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UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Oration by the Vice-Chancellor

The University Challenge

When I spoke briefly to Congregation on this day a year ago, I had the strong sensation that my feet had barely touched the ground. I hope this confession will seem both understandable and pardonable given that I had been officially in office as Vice-Chancellor for all of five minutes. Yet when I look back now over an exhilarating first twelve months, and more importantly when I look ahead to the months and years to come, it strikes me that there was perhaps something prophetic about that initial sensation. For though my feet have certainly become fully grounded in the terrain of Oxford, a great deal about the world of higher education remains up in the air.

This is a critical and hugely challenging time for universities in this country and I want, this morning, to reflect with you a little on what that means for Oxford and for its place in the world. I speak of Oxford's place in the world advisedly, because my conviction has grown ever stronger over the last year that the future health and prosperity of Oxford as a great university is intimately connected to its international character, achievement, and ambition. I do not mean by this that we will become any less committed to nurturing and developing the academic potential of the most able young people in the UK. But it does mean, I believe, that unless we are able to continue to provide an academic environment and resources to compete with the best in the world, we will not be able to offer those students what they deserve and have rightly come to expect from a university with Oxford's reputation. We successfully attract internationally recognised academics and researchers, who create the learning environment which attracts outstanding students to apply. So Oxford's role in Britain and its place in the world are, I believe, deeply intertwined. If one were to suffer, the other would also be at risk.

It is easy to lose sight of just how international Oxford has become. I know from my own experience working in the US that many universities in North America have developed internationalisation programmes. By contrast, Oxford seems to be international in its very fabric. From the arrival of Emo of Friesland in 1190 to the hundreds of international students I met at their orientation events just last week, this university has a proud history of serious engagement with the wider world. More than a third of our students and academic staff come from overseas, hailing from over 140 different countries and territories. At the postgraduate level, the figure is even higher: six out of ten full-time graduate students come from outside the UK. Anyone who, like me, attended the student union international festival at the Examination Schools in February, will have received a graphic illustration of modern Oxford and its extraordinary range of artistic, cultural and—indeed—culinary traditions. And Oxford is not just a global magnet for outstanding academic talent, at staff as well as student level; it also attracts increasing amounts of research income from international sources. Last year the figure was about one pound in every five. Oxford is truly a university of the world, for the world.

When I spoke a moment ago of things being 'up in the air', I might, I suppose, have been referring to the lot of the modern-day vice-chancellor, certainly to the lot of the vice-chancellor of a university with a world-wide reputation. And while it is the case that I have become happily rooted in the richly fertile academic soil of Oxford, that has not prevented me from spending a good deal of the last twelve months at about thirty-eight thousand feet above sea level. Oxford's reputation goes before it and keeping up with it can be a demanding business. It is also an immensely rewarding one—not least in the opportunity it provides to meet Oxford alumni and to hear their accounts of what this University meant and continues to mean to them, often many years later. Our old members are one very real and valuable expression of Oxford in the world.

International travel also provides insight into another aspect of Oxford's international character—its collaborations and fieldwork overseas. In the area of global health, for example, one can point to Oxford's tropical medical research laboratories in Thailand, Vietnam and Kenya, and to other outposts in Laos, Indonesia and China. Projects like these are living examples of the practical difference Oxford can and does make to people's lives in places where that help is so sorely needed.

But if travelling the globe on behalf of the University can cement a sense of positive achievement and of significant contribution to the common good, it also provides a powerful antidote to any tendency towards complacency. International competition in the world of higher education has never been fiercer. For obvious reasons, I have extensive first-hand knowledge of both the achievements and the continuing aspirations of our peer institutions in North America. But travel over the last year has also left me in no doubt that the competition is increasingly on a global, not just a transatlantic, scale. One only has to look at the higher education trends and ambitions in countries such as China and India to realise that resting on one's laurels would mean only that they wither and die.

It may come as a relief to hear that I intend to resist the temptation this morning to offer a detailed statistical analysis of comparative levels of national investment in higher education. It is a sad fact, however, that the most recent figures put the share of our own national GDP at below the OECD average. This seems to me to be quite inadequate and seriously ill advised, given that higher education is one of the most important investments in the future that a country can

make. It is an observation that holds true in my mind whatever the government of the day and with or without an economic downturn.

