

# Guidelines for Alumni Groups

**1. The mission of the University of Oxford Alumni Office is to build awareness, engagement and ultimately support for the collegiate University by offering programmes and resources of perceived value to alumni throughout their lives.**

1.1. The Alumni Office fosters a mutually beneficial relationship with alumni in a variety of ways. One of the most significant of these is through supporting a global network of volunteer-run alumni groups. In regions or areas where there are insufficient alumni to form a viable group, the Alumni Office also records and publicises the names of Oxonian contacts who encourage peer-to-peer interaction on a smaller-scale.

1.2. The purpose of all alumni groups is twofold: to provide opportunities for alumni to engage with the University and to remain connected with each other; and to act as ambassadors and advocates for Oxford within their particular community.

1.3. Alumni groups are expected to maintain an ongoing relationship with their members through a series of planned, regular activities. These are likely to include some of the following: social and professional networking events; events that provide an academic or intellectual link to Oxford, such as speaker events; activities that benefit current or prospective students, such as travel bursaries, freshers' parties, events showcasing student talents, or events forging links with local schools (outreach), business (internships) and institutions (branded events); events that offer an opportunity to promote Oxford and serve the local community. Alumni groups also nurture a more informed interest in the University among members by communicating relevant news through newsletters, webpages and social networking sites.

## **2. Volunteer Committees**

2.1. Each alumni group is autonomous in its operations and it is up to the group to decide the appropriate form for its constitution, according to local conditions and needs. However, the following practices are strongly recommended:

2.2. Every alumni group should have a Secretary who will take the lead in terms of organising group activities and informing the Alumni Office about them. In some regions, this office is called 'President' rather than 'Secretary' to conform to local expectations. The Secretary is expected to be in regular contact with the Alumni Office throughout the year.

2.3. Alumni groups should also have a Treasurer who is responsible for the finances of the group and for financial reporting. Other than these two officers, a volunteer committee may comprise as many or as few people as can contribute to the successful running of the group. A core committee of at least three

is, nevertheless, usually recommended.

2.4. Committee members should not normally serve more than two terms of office, each term comprising three consecutive years.

2.5. All committee members will have matriculated at, or have some academic affiliation with, the University of Oxford (or matriculated at Cambridge in the case of some Oxford and Cambridge Societies).

## **3. The Group Secretary's Remit**

3.1. To be the main point of contact between the group and the University Alumni Office, and the holder of the email forwarding address. To manage the group's membership list and notify the University Alumni Office of changes of address or deaths of members. To obtain contact details for Oxonians in the area from the University Alumni Office.

3.2. To manage a committee to play to members' strengths. For example, a group may wish to divide the responsibility for particular events, mailings, websites, social media, membership, schools' outreach, finance and more.

3.3. To arrange regular meetings of the local committee and document these as appropriate.

3.4. To complete the Annual Update Survey sent out by the University Alumni Office.

#### 4. The Treasurer's Remit

4.1. To oversee the alumni group's income and expenditure.

#### 5. Responsibilities of other members of the Alumni Group Committee

5.1. To organise a series of events and communications to encourage and maintain an interest among members in the activities of the group and the wider University.

5.2. To ensure an efficient and effective handover from one officer to the next, and to have a succession plan in place.

5.3. Some alumni groups maintain a position of Honorary President, reserved for alumni of note in the community. This position is a figurehead only, and does not carry with it any particular responsibilities for the group.

#### 6. Insurance

6.1. Each alumni group is autonomous, maintaining a close relationship with the University of Oxford whilst being independent. For this reason, the University's insurances do not cover alumni group activities or officers, or members of group committees or boards.

6.2. The University recommends that alumni groups obtain appropriate insurance for their activities. The University arranges insurance through Zurich Insurance, who would be happy to hear from UK-based groups should they require cover for any events.

6.3. The University cannot advise alumni groups in relation to their insurance needs, or the merits of particular insurance policies or insurers. Accordingly, alumni groups are asked to seek their own advice. There are other insurance policies and providers available.

#### 7. Formal Relationship with the University

7.1. It is important to recognise:

- that the University bears no responsibility for the financing of alumni groups;
- that the University relies on alumni groups to consistently act in the best interests of the University, as ambassadors and advocates for Oxford;
- that the University has the discretion, at all times, to require the removal of an officer or officers of an alumni group should he or she act in a way that could be construed as prejudicial to the University.

7.2. The formal relationship between an alumni group and the University is established by a letter of agreement: a

copy of the current edition of this letter is available from the Alumni Office.

#### 8. Publicising group contacts and group events

8.1. The Alumni website is [www.alumni.ox.ac.uk](http://www.alumni.ox.ac.uk). This will carry, at all times, a list of alumni groups, from regional groups to shared interest groups, enabling alumni to contact the particular group or groups in which they have an interest.

8.2. The Alumni Office will also publish an annual directory of alumni groups.

8.3. The University of Oxford will use all reasonable endeavours to publicise alumni group events. The Alumni Office relies upon groups to provide timely and accurate information in order to make this possible.



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