



A RECOGNISED INDEPENDENT CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies

Visiting Scholars Handbook

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Introduction

Visiting scholars are always very welcome at the OCHS. Currently the Centre offers one grant for visiting scholars, the Shivdasani Visiting Fellowship (SVF). This Fellowship is provided to the OCHS by a generous benefaction from Mr Azad Shivdasani, businessman and philanthropist.

The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies

The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies is a Recognised Independent Centre of Oxford University, maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity, originality, and excellence. Through research and advanced study the Centre promotes a more informed understanding of Hinduism and Hindu cultures.

The primary purpose of the OCHS is the academic study of Hindu traditions, their histories, texts, theologies, material culture, and social formation.

With such a broad remit the Centre needs to be multi-disciplinary and so we encourage scholars from a range of disciplines, particularly philological study of texts, hermeneutics, philosophy, theology, religious studies, and anthropology.

Shivdasani Visiting Fellowship

The Shivdasani Visiting Fellowship is offered to support study in any area of the arts, humanities, or the social sciences relevant to the study of Hinduism.

The intention of the Fellowship is to provide opportunities for scholars, who have shown outstanding achievement in their chosen field of study and who would benefit from a period of independent study at Oxford.

The successful candidate will be expected to participate fully in the Centre's academic and social activities. The scholar receiving this fellowship is expected to be in residence for a full term. There are three eight-week terms in Oxford: Michaelmas Term, October–December; Hilary Term, January–March; and Trinity Term, April–June.

Applications and appointments

Each term, the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies offers a faculty fellowship in Hindu studies. Awarded to a recognised scholar from India, the fellowship affords the recipient access to the University of Oxford's libraries (on the payment of a small fee for a library card), lectures and other academic resources, and conversation and fellowship with a wide range of scholars and students at the University and the Centre.

The Shivdasani Visiting Fellowship is awarded to a scholar of Indian nationality (whether resident in India or elsewhere). The applicant needs to be the holder of an academic position in an institute of higher education, in India or elsewhere; and the applicant needs to be working in an area relevant to the concerns and remit of the OCHS.

Applications for the Shivdasani Visiting Fellowship are reviewed by the Academic Planning Committee and the following year's Fellows are agreed by week five of Oxford's Trinity Term, (April–June).

Letters of invitation are sent out to successful applicants in week six of Trinity Term and we hope to have all applicants agreed by the end of the Trinity Term.

Selection is based upon the merits and significance of the applicant's proposed or current research and how this can be assisted by study at Oxford.

OCHS responsibilities

The responsibilities of the OCHS towards the Shivdasani Visiting Fellow are,

- to provide one return economy air ticket from the Fellow's nearest international airport,
- to provide suitable accommodation for the duration of the Fellowship,
- to offer a stipend,
- to provide a work place in the Centre,
- to allow access to all OCHS facilities (library, seminars, lectures, Wednesday lunch),

Shivdasani Visiting Fellows responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Shivdasani Visiting Fellow are,

- to give two lectures on their research,
- to provide two seminars on their research,
- if requested, to provide tutorials to OCHS students,

- to take full advantage of the opportunity of studying in Oxford and to pursue their research with diligence,
- to credit OCHS in any publication resulting from research undertaken during their tenure at the OCHS.

Library use

Fellows have full access to the OCHS library, and may borrow books. To join the OCHS library contact our Librarian, Mr Rembert Lutjeharms. He will introduce you to the joys of our borrowing system.

The Bodleian library and Indian Institute library are excellent resources for research and can be used by our visiting scholars. There is a small fee to obtain a library card. This can be done with the help of our Academic Director. To read more about obtaining a Bodleian readers card please see the Oxford University website at www.ouls.ox.ac.uk/services/admissions.

Accommodation

The OCHS uses The North Oxford Overseas Centre (NOOC), run by the Oxford Overseas Student Housing Association, for accommodation of its visiting scholars.

The Oxford Overseas Student Housing Association is a non-profit organisation with charity status. It provides pleasant accommodation at reasonable rates in a caring community for overseas postgraduate students and academic visitors from all parts of the world.

There is no discrimination on racial or religious grounds in the selection or treatment of residents. The NOOC has two houses, located on the Banbury Road, about one kilometre from the OCHS and within easy walking distance of the main libraries, laboratories, and most colleges. There are shops, banks, a post office, and several doctors surgeries within a short walk. The Banbury Road is a principal bus route.

Accommodation provided is single-bed accommodation only and includes rooms with ensuite bathroom facilities and their own kitchens, which can be especially suitable for vegetarians.