While on the subject of national investment in higher education, I do want to focus a bit on where the money comes from—in other words, private or public funds. It will not surprise you, I suspect, to learn that the country at the top of the OECD list is the United States, or that the majority of the money there is from private sources. Philanthropy in the United States has long underpinned the resource-rich environment of the upper reaches of American higher education. Much has been written and said about the need for us in the UK to learn from and follow the American example. I don't necessarily dispute that much-repeated mantra but I would add that, having now had first-hand experience on both sides of the Atlantic, I have been genuinely impressed by what Oxford has already achieved. The *Oxford Thinking* campaign is fast approaching the total of £1bn across the collegiate University, a truly impressive sum to reach in little more than two years of the active phase of the campaign, and especially against a forbidding economic backdrop. Just two weeks ago we had the pleasure of formally launching the Blavatnik School of Government. This project will make possible the realisation of a long-cherished Oxford dream, thanks to the extraordinary generosity of Len Blavatnik who was able to join us for the launch. During the year we also benefited from a remarkable matched-funding initiative from James Martin, whose earlier generosity founded the Oxford Martin School, as it is newly renamed, that focuses on twenty-first-century global challenges. Not every gift, of course, can be transformative for the University in the way that these promise to be. But every gift regardless of size is received with genuine gratitude and a sense of humility. Each gift adds to the pool of resources from which the University seeks to secure the present and build the future. Each also represents a tangible vote of confidence in what Oxford has been and what it aspires to be.

It was that recently beatified Oxford don, John Henry Newman, who did much to shape our modern understanding of universities and their purpose. In his influential work, *The Idea of a University*, Newman wrote: 'A University is a place … whither students come from every quarter for every kind of knowledge … a place for the communication and circulation of thought, by means of personal intercourse … It is a place where inquiry is pushed forward … discoveries verified and perfected and … error exposed by the collision of mind with mind … and knowledge with knowledge.' Formulated one hundred and fifty years ago, that remains an attractive template for what universities are all about. But it does not mean, of course, that all universities are the same. They come in many shapes and sizes and with diverse understandings of their particular place and role in the broader higher education landscape. One way in which universities have increasingly been categorised in recent decades is in relation to whether their primary focus is on teaching or on research. In many ways this is a false distinction. The great universities of the world flourish through their ability to link the progress of research with its impact on teaching; linked, in the words of Louis Pasteur, 'as the fruit and the tree that bears it'. Those of us who toil in the groves of academe know full well that our research helps inform our teaching as we lay out to students the shifting boundaries of knowledge. And our teaching, probed and challenged by bright students, brings new perspective and direction to our research questions. For the students, whether graduate students in our libraries and laboratories or undergraduates in our classrooms and tutorials, there is no educational experience more profound than being taught by those who themselves are repositioning those intellectual boundaries. It is one of the great glories of Oxford that it aspires to do both its teaching and research to an exceptional standard.

Oxford research can stand comparison with the best in the world and a large part of the University's international standing is built upon it. In recent times there has been eye-catching growth in Oxford's research activity, in terms of both staff and income. But, in the current economic climate, funding for research in all areas of scholarship is threatened as rarely before. The Government's recent invitation to do more research with fewer resources has received an understandably cool reception. At the same time a government commitment to focus resources on areas of research excellence may hold out more hope for universities of the calibre of Oxford.

But what then of Oxford as a teaching rather than research institution? It's worth noting that teaching is something we do a great deal more of than our peer institutions in the United States. Oxford has more than twice as many full-time undergraduates, for example, as my old university, Yale, and the ratio isn't vastly different in relation to Harvard. The teaching responsibilities of Oxford academics are significantly larger than those of their disciplinary peers at Yale and Harvard. But it is not just a matter of numbers. Teaching as an activity is surely where the historic understanding of the University has rested for much of its nine-hundred-year history. It is from Oxford's collegiate structure and tutorial system, with the emphasis on individual and personalised learning that the public understanding of the distinctive quality and character of Oxford (and of Cambridge, too) has been formed. The excitement, challenge and—yes—sometimes the fear of the tutorial, are by all accounts something that stays with our students long after they have left the University. And of course the key ingredient in that experience are the tutors themselves, whose own research and deep knowledge of their subjects informs and shapes the student experience in both tutorials and other small group settings. It was Newman again who described evocatively the university as a 'place where the professor becomes eloquent, and is a missionary and preacher, displaying his science in the most complete and most winning form, pouring it forth with the zeal of enthusiasm and lighting up his own love of it, in the breasts of his hearers.' I'm particularly fond of that last line!

