Improving access to postgraduate study: Oxford’s Postgraduate Support Scheme

Fiona Groenhout & John-Paul Roche
Graduate Admissions & Funding

26 June 2014
What is *graduate access*?

Why is it important?
Why is improving access to postgraduate study challenging?
HEFCE Postgraduate Support Scheme: overview
• A pilot scheme that will test ways of supporting progression into taught postgraduate (PGT) education by students who would not otherwise progress to this level

• An evidence base to inform future approaches by government

• £25m funding across 20 projects, to run January 2014 – August 2015

• Pilot activities include financial and pastoral support, mentoring and networking, curricula change, funded studentships, work placements, bursaries and loans
Oxford’s PSS award

The project has five strands:

• Oxford Graduate Scholarships, supported by HEFCE
• Oxford Undergraduate Research Programme
• Oxford Postgraduate Internship Awards
• Springboard for PGT women
• Research programme
Oxford’s PSS award

• £3m funding from HEFCE, leveraged by £750k University funds (£500k Matched Fund, £250k Vice-Chancellor’s Fund)

• The largest grant made under the scheme
Oxford Graduate Scholarships, supported by HEFCE: key features

- Over 110 scholarships for PGT study at Oxford in 2014-15 for Home/EU students

- Scholarships cover:
  - 100% university tuition fees and college fees (less any other scholarship funding)
  - £13,863 grant for living costs (less for P/T)
Selection criteria:

• Academic merit
  \textit{(data collected via course application)}
• Socio-economic data and
• Financial need
  \textit{(data collected via a new online questionnaire)}
Scholarship competition:

- Eligible offer-holders invited during March-April 2014 to complete an online questionnaire
- Socio-economic data, financial need and academic excellence assessed
- Scholarship offers made early June 2014
- High level of interest: 9 applicants for every award
- Running once only, for study in 2014-15
Career development activities: overview
Pilot activities delivered in 2014 and 2015 by the Careers Service and Internships Office:

- Oxford Undergraduate Research Programme
- Oxford Postgraduate Internship Awards
- Springboard for PGT women
Research programme: overview
Any questions?
Further information

Oxford Graduate Scholarships, supported by HEFCE
www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/hefce/

Internships  www.careers.ox.ac.uk/internship-office-and-work-experience/the-internship-programme/

PGT Springboard  www.careers.ox.ac.uk/our-services/events-just-for/female-students/#section3