BALLIOL COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Appointment of Domestic Bursar

Candidate Pack
Autumn 2026

Welcome

I am delighted that you are interested in applying for the role of Domestic Bursar here at Balliol College.

We are one of the oldest and largest of the Oxford colleges, with a long tradition of academic excellence and of contribution to public life. We are distinguished, too, by our strong sense of community, bringing together our Fellows and lecturers, our executive and domestic staff, and alumni from across the world, with a remarkably dynamic and diverse body of students, both undergraduate and graduate. It is a lively and stimulating place, widely known for its friendly and outgoing character.

There are two College Bursars, Domestic and Finance, both of whom report directly to the Master. The Domestic Bursar will be a key part of the senior team of professional and academic officers who work together to ensure that the College fulfils its charitable purposes: teaching, learning, and research.

The College has invested significantly in its estate in recent years, including award-winning accommodation for students on the Master's Field site, some eight minutes' walk away from our historic base in Broad Street in the heart of the City; and we are planning numerous further improvements to our many historic buildings over the coming years. So this will be an exciting time to be the person with responsibility for overseeing the estate.

The post of Domestic Bursar is extremely various, and sometimes demanding: no two days are the same. The successful candidate can certainly look forward to an interesting and diverse life within a thriving institution and alongside a great team.

We look forward to receiving your application and should you wish to do so, please feel free to discuss the role with our advising consultant, Ben Tucker at Minerva (whose contact details are later in this document).

Best wishes,

Professor Seamus Perry
Master

About Us

The University of Oxford is the oldest university in the English-speaking world and today stands as a vibrant, world-leading centre of learning, teaching and research. Home to more than 26,000 students from over 160 countries, Oxford is a community where exceptional minds from every background come together to share knowledge, spark ideas and push the boundaries of discovery.

What makes Oxford unique is its distinctive collegiate system. With 39 colleges, each self-governing and financially independent, students and academics belong not only to a globally renowned university, but also to a close-knit academic community. This blend of the international and the personal provides unparalleled opportunities for collaboration, learning and friendship, and nurtures the multidisciplinary spirit that drives Oxford's outstanding achievements in teaching and research.

Oxford is proud to be ranked first in the world in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings for the last ten consecutive years.

More information about the University of Oxford can be found here: www.ox.ac.uk

Balliol

Balliol is a constituent college of the University of Oxford with Professor Seamus Perry its Master. With a good claim to being the oldest of all the Oxford colleges, Balliol has been a hub of learning and community since its foundation in 1263. The College occupies a historic site in the middle of Oxford, with additional accommodation a short distance away in Jowett Walk and St Cross Road (where the sports pitches and pavilion are also located), and further graduate accommodation at its Graduate Centre at Holywell Manor. As one of the larger colleges within the University, it is home to roughly 860 students, with undergraduates making up just under half of the student body. The College also employs over 80 Fellows, 50 lecturers, and about 180 support staff. The College has over 10,000 alumni from all over the world, including many distinguished old members. There is an active Development Office involved in fundraising and alumni relations. While academic excellence is at the core of Balliol's mission, visitors are often struck by the College's informal and welcoming atmosphere.

Further information about the College is available at www.balliol.ox.ac.uk.

The College has a turnover of around £20m per year. It derives around half its income from student tuition fees, its share of University research income, and charges paid by students for accommodation, food and other services. The rest of its income comes from invested endowment, charitable donations, conferences and summer schools, and private events.

The College's charitable objects are education, teaching, research, and the maintenance of a chapel. To pursue these aims, it is preparing to undertake a major programme of capital works on its estate over the next few years, in which the Domestic Bursar is expected to play a leading role.

The Role

The Domestic Bursar is the College Officer responsible for the efficient operation of most of the functions providing domestic services to academics, students, and staff living or working in College, as well as to conference guests, visiting Old Members, school groups, and the general public.

The Domestic Bursar is a leader and role model for staff whose daily work is crucial for the smooth running of the College. The Domestic Bursar's teams are in many ways the face of the College and deliver the first experience which all our students, guests, and visitors receive upon arrival. The Domestic Bursar is responsible for the management of approximately 125 of our non-academic staff. As with all College Officers holding senior positions, the post-holder may on occasion be required to carry out other duties commensurate with the role.

The Domestic Bursar will attend Governing Body and Executive Committee, the latter of which is directly responsible for most policy decisions on non-academic matters, and other relevant committees.

