

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2024-25: EcoWild (NERC CDT)



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time	Part Time
Expected length	4 years	8 years

About the course

The EcoWild programme will deliver the next generation of innovative researchers and conservationists needed to protect the Earth's vulnerable wetlands.

Biodiversity is declining at an alarming rate. Multiple stressors, such as climatic extremes and chemical pollution, are driving many of these declines. Wetlands and fringing ecosystems are exceptionally biodiverse, critical for combating the climate emergency and essential for enhancing community resilience to extreme weather events such as storms and floods. These ecosystems are among the most threatened globally, impacted by multiple environmental stressors. However, our understanding of these impacts is limited, thereby hindering conservation and restoration efforts, and impeding their potential as nature-based and bioengineered solutions.

The EcoWild NERC Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) programme has been designed to deliver the next generation of innovative researchers and conservationists needed to protect some of the Earth's most vulnerable and valuable ecosystems.

EcoWild is a unique partnership, led by Heriot-Watt University, that brings together research expertise and innovation across various fields including environmental toxicology, ecology, multiple stressor theory and modelling, wetland conservation and restoration, socioeconomics, community engagement, management and governance; and involves some of the leading UK experts in these fields. Full research themes and details of the partnership can be found on the EcoWild website (For links see *Further information and enquiries*).

The course is available in both full- and part-time study modes. If you are studying full-time, you will spend four years (or eight years if studying part-time) at Oxford working on your DPhil project with your main supervisor. For full-time students, NERC funding will cover three years and eight-months and a comparable proportion of the duration of part-time study. You will have a co-supervisor from one of the other academic partners (Heriot-Watt University, University of York, University of the Highlands and Islands, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology) and a co-supervisor from a non-academic partner (such as Natural England, the Freshwater Biological Association, Scottish Government Marine and Fisheries). Each year you will also receive world class taught training in multi-stressor science and wetland ecology in a mix of in-person cohort-building events and online training. The training is enriched through the active involvement of our associated partners, who contribute to the design and delivery of the programme, organise challenge events, and offer secondments and internships. This provides students with valuable real world experience in addressing environmental problems and working in a professional environment. In addition to specialised training, EcoWild students will attend careers events and established workshops, including for data management, time management, leadership, writing skills and viva preparation, aligning with the Vitae Research Development Framework.

Supervision

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

Students will meet with the supervisor at least twice a month.

Assessment

All students will be initially admitted to the status of Probationer Research Student (PRS). Within a maximum of six terms as a PRS student if studying full-time (around 12 terms if studying part-time), you will be expected to apply for transfer of status from Probationer Research Student to DPhil status. This application is normally made by the fourth term. (likely to be by the eighth term for part-time students).

A successful transfer of status from PRS to DPhil status will require a report that will consist of an introductory part that could become the introduction to the thesis, one rather well-worked analysis of preliminary data representing roughly the equivalent of one thesis chapter, and a plan for the other chapters in the thesis including a detailed timetable. Students who are successful at transfer will also be expected to apply for and gain confirmation of DPhil status to show that your work

continues to be on track. This will need to be done within nine terms of admission if studying full-time (around 18 terms if studying part-time).

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

Full-time students will be expected to submit a substantial thesis of up to 50,000 words after four years from the date of admission (after eight years for part-time students).

To be successfully awarded a DPhil in Biology 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>). We expect that the majority of applicants who are offered a place on this course will also be offered a fully-funded scholarship specific to this course, covering course fees for the full duration of your fee liability for the course, and a living stipend for three years and eight months (for full-time students) or seven years and four months for part-time students.

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2024-25

Full-time study

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

Part-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£4,750
Overseas	£15,740

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 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.

Part-time study

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>).