

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2024-25: MSc in Evidence-Based Health Care (Systematic Reviews)



Course facts

Mode of study	Part Time Only
Expected length	2 to 4 years

About the course

This is a course for health professionals seeking an understanding of the importance of systematic reviews in healthcare as well as the practical skills to conduct them. Training is provided in the fundamental principles of evidence-based healthcare and research design, with more specific training in the conduct of basic and more complex systematic reviews.

The MSc in Evidence-Based Health Care (Systematic Reviews) is designed for health care professionals and researchers seeking to consolidate their understanding and ability in contextualising, carrying out, and applying systematic reviews appropriately in health care settings.

The course aims to provide a structured training in designing, conducting, and interpreting high-quality systematic reviews in health care.

The course also aims:

- to introduce the basic concepts and skills of evidence-based health care, including how to formulate a clinical research question, search for evidence, critically appraise evidence for sources of bias, and apply evidence to health care settings
- to describe in detail different types of research methods and identify the strengths and weaknesses of different study designs.

Students on the course will:

- learn how to design a systematic review research protocol
- gain a more detailed understanding of the process involved in conducting a systematic review
- develop the skills to conduct, report and update a systematic review
- gain a familiarity with basic and advanced techniques for the analysis of quantitative systematic review data: meta-analysis, meta-regression, network meta-analysis, diagnostic meta-analysis, individual patient data meta-analysis
- gain an understanding of and reasons for more complex systematic reviews in health care, such as realist reviews, reviews of clinical study reports, prognostic reviews, and meta-synthesis
- explore new paradigms in systematic reviews and evidence synthesis
- gain sufficient training to conduct systematic reviews independently.

Compared with the MSc in Evidence-Based Health Care, this degree will suit those with a particular interest in and requirement for training in the conduct of systematic reviews relevant to evidence-based health care.

The MSc is a joint course offered between the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences and the Department for Continuing Education. The course works in collaboration with the renowned Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine in Oxford.

The course has teachers and contributors who are internationally recognised leaders in the field of evidence-based practice and systematic reviews. The flexible structure of the course has been devised to fit with the structure of specialist training and to accommodate student choice. The course also includes a series of optional methodology clinics with members of the faculty.

Teaching is tailored to those with a minimal prior knowledge of systematic reviews and delivered by an experienced team of tutors from the University of Oxford, who actively work to advance the practice of evidence-based health care through the conduct and dissemination of systematic reviews.

Course structure

The MSc in Evidence-Based Health Care (Systematic Reviews) is a part-time course. You will take four core modules and two option modules, followed by a dissertation, which will take the form of a systematic review.

The majority of modules are run over either an eight, or fifteen week learning cycle. This allows for a choice of options to be taken over the two to four years that you attend the course.

Core modules will introduce you to the principles of evidence-based health care, as well as the core skills and methods needed for research design and conduct. Further option modules will provide you with specific skills in conducting basic systematic reviews, meta-analysis and broader forms of evidence synthesis, such as realist reviews, reviews of clinical study reports and diagnostic accuracy reviews.

Core Modules

You will take the following four core modules:

- The Practice of Evidence-Based Health Care
- Systematic Reviews
- Complex Reviews
- Meta-analysis

Optional modules

You will then choose two additional modules from the following options. Please note that not all modules are guaranteed to run every year.

- Introduction to Study Design and Research Methods
- Realist Reviews and Realist Evaluation
- Essential Medical Statistics
- Qualitative and Mixed Methods Systematic Reviews

Teaching format

Most modules are either delivered fully online or in a blended format, however, some modules are only delivered with a blended format that includes a five day attendance in Oxford, and some are only run entirely online. In any given year, not all delivery formats for a module may be available.

Further details about the course and modules can be found on the course page, on the Department for Continuing Education Website (See *Further Information and Enquiries*).

Blended format

An initial period of self-directed study is spent on introductory activities using a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This is followed by a week spent in Oxford for supported face-to-face teaching, and then a further period of Post-Oxford activities (a mixture of self-directed and supported distance learning also delivered through the VLE). The final week of each module is for self-directed personal study, shortly followed by the assignment submission.

Fully online format

Fully online modules are delivered through the VLE with the first week allocated to self-directed introductory activities.

For some courses, you will have a number of units to work through which are released week by week. Each unit includes a mixture of supported and self-directed learning with discussion forums, tasks and activities. You will then have five weeks of self-directed personal study with use of a revision forum and the requirement to submit an assignment electronically the following week. These courses that usually run over a 15 week period.

For other courses, five consecutive days of synchronous and asynchronous teaching sessions will be followed by a further period of activities (a mixture of self-directed and supported distance learning also delivered through the VLE). The final week of each module is for self-directed personal study, shortly followed by the assignment submission. These courses usually run over an eight week period.

Part-time attendance details

As a part-time student, you will be required to attend a minimum of two modules (one of which must be a compulsory module) 'in person' in Oxford. Each 'in person' module requires you to attend a week (five days) in Oxford for supported face to face teaching. Your other four modules can be made up of a mix of 'in person', or fully online modules. For additional note: All students are required to attend a minimum of one module in each academic year on course. This can either be 'in person' or fully online.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences and/or the Department for Continuing Education and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. Under exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be found outside the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences and/or the Department for Continuing Education. Students are usually expected to either meet, or contact their supervisor at least once per month.

Assessment

Assessments are conducted at the end of each module and comprise a written paper, submitted via an online portal. The dissertation will be on a topic chosen in consultation with your supervisor and the course director.

Students typically submit a 'Notification of Provisional Title', a calendar year before their dissertation submission date. A full draft is usually submitted two months prior to the submission deadline. The final submission is usually due on the last working day of September, for the given year of completion.

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

Modular course fees

The fees for this course are charged on a modular basis. You will pay an annual course fee and an additional fee for each module studied. A minimum of two annual course fees are payable for this course. If this course includes a dissertation, three module fees will be charged for the dissertation.

Fees for the 2024-25 academic year

Fee status	Annual Course Fee	Fee per module	Total estimated fees
Home	£8,455	£2,570	Please see the department's website for further details
Overseas	£8,455	£2,570	

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.

Additional cost information

This course has residential sessions in Oxford. You will need to meet your travel and accommodation costs in attending these sessions. Further, as part of your course requirements, you may need to choose a dissertation, a project or a thesis topic. Depending on your choice of topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel expenses, 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>).