After the successful completion of an initial period of office, the Domestic Bursar will be considered for election to a Fellowship of the College.

MAIN DUTIES

The Domestic Bursar will report to the Master, as Head of the College, and will be responsible to the Governing Body for the overall domestic management of the College.

The Domestic Bursar is responsible for the day-to-day running of the College, assisted by the Heads of Departments in the following areas: Accommodation, Housekeeping, Front of House, Kitchens, Lodges Maintenance, Conference and Events, Grounds, Gardens, Human Resources (non-academic), the Sports Field, and the Boathouse.

The Domestic Bursar manages the respective Heads of Department. The Domestic Bursar is also the Safeguarding Lead, the Premises Licence Holder, the Fire Safety Officer, and the College's Health and Safety Officer.

As well as Governing Body, the Domestic Bursar sits on several of the principal committees of the College.

The Domestic Bursar is also a member of the Conference of Colleges Domestic Bursars' Committee which meets twice a term and is attended by those holding similar roles from all Colleges.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Leadership and Strategic Management

1. A Senior College Officer and a key member of Balliol's management team, the Domestic Bursar contributes to the development and delivery of the College's strategic priorities. The Domestic Bursar participates in the relevant committees, working groups, and other governance meetings, helping to shape policy and long-term planning.

2. The Domestic Bursar is responsible for the leadership, management, and smooth operation of all domestic departments within the College (approximately 125 staff). This includes the oversight and line management of departmental operations:

    - Play a leading role in the planning and delivery of a programme of capital buildings projects further to enhance the College's facilities and educational infrastructure;
    - Play a leading role in the development and successful implementation of a strategy for the upkeep and the refurbishment of the College estate, liaising closely with the Buildings Working Group, with the Buildings Manager, and with external providers;
    - Oversee the work of the Conference and Events Manager to ensure the delivery of a successful and revenue-generating programme of Conferences and Events, in line with College needs;
    - With the Buildings Manager and Deputy Domestic Bursar, plan and deliver timely maintenance and refurbishment programmes across the College estate;
    - Oversee the provision of catering, through the Executive Head Chef and Front of House Manager, ensuring food service is delivered to high standards and cost-effectively, to meet the needs of Senior and Junior Members and of Conference clients;

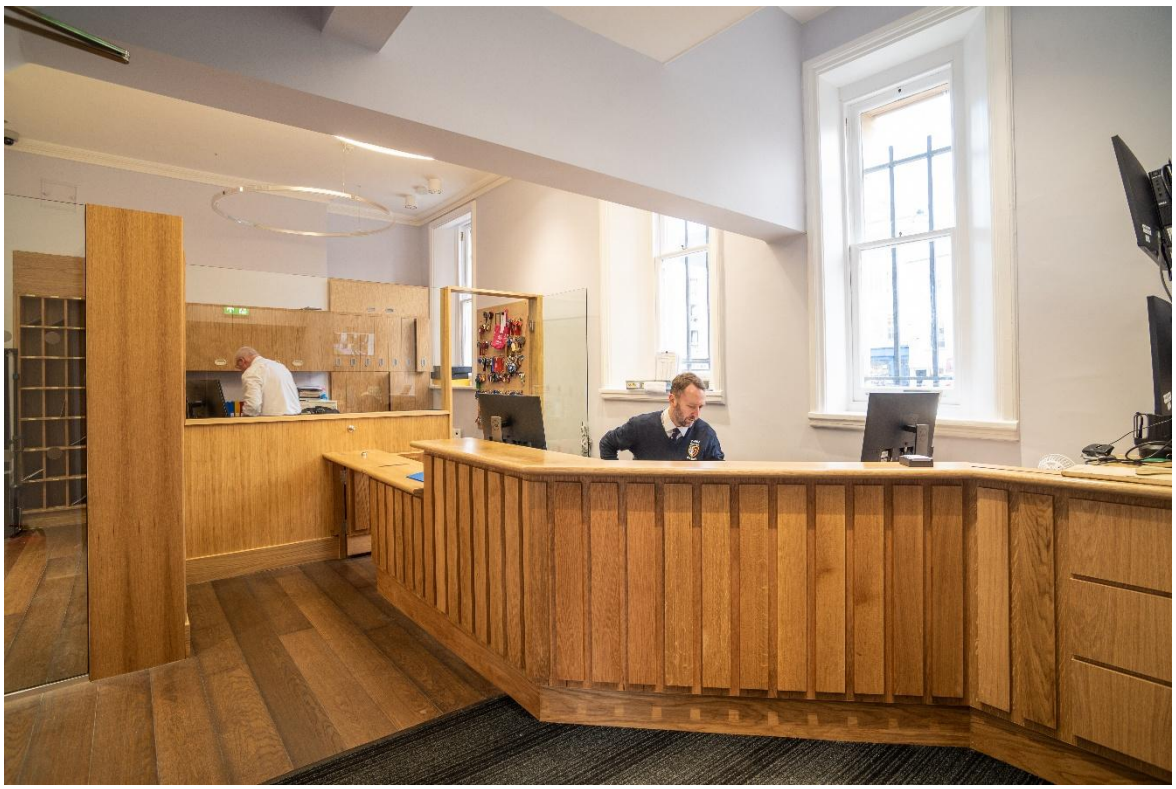
- Oversee the provision of accommodation, through the Deputy Domestic Bursar and at the instruction of the Rents & Charges Committee (allocating rooms and dwellings to students and guests);
- Deliver a cost-effective and efficient reception and security function in the Lodge; and ensure that the Lodge is staffed at all hours with appropriately trained and supported staff;
- Oversee the green spaces of the College, supporting the Head Gardener and participating in the Gardens Committee.

