

Materials Science Information Sheet for entry in 2021

Materials Science is an interdisciplinary subject, spanning the physics and chemistry of matter, engineering applications and industrial manufacturing processes. Modern society is heavily dependent on advanced materials, for example, lightweight composites for faster vehicles, optical fibres for telecommunications and silicon microchips for the information revolution. Materials scientists study the relationships between the structure and properties of a material and how it is made. They also develop new materials and devise processes for manufacturing them. Materials Science is vital for developments in nanotechnology, quantum computing, batteries and nuclear fusion, as well as medical technologies such as bone replacement materials.

This diverse programme spans the subject from its foundations in physics and chemistry to the mechanical, electrical, magnetic and optical properties of materials, and the design, manufacture and applications of metals, alloys, ceramics, polymers, composites and biomaterials. This work is supported by excellent laboratory and teaching facilities.

The programme also offers an opportunity to develop an introductory understanding of entrepreneurship (learning how to write a business plan, raise capital and start a company). There are also voluntary options to learn a foreign language with the University's [Language Centre](#).

The Oxford Materials degree includes in its fourth year the special feature of an eight-month full-time research project, where you will join a research team either here at Oxford in one of the strongest Departments of Materials in the UK or, occasionally, at an overseas university or in an industrial laboratory (additional costs may be associated with a project outside Oxford). You will learn how to break down a complex problem, design an experiment or model, manage a project and communicate your results. These research skills are transferable to many career paths and are valued highly by employers.

Work placements/international opportunities

Students are encouraged to undertake a voluntary summer project in industry or a research laboratory. Recent locations for overseas summer projects have included Beijing, Zhejiang, Shanghai, Tokyo, Bochum, Krakow, Santa Barbara and Boston. A voluntary industrial tour to an overseas destination is organised in most Easter holidays. Recent destinations include Singapore, Sweden, France and China.

A typical week

During Years 1 and 2, your work will be divided between lectures (about ten a week), tutorials/classes (about two a week) and practicals (two or three afternoons a week). Typically, the work in preparation for each tutorial or class will be expected to take six to eight hours. Year 3 starts with a two-week team design project, and about eight lectures and two classes/tutorials a week for the first two terms, while most of the third term is set aside for revision. Year 4 consists of a supervised research project spanning three extended terms.

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Lectures throughout Years 1-2 may be attended by the full year groups of around 40 undergraduate students; normally Materials Year 3 Options Courses lectures will be attended by a smaller number of undergraduates plus a small number of research students. Some Year 1 classes, which support the lectures, are attended by the full year group of around 40. Tutorials supporting the Year 1 and Year 2 Materials lecture courses are usually 2 to 4 students with a tutor. The Year 1 and 2 Mathematics lectures are supported by small group tutorial classes, typically up to 6 students per group. The Year 3 Options lectures are supported by small group tutorial classes, typically 8-12 students per group.

The majority of tutorials and lectures are delivered by staff who are Professors or Associate Professors. Many are world-leading experts with years of experience in teaching and research. Some teaching may also be delivered by post-doctoral researchers or postgraduate research students. To find out more about how our teaching year is structured, visit our [Academic Year](#) page.

Course structure

YEAR 1	
COURSES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical foundations of materials• Structure and mechanical properties of materials• Transforming materials• Mathematics for materials science• Computing for materials science (MATLAB)• Crystallography classes• Practical course• Foreign language (optional)	ASSESSMENT <p>First University examinations: four written papers; continual assessment components equivalent to a fifth paper</p>
YEAR 2	
COURSES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lifecycle, processing and engineering of materials• Electronic properties of materials• Mechanical properties of materials• Structure and thermodynamics of materials• Foreign language (optional)• Supplementary subject (optional)• Mathematics• Practical course• Industrial visits• Entrepreneurship course• Industrial talks• Communication skills	

YEAR 3	
<p>COURSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials options courses 1 • Materials options courses 2 • Team design project • Introduction to materials modelling module • Characterisation of materials or Atomistic modelling module • <p><i>Examples of current options courses are available on the Materials Science website.</i></p> <p>At the start of Year 3, it is possible to transfer to a 3-year BA degree in Materials Science, graduating at the end of Year 3. See essential further information about this on the course website. The BA is not accredited.</p>	<p>ASSESSMENT</p> <p>Final University examinations, Part I: six written papers; continual assessment components equivalent to a further two papers</p>
YEAR 4	
<p>COURSES</p> <p>Research project (full-time). Additional elements include Project management, Presentation skills and an optional foreign language course. (Students are required to achieve 50% minimum in the Part I assessment in order to progress to Part II.)</p> <p><i>Examples of project titles are available on the Materials Science website.</i></p>	<p>ASSESSMENT</p> <p>Final University examinations, Part II (equivalent to 4 papers): project dissertation submitted and assessed; oral examination of project dissertation</p>

The University will seek to deliver each course in accordance with the descriptions 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. For further information, please see the [University's Terms and Conditions](#).

