

Corpus Christi
College Oxford



Appointment of President

CANDIDATE PACK
NOVEMBER 2026





Introduction

The Governing Body of Corpus Christi College, Oxford intends to elect a new President to succeed Professor Helen Moore who will complete her term as President at the end of September 2027.



About Corpus and its Priorities



Corpus Christi is a constituent College of the University of Oxford. Founded in 1517, it was the first truly Renaissance institution of Oxford or Cambridge, created as ‘a certain bee-garden’ where ‘scholars, like ingenious bees, are by day and night to make wax....and honey’. Over five hundred years later the bee garden that is Corpus continues to thrive and grow. The College admits undergraduate and graduate students across the humanities, sciences, and social sciences.

The College is one of the smaller Oxford Colleges with 259 undergraduates and 102 graduates. There are 38 Fellows (not including the President) on the Governing Body plus 2 Career Development Fellows, 3 Research Fellows, 1 Medical Research Fellow, and 10 Junior Research Fellows. Teaching is also done by college lecturers.

The College is a vibrant and friendly community of people from many different backgrounds. Individual members are supported in their own pursuit of excellence; and are valued as participants in the many activities that comprise College life.

The aims and objects of the College are to:

- Deliver world-class undergraduate education, regardless of financial background, through rigorous academic selection, and personal and small group tuition within the College together with personal pastoral support;
- Provide an academically diverse environment in which graduate students may mature towards independence in study and research;
- Promote research of the highest quality by Fellows and students for the benefit of wider understanding;
- Maintain good stewardship of the College’s historic buildings and collections which are a part of the nation’s heritage; and
- Maintain and enhance the College’s endowments and benefactions for the benefit of future generations while supporting current activities.

The academic values of the College, as stated by Governing Body, are to:

- Strive for and promote excellence in teaching, learning and research;
- Promote an atmosphere of academic integrity, innovation and a global outlook;
- Set high academic standards and to support these with appropriately directed resources, regularly reviewed; and
- Promote our values of academic excellence, humanity, integrity, enquiry and endeavour within the wider community.

Students

Teaching in the College is provided by outstanding scholars and researchers committed to small group teaching. Students are supported in many ways, starting with a friendly and highly professional team in the Porters' Lodge. There is a large College staff, many of whom have enjoyed a lengthy tenure at the College. Our kitchen is renowned for providing students and staff with food of exceptional quality. One of the College's Apprentice Chefs won the 2026 Oxford Young Chef of the Year Award. A dedicated and experienced welfare team helps students make the most of their time at Oxford.

We guarantee every undergraduate a room in College accommodation for the duration of their degree. We currently offer graduate students accommodation for up to two years. There are awards and prizes for students who are working consistently well and achieving academic excellence. Funding is also provided



to students through Travel Grants, Academic Expenses Grants and other financial support. A series of highly successful President's Seminars brings in key thinkers to engage with students. Many subjects also run their own events for their students.

Besides the Junior (undergraduate) and Middle (graduate) Common Rooms, there are a range of college student societies, including sporting societies. The soon-to-be refurbished College gym is open 24/7 on the main site. It will soon be refurbished and equipped with comprehensive cardio-vascular and functional fitness equipment, including free weights.





Scholarship

Academic ambition is central to the College's mission. Teaching is underpinned by a commitment to expand the intellectual horizons of students and to help them achieve their intellectual potential. The academic staff are distinguished and active scholars in a diversity of fields. They contribute not just to the life of the College but to the University and wider public and academic discourse.

The small size of the Fellowship is conducive to a continuous exchange of ideas and the development of interdisciplinary initiatives. College facilities are made available to Fellows so that they can organise and host academic events. Shared meals are especially important in maintaining the vitality of our academic community. At lunch a physicist will be found avidly chatting to a legal scholar about methodology. A recent volume co-produced by two Fellows opens with the words: 'This book began from a lunchtime conversation between the two editors, a historian and a philosopher...'