3. Represent the College at Conference of Colleges and University meetings as appropriate, and report back on matters of note to the Master or other College Officers as required.

4. Maintain up-to-date knowledge of employment issues and contribute to the development of policies and procedures, in consultation with the Master, the HR Manager, Finance Bursar, the College Accountant, and external advisers.

Financial Administration

1. Ensure line-managed departments use their budgets efficiently and effectively, working closely with the Finance Bursar and the College Accountant. This will include making sure the tendering processes are followed and procurement is managed effectively.



People Management

1. Work closely with the HR Manager to foster a culture of professionalism, service excellence, and inclusivity, encouraging collaboration across teams and maintaining a strong "customer" focus in the delivery of all services to Fellows, students, staff, conference guests, and visitors.

2. Provide support and guidance to their Heads of Department to instil strong values, support them in their problem-solving, and encourage effective and efficient delivery of services to meet appropriate standards of quality which respond to the needs of the College.

3. Ensure line-managed staff receive regular performance feedback, including an annual performance appraisal, that they have clear targets, report against key performance indicators, are encouraged to undertake CPD and receive appropriate training.

4. Ensure visa, right to work and other legal obligations are met with respect to non-academic staff.

Compliance

1. Keep abreast of legislation (including upcoming legislation) affecting areas of operational responsibility, and inform Governing Body when serious change is imminent, with the objective of ensuring that the College is compliant with all such legislation at all times. It is expected that departmental managers will be accountable to the Domestic Bursar, where function-specific compliance is concerned.

2. Ensure the College is compliant with Health and Safety legislation, and fulfil the role of nominated Health and Safety Officer and Fire Safety Officer for the College; maintain and update the Health and Safety policy and plan; maintain and update the fire safety plan and fire assessments; support the College in embedding accommodation standards; and to source and implement Health and Safety training, and professional advice as necessary.

3. Foster a culture that proactively engages in safety amongst staff and students; be an active voice for H&S within committees and other meetings. Support heads of department in maintaining and regularly updating risk assessments and business continuity plans.

4. Ensure the College is compliant with its obligations under the Equality Act.

5. Act as the initial point of contact for police, the fire service and the Local Authority.

6. Be conversant with and keep up-to-date all relevant College policies.

7. Hold the alcohol and events licence on behalf of the College.

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

- Educated to first degree level or with equivalent competencies gained in a similar role;
- Extensive leadership experience at a senior, strategic and operational level;
- Understanding of the aims and culture of the College and the University;
- Proven ability to manage and bring sound judgement to a large number of complex and diverse problems with often conflicting priorities; an ability to prioritise tasks and to work to deadlines;
- Excellent communication skills, interpersonal and influencing skills with the ability to engage and build good working relationships at all levels across the College the wider University, including senior academic staff, students, and non-academic staff;
- Ability to lead with empathy, build consensus, and manage change sensitively;
- Proven team-development skills;
- Ability and willingness to work out-of-hours, sometimes at weekends and in the evenings, when required;
- Budget management – devising budgets and managing cost centres to achieve budgets (income and expenditure);
- Experience of current Employment and Health and Safety Legislation;
- Good systems skills (and as a user of Microsoft Office applications);
- Ability to produce clear, considered, informative and numerate papers for College meetings that contribute to transparent and effective decision making.