Teaching delivery

At the time of writing course information sheets for 2021/22 entry, the COVID-19 pandemic was still impacting the University. A range of measures have been put in place to comply with Government legislation and guidance in response to the pandemic, and to help keep students, staff and the wider community safe.

Inevitably, some changes have been necessary to teaching and student services during the pandemic (for example, a greater amount of online teaching and examinations, and restrictions on numbers allowed to access facilities at one time).

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Whatever the circumstances in the 2021/22 academic year, the University will deliver core services and learning outcomes for each course, even though the modes of delivery may change.

All course information sheets should be read in that context, and we will keep offer holders and students regularly informed if circumstances change. Further details are available on our [website](#) and within the [Student Terms and Conditions](#).

Fees

These annual fees are for full-time students who begin this undergraduate course here in 2021.

Information about how much fees and other costs may increase is set out in the University's Terms and Conditions.

Please note that while the University sets out its annual fees as a single figure, this is a combined figure for both your University and college fees. More information is provided in your [Terms and Conditions](#).

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home (UK, Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands & Isle of Man)	£9,250
Overseas (including most EU students– see Note below)	£37,510

Note: Following the UK's departure from the EU, most EU students starting a course in 2021/22 will no longer be eligible to pay fees at the 'Home' rate and will instead be charged the higher 'Overseas' rate. This change will not apply to Irish nationals living in the UK or Ireland, who will continue to be charged fees at the 'Home' rate for the duration of their course.

The government has issued guidance stating that EU, other EEA, and Swiss nationals who have been granted settled or pre-settled status in the UK under the EU settlement scheme may be eligible for 'Home fee' status and student loan support, subject to meeting residency requirements. However, until the government formally updates its fee status regulations the University is unable to confirm fee statuses for students who may qualify on this basis. We will contact you directly if we need further information from you to determine your fee status.

Please refer to the [Undergraduate fee status](#) and the [Oxford and the EU](#) pages for more information.

Additional Fees and Charges Information for Materials Science

The fourth year is entirely devoted to research - a special feature of the Oxford MEng in Materials Science programme - consisting of a full-time individual research project under the supervision of a member staff. This final year has three extended terms of 12 to 13 weeks and is 37 weeks in total so you will need to budget for higher living costs in the final year, as you will be required to be in Oxford for longer than the standard terms. (See the [likely range of living costs](#) for an additional month in Oxford.) During the project you will learn how to break down a complex problem, design an experiment or model, manage your time and project, maintain systematic records, present your work orally and write a substantial report. These research skills are transferable to other career paths and are valued highly by employers. On occasion significant scientific publications result from these projects.

Living costs

Your living costs will vary significantly dependent on your lifestyle. These are estimated to be between £1,175 and £1,710 per month in 2021-22. Each year of an undergraduate course usually consists of three terms of eight weeks each but you may need to be in Oxford for longer. As a guide, you may wish to budget over a nine-month period to ensure you also have sufficient funds during the holidays to meet essential costs.

Living costs breakdown

	Per month		Total for 9 months	
	Lower range	Upper range	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£280	£400	£2,520	£3,600
Accommodation (including utilities)	£655	£790	£5,895	£7,110
Personal items	£130	£250	£1,170	£2,250
Social activities	£45	£115	£405	£1,035
Study costs	£45	£100	£405	£900
Other	£20	£55	£180	£495
Total	£1,175	£1,710	£10,575	£15,390

In order to provide these likely living costs, the University and the Oxford University Students' Union conducted a living costs survey to complement existing student expenditure data from a variety of sources including the UK government's Student Income

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and Expenditure Survey and the National Union of Students (NUS). The likely lower and upper ranges above are based on a single student with no dependants living in college accommodation (including utility bills) and are provided for information only.

When planning your finances for future years of study at Oxford beyond 2021-22, you should allow for an estimated increase in living expenses of 3% each year.

Document accessibility

If you require an accessible version of the document, please contact Undergraduate Admissions by email (uao.comms@admin.ox.ac.uk) or via the online form (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/ask>).

Please note, at the time of publishing the CIS, further details regarding the availability and eligibility of financial support for some EU students with settled or pre-settled status remained outstanding. Confirmation about funding arrangements for the year abroad were also outstanding. Any updates impacting students will be published on the Oxford and the EU webpage.