

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2023-24: DPhil in Pharmacology



About the course

The DPhil in Pharmacology offers a wide range of cutting-edge research topics within a multi-disciplinary and world-renowned department (ranked number 1 by subject since 2019 in the QS World Ranking), from calcium signalling to cardiovascular pharmacology, neuropharmacology and medicinal chemistry.

This programme aims to train students in the general areas of:

- Cardiovascular Pharmacology
- Medicinal Chemistry
- Neuropharmacology
- Signalling.

Within each area, cutting-edge laboratory research techniques will be used including biophysical approaches to the study of ion channels, electrophysiology, high resolution microscopy, molecular biology, systems biology all across a broad range of sub-disciplines including cell biology, calcium channels and signalling, medicinal chemistry, drug discovery, vascular pharmacology, circadian rhythms, rare diseases, lysosomal and sphingolipid disorders, neuronal circuits, synaptic plasticity and pharmacology, neuropsychopharmacology and molecular biology.

A typical day/week in each year of the course in the first two to three years will mostly focus on direct research and lab work, but will also require reading of the literature, attendance at departmental seminars, lab meetings and skills training. Once sufficient progress has been made, laboratory research will taper off and efforts will focus on data analysis and thesis preparation.

For a DPhil, your research will be carried out at Oxford under the supervision of a member of academic staff. You will work within their research group on an agreed project at the forefront of the subject.

If you are interested in joining the department as a DPhil student, you are strongly encouraged to look at the Department of Pharmacology's current research to help identify the most suitable area of research. Selecting the correct research project is a hugely important first step, so it is recommended that you contact potential supervisors and the Director of Graduate Studies to discuss possibilities before you apply online for a place on the course.

Supervision

DPhil candidates will be assigned to two supervisors, one acting as the main day-to-day research supervisor and the second as an additional mentor. The allocation of graduate supervision is the responsibility of the Department of Pharmacology 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 Pharmacology.

In the case of students who require specific help to adjust to an academic programme or to a new range of skills, supervisors will work with them to ensure that they have additional support. Regular monitoring undertaken by your supervisor is anticipated to be at least once a week.

Assessment

You will begin your course as a probationary research student (PRS), and near the end of the first year you will write a report to enable you to apply to transfer to DPhil (PhD) status. To transfer your status, you must make a formal application which will include a research report and statement of future research plans. You will also take an independent assessment by two assessors. Continuation in the programme is subject to you passing the Transfer of Status exam.

After eight terms of study, you will need to apply formally to confirm your DPhil status from PRS status. You will be required to present your on-going work in a formal context where it will be reviewed by two independent assessors. Continuation in the programme is subject to successfully completing the final transfer, Confirmation of Status.

The length of the programme ranges from three to four years with the exact duration depending on the following factors as judged by your supervisor(s) and assessors:

- focus and rate of your research development and progress
- achievement of acceptable focus and scope of thesis

- publication quality research
- length of available funding.

You will be given the opportunity to potentially become an expert in your research area and you will have demonstrated that you are an original and creative thinker capable of independent scientific work at a very high level.

At the end of your time with the department, you will produce a doctoral thesis that represents a significant advance in the field.

You will be examined by viva-voice by two examiners (one internal and one external to the Department) chosen by your supervisor and usually in the research area of your thesis.

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 Only
Expected length	3 to 4 years

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2023-24

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£8,960
Overseas	£29,700

Information about 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, 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 2023-24 is £572, 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

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.

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.

The likely living costs for 2023-24 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 one month

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£300	£470
Accommodation	£715	£860
Personal items	£180	£305
Social activities	£40	£90
Study costs	£35	£80
Other	£20	£35
Total	£1,290	£1,840

Likely living costs for nine months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£2,700	£4,230
Accommodation	£6,435	£7,740
Personal items	£1,620	£2,745
Social activities	£360	£810
Study costs	£315	£720
Other	£180	£315
Total	£11,610	£16,560

Likely living costs for twelve months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£3,600	£5,640
Accommodation	£8,580	£10,320
Personal items	£2,160	£3,660
Social activities	£480	£1,080
Study costs	£420	£960
Other	£240	£420
Total	£15,480	£22,080

When planning your finances for any future years of study at Oxford beyond 2023-24, it is suggested that you allow for potential increases in living expenses of 5% or more each year – although this rate may vary significantly depending on how the national economic situation develops.

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>).