There is further information about the NOOC on their website: www.nooc.org.uk. Having been appointed to the Shivdasani Visiting Fellowship, successful candidates – according to the rules of NOOC – have to book their own accommodation directly to the NOOC via the application form on their website.

Applications must be made the same amount of time in advance as you are intending to stay. For example, if you wish to stay for the eight weeks of term, please apply a minimum of eight weeks in advance. When making your booking please consider that the OCHS can only fund the period for which you have been appointed. Bookings are made for a maximum of six months.

Stipend

A generous stipend is attached to the SVF, which will more than cover any normal living expenses. Matters relating to the stipend should be referred to the OCHS Director.

Travel from airports

Both Heathrow and Gatwick airports have very regular bus services to and from Oxford. Gloucester Green, the main bus station in Oxford, is a five-minute walk from the OCHS. Please see the following site for information on bus times and fares: <http://www.oxfordbus.co.uk/heathrow.html>

OCHS offices

Computers and internet access

Computers are available at the OCHS Offices in Magdalen Street. All computers provide free broadband internet access. Scholars can also access reasonable amounts of free printing, fax, and photocopying.

Kitchen and food consumption

The kitchen is a source of wonderful dinners and lunches, contributing greatly to the grace of living of the OCHS.

We are a Hindu-friendly space, so please respect the rule of no meat, eggs, fish, onions, garlic, or alcohol on the premises. This helps us retain our five-star-any-Hindu-can-eat-here status.

No food or drink are to be consumed in the vicinity of the printer, photocopier, or at desks. Drinks must be kept well away from computers and telephones. In the event of damage caused to equipment from spillages etc., equipment will be replaced at the expense of the individual responsible.

Scrap paper

The Centre participates in an Oxford-wide scheme to recycle scrap paper. You can help us in this by leaving your scrap paper in the box provided on the

photocopy room window-ledge. Please ensure that any staples or paperclips have been removed.

Please don't forget to collect your printing, as uncollected printing will be added to the scrap paper collection each evening.

Security

Two security keys are issued to scholars. The metal front door of the Centre, the main entrance, has two locks, both of which operate with a single black key. The entrance door to reception is operated with a single brass key. If keys are lost the full cost of a replacement set will be charged (£25).

Please ensure that the front door closes behind you whenever you leave the building. If no-one else is in the building, please be sure to double-lock the front door.

For insurance reasons all windows and doors must be closed by the last person leaving the building each day. It is also the responsibility of the last person leaving the building to switch out lights, lock the reception door, and double lock the main entrance.

Health and safety

Any accidents or injuries which occur on the premises of the OCHS must be recorded in writing and given to our office Secretary. This can be done via email. If there is a need for First Aid or medical attention, Meru is our designated member of staff. There is a First Aid box in the in the kitchen; if materials are taken or missing from it please inform the Office Secretary.

Fire procedures

Fire extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are located at the top of the entrance stairs and outside the toilets at the rear of our floor. Operating instructions are on the extinguishers. There are two types of extinguisher: a large one containing water and a smaller carbon dioxide one for electrical fires. There is also a fire blanket located in the kitchen.

Fire alarm

There are three points for activating the fire alarm. These are red square boxes located,

- on the reception wall just inside the main door,
- at the beginning of the corridor,

- at the far end of the corridor just past the toilets.
- To activate the alarm, break the glass and press the silver button.

Fire exits

There are three fire exits to the building:

- The main entrance staircase at the front.
- The glass door half way up the corridor, which leads out onto the flat roof area.
- The door at the rear of the corridor near the toilets. This door has a glass bar covering the lock. To exit, break the glass, open the door, and go down the staircase. You will find yourself in the alleyway between Jaeger and Borders.

The fire doors are all alarmed and will activate the burglar alarm if opened.

Smoke alarms

The office is fully equipped with smoke alarms. These can be activated by candles and sometimes by matches. They can also be activated by burnt food in the kitchen. Please take care not to activate the smoke alarms.

Exiting the building

In the event of a fire, do not try to extinguish it but leave the building as quickly as possible. Ensure that the fire alarm is activated. All Centre members and visitors should assemble on the corner of Magdalen Street and Beaumont Street, outside the Randolph Hotel.

The building is shared by four separate occupiers over five floors. Please do not assume that because you cannot smell smoke it is a false alarm. When the alarm activates please exit the building immediately, if possible by the front exit.

Oxford information

Below are some useful and informative Oxford links.

www.ochs.org.uk/visitors

www.oxford.gov.uk/tourism

www.ox.ac.uk/aboutoxford

www.ox.ac.uk/visitors

www.admin.ox.ac.uk/nb

www.oxfordcity.co.uk

OCHS directory

The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies
13 Magdalen Street
Oxford
OX1 3AE

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