

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: MSc in Neuroscience



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	12 months

About the course

The MSc in Neuroscience is a one-year, full-time taught course at Oxford. It combines core modules, advanced topics, and two research projects across molecular, cellular, systems, and cognitive neuroscience.

The course is interdisciplinary in content and completely inter-departmental in structure, since at least nine departments or research centres contribute to it each year. Providing both theoretical and practical training, including two research laboratory placements, the course is modular and therefore flexible with respect to participants' backgrounds and interests.

The course takes an integrated approach to neuroscience and provides skills training in a wide range of experimental and theoretical methods intended to enable you to ask questions and tackle problems that transcend the traditional disciplines from which neuroscience has evolved.

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 academic year begins in late September and is divided into three terms. The first term provides an introduction to neuroscience and research methods through five compulsory introductory modules and associated practical classes. During the second and third terms you will combine advanced taught courses, essay writing and two laboratory rotations (research projects).

You will undertake two extended research projects from a choice of over 100 offered each year by the extensive neuroscience research community in Oxford. You will also attend the graduate programme lecture series, which provides a broad education covering molecular, cellular, systems, computational and cognitive neuroscience.

Each of the MSc research projects lasts for about 16 weeks and is selected from a very extensive list of approved abstracts. With over 100 abstracts submitted each year there is always plenty of choice, but if you are interested in a particular lab or research topic, you are welcome to discuss a potential project independently with an appropriate supervisor. Many of these projects lead to publications.

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.

Hot desking, within the Department of Experimental Psychology in the heart of the University Science Area, provides a base for MSc in Neuroscience students which can be particularly important on an interdisciplinary course. IT support is provided by an in-house team and all the MSc lectures are given in this department.

The Radcliffe Science Library is the main library facility for biomedical sciences. The Cortex Club, a student-led organisation for those studying neuroscience in Oxford, provides an extensive series of seminars and social events where students from

all departments can meet to exchange ideas. This is in addition to the seminars and other events that are organised at both divisional and departmental level.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Medical Sciences Division 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 Division.

Students are allocated a day to day supervisor and have the opportunity to meet with this person individually when necessary, particularly at the beginning of the project.

Assessment

Each of the MSc research projects are written up as dissertations. The course concludes with an oral examination. The first term is assessed by the Qualifying Examination. In both the second and third terms there is a project that is written up as a dissertation. Students also complete four advanced option modules over the two terms. This may be two per term but this is not mandatory. Each option is written up as a practical portfolio (Computational Neuroscience) or an essay for all other options. Students are also expected to attend Journal Club in both terms.

Course components

Compulsory study

The first term provides an introduction to neuroscience and research methods through five compulsory introductory modules and associated practical classes:

- Introduction to Neuroscience
- Neuroanatomy
- Synapses and Transduction
- Neuronal Cell and Molecular Biology
- Systems Neuroscience

You will also attend the graduate programme lecture series, which provides a broad education covering molecular, cellular, systems, computational and cognitive neuroscience.

Options

During the second and third terms you will combine advanced taught courses, essay writing and two laboratory rotations (research projects).

Advanced Option modules for the second and third terms offered in previous years have included:

- Cognitive neuroscience
- Neuroscience and clinical mental health
- Computational neuroscience
- Sensory systems
- CNS Development, Plasticity and Repair
- Molecular neuroscience
- Genes, circuits and behaviour.

Research projects

You will undertake two extended research projects from a choice of over 100 offered each year by the extensive neuroscience research community in Oxford. Lab rotations are available in at least nine University departments or research centres that contribute to the MSc. If you are interested in a particular lab or research topic, you are welcome to discuss a potential project independently with an appropriate supervisor.

Examples of previous MSc Neuroscience rotation projects from the past five years include:

- Inhibition of alpha-synuclein aggregation and glial activation as a therapeutic strategy for Parkinson's disease
- A functional and anatomical mechanism for hippocampal-neocortical interaction during memory recall
- Extracting hierarchical structure from experience
- Comparative Mapping of Brain Connectivity
- Developing a robust, high-throughput, probabilistic reversal learning assay to assess behavioural flexibility in mice
- Can Ketamine Reduce Stress Reactivity in Humans? A Double-blind, Placebo-controlled Investigation
- Purinergic Modulation of Striatal Dopamine Release
- Towards temporal prediction models of touch for naturalistic stimuli

- The effects of constant light on sleep and torpor
- The contributions of GABA and acetylcholine to attention: a combined pharmacological-TMS study.

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.

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	£14,180
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 (or, after fee liability ends, continuation charges) and living costs. However, as part of your course requirements, you will need to choose two research projects. 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. You will need to meet these additional costs, although you may be able to apply for small grants 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 \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs\)](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
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 \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) page of our website.

Document accessibility

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