The College has an established and highly competitive scheme for Visiting Fellows and Scholars. This scheme enables academics from across the world and at different stages of their career to spend between one term and one year at the College. The College also participates in such schemes as the AfOx Visiting Fellowship Programme and the Huntington Library Exchange. This continual interaction with the wider academic world enriches the College and is a source of pride.

Building and Estate

The main site of the College, with its famously informal gardens, is located in the heart of Oxford. The High Street is just 2 minutes' walk in one direction. The tranquillity of Christ Church Meadow is the same distance in the other. On site are the Hall, College chapel, garden, academic and staff offices and meeting and common rooms. The President's Lodgings are some fifty yards from the main College buildings in Merton Street. The lodgings consist of a substantial Elizabethan-Jacobean house, with a beautiful garden. Parking for the President is provided beneath the adjoining Oldham building or in the Fellows' car park. The main site also includes Beam Hall, two Magpie Lane houses, Kybald Twychen, and the Oldham and Jackson Buildings.

The College also operates accommodation sites around central Oxford for its graduate and undergraduate students including the Liddell Building, Lampl Building, Venneit Close (8 flats), two Banbury Road houses, and two Walton Street houses. It has recently acquired a major new site at Moberly Close, which is to be redeveloped under the name of East Quad.

In 2024, the College opened the Spencer Building - a new permanent home for its Library, Archives, and Special Collections. An ambitious building project, the building provides state-of-the-art library and archival facilities, allowing rare and valuable materials to be stored safely and making them available to researchers and scholars. It is one of the UK's first Grade I listed Passivhaus buildings and won a RIBA South Award in 2026.

The College operates a successful conference business, making its rooms available for hire for residential conferences, dinners, and events.



Governance

The Governing Body of the College consists of the President and 38 Governing Body Fellows. The Governing Body has responsibility for the management of the affairs of the College. Committees meet on a regular basis; their reports and recommendations enable the Governing Body to make informed decisions on all areas affecting the College.

The College's commitment to academic self governance is embodied in the senior administrative roles performed by Fellows as College Officers alongside their teaching and research careers: these roles include those of Senior Tutor, Tutor for Admissions, Tutor for Graduates, Dean, and Welfare Dean and are typically held for a fixed term. Additionally, there are three permanent College Officers (the Bursar, Domestic Bursar, and Development Director) who attend to the principal non-academic necessities of the College in pursuit of its mission.

A key responsibility of the President is to support the College Officers and facilitate the cycles of succession in those roles, taking a leading role in ensuring the workload and responsibilities are appropriately assigned.

The College is committed to probity and transparency in its decision making, and over the last decade has reviewed and revised its governance structures and statutes.



Access and Outreach

The College is committed to widening participation in Higher Education and to broadening access to the University of Oxford. A dedicated Outreach Team runs a series of events across each year, with many academics involved. In 2025 the College delivered 81 events and interacted with over 5,300 students. Many of these are well-established programmes within our geographical link area – the North West of England. The North West Science Network has been running for over a decade and holds events (including a summer school) that enable school students interested in a career in science to meet and learn from established researchers.

The North West Humanities Network was launched in October 2026 and will run in parallel with its scientific counterpart. The College has also been running a successful Law Residential and Legal Reasoning Prize for school students since 2017.



Alumni

The College is proud of its 5,000 strong alumni community (known as Corpuses) and there are many ways alumni maintain a close connection with the College. There are traditional gaudies (reunions) and other social events that provide opportunities for former students to return to the College. In recent years the College has also hosted events in other countries.

The Corpus Black and Minority Ethnic and the 'First Generation' Student and Alumni Mentoring Schemes connect current undergraduate and graduate students with alumni who have volunteered to provide personal and professional mentoring, to share experiences and advice, and to encourage and enable students to fulfil their career aspirations. For the academic year 2024-25, there were twenty-eight mentor/mentee pairings.

