

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2023-24: MSc in Social Science of the Internet + DPhil in Information, Communication and the Social Sciences



About the course

The combined MSc Social Science of the Internet and DPhil Information, Communication and the Social Sciences programmes provide an opportunity for highly qualified students to develop the theoretical and methodological toolkit needed to undertake multidisciplinary Internet-related research.

The Oxford Internet Institute (OII) trains social scientists to undertake rigorous theoretical and empirical research in the study of the Internet and technology.

During your MSc you will be equipped with essential theoretical tools and methodological skills to undertake cutting-edge research in this domain. You are introduced to the empirical evidence necessary for an in-depth understanding of the role of the Internet in society, including the changing nature of governance and the theoretical, practical and ethical questions surrounding Internet use.

Full-time MSc students will be expected to spend around 40 hours studying each week during term, and to undertake further study and complete assessments during vacations. During Michaelmas and Hilary Terms, MSc students are advised to allocate between 10 and 15 hours each week for each course they undertake. This includes:

- At least six hours per week on reading, preparation and formative assignments for each core/option course
- Ten to 12 hours per week in classes (typically one and a half to two hours of lectures per course, plus a one hour seminar or workshop on certain core and methods-based courses).

During the three- to four-year DPhil component, students are expected to produce an important and original piece of scholarship that will make a significant contribution to the dynamic area of Internet research. On completion, you will have the qualities and transferable skills necessary to excel in teaching, research, policymaking or business. The multidisciplinary research OII students undertake ranges across the social sciences, with most projects falling into the following broad themes:

- digital knowledge and culture
- digital politics and government
- education, wellbeing and digital life
- ethics and philosophy of information
- information geography and inequality
- information governance and security
- Internet economics
- social data science.

OII faculty work on cutting-edge research in their fields. This innovative research is fully reflected in their teaching and supervision. As a doctoral student at the OII, you will address research questions from across the spectrum of disciplines. You will draw both on the multidisciplinary faculty and on the complementary strengths of your cohort of peers, who are building on literature from different disciplines to answer their research questions. This system allows doctoral students to dig deeply into disciplinary questions in, for instance, politics or sociology, while also being able to place these questions into a broader picture of how the Internet can be theorised and researched.

Please note that the MSc component is also offered separately as the MSc in Social Science of the Internet.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Oxford Internet Institute 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 of the Oxford Internet Institute.

While an MSc student, you can typically expect to meet with your supervisor 8 to 102 times. Once you have progressed to the DPhil programme, you can normally expect to meet with your supervisor around three to four times a term.

Assessment

During your MSc year, you will take four core papers, three option papers and produce a final thesis on a topic of your choosing based on discussions with a thesis supervisor. Papers are assessed by either written examinations or coursework submissions. Throughout the degree, you will receive regular feedback on formative exercises, assignments and practice essays. Such feedback does not count towards your final mark but prepares you for the formal, summative assessment of each individual paper.

- **Core papers** are designed to provide students with a foundation of core skills, methods, theories and concepts required for sophisticated study in the field.
- **Option papers** enable students to pursue specialist research skills and develop further in-depth disciplinary expertise and methodological training. With their supervisor students can choose the options and methods that best fit with their future career path and thesis research from a wide selection of courses designed by OII faculty who are leading cutting-edge research in their fields.
- **The thesis** is the capstone to the MSc experience. It provides students with the opportunity to apply the methods and approaches they have covered in the other parts of the course and carry out a substantive piece of academic research, including designing a study, carrying out data collection and analysis, and developing a theoretical framework.

Students admitted to the combined MSc + DPhil programme will need to meet the normal admissions requirements and any conditions set to progress to the DPhil in Information, Communication and the Social Sciences.

During the DPhil element of the course, all students will be initially admitted to the status of Probationer Research Student (PRS). Within a maximum of four terms as a full-time PRS student, you will be expected to apply for, and achieve, transfer of status from Probationer Research Student to DPhil status.

A successful transfer of status from PRS to DPhil status will require satisfactory completion of such lectures, seminars and classes as the Graduate Studies Committee of the OII shall determine. Following successful transfer, students will need to apply for and gain confirmation of DPhil status to show that the work continues to be on track. This will need to be completed within nine terms of admission.

Both milestones involve an interview with two assessors (other than your supervisor).

You will be expected to submit an original thesis of not more than 100,000 words three or, at most, four years from the date of admission. To be successfully awarded a DPhil in Information, Communication and the Social Sciences you will need to defend your thesis orally (viva voce) in front of two appointed examiners.

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

	Full Time Only
Expected length of MSc component	10 months
Expected length of DPhil component	3-4 years

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2023-24

During the first year of the course you will be charged course fees at the MSc in Social Science of the Internet fee rate. These fees are shown in the table below.

Annual MSc in Social Science of the Internet (first year) fees for the 2023-24 academic year

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£25,760
Overseas	£30,910

In each subsequent year, you will be charged course fees at the DPhil in Information, Communication and the Social Science fee rate for that year of study. For an indication of costs, the tables below show the annual full-time and part-time DPhil course fees for the 2023-24 academic year.

Annual DPhil in Information, Communication and the Social Sciences fees for the 2023-24 academic year

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£13,050
Overseas	£28,020

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

MSc component

There are no compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees and living costs. However, as part of your course requirements, you may need to choose a dissertation, a project or a thesis topic. Please note that, 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.

DPhil component

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.

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 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>).