It is no secret that this form of education does not come cheap. The full cost of teaching an undergraduate student at Oxford is estimated at about £16,000 per year, which means that when you subtract the contribution made by tuition fees and public funding, the annual deficit per undergraduate every year of their Oxford career is about £8,000. You might say the size of the gap is matched only by the strength of our conviction that this is a system that works uniquely well. It is a conviction, tried, tested—and yes, refined—by long and productive experience. Given that we think it is the best way to nurture maturing minds, the challenge clearly is to make it more financially sustainable. Of course, we need to continue to examine whether we are doing it as cost-effectively as possible. The current review of teaching will help us to understand in a more complete way the full extent of our tutorial offering, with a view to ensuring that we use the resources as effectively as we can. But we also need to be extremely vigilant about maintaining its quality. The one thing that Oxford really cannot afford to do is to sacrifice excellence—this would be an utterly false economy. So we need to continue to use and develop other ways of plugging as well as narrowing the funding gap. One coping strategy—as the jargon has it—that we have been using is internal cross-subsidies. But this is something that carries its own price. The negative effects

are already starting to show: in recurrent deficits, in the underfunding of Oxford's infrastructure, and, most worryingly for our competitive position relative to our North American peers, in the scale of our endowment and our support for doctoral students. We should not fool ourselves that such a strategy is any kind of long-term cure and even as a palliative it is one that, as I have indicated, involves increasingly unacceptable side-effects.

I mentioned earlier that a large proportion of investment in higher education in the United States comes from private as opposed to public sources: two-thirds, in fact, compared with one-third in the UK. Here at Oxford it is clear that the generosity of our benefactors is going to play an increasingly important part in meeting the intense challenge of supporting our outstanding teaching. And that is true at graduate as well as undergraduate level. As an illustration of the high demand for graduate student places, the number of applications for graduate study has risen from 17,510 in 2009–10, to over 20,000 for those wishing to study in 2010–11.This year the University has launched a dedicated fund that will channel philanthropic support into developing more graduate scholarships for both UK and international students. The fund will augment initiatives already in place. It is vital that we are able to attract the best graduate students nationally and internationally in what is a growing and highly competitive market. In helping to develop their potential we are helping to nurture the outstanding teachers and researchers of the future.

When it comes to the funding of undergraduate teaching this is obviously an area where—to return to my point of departure in this speech—we are very much 'up in the air', though Lord Browne and his *Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance* are due to land (one suspects with a bump) any day now, closely followed by the results of the government's Comprehensive Spending Review. The air traffic controllers of higher education are going to need their wits about them. In Oxford's own submissions to the Browne *Review*, we put forward a model which would not, we believe, involve additional burdens on the public purse in this period of austerity in the public finances. At the same time, we believe this model would secure vital investment for universities, while safeguarding educational excellence and student participation. Under the system we advocate, a university would be able to raise fees over time, in step with robust arrangements to ensure student affordability. Study would remain free at the point of access and, as now, graduates would not start to repay fees until an earnings threshold had been exceeded and then at a rate directly linked to income. Our proposals to the Browne *Review* have been based on the understanding that a funding structure that makes sense for Oxford, in allowing it to support its distinctive teaching and world competitiveness, must not damage other parts of the UK higher education sector. But, conversely, we are clear that any other structure that might find favour should not put at risk the ability of the leading universities in the UK to retain their pre-eminent positions.

It will be interesting and instructive to see at last what Lord Browne has made of it all; and possibly even more interesting to see what the politicians make of Lord Browne. As for timescale, the coalition government has recently indicated that a new Higher Education Bill is likely next autumn, with the target of implementing whatever reforms are agreed by the academic year 2012–13. Given all the uncertainty and unpredictability of the situation, it would be both foolhardy and ill advised for me to try to second guess what the higher education terrain will look like at ground level by then. In any case, institutions with a nine-hundred-year history need and expect to take a longer view. So returning to my aerial perspective for a moment may prove more productive and more useful. It seems to me highly improbable—all right then, inconceivable—that the funding gap in our teaching costs is going to be closed overnight. However, if our model or something like it were advocated by Browne and accepted by Parliament, then over time we could hope to travel progressively in that direction. We have made clear, as I have already indicated, that if we are going to come closer to covering the real costs of our teaching then this cannot be at the expense of our strong commitments on student access. We continue to expend huge amounts of time and effort and considerable amounts of money on these activities. No one who witnessed the extraordinary buzz of the UNIQ summer school programme, for example, could fail to be impressed by the strength of commitment on all sides—staff, volunteers, and potential students. Such projects are important because we believe that promoting equality of opportunity is fundamental to a civilised society. But we also run them out of self-interest. As a university, we aspire to be the best and to attract the most talented students whoever and wherever they are. Financial barriers to them are also barriers to our own aspirations and ambitions. If we are going to charge more, we need to help more.

