

## Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: BPhil in Philosophy



### Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	21 months

### About the course

The BPhil in Philosophy is a two-year taught course combining classes, supervisions, and independent research, with essays and a thesis covering theoretical, practical, and historical philosophy, preparing students for doctoral study.

The BPhil in Philosophy is an intellectually demanding course that requires a great degree of independence of thought from students, both academically as well as organisationally: students have to put together their own programme of classes, supervisions and topics for assessment. It is regarded both as training for doctoral study and a basis for teaching a range of philosophical subjects.

The main purpose of the BPhil is to provide future doctoral students with:

- a basis of knowledge and understanding of a number of philosophy subjects that they can develop into areas of teaching competence;
- the skills to conduct independent research in philosophy in their chosen area; and
- the ability to produce written work that displays sustained argument, independent thought and lucid structure and presentation.

Students are encouraged to organise their own seminars and reading groups, and they also run two societies: one invites distinguished speakers from the UK and around the world, while another gives graduates the opportunity to present papers to a graduate audience.

Each year there is an Oxford Graduate Philosophy Conference, in which most graduate philosophy students participate in some way.

### Course structure

An overview of the course structure is provided below. Details of the compulsory and optional elements of the course are provided in the *Course components* section of this page.

Tuition on the BPhil is through a combination of classes, one-to-one supervisions and independent research.

You will write four essays across at least three subjects (with no more than two essays on any one subject), together with a thesis of up to 30,000 words. During your first four terms of study, you will receive one-to-one supervision on three or four chosen subjects, with four hours of supervision per term.

You may also attend any other classes, seminars and lectures in the Faculty of Philosophy which are of interest to you and any classes, seminars and lectures in other faculties that are open to you. Each term many graduate classes and research seminars are organised by faculty members in which graduate students are full and important participants.

### 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). (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/accommodation/residence-requirements>)

This course is not available in part-time mode of study and is not offered via distance learning.

The course has no fieldwork, industrial placement or year abroad element, but students may decide to attend conferences, workshops or research training elsewhere.

### 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.

### **The Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities**

The Faculty of Philosophy will be based in the Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, a brand-new building at the University of Oxford, which will accommodate seven faculties, two institutes, a new library, a large number of well-equipped teaching and seminar rooms, and performance and arts venues. Each faculty will have its own centre and social hub within a building which will also facilitate interdisciplinary and collaborative work. At the heart of the building will be a large atrium – called the Great Hall – which will be a beautiful space, bringing light into the building, and serving as a space for informal work, relaxation, meeting with friends, taking breaks, having refreshments – and much more.

The library, part of the Bodleian Libraries, will be open to all students, and will house lending collections for Philosophy. There will be 340 general reader seats, and around 80 graduate study seats – with a further 320 formal and informal study seats throughout the building outside the library.

Open-shelf lending collections will be complemented by access to electronic resources, scan on demand, and material requested from the Bodleian's Collections Storage Facility. As well as the Library's extensive staffed hours, there will be a 24/7 study space, including smart lockers for self-collect of borrowable items out of hours. Subject support is provided by a team of subject librarians.

### **Supervision**

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Faculty of Philosophy, and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. However, incoming students' supervision preferences are accommodated where possible. Under exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be found outside the Faculty of Philosophy.

During the first four terms of study most students have the opportunity to receive sixteen hours of one-to-one supervision (four hours in each term).

Prior to each supervision, you will agree a topic in consultation with your supervisor and write an essay that will be discussed with your supervisor in the supervision. In the last two terms of study, you will research and write a 30,000-word thesis, under the guidance of a supervisor with relevant subject expertise.

### **Assessment**

BPhil examination is by submission of a thesis and four assessed essays across a range of philosophical subjects. The thesis will be on a topic of your choice, approved by the Graduate Studies Committee.

### **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 in circumstances of a pandemic, epidemic or local health emergency. 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.

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>), and the provisions of the student contract (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract-2024>), regarding changes to courses.

### **Course components**

#### **Compulsory study**

You will be required to attend the compulsory Pro-Seminar as well as one other graduate class per term during your first year. The Pro-Seminar covers Theoretical Philosophy in Michaelmas term, Practical Philosophy in Hilary term and History of Philosophy in Trinity term. In the fourth term of your studies you will be required to attend two graduate classes. Graduate classes are normally provided across a range of areas covered by the BPhil syllabus.

You will also write a thesis of up to 30,000 words.

**Options**

You will write four essays across at least three subjects (with no more than two essays on any one subject).

The essays must be chosen from three broad subject groups: one essay must be on a subject from Group 1, one on a subject from Group 2, and one on a subject from Group 3. The fourth essay may be on a subject from any of the Groups. The precise list of subjects in the three groups is published at the beginning of each year and may be tailored to the particular strengths of the faculty members who will be teaching that year, but a typical list might be as follows:

**Group 1: Theoretical Philosophy**

- Epistemology; Logic and Philosophy of Logic; Metaphysics; Philosophy of Action; Philosophy of Language; Philosophy of Mathematics; Philosophy of Mind; Philosophy of Physics; Philosophy of Probability and Decision Theory; Philosophy of Psychology and Cognitive Science; Philosophy of Religion; Philosophy of Science.

**Group 2: Practical Philosophy**

- Aesthetics; Feminist Philosophy; Meta-Ethics; Normative and Applied Ethics; Philosophy of Law; Political Philosophy.

**Group 3: History of Philosophy**

- Ancient Philosophy; Medieval Philosophy; Early Modern Philosophy; History of Philosophy from 1800.

## 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	£18,970
Overseas	£43,730

### 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).

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); and
- [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).

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 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 to help you cover some of these expenses. The Philosophy Graduate Studies Committee has a research and travel fund for graduate students to which students may apply for assistance with, for example, the costs of attending conferences or workshops. BPhil and MSt students may only apply for funding if they are presenting a paper.

### 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 \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) and/or [living costs for family members or other dependants \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs#field\\_listing\\_content\\_content-item--2\)](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 \(//www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/family\)](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
<b>Food</b>	£315	£545
<b>Accommodation</b>	£825	£990
<b>Personal items</b>	£160	£310
<b>Social activities</b>	£50	£130
<b>Study costs</b>	£35	£90
<b>Other</b>	£20	£40
<b>Total</b>	£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 \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) page of our website.

**Document accessibility**

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