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19 March 2025 webinar presentation

Thank you for attending this first webinar for Girton's 2025-26 offerholders. You are among a growing number of new Girton offerholders who will hopefully begin study this October. For your information, in 2024-25, we welcomed 172 new postgraduates and we will likely have similar numbers this October. A few other stats from last year's intake: 43% female, 70% overseas leading to a very rich cultural community at Girton, 42 different departments are represented with many more different courses, 18% on Phd courses, and 17 are in receipt of College funding.

I am going to briefly go through what happens now that you have both College membership and a Departmental offer.

You need to now actively concentrate on fulfilling your remaining offer conditions by the 31st of July, the University deadline. This means obtaining the necessary remaining documentation and uploading it to your self-service portal in good time for the Postgraduate Admissions Office (PAO) to check and verify everything you upload.

Continue to pay close attention to the portal and the list of outstanding conditions and/or any messages that may be sent by PAO. Reply in a timely way to any messages and complete the conditions that are simple to tick off the list as soon as you can, for instance, upload a passport-sized photograph, and the required ID (usually a valid passport). As mentioned, each document you upload to your self-service is checked and then verified by PAO and this can take a number of days to do and even longer the closer it gets to 31 July, hence us suggesting you upload the simpler ones as soon as you can. You'll see the PAO processing times indicated on your self-service. Each item takes time to process – so a photograph might take as long as your academic condition, again why it's important to leave only the necessary conditions until July, for example, your academic condition. Important: If you have any questions about your documentation or the timeframe of processing, you can go directly to the Postgraduate Admissions Cambridge Contact Us page where you'll see a number of creative and fairly efficient ways to contact them listed – you can also speak to current students which could be helpful. You're also welcome to ask us at Girton if you can be put in touch with one of our current postgraduates who I'm sure would be happy to connect with you.

College has included a 15 July date in the Offer letter – this is the date by which you need to be confirmed by the University and have applied for College accommodation in order to be considered for a College room.

If any of this is unclear or confusing, please don't hesitate to contact us at the postgraduate.office@girton.cam.ac.uk email address. There are NO silly questions. Cambridge is an ancient institution with unique ways of doing things and many acronyms! Don't hesitate to ask.

About the photograph to upload - the photo required needs to be a standard passport-sized close up photo in jpg format and should contain no other people or backgrounds. If it's not, it could be rejected, and could affect you getting your University card in a timely manner at the time of arrival.

We ask that you go back and read the College offer letter. Also attached to that email was a Declaration form that needs signing and uploading but only when you are sure of your funding source(s). The Declaration does not need to be uploaded to your Admissions self-service portal – it just needs to be returned to us. The Declaration informs the College of your funding plan (whether you will be funded, fully or partially, or will be self-funding) and it also highlights that your University Composition fee (the fee for your course) is due in full by mid-November. Don't worry about this at the moment as there are ways to

request alternate payment options AFTER YOU'VE ARRIVED, if you are fully sponsored. Please send us evidence of any financial sponsorships or student loans. If you are self-funding there is no need to send us evidence, however it is extremely important that you do know the source of the money you need for fees and maintenance BEFORE you sign both this and the University's Financial Undertaking form. Send us the Declaration when you are ready to sign and upload the University's Financial Undertaking form to your self-service portal.

With respect to the College's funding competition for new postgraduates, please don't send us a separate email asking about College funding – if you applied to the University by 7 Jan and you're eligible, we will be able to see your application at the time of short listing. The Funding Chair will speak more about this later.

Please apply for College accommodation using the link on our website sooner than later, if you have any intention of living in College accommodation. It helps our planning to know now how many hope to live in. Also, the 25/26 provisional rents are now available on our website.

Just two more things to let you know of now:

If you're able to, we encourage you to come to Cambridge and to Girton for a tour before you move here in October. You can either come to College and do a self tour of the main site by checking in with the Porters at the Main Site and they'll give you a map to help with your tour, or if you would like us to show you around on a M to F between 9 and 4, then make an appointment with us via email. If you do come on the weekend or out of our hours, please. We can't offer a tour of accommodation, I'm afraid but it really is helpful to get a feel for Girton and for Cambridge before you arrive if you can manage it.

And lastly, I'm starting already at this early stage to emphasise the importance of communication before and during your time at the College and University. Certainly do between now and October and then after you obtain your Cambridge @cam email address (close to the beginning of term), we ask you to read and respond to emails sent to that address at least once a day – it may mean you need to set up email forwarding so that it's easy for you to see all of your emails in one place – if you need to ask how to do this, please do. It is the address used by all of us at the University and we're all doing our best to be considerate communicators.