

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2024-25: DPhil in International Relations



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time	Part Time
Expected length	3-4 years	6-8 years

About the course

The DPhil programme is a full-time programme of doctoral research in the academic study of International Relations with an expected length of three to four years of full-time study or six to eight years of part-time study. Note that the part-time option is not a distance-learning programme; part-time students are required to attend face-to-face teaching in Oxford on up to three separate days each week during term.

As a DPhil student you will be a member of a distinguished academic community that is renowned for its cutting-edge research and its intensive and individualised teaching and supervision. The programme has received the highest level of recognition in UK national and global assessment exercises. It is a community from which you will draw support and guidance but which will also learn from your own contribution to its work.

You will have rich opportunities for connecting with fellow-students, postdoctoral fellows, and temporary and permanent academic staff involved in disciplinary and cross-disciplinary research programmes. The department attracts many of the world's leading figures in International Relations (IR) - as visiting scholars, speakers in the regular IR Colloquium, and participants in research conferences and workshops.

Doctoral students spend the first year of full-time study, or the first two years of part-time study, in the development of, and early work on, the thesis topic; in improving knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research methods; in attendance at relevant lectures, seminars and classes; and in preparing to transfer from Probationary Research Student (PRS - the status at which you will normally be admitted - see Assessment) to full DPhil status.

An academic supervisor will advise and guide you as you progress through the different stages of your doctoral research. In addition to work for your supervisor, you will be required to take a range of coursework. In the first term this includes: Research Design and Methods (RDM) in IR, Research Design, and introductory or intermediate statistics, as well as attendance at the regular IR DPhil Research Seminar which runs through the year and at which doctoral students present their work. In the second term students continue with RDM in IR and take one course in Formal Analysis, Causal Inference or Qualitative Methods. In the third term, there are a series of short, specialised methods courses. For part-time students, these coursework obligations are distributed across six terms.

Exemptions from particular elements of the coursework can be sought on the basis of previous training. Subsequent years are largely devoted to the development of the thesis project.

Doctoral theses will normally require substantial original research, often involving archives, fieldwork, interviewing or other forms of data generation and collection. For the doctoral degree the most crucial requirement is that the thesis makes a 'significant and substantial contribution to the field of knowledge within which it falls'. There are many ways of achieving this.

The department is committed to the rigorous use of a plurality of methods. There are many different ways of conducting research for a thesis. Any or all may be valid in a given case, depending on the subject of the research and the questions addressed. Some theses may involve an analytical-descriptive attempt at understanding different events, perspectives and traditions of thought. Others may have a strong historiographical element - exploring, for example, the relation between events and ideas, or involving an original and expert use of sources. Others may involve advancing a hypothesis about a subject and then testing it with a range of qualitative and/or quantitative approaches. Apart from meeting the highest scholarly standards, there is no set template. There is also a strong and successful tradition of normative and critical work. Oxford IR seeks to combine the best of North American political science with deep engagement with the international relations of different parts of the world and with the history of different traditions of thought on the subject.

As a doctoral student of the department, you will have access to outstanding library and computing resources within the Social Sciences Division (of which the Department of Politics and IR is a major part), elsewhere in the University and, in most cases, in your college. The division runs network events to enable DPhil students to meet and network with their colleagues not only within politics and IR but with other social science disciplines.

As a part-time student you will be required to attend classes, seminars, supervision meetings and other obligations in Oxford for a minimum of thirty days each year.

There will be limited flexibility in the dates and pattern of attendance. Attendance will be required during term-time at least one day each week throughout the first two years of your study on days determined by your class and seminar attendance

and by your supervisor. Attendance will be required outside of term-time on dates to be determined by mutual agreement with your supervisor.

You will be required to attend fieldwork and training sessions on dates to be determined by mutual agreement with your supervisor.

Successful completion of an Oxford DPhil requires an intense and sustained level of personal motivation and focus within a world-class research and teaching environment.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Department of Politics and International Relations and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. Supervisors are usually selected from the academic staff within the Department of Politics and International Relations. Under exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be found outside the Department of Politics and International Relations.

You will be assigned an academic supervisor who will advise and guide you as you progress through the different stages of your doctoral research.