So in future it seems to me that we are going to have to ensure that support—for student bursaries and scholarships, at both undergraduate and graduate level, and for teaching—plays a much bigger role in our fundraising activity. I have seen this at close quarters in the United States and my strong sense is that our well-wishers and benefactors, large and small, will be prepared to identify with and respond to such a priority here at Oxford. In the next few months, as the highly successful *Oxford Thinking* Campaign passes the £1bn milestone, it will be time to come together across the collegiate University to plan a new phase, a recalibration, of the Campaign: a recalibration that will set new aspirations for sustaining Oxford's research and teaching pre-eminence in a changed financial landscape. This is something that aligns the very real interests of all parts of the collegiate University. And these are the ambitious goals that I know we can achieve if we, colleges and University, continue to work together.

Oxford is what it is because of the immense contributions of so many dedicated members of the academic and professional staff. Many of this year's achievements have been commented on by the Public Orator in his Creweian Oration, with considerably more eloquence than I can manage. But because of the international theme of this Oration, I should here—invidious as it may be to give specific examples when so many are worthy of comment—make note of the recently-announced 2010 Lasker Award for Special Achievement to Professor Sir David Weatherall; the award of the *Légion d'Honneur* to Professor Vernon Bogdanor and to Professor Sir David King; and the inaugural Onassis International Prize in Humanities for Sir John Boardman. Our students, too, have excelled in a wide range of activities. Just one example of these is the Vice-Chancellor's Civic Awards, made this year for the first time to six of our students for their activities ranging from local charities to national outreach work and to international climate change.

Although this has been an anxious year in terms of the public funding provided for Oxford's museums, rewards and plaudits have continued to come the way of our collections. In the spring, the University received the Queen's Anniversary Prize—for the seventh time in eight awarding rounds, and more often than any other institution—in recognition of the outstanding quality and public benefit of its museums, libraries and archives. Last autumn saw the final

stages of the redevelopment, and the reopening by Her Majesty the Queen, of the Ashmolean Museum. The extension to the Ashmolean was nominated for the prestigious Stirling Prize of the Royal Institute of British Architects. The upper gallery of the Pitt Rivers Museum was reopened following refurbishment funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and the University's Museum of Natural History celebrated its 150th year, an anniversary that has coincided with the retirement of its director, Professor Jim Kennedy, who has done so much for the Museum and who in particular has furthered its outreach and public access work. Finally, the New Bodleian Library has received planning permission for its forthcoming transformation into the Weston Library, and the new book storage facility for the Bodleian Libraries, located just outside Swindon, is to be opened in two days' time.

I should like to thank publicly Dr Julie Maxton, who completes her term as Registrar in January and will take up a new role as Executive Director of the Royal Society. Dr Maxton has contributed much to the significant improvements within the administrative functions of the University over the past five years. She is to be succeeded by Professor Ewan McKendrick, currently Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education, Academic Services and University Collections). There has been a number of changes of heads of house during or at the end of the past year. Sir Tim Lankester retired as President of Corpus Christi at the end of last Michaelmas Term, and has been succeeded by Professor Richard Cawardine. Professor Colin Bundy is succeeded by Sir David Watson as Principal of Green Templeton, and Mr Mark Damazer becomes Principal of St Peter's, in succession to Professor Bernard Silverman. This year sees the retirement of no fewer than four heads of house who have served as Pro-Vice-Chancellors without portfolio: Dame Averil Cameron is succeeded as Warden of Keble by Sir Jonathan Phillips; Dame Jessica Rawson by Sir Martin Taylor as Warden of Merton; Dame Fiona Caldicott by Dr Alice Prochaska as Principal of Somerville; and Professor Paul Slack by Dr Nick Brown as Principal of Linacre. I thank all four for their immense help over the past year, and for their service to the University, in a range of duties spanning many years. Dame Fiona has been succeeded in her role as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Personnel and Equality) by Dr Sally Mapstone. I should note also my immense gratitude to Professor Michael Earl, who, as acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Development and External Affairs), stayed longer and worked harder than any new vice-chancellor has a right to expect. He is succeeded by Professor Nick Rawlins.

