

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: DPhil in Cancer Science (Clinician)



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	3 years

About the course

The DPhil in Cancer Science (Clinician) is a research course for qualified doctors, offering advanced training in oncology through a three-year lab-based project, seminars, and skills development in cancer biology, diagnostics, and therapeutics.

This course is aimed at fully-qualified medical doctors who are, or are eligible to be, registered clinical practitioners with the General Medical Council (GMC).

As a doctoral student on this course, you will be based in a single research group/laboratory to undertake a research project for three years on a full-time basis. You will be admitted to work under the supervision of a Principal Investigator who is formally appointed as your DPhil supervisor.

You will undertake a selected research project from the list advertised in the course's "Clinical/Medical Undergraduates" project booklet. There is no period of rotation between laboratories.

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

All doctoral students develop their skills through a range of research training and skills development in their first year of full-time study, by attending compulsory and optional courses and lectures in laboratory techniques and generic skills, including scientific writing and statistics, while also carrying out your research project.

You will be encouraged to attend lectures and seminars related to your programme of research and make the most of the doctoral training and research methods provision available across the University. The aim is to tailor this training to individual needs and bring all students up to an advanced level in background knowledge. Later training is focused on the skills required for a successful career in independent research and for clinicians, to successful re-integration into clinical training.

Student and employment contracts

Students will have a salaried employment contract with the University of Oxford for the three-year duration of the course. This means that students will have two contracts, both lasting three years:

- an employment contract with the University (the terms of which will be set out at the point of their offer letter); and
- a student contract (details of which can be found in our [contract information for new students \(//www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract)).

Each of the two contracts is conditional upon the other – if one ends for any reason then the other will normally end too. So, for example, if the student contract terminates before the scheduled expiry of the three years (eg because the student has failed to pass a required academic assessment/exam or as a result of a finding that the student has committed a serious breach of the Student Disciplinary Code) the employment contract will normally terminate, and vice versa. (In some cases, if a student is close to submission of final assessments but three years have elapsed, the student contract may be extended to enable them to finish, though the employment contract would not normally be extended in these circumstances.)

Successful applicants will be offered a salary for three years at band E63/E64 ([details of the current salary scales \(https://finance.admin.ox.ac.uk/salary-scales#collapse1098076\)](https://finance.admin.ox.ac.uk/salary-scales#collapse1098076) can be found on the Finance Division website). The salary offered will reflect the applicant's existing seniority, with consideration of the BMA's published salary scales for resident doctors in the NHS (and for applicants from outside the UK there will be a similar consideration of the applicant's seniority).

Successful applicants' University tuition fees will be fully funded at the Home fee rate, or the Overseas fee rate if applicable.

It is a pre-condition of commencing the course that the applicant must be entitled to both study and work in the UK. Applicants from overseas will need to have an appropriate visa by the point that the course commences, and if such a visa cannot be obtained then the offer will be withdrawn.

If students wish to maintain eligibility to practice with the GMC, they should arrange a separate contract with the NHS to enable them to continue clinical practice (while ensuring they dedicate most of their working time to their studies/work for the University). Where applicable, it is the student's responsibility to arrange this.

Further information about this course and employment aspects

(<https://www.medsci.ox.ac.uk/study/graduateschool/courses/dtc-structured-research-degrees/dphil-cancer-science>) can also be found on the department's website.

Attendance

The course is full-time and requires attendance in Oxford. Full-time students are subject to the University's Residence requirements. (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/accommodation/residence-requirements>)

You will be based in various units, buildings and campuses around Oxford with the department supporting a wide range of clinical services located in Oxford's John Radcliffe and Churchill Hospitals.

Provision exists for students on some courses to undertake their research in a 'well-founded laboratory' outside of the University. This may require travel to and attendance at a site that is not located in Oxford. Where known, existing collaborations will be outlined on this page. Please read the course information carefully, including the additional information about course fees and costs.

Resources to support your study

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>) at Oxford.

As a student on this course you will have access to experimental facilities, as appropriate to your research. IT support will be provided from both the department hosting your research and University IT Services. You will also have access to library services such as the Radcliffe Science Library and the Cairns Library.

The provision of project-specific resources will be agreed with the relevant supervisor and host department during the planning stages for the research project.

Workspace will be allocated according to individual circumstances. If undertaking experimental work, you will be provided with bench space in a laboratory. If undertaking theoretical research, you will have shared office space.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision is the responsibility of the Medical Sciences Doctoral Training Centre 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 Medical Sciences Doctoral Training Centre.

Students on this course are likely to be from a diverse range of backgrounds and specialisms, and study an assortment of subjects across many different departments and institutes. As such, every student-supervisor relationship is tailored to the specific needs of each.

Students can expect to meet with their supervisors between every one to four weeks for input and guidance, although this may change throughout the course as students accumulate more experience.

Independent mentorship and supervision will be provided centrally from the course and will meet one to two times per year.

Assessment

Students begin the course as a probationary research student (PRS). Before the end of their fourth term, students are required to write a report prior to transfer to DPhil status. Progress is evaluated by two academic assessors, who are not directly involved in the student's supervision. Continuation on the course is subject to passing the Confirmation of Status assessment in year two or three. The doctoral work will culminate in a thesis that will be defended in an oral examination (*viva voce*). Students are expected to submit their thesis between the ninth and twelfth terms from being admitted as a PRS.

Research areas

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

- Immuno-Oncology
- Cancer Big Data
- Novel Therapeutics
- Early Cancer Detection.

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 \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses) and the [provisions of the student contract \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract) regarding changes to courses.

Successful applicants will be offered a salary for three years at band E63/E64 ([details of the current salary scales \(https://finance.admin.ox.ac.uk/salary-scales#collapse1098076\)](https://finance.admin.ox.ac.uk/salary-scales#collapse1098076) can be found on the Finance Division website). The salary offered will reflect the applicant's existing seniority, with consideration of the BMA's published salary scales for resident doctors in the NHS (and for applicants from outside the UK there will be a similar consideration of the applicant's seniority).

Successful applicants' University tuition fees will be fully funded at the Home fee rate, or the Overseas fee rate if applicable.

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	£10,470
Overseas	£34,700

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

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 funding from your department to help you cover some of these expenses.

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 full-time study

For the 2026-27 academic year, the range of likely living costs for a single, full-time student is between £1,405 and £2,105 for each month spent in Oxford. We provide the cost per month so you can multiply up by the number of months you expect to live in Oxford. Depending on your circumstances, you may also need to budget for the [costs of a student visa and immigration health surcharge](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs>) and/or [living costs for family members or other dependants](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs#field_listing_content_content-item--2) (https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs#field_listing_content_content-item--2) that you plan to bring with you to Oxford (if [dependant visa eligibility criteria](https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/family) (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/family>) 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) (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs>) page of our website.

Document accessibility

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