

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2016-17

BPhil in Philosophy

About the course

The Bachelor of Philosophy (BPhil) in Philosophy is a two-year taught graduate degree, which is an intellectually demanding course requiring a background in philosophy, usually from undergraduate study. 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 five 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.

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

The Pro-Seminar, which is compulsory for all incoming BPhil students, is held in the first term and covers some classic papers in theoretical philosophy and some in practical philosophy.

You will also be required to attend two graduate classes per term, during the first four terms of study. Graduate classes are normally provided for the most popular subjects in the BPhil syllabus.

During the first four terms of study you should receive eight individual, one-to-one supervisions on two chosen subjects, normally two supervisions per term. The four supervisions on a given subject are in consecutive terms. Prior to the supervisions, you will submit an essay that will be discussed with your supervisor in the supervision. The essay topics and literature to be covered should be agreed in advance between you and your supervisor.

In the last two terms of study, you will research and write a 30,000-word thesis, under the guidance of a supervisor with subject expertise. The thesis will be on a topic of your choice, approved by the Graduate Studies Committee.

You may also attend any other undergraduate and graduate classes, seminars and lectures in and outside of the Faculty of Philosophy which are of interest to you, provided those classes, seminars and lectures are open to you.

BPhil examination is by submission of a thesis of up to 30,000 words and six assessed essays, each of no more than 5,000 words, across at least five subjects with no more than two essays on any one subject. At least one essay should be on theoretical philosophy, at least one essay on practical philosophy and two essays should be on history of philosophy, of which at least one must be concerned with philosophy written before 1800.



If you are interested in the philosophy of physics or ancient philosophy you may wish to study the specific pathways for these subjects in the BPhil in Philosophy. These are not separate courses, but a way of maximising the study of these topics within the existing BPhil structure. A student on these tracks would study primarily the philosophy of physics/science or ancient philosophy during the first four terms and go on to write a 30,000-word thesis on a philosophy of physics/science or an ancient philosophy topic in the final two terms.

Most students join the BPhil course with the intention of progressing to a doctoral programme in Philosophy. BPhil students who progress to the DPhil in Philosophy programme at the University of Oxford, have the advantage of skipping the first year of the DPhil (as a Probationary Research Student) and being allowed to incorporate the contents of their entire 30,000-word BPhil thesis into their 75,000 word DPhil thesis. Such students also have only another six terms (instead of the usual nine terms) of fee liability for their DPhil.

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

MSt in Philosophy

The Master of Studies (MSt) in Philosophy is the one-year version of the BPhil. The entry requirements for the MSt are the same as for the BPhil. However, the Graduate Studies Committee considers applications for the MSt alongside applications for the BPhil in Philosophy (for the same admissions quota) and only rarely and in exceptional circumstances accepts students to this course.

The examination for the MSt consists of four essays on at least three subjects. There is no thesis element. The MSt is considered to be a terminal degree and students who complete this course are not permitted to continue onto the DPhil in Philosophy. It is also an exit award for students who fail or withdraw from the BPhil but have completed the requirements for the MSt.

Changes to courses

The University will seek to deliver each course in accordance with the descriptions set out above. 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. For further information, please see the University's Terms and Conditions.

Expected length of course

21 months

Annual fees for entry in 2016-2017

Fee Status	Tuition fee	College fee	Total annual fees
Home/EU (including islands)	£8,460	£2,933	£11,393
Overseas	£17,555	£2,933	£20,488

The fees shown above are the annual tuition and college fees for this course for entry in the 2016-17 academic year; for courses lasting longer than one year, please be aware that fees will usually increase annually. For details, please see our guidance on likely increases to fees and charges.

Tuition and college 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 tuition and college fees).

Additional cost information

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 from your department and/or college to help you cover some of these expenses.

Living costs

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

The likely living costs for 2016-17 are published below. These costs are based on a single, full-time graduate student, with no dependants, living in Oxford. We provide the cost per month so you can multiply up by the number of months you expect to live in Oxford.

	Likely living costs for 1 month		Likely living costs for 9 months		Likely living costs for 12 months	
	Lower range	Upper range	Lower range	Upper range	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£265	£298	£2,384	£2,673	£3,177	£3,565
Accommodation	£469	£667	£4,221	£6,002	£5,627	£8,006
Personal items	£119	£244	£1,073	£2,187	£1,429	£2,915
Social activities	£60	£107	£539	£960	£718	£1,280
Study costs	£36	£73	£314	£661	£418	£880
Other	£19	£44	£197	£410	£265	£547
Total	£970	£1,433	£8,727	£12,894	£11,636	£17,191

When planning your finances for any future years of study in Oxford beyond 2016-17, you should allow for an estimated increase in living expenses of 2% each year.

More information about how these figures have been calculated is available at www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs.

10 December 2015