This year has also seen the retirement of many other distinguished colleagues who have contributed to the University's intellectual life over the years: Professor Douglas Abraham, Professor of Statistical Mechanics; Dr Ruth Barnes; Dr Peter Beverley; Professor Vernon Bogdanor, Professor of Politics and Government; Professor Sir Mike Brady, BP Professor of Information Engineering; Dr Lucy Carpenter, Reader in Statistical Epidemiology; Dr Peter Clifford, Reader in Mathematical Statistics; Professor Francis Close, Professor of Theoretical Physics; Dr David Cram; Professor Robin Devenish, Professor of Physics; Professor Arthur Dexter, Professor of Engineering Science; Professor John Finnis, Professor of Law and Legal Philosophy; Dr Kenneth Fleming, former Head of the Medical Sciences Division; Dr Martin Francis; Professor Michael Glazer, Professor of Physics; Dr Paul Griffiths; Dr Ann Hackmann; Mr Philip Healy; Professor Anthony Heath, Professor of Sociology; Dr Tim Horder; Mrs Janet Howarth; Professor Harold Jaffe, Professor of Public Health; Professor Richard Jenkyns, Professor of the Classical Tradition; Professor Jacob Klein, Dr Lee's Professor of Chemistry; Dr Mansur Lalljee; Dr Anthony Lemon; Professor Gary Lock, Professor of Archaeology (Computing and Statistical Methods); Dr Hugh Macmillan; Professor Henry McQuay, Nuffield Professor of Clinical Anaesthetics; Professor David Mant, Professor of General Practice; Mr Martin Matthews; Professor John Morris, Professor of Human Anatomy; Professor Andrew Neil, Professor of Clinical Epidemiology; Dr Michael Nicholson; Dr John Norbury; Professor John Ockendon, Professor of Mathematics; Professor David Pettifor, Isaac Wolfson Professor of Metallurgy; Dr Guo Ping; Professor Peter Renton, Professor of Physics; Mr Craig Raine; Professor Peter Raynes, Professor of Optoelectronic Engineering; Dr Julie Scott-Jackson; Ms Valerie Seagroatt; Professor John Sear, Professor of Anaesthetics; Professor David Sherratt, Iveagh Professor of Microbiology; Professor George Smith, Professor of Materials Science and George Kelley Reader; Dr Paul Smith, Reader in Engineering Science; Mr Bernard Sufrin; Professor John Sykes, Professor of Materials; Professor Kathy Sylva, Professor of Educational Psychology; Dr Roger Tomlin; Dr Roger Trend; Dr Malcolm Vale; Professor Michael Vaughan-Lee, Professor of Mathematics; Professor Michael Vickers, Professor of Archaeology; Dr Roger Ward; Dr Helen Whitehouse; Mr Gavin Williams; and Professor Adrian Zuckerman, Professor of Civil Procedure. I mention with relief and eager anticipation of future Creweian Orations, that although Professor Jenkyns retires from his academic post, he continues as Public Orator.

A number of senior administrators have retired during the past year: Mr Roger Boning, formerly Director of Finance at OUP, from a second career as Head of Business Services and Projects; Ms Jennifer Wood as Director of Estates; Lady Kenny as Director of the Oxford University Society; Ms Lesley Sims as Head of the Planning and Resource Allocation Section; Dr Felicity Cooke as Head of the Equality and Diversity Unit; Mrs Sarah Wolfensohn as Head of Veterinary Services; and Ms Frances Barnwell, as Deputy Head of the Legal Services Office. In addition, I should note the retirement of Mr Martin Harrington after twenty-one years as editor of the *Gazette*. I understand that a number of vice-chancellors, in finalising their Orations, have had cause to be grateful for his skills.

