers. Our events programme includes tours of colleges, museums and other places of interest.



FIND OUT MORE AT
www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk,
<https://www.facebook.com/OUNewcomers/>,
OR EMAIL US AT
newcomers@ox.ac.uk



Parent/Carers Group

Next session

Tuesday 16 October 2018 at 10.00am

Do you have questions or want to share information/experiences with fellow parents/carers?

The parent/carers group is a useful way for staff to share tips and advice. All staff are welcome to attend.

**10:00am
Large Seminar Room**

To sign up contact
ocdem.personnel@ndm.ox.ac.uk





New: Visa loan scheme for international staff

Employees can apply for a loan of up to £7,500 to cover allowable costs. This limit has been set so that the loan, if combined with other University loan schemes such as season train tickets, does not exceed £10,000 and become a taxable benefit. The loan can be repaid over a maximum of 24 months.

Approval of any loan is at the discretion of your Department or Faculty. **Anyone making a visa application after 1 August 2018 is eligible to apply.**

Find out more online at: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/permits/reimburse&loanscheme.

The University is introducing a visa loan scheme for international staff as we seek to assist those dealing with increasing costs for visa and Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) applications to the Home Office.

Employees requiring a visa can now apply for a loan to cover the costs of the visa and the Health Immigration Surcharge. The loan can be used to cover these costs for both the staff member and their dependents. The scheme can also be used for an employee's ILR application.

Please note that the loan should not be used to cover costs that will already be reimbursed by a department or faculty, eg the cost of a first application for some visas.

USS PENSION EMPLOYEE CONSULTATIONS

In late July, the USS pension scheme trustees announced their proposal to make phased contribution increases for both employees and employers. The proposed changes are subject to consultation with scheme members. **The employee consultation will run from 3 September – 2 November 2018.**

All eligible employees at Oxford have been mailed a letter and leaflet providing further details of the proposals and how they can take part in the consultation. Open forums are being held for members in September; register [here](#). Members have also been advised of these developments via emails in July and August and on the University **website** dedicated to the issue.

The proposed increases are due to be implemented in three phases from April 2019. More information, including worked examples of increases, is on the website [here](#).

Universities UK and the University and College Union are separately discussing the valuation of the USS scheme, which may lead to alternative proposals later in the year. For the time being, however, the USS trustees are legally obliged to put forward proposals based on the current valuation, which they believe will maintain current pension benefits and meet the requirements set by the Pensions Regulator. For more information from USS, please see [here](#).



SPEAK TO AN EXPERT

Are you looking for advice about caring responsibilities?

[My Family Care](#) offers a free advice phone line to all University employees. The team of experts at the **Speak to an Expert** service can provide advice and support on a whole host of caring related questions, whether it's for children, elderly relatives or dependent adults. It's easy to book a call via their website, and you can arrange a time that suits your schedule. Topics include:

- Where to start looking for childcare
- Parenting disabled children
- Information on care homes for the elderly
- Paying for care and claiming benefits and support
- Different types of flexible working

Registering for My Family Care is free to all University employees. You simply need to provide your SSO and personnel number (found on your payslip or on **HR Self-Service**).

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The following article which appeared on BBC News on the [Menopause](#) has got several woman in the department talking. If you would be interested in setting up an informal group to meet and discuss the issues highlighted in the article then please email Ocdem.personnel@ndm.ox.ac.uk.