Bequests have played an important part in the history of the College and continue to be a way for individuals and organisations who care about the College to sustain its present and contribute to its future. The College gratefully receives these deeply personal gifts. The income received by the College from Donations and Legacies for the year ending 31 July 2025 is £11.6 million, of which £10.4 million is from six bequests. This generosity is remarkable and vitally important to Corpus as a way to secure the future, while celebrating an individual's past.





Future Priorities

In 2025 the Governing Body approved a ten-year strategic plan for the College, which has shaped the Development Office's fundraising priorities. A central ambition of this plan is to enhance and expand the College's accommodation and facilities through the East Quad project.

Now that Corpus has some of the best teaching and learning facilities in Oxford following the successful completion of the Spencer Building campaign - 88% philanthropically funded by 230 alumni and friends – the priorities for the next five years focus on preserving our academic excellence, alongside providing an exception experience for our students. Complementing the University's Oxford Excellence campaign the agreed priorities fall across four core pillars of Academic Posts, Graduate Scholarships, Capital Projects (accommodation) and Other Strategic Priorities, notably Outreach and Student Support.

The primary goal for Academic Posts is to secure five Tutorial Fellowships in perpetuity by fully endowing the College's share of each post, as well as establishing an endowment fund for the Law Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA). This will play a crucial role in sustaining our core work, including Corpus' unique tutorial system, which offers students an exceptional level of personalised teaching and academic engagement.

The years-long decline in government funding for graduate research means that we will continue to work energetically in raising funds to support this vital activity, which underpins our research mission both now and into the future. The scale of the need is indicated by the fact that the number of Corpus graduate studentships partially or fully funded by donations has increased from 13 in 2021 to 21 in 2026-27.

The recent purchase of Moberly Close, a property 12 minutes' walk from the main site, represents a transformational opportunity for the College to significantly enhance its offering for its students however its significance extends well beyond the building itself. The East Quad project envisaged for this site will enable strategic growth, increased graduate numbers, new academic specialisms, and a more diverse and resilient income base.

Finally, a key strategic priority remains sustaining Corpus's Outreach Programme and its wide-ranging student support initiatives, including the Career Development Fund, Expanding Horizons, the Pelican Fund, and other mainstay offerings for students.

The Role



The President is the Head of the College and has ultimate responsibility for furthering the intellectual mission of the College and the fulfilment of its purpose, promoting its effective operation as a place of education, research and scholarship. The President plays a central role in the intellectual life of the College and in fostering the achievement of its members.

The President acts in three main capacities. First, she or he chairs the Governing Body, recognising that the voice of each fellow is of equal account. Second, the President oversees the execution of the Governing Body's will and is responsible for the good governance of the College. Third, she or he is the principal representative of the College externally.

The Presidency is a full-time role which combines an active involvement in running the College with the duty of representing Corpus in the broader University and in the wider world. As is stipulated by the Statutes, the electors are seeking someone with a strong affinity for the College's aims and objectives, proven academic or other professional achievements, and the experience needed to administer College affairs and support the academic work of the College. The President requires skills in communication (both spoken and written), administration, and consensus-building. It is this combination which permits her or him to guide the progress of an academic community over which the President does not have executive authority.

The responsibilities of the President include chairing meetings of the Governing Body and College committees in a purposeful manner that ensures the successful and democratic operation of the College. The President oversees the management of the College and works with the College Officers and administrative staff to ensure that the decisions of the Governing Body and its committees are carried out. It is essential that she or he can engage with a complicated financial picture, can actively participate in the financial affairs of the College, and is able to offer appropriate oversight. The President has a very important part to play, both symbolically and substantively, in fostering both intellectual engagement and achievement among the College's students, and high-quality research and teaching among its academic staff.

The President represents the College to the wider world in many ways, but has a particularly important leadership role in the area of fundraising. This will be one of the most strategically significant aspects of the role, particularly during the early years of the appointment, as the College seeks to realise the exceptional opportunities created by the Moberly Close acquisition and the transformational opportunity this presents to accelerate the College's wider strategic ambitions. Working in close partnership with the Development Director and their team, the President will play a leading role in cultivating and securing major philanthropic support.