Qualities

- Able to lead teams through change, to coach and to develop staff;
- A collaborative style and used to working as a member of a senior professional team though always with a willingness to "own" and advance the issue;
- A precise thinker who values accuracy;
- A pro-active, resourceful and hands-on manager, with an eye for new approaches and solutions;
- Able to handle sensitive material with professionalism and discretion;
- A sympathy with the academic aims and ethos of an Oxford college and its structures of governance;
- A commitment to ensuring that our operations meet the best possible environmental standards and help address the challenges of climate change;
- A commitment to equality, diversity and inclusivity in the workplace and an understanding of how such an approach strengthens the organisation.

Desirable Attributes

- Professional experience in higher education and of working in a collegiate environment;
- Senior level professional experience in the hospitality industry.

FURTHER PARTICULARS

Salary:

£85,000 - £90,000, depending on skills, qualifications and experience. Salaries are reviewed annually.

Hours:

37.5 hours per week across the year, although this may, in practice, be weighted towards busier periods in term-time. As a member of the senior management team, the ability and willingness to work longer hours and weekends will be required from time to time.

Pension:

The post-holder will be eligible to join the USS pension scheme as soon as they start employment with Balliol. This is a contributory pension scheme, with contributions from both the post holder and the College. Further details are available here.

Meals:

A two-course lunch is available in the Hall when the kitchens are open. The post-holder will also have full SCR dining rights and membership of the SCR (for which a small termly charge is levied and certain other charges for wine and Guest Night dessert, apply).

Holidays:

6 weeks (30 days) paid annual holiday, plus public holidays. Five of these days are taken around Christmas and New Year. Please note that the College reserves the right to require staff to work on Bank holidays during term-time, receiving a day off in lieu of each day worked. Leave may not normally be taken during Full Term. The Master must approve all leave.

Probation:

The appointment will be offered with a probationary period of four months and is subject to a satisfactory check with the DBS, references and proof of the right to work in the UK.

Notice:

During the probationary period either party may give the other one month's Notice of Termination in writing. Following successful completion of probation, the length of notice will be three months on either side, given in writing.

Healthcare:

There is an option to join a Private Health Scheme as a taxable benefit. Access to an employee assistance programme is provided free of charge, plus an annual flu jab voucher. There is free use of the College's onsite gym and the University swimming pool and preferential rates for other University sports facilities and the Nuffield Health gym on Woodstock Road.

Travel benefits:

Interest-free ticket loans enabling the purchase of bus passes and annual rail season tickets to Oxford. Discounted travel is available on some services. There is a cycle to work scheme offering discounted rates on bicycles and accessories. An electric vehicle leasing scheme (salary sacrifice) is also available.

Learning and development:

The University runs an extensive programme of training courses. The post-holder will be encouraged to attend training sessions as appropriate, both within College and the wider University. An online Information Security module must be completed annually.

University Club:

Free membership of the University Club, offering refreshments and accommodation in an exclusive space for staff, postgraduates and alumni.

Visitor access:

Staff can enjoy a range of benefits including free or discounted visitor access to the University's colleges, gardens, libraries, museums and events.

Balliol nursery:

A day-time nursery on Rawlinson Road, subject to availability. Subsidised rates are available for Balliol staff.

HOW TO APPLY

The closing date for applications is **Monday 12 October**. Applications should be addressed to balliol@minervasearch.com in the form of a CV and covering letter. First interviews will take place at the College on 26 October 2026. Final interviews will be in early November 2026.

Prospective applicants wishing to discuss the position should, in the first instance contact Ben Tucker at Minerva (balliol@minervasearch.com).

Balliol College is an equal opportunities employer. All applicants are asked to complete a separate confidential Equal Opportunities Monitoring form to help us fulfil our duties in this regard. Applicants should let us know if they require reasonable adjustments for any part of the recruitment process.

Shortlisted candidates will be expected to supply original documentation proving that they have the right to work in the UK.

Data Protection: personal data is processed in accordance with the College's Privacy Policy which can be accessed here.