

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2022-23: DPhil in Musculoskeletal Sciences



About the course

The DPhil in Musculoskeletal Sciences is intended to provide clinical and non-clinical graduates with a wide variety of research skills, in-depth knowledge, understanding and expertise in specific musculoskeletal-related fields of research. Furthermore, as part of your training you will be exposed to a range of topics such as critical appraisal, epidemiology and medical statistics.

After a short induction period in Michaelmas term, during which some basic training is provided, you will start a research project in your supervisor's unit. There are a wide range of projects that can be undertaken under this title, including projects on epidemiology, clinical trials, pathophysiology of various musculoskeletal disorders, bioengineering, cancer biology, stem cell and epigenetics, cartilage and tendon biology, among others.

Most research groups have weekly meetings where members present and discuss their research results with other members of their team. You are likely to be asked to regularly present your work in progress seminars, which are attended by other research groups working in related areas. Whilst working on your research project you will participate in a comprehensive, flexible skills training programme which includes a range of workshops and seminars in transferable skills, generic research skills and specific research techniques. There are also numerous seminars and lectures by local and visiting scientists and you are provided with many opportunities to meet leading scientists.

Your training will be tailored to your particular needs, drawing from the vast range of training available at Oxford and covering both specialist scientific methods and techniques and transferable skills. Please note that there is no formal taught component of the DPhil in Musculoskeletal Sciences. However, you will develop your research skills through a range of research training in your first year, including compulsory attendance at core subject lectures on a variety of topics such as an introduction to pathophysiology of musculoskeletal disorders, epidemiology, basic immunology, clinical trials and rehabilitation.

During your first year, you will be expected to attend a number of topic-related modules. Attendance on a two-day Data Analysis: Statistics Designing Clinical Research and Biostatistics course is compulsory to assist you with appropriate research design. You are also encouraged to work with your supervisor(s) on your research-specific literature review and to develop a study design for your thesis within the first term (two terms for part-time students) of your research training.

You will be required to attend and present at postgraduate seminars, not only to develop your presentation skills but also to benefit from the feedback, support and interaction from your University peers and senior academics.

As a member of Medical Sciences Graduate School, you will be entitled to attend various workshops run by the Medical Sciences Skills Training programme. Further academic and pastoral support will be provided for by the Departmental Graduate Studies Team which consist of the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) as well as the departmental Graduate Studies Officer (GSO) and Assistant (GSA). Further support is available from your college advisor.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of Medical Sciences and the Nuffield Department of Orthopaedics, Rheumatology and Musculoskeletal Sciences (NDORMS) 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 Medical Sciences and NDORMS.

All students must have a core supervisory team of at least two supervisors. At the beginning of your programme, you will meet with your supervisors regularly to finalise your project and agree on an initial programme of research. Within the first three months, you will complete an analysis of your training needs for the duration of your research (TNA) with your supervisor and submit it as part of your compulsory termly reporting.

Regularity of student/supervisor meetings will be agreed between the student and supervisors directly. Every student should meet their supervisors at least once per month. A Thesis Committee is a recommended second strand of supervisory support in the Botnar Research Centre.

Within the first six to twelve months (twelve to twenty four months for part-time students) you are expected to complete a literature review on a topic relating to your area of research.

In the case of students who require specific help to adjust to an academic programme or to a new range of skills, the supervisor will work with them to ensure that they have additional support.

Assessment

Your attainment will be monitored regularly via:

1. Completion of termly reports by you and your supervisor(s) through Graduate Supervision Reporting (GSR)
2. Transfer of Status, to be completed before the end of the fourth term (eighth term for part-time students). The process includes preparation and submission of a 5000-word transfer report and assessment in a viva.
3. Confirmation of Status, to be completed before the end of the eighth term (sixteenth term for part-time students). This process includes assessment in a viva including presentation of findings and an outline of the thesis.
4. Submission and defence of the final thesis by viva, no later than twelfth term (twenty fourth term for part-time students - depending on funding duration).

Stages 2, 3 and 4 will be assessed by two independent senior academics to ensure you are on track with your research and that you are receiving adequate guidance.

Changes to courses

The University will seek to deliver this course in accordance with the description 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. These may include significant changes made necessary by a pandemic (including Covid-19), epidemic or local health emergency. For further information, please see the University's Terms and Conditions (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/terms>) and our page on changes to courses (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges>).

Expected length of course

	Full Time	Part Time
Expected length	3-4 years	6-8 years

Costs

Full-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£8,620
Overseas	£28,560

Further details about fee status eligibility can be found on the fee status webpage (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/feestatus>).

Part-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£4,310
Overseas	£14,280

Further details about fee status eligibility can be found on the fee status webpage (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/feestatus>).

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, please be aware that fees will usually increase annually. Information about how much fees and other costs may increase is set out in the University's Terms and Conditions (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/terms>).

Course fees cover your teaching as well as other academic services and facilities provided to support your studies. Unless specified in the additional cost information (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 cost information.

Graduate students who have reached the end of their standard period of fee liability may be required to pay a termly University and/or a college continuation charge.

The University continuation charge, per term for entry in 2022-23 is £548, 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 is likely to be in the region of £100 to £600 per term. Please contact your college for more details.

Additional cost information

Full-time study

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

Part-time study

Please note that you are required to attend in Oxford for a minimum of 30 days each year, and you may incur additional travel and accommodation expenses for this. Also, depending on your choice of research topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur further 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 course fees, you will need to ensure that you have adequate funds to support your living costs for the duration of your course.

If you are studying part-time your living costs may vary depending on your personal circumstances but you must still ensure that you will have sufficient funding to meet these costs for the duration of your course.

The likely living costs for 2022-23 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

	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	£290	£410	£2,610	£3,690	£3,480	£4,920
Accommodation	£680	£810	£6,120	£7,290	£8,160	£9,720
Personal items	£135	£260	£1,215	£2,340	£1,620	£3,120
Social activities	£45	£120	£405	£1,080	£540	£1,440
Study costs	£45	£100	£405	£900	£540	£1,200
Other	£20	£55	£180	£495	£240	£660
Total	£1,215	£1,755	£10,935	£15,795	£14,580	£21,060

When planning your finances for any future years of study at Oxford beyond 2022-23, you should allow for an estimated increase in living expenses of 3% each year.

More information about how these figures have been calculated is available at www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/livingcosts.

Document accessibility

If you require an accessible version of the document please contact Graduate Admissions and Recruitment by email (graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk) or via the online form (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/ask>).