She or he must also be an effective presence at public functions and in entertaining current and potential benefactors, formally and informally, within College and beyond, both during term and during vacations. Representation to alumni, the general public, and potential donors will be a vital and early part of the role. Events and meetings may take place outside Oxford, and there is an especially strong network of friends and members of Corpus in North America.

External and timely representation may also be necessary when members of the College, or its affairs, attract the interest of the media.

The President acts as the public face for the College, to current and former students, at a variety of formal and informal occasions, such as dinners, and events in the evening and

at weekends; the role thus entails a certain amount of entertaining, hosting and public speaking. The President is an embodiment of the character of Corpus, and her or his physical presence in the College makes a central contribution to its cohesion as a community. During term time, the President must reside in the President's lodgings, and be an active member of College life.

The President is the principal representative of the College within the University of Oxford. Recent far-reaching changes in the governance and funding of higher education make it particularly important that the College's concerns are given weight by the University, and vice versa, through the President's membership of central committees of the University and through meetings with other Heads of House.



Candidate Profile



To succeed in this appointment the successful candidate will need a broad range of skills and experience. They will be the following.

- A figure of achieved distinction and high intellectual calibre, with a record of successfully leading an estimable institution or organisation, or able to demonstrate the potential for providing such leadership. The successful candidate need not come from within the academic world but will have a strong sense of the meaning and purposes of an institution of higher learning, advanced teaching and research. On this basis the candidate will offer inspiring, empathetic and sustained leadership to a non-hierarchical and diverse self-governing community of scholars.
- Capable of providing strategic vision in fostering collegiality and providing intellectual leadership and a shared sense of common purpose within the Fellowship including taking an energetic and constant interest in the academic progress and wider achievements of the College's talented undergraduate and graduate students from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Able to act as the public face of the College in a complex, dynamic and challenging environment. This will include: representing and furthering the interests of the College within the University and beyond; fostering good relationships with old members and others; and bringing a vision and proactive approach to the College's development work.
- Able to build strong relationships with benefactors, articulating for them a compelling vision for the College, and where appropriate making direct requests at the highest level for transformational gifts.
- Capable of performing a multi-faceted leadership role for the non-academic staff and handling multiple lines of reporting.
- Able to make decisions effectively but collegially by putting the Governing Body in the best position to exercise its Trustee duties.



Terms & Conditions



- The salary for the President will be decided in consultation with the person elected and will be competitive in comparison with other colleges, reflecting the size and complexity of the College's operations.
- The salary is pensionable within the Universities Superannuation Scheme. Common table is provided free of charge and there is a budget for College expenses incurred by the President, including entertainment.
- A personal assistant is provided by the College.
- The President must seek the consent of the College if she or he wishes to hold other offices. There are arrangements in place for occasional sabbatical leave for the purposes of advanced study or research, and an academically active President will also be entitled to a research allowance.
- The responsibilities of the President involve activities at certain weekends during term-time and at certain periods during vacations.
- The President will be required to attend College functions both in and out of term, and undertake national and international travel on College business.
- The Lodgings must be the President's main place of residence during his/her term of office. They are provided free of rent, property taxes and maintenance costs; the cost of utilities is split with the College on a 50/50 basis.
- The post is eligible for non-contributory private medical insurance.
- Holiday entitlement is 25 working days; in addition the College closes for 5 days at Christmas. Employees are also entitled to all UK Bank Holidays.
- We expect to appoint a President for a fixed term of 7 years. The post is subject to the College Retirement Age (currently the September prior to the incumbent's 70th birthday).



How to Apply

The closing date for all applications, which should be in the form of a CV and cover letter, and addressed to ccc@minervasearch.com is Monday 11 January 2027.

Should you be interested in an informal conversation about the post, please contact Minerva Search via ccc@minervasearch.com

It is anticipated that in-person meetings and interviews with shortlisted candidates will take place at Corpus Christi, Oxford in March 2027.