

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2023-24: MSc in Precision Cancer Medicine



About the course

The MSc in Precision Cancer Medicine is a two year, part-time, online course that will provide you with the multidisciplinary skillset and knowledge required to design, conduct and lead precision medicine research.

The course will appeal to health professionals from a variety of backgrounds including clinical academics, diagnosticians, scientists and clinicians from academia and industry; bio-informaticians, statisticians and scientists and clinicians working in all stages of target discovery and drug development.

Precision medicine is an emerging approach which takes into account variability in the biology, environment, and lifestyle for each individual person to help guide disease diagnosis and treatment. In particular, genetic and genomic data allow us to go beyond conventional histopathological assessment, and classify cancer into distinct sub-entities, leading to novel molecularly-directed treatment approaches.

To realise the potential for precision medicine, the clinical development of diagnostics and therapeutics need to go hand in hand. Future leaders – whether in research or in the clinic – will need a broad understanding of the field and the ability to work with a range of stakeholders.

This course aims to deliver a broad overview of the scientific and clinical disciplines involved in precision medicine. You will cover the scientific basis for precision medicine, current technologies, drug discovery and development, and the global regulatory, payer and ethical challenges.

The course consists of eight modules:

1. Introduction to Human Genetics and Genomics
2. Applied Precision Diagnostics
3. Omics Techniques and their Application to Genomic Medicine
4. Clinical Bio-Informatics
5. Treatment, Pharmacogenomics, Clinical Trials and Experimental Cancer Therapeutics
6. Ethics and Health Economics
7. Molecular Pathology and Imaging
8. Onco-immunology and Genomics

The course will be taught using state-of-the art technology via the University's virtual learning environment (VLE) platform, Canvas. Core and guest lectures are pre-recorded, and will be available for you to watch in your own time, alongside recommended reading and other coursework activities. You will attend regular online discussion groups, with a small group of fellow students, which will be moderated by members of faculty. For these sessions you will be expected to prepare short essays and presentations for discussion. Each module also has a moderated Q&A session and online tests for you to check your understanding.

The taught modules conclude in March of year two with a compulsory week-long residential school in Oxford, to consolidate your learning. For the final five months you will work on a dissertation. The aim of the dissertation is to enable you to explore an area relevant to Precision Cancer Medicine in depth and to develop a carefully considered and critical piece of written work related to this chosen area of study.

As this is an online course, you will need to manage your own study time. The scheduled teaching that you will be required to attend are fortnightly online discussion groups. To support your learning, you will be provided with lectures, required reading, and assignments for the discussion groups. It will be up to you to plan how and when to use these materials, and to broaden your knowledge by reading around key topics (known as 'self-directed learning').

This part-time distance-learning course involves one or two online, self-paced lectures per week. These lectures can be completed on any day of the week; however students are expected to keep pace with the course, completing each lecture in the week indicated in the published schedule. Each module contains three live online tutorials at approximately two-week intervals. Multiple time slots are provided for each tutorial to accommodate students' time zones and work schedules. Students are expected to attend all tutorials, selecting the time slot which is most convenient for them. Students are required to attend the one-week Oxford Residential School at the end of March in their second year of study.

It is your responsibility to ensure your schedule allows adequate time to devote to your studies. Our support team for the course includes a full-time course administrator.

Supervision

You will be assigned a personal advisor from the course team, who will help you review your progress, and discuss any concerns you have; your course advisor and the course administration team will usually be your first port of call for any queries about your studies. You will also have an advisor at your Oxford college, to whom you can turn if you feel you need to discuss your progress, or anything else pertinent to your study, away from the course team. During the research project you will be allocated a project supervisor who will be responsible for your supervision and training. We would recommend arranging online meetings with your supervisor on a regular basis, at least every two weeks.

The allocation of graduate supervision during the research project is the responsibility of the Department of Oncology and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. A supervisor may be found outside the Department of Oncology.

Assessment

To complete the MSc you need to submit and pass two pieces of written work, an examination and the dissertation. Schedule of summative assessments that contribute to your final degree:

Year One

June: Extended essay

August: Practical assessment - written work

Year Two

March: Examination

August: Dissertation

Additional information

Further details of the curriculum, schedule and assessments can be found on the course webpage on the department's website (see *Further information and enquires* panel for details).

Changes to courses

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 registration. These may include significant changes made necessary by a pandemic (including Covid-19), 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>).

Expected length of course

	Part Time Only
Expected length	2 years

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2023-24

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£7,635
Overseas	£16,380

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 2023-24 is £572, 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 per term. Please contact your college for more details.

Additional cost information

Students will need a computer (Windows or iOS), webcam and microphone. Students will also need to ensure appropriate internet connection. The recommended bandwidth for the software used is 1Mbps. Estimated cost to purchase and set up from scratch would typically be around £1000 in the UK. Students may be able to apply for small grants from their department or college.

It is necessary that students attend a one week residential school at the University of Oxford. Accommodation and some food costs whilst attending the residential school are included in the course fees. You will need to pay for your travel to Oxford and additional food costs, but you will be able to claim back travel expenses up to £200 for Home/EU students and up to £1000 for Overseas students. You may be able to apply for small grants from your department and/or college to help you cover any additional expenses associated with attending the residential school.

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 2023-24 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	£300	£470
Accommodation	£715	£860
Personal items	£180	£305
Social activities	£40	£90
Study costs	£35	£80
Other	£20	£35
Total	£1,290	£1,840

Likely living costs for nine months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£2,700	£4,230
Accommodation	£6,435	£7,740
Personal items	£1,620	£2,745
Social activities	£360	£810
Study costs	£315	£720
Other	£180	£315
Total	£11,610	£16,560

Likely living costs for twelve months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£3,600	£5,640
Accommodation	£8,580	£10,320
Personal items	£2,160	£3,660
Social activities	£480	£1,080
Study costs	£420	£960
Other	£240	£420
Total	£15,480	£22,080

When planning your finances for any future years of study at Oxford beyond 2023-24, it is suggested that you allow for potential increases in living expenses of 5% or more each year – although this rate may vary significantly depending on how the national economic situation develops.

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 the 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>).