

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: DPhil in English Local History



Course facts

Mode of study	Part Time Only
Expected length	4 to 6 years

About the course

The DPhil in English Local History is a part-time research-based course focused on individual study. Topics may typically include medieval power, early modern elites, poverty, religion, and community in England, supported by seminars and supervision.

The DPhil in English Local History draws on Oxford Lifelong Learning's knowledge and skills, which have been acquired over many years of providing specialist classes in local history, and profiting from close links with local, social and economic historians elsewhere in the University.

To learn more about the research topics you'll have the opportunity to explore, please refer to the *Research areas* section on this page.

This course is overseen by the University's Continuing Education Board, and admission is through Oxford Lifelong Learning. All graduate students on this course are members of the department's graduate school.

As a research student you may be required to undertake appropriate research training provided within the University. In addition, you will be strongly encouraged to participate in seminars and informal meetings with staff and other researchers. The major commitment of time will be to individual study and research, involving wide and intense reading, data collection and analysis, and writing. Support in making decisions about research is provided by the course team.

It is only possible to study for a DPhil (doctorate) in English Local History by part-time research. The part-time DPhil regulations require a minimum period of four years' part-time study (equivalent to two years' full-time). However, except where students are building on research and research skills developed by taking the MSc in English Local History the average time taken is approximately six years (equivalent to three years' full-time).

Attendance

The course is part-time. Part-time students are required to attend course-related activities in Oxford for a minimum of 30 days each year.

As a part-time student you will be required to attend supervision, training, seminars, milestone assessments (eg transfer of status) and other obligations in Oxford.

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.

Studying part-time for a DPhil is demanding and students should normally expect to devote on average at least 20 hours per week to their research. Students should also ensure their employer understands the importance of full participation in the course.

Resources

As a graduate student, you will have access to the University's wide range of resources including libraries, museums, galleries, digital resources and IT services.

The Bodleian Libraries is the largest library system in the UK. It includes the main Bodleian Library and libraries across Oxford, including major research libraries and faculty, department and institute libraries. Together, the Libraries hold more than 13 million printed items, provide access to e-journals, and contain outstanding special collections including rare books and manuscripts, classical papyri, maps, music, art and printed ephemera.

The University's IT Services is available to all students to support with core university IT systems and tools, as well as many other services and facilities. IT Services also offers a range of IT learning courses for students to support with learning and research, as well as [guidance on what technology to bring with you as a new student \(https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/what-to-bring\)](https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/what-to-bring) at Oxford.

The [Rewley House Continuing Education Library \(https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/about/library-facilities\)](https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/about/library-facilities), one of the Bodleian Libraries, is situated in Rewley House. The department aims to support the wide variety of subjects covered by departmental courses at many academic levels. The department also has a collection of around 73,000 books together with periodicals. PCs in the library give access to the internet and the full range of electronic resources subscribed to by the University of Oxford. Wi-Fi is also available. The Jessop Reading Room adjoining the library is available for study.

The department provides various [IT facilities \(https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/about/online-support\)](https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/about/online-support), including the Student Computing Facility which provides individual PCs for your use.

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. In such circumstances, a second internal supervisor will be appointed.

Supervision on the DPhil course is provided by specialist tutors from the department, elsewhere in Oxford and further afield. Contact time will vary according to the phase of the project but, a student can anticipate an average of 3-5 hours of one-to-one time over a term. This is also supplemented by other forms of contact through graduate school and faculty training and by seminar participation.

As part of the University's requirement for students on the DPhil to attend a minimum of 30 days of university-based work each year, you will have the opportunity to arrange to meet your supervisor once a term.

Assessment

You 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 6th and the 8th 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 12th and 18th 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 substantial thesis (of at least 100,000 words) after 18 or, at most, 24 terms from the date of admission. To be successfully awarded a DPhil in English Local History you will need to defend your thesis orally (viva voce) in front of two appointed examiners.

Research areas

You'll have the opportunity to undertake research within the specialised themes of this course, which include:

- Power and patronage in the later medieval localities
- Kinship, culture and community: provincial elites in early modern England
- Poverty and the Poor Law in England 1660-1800
- Religion and community in England, 1830-1914.

