

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2024-25: DPhil in Earth Sciences



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	3 to 4 years

About the course

The Earth sciences are the focus of scientific understanding about this and other planets, embracing a large range of fundamental topics including the evolution of life, how climate has changed in the past and will change in the future, the nature of planetary surfaces and interiors and the processes underlying natural hazards like earthquakes and volcanoes.

The DPhil is an advanced degree by research that will take between three to four years to complete. You will typically join a research group and work alongside other research students, postdoctoral researchers and academics in the same general research area – all of whom provide additional support and advice for DPhil students. Academic activity across research groups is also strongly encouraged.

While the focus of the DPhil is on your development to conduct independent research, there are formal courses available both within the Department of Earth Sciences and other departments in the Maths, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS) Division. Formal courses are organised through the MPLS Graduate Academic Program and include generic skills such as advice on science writing, as well as subject specific specialist courses. These allow the structured course components to be tailored to your individual research project needs.

There are also paid opportunities for you to gain teaching experience by demonstrating laboratory classes to undergraduates, assisting on undergraduate fieldtrips or in tutorial teaching.

You will be encouraged to present your research at national and international meetings and publish in internationally-recognised science journals. You may also choose to take part in outreach activities, explaining to the public and schoolchildren the exciting science conducted in the department. Within the department you will be part of a community of seventy research students including students enrolled on the Environmental Research NERC Doctoral Training Partnership course.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Department of Earth Sciences 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 Department of Earth Sciences.

You will have at least two (and sometimes more) supervisors, who are experts in their field, and who provide the project research framework, guidance and mentoring throughout the program.

You should expect to meet with your lead supervisor at least once a term, and have meetings with any member of the supervisory team at least once every two weeks averaged across the year.

Assessment

All students will be initially admitted to the status of Probationer Research Student (PRS). Within a maximum of four terms as a PRS student you will be expected to apply for transfer of status from Probationer Research Student to DPhil status.

A successful transfer of status from PRS to DPhil status will require the submission of written work. Students who are successful at transfer will also be expected to apply for and gain confirmation of DPhil status within nine terms of admission, to show that your work continues to be on track.

Both milestones normally involve a presentation and an interview with two assessors (other than your supervisor) and therefore provide important experience for the final oral examination.

You will be expected to submit a substantial/original thesis not exceeding 250 pages after three or, at most, four years from the date of admission. To be successfully awarded a DPhil in Earth Sciences you will need to defend your thesis orally (*viva voce*) in front of two appointed examiners.

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

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£9,500
Overseas	£31,480

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

Many projects have associated costs such as field work, computing, consumables and laboratory costs. These are usually covered by scholarships advertised by the Department of Earth Sciences, but not always covered by scholarships the students may have been awarded from elsewhere. Students will need to establish with their supervisor whether they have funding available to cover any such costs.

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.

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>).