Assessment

Applicants are admitted to the DPhil with Probationer Research Student (PRS) status. As a PRS, you will develop your research proposal and skills, complete a programme of assessed research methods coursework, and produce a draft section or sections of the thesis, in order to apply for the Transfer of Status that will end your probationary period as a research student. The Graduate Studies Committee will require satisfactory completion of this training programme as a condition of your change of status from PRS to DPhil.

Once you have been admitted to full DPhil status, you must achieve confirmation of that status by the end of your ninth term as a full-time doctoral student, or by the end of your eighteenth term as a part-time student. Once you have completed your thesis, you will be examined *viva voce*.

Changes to this course

The University will seek to deliver this course in accordance with the description set out above. However, there may be situations in which it is desirable or necessary for the University to make changes in course provision, either before or after you commence your course. These might include significant changes made necessary by any pandemic, epidemic or local health emergency. For further information, please see the University's Terms and Conditions (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/terms>) and our page on changes to courses (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges>).

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2024-25

Full-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£15,300
Overseas	£29,140

Part-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£7,650
Overseas	£14,570

Information about course fees

Course fees are payable each year, for the duration of your fee liability (your fee liability is the length of time for which you are required to pay course fees). For courses lasting longer than one year, please be aware that fees will usually increase annually. Information about how much fees and other costs may increase is set out in the University's Terms and Conditions (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/terms>).

Course fees cover your teaching as well as other academic services and facilities provided to support your studies. Unless specified in the additional cost information (below), course fees do not cover your accommodation, residential costs or other living costs. They also don't cover any additional costs and charges that are outlined in the additional cost information.

Graduate students who have reached the end of their standard period of fee liability may be required to pay a termly University and/or a college continuation charge.

The University continuation charge, per term for entry in 2024-25 is £628, please be aware that this will increase annually. For part-time students, the termly charge will be half of the termly rate payable by full-time students.

If a college continuation charge applies (not applicable for non-matriculated courses) it is likely to be in the region of £100 to £600. Please contact your college for more details, including information about whether your college's continuation charge is applied at a different rate for part-time study.

Additional cost information

Full-time study

There are no compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees (or, after fee liability ends, continuation charges) and living costs. However, please note that, depending on your choice of research topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel and vaccination expenses, conference attendance, research expenses, and field trips. You will need to meet these additional costs, although you may be able to apply for small grants from your department and/or college to help you cover some of these expenses.

Part-time study

There are no compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees (or, after fee liability ends, continuation charges) and living costs.

Please note that you are required to attend in Oxford for a minimum of 30 days each year, and you may incur additional travel and accommodation expenses for this. Also, depending on your choice of research topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur further additional expenses, such as travel and vaccination expenses, conference attendance, research expenses, and field trips. You will need to meet these additional costs, although you may be able to apply for small grants from your department and/or college to help you cover some of these expenses.

Living costs

In addition to your course fees, you will need to ensure that you have adequate funds to support your living costs for the duration of your course.

If you are studying part-time your living costs may vary depending on your personal circumstances but you must still ensure that you will have sufficient funding to meet these costs for the duration of your course.

The likely living costs for 2024-25 are published below. These costs are based on a single, full-time graduate student, with no dependants, living in Oxford. We provide the cost per month so you can multiply up by the number of months you expect to live in Oxford.

Likely living costs for one month

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£315	£495
Accommodation	£745	£925
Personal items	£190	£320
Social activities	£40	£95
Study costs	£35	£85
Other	£20	£35
Total	£1,345	£1,955

Likely living costs for nine months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£2,835	£4,445
Accommodation	£6,705	£8,325
Personal items	£1,710	£2,880
Social activities	£360	£855
Study costs	£315	£765
Other	£180	£315
Total	£12,105	£17,595

Likely living costs for twelve months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£3,780	£5,940
Accommodation	£8,940	£11,100
Personal items	£2,280	£3,840
Social activities	£480	£1,140
Study costs	£420	£1,020
Other	£240	£420
Total	£16,140	£23,460

When planning your finances for any future years of study at Oxford beyond 2024-25, it is suggested that you allow for potential increases in living expenses of 5% or more each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation.

More information about how these figures have been calculated is available at www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/livingcosts.

Document accessibility

If you require an accessible version of this document please contact Graduate Admissions and Recruitment by email (graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk) or via the online form (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/ask>).