Changes to this course

The University will seek to deliver this course in accordance with the description set out in this course page. 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. The safety of students, staff and visitors is paramount and major changes to delivery or services may have to be made if a pandemic, epidemic or local health emergency occurs. In addition, in certain circumstances, for example due to visa difficulties or because the health needs of students cannot be met, it may be necessary to make adjustments to course requirements for international study.

Where possible your academic supervisor will not change for the duration of your course. However, it may be necessary to assign a new academic supervisor during the course of study or before registration for reasons which might include illness,

sabbatical leave, parental leave or change in employment.

For further information please see our page on [changes to courses](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses) (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses>) and the [provisions of the student contract](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract) (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract>) regarding changes to courses.

Costs

Annual course fees

The fees for this course are charged on an annual basis.

Fees for the 2026-27 academic year at the University of Oxford

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£5,570
Overseas	£14,630

What do course fees cover?

Course fees cover your teaching as well as other academic services and facilities provided to support your studies. Unless specified in the additional information section 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 costs information below.

How long do I need to pay 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 fees will usually increase annually, as explained in the University's [Terms and Conditions \(//www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract).

Graduate students who have reached the end of their standard period of fee liability will be required to pay a University continuation charge and/or a college continuation charge.

The University continuation charge, per term for entry in 2026-27 is £656, 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 will be between £150 and £500, as explained in our [information about continuation charges \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/continuation-charges\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/continuation-charges). 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.

Where can I find more information about fees?

Our [fees and other charges \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges) pages provide further information, including details about:

- [course fees and fee liability \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/courses-fees-and-liability\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/courses-fees-and-liability);
- [how your fee status is determined \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/fee-status\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/fee-status);
- [changes to fees and other charges \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/changes-to-fees-and-charges\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/changes-to-fees-and-charges); and
- [continuation charges \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/continuation-charges\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/continuation-charges).

Information about how much fees and other costs will usually increase each academic year is set out in the University's [Terms and Conditions \(//www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract).

Additional costs

Please note that this course requires that you attend in Oxford for a minimum 30 days each year and you may incur additional travel and accommodation expenses for this. Accommodation costs in Oxford can start at around £98 per night in a college or around £120 in a hotel (single rate). Students should also factor in costs for meals during their stay. Depending on your choice of thesis and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel expenses, research expenses, equipment, materials and field trips. These costs will vary according to the location and length of the fieldwork. You will need to meet these additional costs yourself. There are no other compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees and living costs.

Living costs

In addition to your course fees and any additional course-specific costs, you will need to ensure that you have adequate funds to support your living costs for the duration of your course.

Living costs for part-time study

Your living costs may vary depending on your personal circumstances but you will still need to cover your cost of living on a full-time basis for the duration of your course, even if you will not be based in Oxford throughout your studies. While the range of likely living costs for a single, full-time student living in Oxford in the 2026-27 academic year is between £1,405 and £2,105 per month, living costs outside Oxford may be different.

Part-time students who are not based in Oxford will need to calculate travel and accommodation costs carefully. Depending on your circumstances and study plans, this may include the cost of a visitor visa to attend for short blocks of time (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs>) (if visitor visa eligibility criteria (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/visitors>) are met).

Further information about living costs

The current economic climate and periods of high national inflation in recent years make it harder to estimate potential changes to the cost of living over the next few years. For study in Oxford beyond the 2026-27 academic year, it is suggested that you budget for potential increases in living expenses of around 4% each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation.

A breakdown of likely living costs for one month during the 2026-27 academic year are shown below. These costs are based on a single, full-time graduate student, with no dependants, living in Oxford.

Likely living costs for one month in Oxford during the 2026-27 academic year

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£315	£545
Accommodation	£825	£990
Personal items	£160	£310
Social activities	£50	£130
Study costs	£35	£90
Other	£20	£40
Total	£1,405	£2,105

For information about how these figures have been calculated as well as tables showing the likely living costs for nine and twelve months, please refer to the living costs (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs>) page of our website.

Document accessibility

If you require a more accessible version of this document please contact Graduate Admissions and Recruitment by email (graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk).