

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2021-22: DPhil in Plant Sciences



About the course

The DPhil in Plant Sciences allows graduates to undertake both fundamental and applied research in topics across the breadth of plant science. You will gain a wide range of research skills as well as in-depth knowledge and expertise in your chosen field of research. At the end of this course you will have developed the skills needed for independent critical enquiry and made a significant contribution to understanding in the specific area of investigation.

As a graduate student you will be expected to develop an original research project under the guidance of your academic supervisor(s) and normally on a topic related to their areas of expertise. The vast majority of your time will, therefore, be spent in independent self-directed research and will involve a mixture of experimental, computational and observational activities in either the laboratory or field locations, depending on the precise nature of your project. Alongside your research work, you will have the opportunity to attend a range of short training courses (mainly in your first and second years) designed to develop skills you will need as a scientist and more general transferable skills. These include courses on critical analysis of the literature, scientific writing, presentation skills, as well as foundation courses in plant biodiversity, bioinformatics and statistics, if appropriate. Such training courses are expected to take up no more than 10% of your time.

The department has a friendly and vibrant graduate community which provides a welcoming network to new students. The graduate student community offers a supportive environment, both social and scientific, allowing new graduates to develop into well-rounded and confident scientists. Graduates are a valued part of the department's research community and their work is showcased annually at the departmental Graduate Symposium.

Supervision

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

As a graduate student you will be embedded in the research groups of one or more members of academic staff who act as your supervisors and provide the bulk of the research guidance and training. You will typically meet with your supervisor weekly to discuss your progress and developments in the field, although this may vary depending on the area of research, the nature of your project, and the stage of your studies.

Assessment

All students will be initially admitted to the status of Probationer Research Student (PRS). Within a maximum of four terms of study you will be expected to apply for transfer of status from PRS to DPhil status.

A successful transfer of status from PRS to DPhil status will require you to present a convincing research proposal, demonstrate satisfactory progress in its development, and show that the work you are conducting is of an acceptable scientific standard. Students who are successful at transfer will also be expected to apply for and gain confirmation of DPhil status within nine terms of admission, to show that work continues to be on track.

Both milestones normally involve an interview with two assessors (other than your supervisor) and therefore provide important experience for the final oral examination.

You will be expected to submit an original thesis of up to 50,000 words after three or, at most, four years from the date of admission. To be successfully awarded a DPhil in Plant Science you will need to defend your thesis orally (viva voce) in front of two appointed examiners.

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 2021-22

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home (UK, Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands & Isle of Man)	£8,290
Overseas (including EU)	£27,460

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.

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 2021-22 is £528, 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 £400 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 2021-22 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 2021-22

	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	£280	£400	£2,520	£3,600	£3,360	£4,800
Accommodation	£655	£790	£5,895	£7,110	£7,860	£9,480
Personal items	£130	£250	£1,170	£2,250	£1,560	£3,000
Social activities	£45	£115	£405	£1,035	£540	£1,380
Study costs	£45	£100	£405	£900	£540	£1,200
Other	£20	£55	£180	£495	£240	£660
Total	£1,175	£1,710	£10,575	£15,390	£14,100	£20,520

When planning your finances for any future years of study at Oxford beyond 2021-22, 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>).