

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2024-25: DPhil in Sustainable Urban Development



Course facts

Mode of study	Part Time Only
Expected length	4 to 8 years

About the course

The Doctor of Philosophy (DPhil) in Sustainable Urban Development is a part-time doctoral programme that provides outstanding students an opportunity to pursue in-depth and rigorous research about the pressing challenges of urban sustainability and the processes of environmental, economic, and social development in urban environments around the world.

Students admitted to the programme are usually motivated to undertake detailed research in preparation for an academic career and other research-intensive occupations; to have a substantial impact on future policy-making processes; or to pursue and/or advance their professional career at organisations and institutions operating in the field of sustainable urban development. The course provides support and an intellectual environment by leading scholars in the field to pursue your own independent research.

Pattern of teaching and learning

This is a part-time DPhil programme, taken over a minimum of four years and a maximum of eight years. You are required to have a good general knowledge of the field within which research falls, and of the methods appropriate to the study of this field. Throughout the period of study, you will be part of a thriving international graduate community of students engaged with sustainable urban development, including students on the part-time MSc in Sustainable Urban Development.

Students are expected to attend the programme's two doctoral training weeks each academic year (usually held in October and June), and to contribute to additional online research and reading seminars. Students should meet regularly with their supervisor during their doctoral research – usually once or twice a term - but also will be motivated and capable of maintaining consistent independent and self-directed studies throughout the year.

As a part-time student you will be required to attend course activities and related obligations in Oxford for a minimum of 30 days each year.

There will be flexibility in the dates of attendance, which will be determined by mutual agreement with your supervisor. You will have the opportunity to tailor your part-time study and pattern of in-person attendance in liaison with your supervisor. It is expected that you will join all online course activities during your period of study.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of 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 Department for Continuing Education.

Students admitted to this degree will conduct their own research under the guidance of a University supervisor, who will advise on all aspects of training, development and academic progress. In being admitted to the degree you must be prepared to work independently a good deal, and you will need considerable personal motivation.

In the case of students admitted to the DPhil who require specific help to adjust to an academic programme or to a new range of skills, the supervisor will work with them to ensure that they have additional support.

Students on the DPhil are required to attend a minimum of 30 days of university-based work each year for the duration of your studies, usually that involves meeting their supervisor once a term.

Assessment

Students will be admitted initially as a Probationary Research Student (PRS), in line with University regulations on doctorates. During the probationary period, you will develop and begin work on the thesis topic. You will develop research skills through a range of training and skills development primarily offered via the Department for Continuing Education Graduate School, as well as across the University.

Students must apply for a Transfer of Status from PRS to DPhil status between the sixth and the eighth academic term after admission, each academic year at Oxford having three terms. This involves the submission of a piece of written work that is

examined by two assessors, neither of whom will be your supervisors. This process is to ensure that your work is of potential DPhil quality and that the methodology of the research is appropriate and feasible. Upon successful completion of the Transfer of Status, you would usually undertake a period of primary fieldwork/data collection over one to two years.

You will also be required to apply for a Confirmation of Status as DPhil sometime between the twelfth and eighteenth term after admission. This will also involve the submission of a piece of written work that is assessed by two assessors, neither of whom will be your supervisors. The Confirmation of Status assessment is different to the Transfer of Status assessment as the assessors will be focusing on how the research is progressing, the quality of the draft chapters/papers, and on the plan for completion. The assessors will be looking to ensure that you are making the appropriate amount of progress in the development of your thesis, so that thesis submission will be achieved within the time limit.

You will be expected to submit a substantive academic thesis of around 100,000 words after the eighteenth or, at most, twenty-fourth term from the date of admission. To be successfully awarded a DPhil in Sustainable Urban Development 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	£14,535
Overseas	£14,535

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

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 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>).