

## Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: MSc in Education (Digital and Social Change)



### Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	12 months

### About the course

The MSc Education (Digital and Social Change) is an exciting and innovative course, in which you will develop a strong theoretical understanding of new technologies, education and society.

At the core of the MSc is a strong commitment to digital inclusion and social justice that addresses contemporary issues regarding the impact of digital and social change in education.

At a time when many people are discussing significant moral questions regarding technology and its use in education, including for example, the ethics of Artificial Intelligence, there is a pressing need for a new generation of researchers and practitioners that can affect social change through stronger theoretically-informed practice, research, design and policy.

The course covers topics such as:

- Key Concepts in Digital Education: What is technology and what is the purpose of Education? How might we theorise how people learn with technologies? How can we conceptualise and enable social change in education?
- Social Justice and Technology: How can we make social justice an underpinning principle of technology design, development, implementation and evaluation? What are the controversies and debates regarding the role of technology in global contexts?
- Education, the Internet and Society: How might we understand society in a digital era and what implications does this have for education? What kinds of educational futures do we wish to create?
- Critical Digital Innovation: What are the potential benefits, emerging risks, and inevitable trade-offs involved in the design and development of educational technologies, particularly given advances in AI? How might we use inclusive design approaches to work with marginalised communities?

The department welcomes students from a range of disciplinary backgrounds including but not limited to education, computer science, sociology, communications and international development. You will have a commitment to social justice in education, a questioning stance on technology and an interest in developing interdisciplinary knowledge.

The course aims to help you develop the skills to:

- Critically assess and understand the role of technology in education across the life course
- Develop the expertise to address the challenges posed by digital inequality
- Understand how to embed innovative learning technologies in practice
- Cultivate research and design prototyping skills
- Understand the relationship between social justice, technology and learning.

By the end of the course you will develop:

- The ability to integrate educational theory and practice
- An in-depth and comparative understanding of learning theories and their appropriate use to develop informative research questions
- The necessary research skills for progression to the next stage of your career, including doctoral study
- Specialist technical and social knowledge, enabling the critical evaluation of technologies for digital and social change
- An understanding of the ethics of technology when working with marginalised communities
- Informed insights about the state-of-the-art technologies, such as artificial intelligence and the ability to critically evaluate their application to, and limitations for, digital and social change in education
- The ability to develop and manage a research project, and work collaboratively and reflectively on contemporary research issues.

### 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.

The MSc Education (Digital and Social Change) features six core modules plus one of a choice of option courses.

Research in the department is organised around three major themes:

- Language, Cognition and Development
- Policy, Economy and Society
- Pedagogy, Learning and Knowledge.

Within each of these themes there are several research groups and centres. All staff and doctoral students belong to one or more of these research groups, each of which has its own seminar programme to which graduate students often contribute. In addition, the department as a whole sponsors seminars and public lectures which attract distinguished national and international speakers.

## 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>)

## 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) (<https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/what-to-bring>) at Oxford.

The Bodleian Education Library, located at the centre of the Department of Education, specialises in material on education and related fields. As well as a print collection of books, journals and statistics, the library provides access to a wide range of electronic resources. The library also houses a collection of teaching resources, primarily in support of subjects covered by the department's secondary PGCE course. The Social Sciences Library provides valuable additional resource to students pursuing programmes in the Department of Education.

## Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Department of 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 of Education.

Most students receive a minimum of ten hours of supervision over the three terms of the academic year. You will meet with your supervisor on a number of occasions during the year. This will normally include at least twice during Michaelmas term in order to discuss early ideas and plan the initial reading; at least twice during Hilary term, in order to develop a firm plan, and make the ethical approval application; normally four times in Trinity term (which includes during the summer break leading up to dissertation submission), in order (1) to discuss fieldwork, (2) plan the analysis and thesis design, (3) discuss early chapters, and (4) discuss the first complete draft. Supervisors are also available to students via email.

Your choice of dissertation topic is up to you and will be iteratively developed in collaboration with your supervisor.

## Assessment

Students will complete six modules. Currently each module is assessed by coursework. Students will also submit a dissertation on a topic selected by the student and approved by the supervisor.

The Department of Education will undertake a comprehensive review of its assessment methods during the 2025–26 academic year, taking into account recent developments in Artificial Intelligence. As a result, some assessment methods may be subject to change. Applicants and offer-holders will be informed of the revised approach to assessment prior to starting the course.

## Course components

### Compulsory study

Core modules:

- Key Concepts in Digital Education (taught by DSC team)
- Social Justice and Technology (taught by DSC team)

Core research methods modules, common to all pathways:

- Foundations of Education Research I: Concepts and Design
- Foundations of Education Research II: Strategies and Methods *or* Intermediate Quantitative Research (should prerequisites be met).

## Options

You must also choose at least one of the following options:

- Critical Digital Innovation (taught by DSC team)
- Education, the Internet and Society (taught by DSC team)

You can also choose from the option papers from the other MSc Education pathways, examples of which include (depending on the year and availability):

- Core Principles of Child Assessment
- Education in Africa
- Global Higher Education
- The Implementation of the Rights of Children
- Qualitative Research (should prerequisites be met).

## 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](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses) (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses>) and the [provisions of the student contract](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract) (<http://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	£18,970
Overseas	£40,710

### 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

Please note that as part of your course requirements, you will need to choose a dissertation topic. This element of the course is mandatory and forms part of the assessment for the course. Depending on your choice of topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel expenses (transport, accommodation, meals), 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 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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