I would also like to mention those other colleagues who have retired from valued administrative, library or service posts in the University: Dr Adrian Allsop, Ms Shirley Ashmore, Ms Sarah Ayers, Mr David Barnwell, Mrs Jennifer Beaton, Miss Alison Bird, Mrs Lorraine Bird, Ms Stella Brecknell, Mr Timothy Bruce, Mr Lou Burnard, Mrs Jean Clay, Mr Philip Cleary, Mr Geoff Clough, Mrs Grazyna Cooper, Mr Barry Cornelius, Mr Gordon Cunningham, Mr Peter Dobbs, Ms Christine Elliott, Mr Harry English, Ms Barbara Farrell, Mr Harry Fearnley, Mr Mike Field, Mrs Anne Flavell, Mr Ken Fowler, Mrs Wendy Fuggles, Mr Michael Gardner, Mr Richard Gaskell, Ms Ann Gavin, Dr Kit Goodwin-Bailey, Dr Anne Grocock, Mr Malcolm Harper, Mr Brian Harrison, Ms Kim Hart, Ms Gay Haskins, Mr Edwin Laming Macadam, Mr Raymond Leece, Mr Richard Lidwell, Ms Deborah Lisburne, Mrs Pilar McGillyCuddy, Mrs Judith McIntyre, Mr Angus McKendrick, Mr John Mason, Mrs Valerie Moar, Mr John Moffatt, Mrs Carole Newbigging, Mrs Margaret Okole, Mr Alan Peters, Mr Derek Reed, Mr David Rischmiller, Mrs Catherine Rowland, Ms Katherine Salahi, Mr Richard Saxton, Mr Christopher Scotcher, Ms Julie Sidebotham, Miss Ann Stedman, Mr Keith Thomas, Mr David Tilley, Dr Nick West, Mrs Jennifer Williams and Mr Fred Wondre.

This year the University community has lost colleagues whose early deaths have been a source of great sadness: Dr Joan Austoker, Director of the Primary Care Education Research Group; Dr John Barnett, Reader in Physics; Professor Elizabeth Fallaize, former Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Fellow of St John's; and Mrs Katie Haines, of the

Public Affairs Directorate. I note also with great regret the recent death of the former High Steward, Lord Bingham of Cornhill.

Finally, we pause to remember the contributions of those colleagues who have died in retirement over the past year: Mrs Doris Beyer, Dr Martin Birch, Miss Grace Briggs, Sir Ian Brownlie, Mr Eric Buckley, Mr Dennis Burden, Professor John Burrow, Dr Charles Caine, Dr John Clarke, Professor Jerry Cohen, The Revd Herbert Cowdrey, Professor Alex Crampton-Smith, Mr Ian Crombie, Dr Tony Crowle, Sir Marrack Goulding, Dr Roger Hay, Dr Ronald Hingley, Professor Anthony Hopwood, Mrs Mary Hulin, Mr Austin Jones, Mr George Jones, Dr Richard Kindersley, Dr Elizabeth Lennox, Professor Sir Hugh Lloyd-Jones, Dr Pamela Mackinnon, Mrs Christine Martin, Dr Patrick Martineau, Dr John Mason, Mr George Melson, Dr Bruce Mitchell, Baroness Park of Monmouth, Professor Jack Pole, Lord Quinton of Holywell, Dr Robin Robbins, Mr Jim Sharpe, Mr Winfred Siertsema, Mrs Ann Smart, Mr Graham Spindler, Mrs Pamela Taylor, Mr Pat Thompson, Mr Roger Van Noorden, Mr Stephen Wall and Professor Michael Williams.

I began this speech setting Oxford in a world context and I want to conclude it in the same way. As I have noted, my travels over the past twelve months as Vice-Chancellor have been extensive. Wherever I have gone, Oxford has needed no introduction. It is what marketing people would call 'a global brand'—perhaps the top global brand in higher education. But a brand is nothing without top quality content. I hope and believe that those who regulate and shape the future of our higher education environment in the UK understand what an extraordinary asset our great universities represent in the world. I also hope and believe they will wish to accompany and support us at Oxford in our particular mission. But whatever the surrounding context, my aim and my duty will remain to do everything I can to ensure that Oxford remains among the very best universities in the world: a centre combining outstanding research and outstanding teaching, where the best and brightest staff and students from here in the UK, and from all over the globe, can develop new understanding and knowledge for the benefit of all. The means may, and probably will, alter over time but, let none of us doubt, the end remains the same.