**International freshers’ guide to admin**

**I/ Before arriving in Oxford:**

1. **Register with the GP**

I suggest registering with the **19 Beaumont Street practice** – they collaborate with college and are well versed in student issues; this is the one college recommends as well

Unfortunately, this is the only thing you can do before arriving in the UK. When you get to college, the registration letter will be waiting in your pidge (letterbox). Don’t throw this away without taking note of the **NHS number at the top!**

1. **Register with student discount apps**

Many stores offer student discounts. Download and sign up to **UNiDAYS** and **Studentbeans** with your student email address to access discounts from loads of stores, including apple!

**II/ As soon as you are in Oxford:**

Get familiar with **webprint**, which is the college’s printing system. You will need it for documents – ask one of the librarians for help if necessary.

1. **Get a British bank account**

Even if you think that you will not need one, you will. You will be living in the UK for the next three years and potentially more, having a British bank account as early as possible will save you pain and heartache. From avoiding currency fees to having proof of address and being able to get a phone plan, this is a necessity.

**Do not apply online as an international**, even if they say you can! The system is not built for visa share codes and BRPs, and it will cause more trouble in the long run. Wait until you are in the UK, walk into a branch and ask for an appointment there. Trust me on this one.

If you are an international you will only be able to apply for **basic bank accounts**, especially as you do not have extensive banking history. This is not a problem, as a student all you realistically need is a current account with basic functions.

Every bank will have a slightly different procedure and may ask for different **documents**. I am with Santander, and these are the documents they required:

* Passport (not a photocopy)
* Certificate of enrolment in studies (found on the student self-service website, get it printed and stamped/signed by college)
* Visa share code/BRP for non-EU students
* Letter of introduction to banking services, stamped and signed by the college (ask the academic office in 10 Merton Street for this)

1. **Get a British phone number (eSIM)**

To get a British phone number you will need a British bank account, so make sure that you have done that.

You will need a British phone number for all discount cards, and it will make your life in the UK easier. I suggest getting an **eSIM**, so that you can still continue using your home phone number when you go back but you can use your UK phone number here.

**Look online** rather than in the shops, as they tend to somehow convince you to get the most expensive plan possible (I was nearly coerced into buying a Wi-Fi router).

Only get an eSIM from one of the main providers **(3, Vodafone, O2, EE)**. I tried to get an eSIM from Lyca mobile and it was a disaster. Please note that signal will be mediocre whichever provider you choose, Oxford was not built with mobile data in mind.

1. **Discount cards**

There are a number of advantage cards which will allow you to save a lot over time. For these **you need a British phone number**, so make sure you have done that first.

* For groceries: Tesco Clubcard, Sainsbury’s Nectar Card
* For toiletries: Boots Advantage Card, Superdrug Beautycard

**III/ At some point during your first term:**

These are all things which are not urgent immediately but are useful in the long run.

1. **Get the NHS app**

Once you download the app, you will need to complete identity checks, which will take a few weeks. For this you will need your **NHS number**. Once you have done this, you will be able to see your patient records and any prescriptions you have.

1. **Apply for a National Insurance Number**

If you decide to do an **internship or get a job**, you will be asked for your National Insurance Number. Apply for this on the **UK Government website**. It may take a few weeks to get processed, so do not leave it until the last minute.

If you wish to apply for a **Provisional Driving License**, you may be asked for your National Insurance Number. Note that you may only apply for this after having lived in the UK for 6 months, via the UK Government website. I unfortunately do not know the details about this procedure