



## UPDATE FOR VACATION RESIDENCE FOR THOSE IN A PRIORITY YEAR FOR THEIR SUBJECT

This message is primarily for those students in a *priority year* for their subject.

- There are no changes to the *priority year* for each subject (see attached list) as designated earlier this term;
- There are no changes to vacation residence procedures for any other students other than for those in a priority year.

All students, however, are reminded that there is not unlimited accommodation available and therefore there may be some students who apply for accommodation but are not permitted for reasons of capacity. You should see the [College Regulations](#) and the website for [Vacation Residence](#) for further information.

Because of this update today, vacation residence results for all students will be published in 7<sup>th</sup> week, rather than usual notification at the end of 6<sup>th</sup> week, to allow time for additional processing.

The window for application has been extended to Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> February, at midnight. No applications will be taken after midnight.

For clarity the designation of *priority year* is a temporary one, and it, along with other accommodation and vacation residence topics continue under review, throughout the remainder of this academic year, as planned. Students will be contacted for consultations on these topics over the remainder of this academic year.

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The following information applies to students in their priority year only, and only they need read further for the changes made.

The decision to abolish the very reduced vacation rate, known as a *finalist rate*, agreed last academic year by the College, has been reversed yesterday (14 February 2024); therefore - for this year only - the very reduced rate (£9.30) will still be used. This rate is available for those in a *priority year* only, i.e., the list that had been circulated previously, and is again circulated with this message. There is no change to the priority year list.

To be clear, there was no intention to continue a *special rate* (aka finalist rate) and it was agreed to apply the same flat vacation rate for all. At the same time, we agreed to update the [Regulations](#) (done over summer 2023) and the *priority year* for each subject was established as an interim measure until further decisions are made. The review of a number of aspects of accommodation, the vacation periods, and vacations residence terms, continues during this academic year. The *priority year* is only intended to prioritise eligibility for a room if we are oversubscribed at Easter this year (see the Regulation for further information). The priority year was about eligibility for accommodation, and not about eligibility for a special discounted price.

The reason the College is reviewing all these things is an urgent need to reduce the pressure on accommodation during the short vacations. Despite the College policy, which recommends that it is beneficial and desirable for students to take a break and have time away from Oxford, the subsidy is so significant as to incentivise staying in College over the Easter vacation, and is therefore inconsistent with this advice.

However, the College has agreed to hold off on the implementation of the *higher* rate, for students in a *priority year* this year.

So, for this year only - while we continue the review and reform of the terms of vacation residence - we will also allow a priority year student to opt to stay for a shorter period, i.e., not the entire vacation, at the special low rate. The reasons are twofold:

- a) to *encourage* all students to have a break from College and some time away from Oxford and their study and futher;
- b) to *not incentivise* students to choose to stay the whole period.

For students who are in financial hardship it will also provide a further measure to reduce costs in their priority year, however the College still recommends that any student in hardship should consider [application for assistance](#).

15 Feb 2024  
MLB  
The Domestic Bursar