

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2023-24: DPhil in Public Policy



About the course

The DPhil in Public Policy provides academically outstanding students who are committed to public service an unrivalled opportunity to study for a rigorous research degree that prepares them to have substantial impact on future policymaking processes.

The course can be taken full time in three years or part time over six to eight years. Part-time students are required to spend a minimum of 30 days on study-related business in Oxford each year and to commit approximately 20 hours per week to their studies. Part-time students are also expected to be in Oxford for the first few weeks of the first term so that they can fully participate in induction activities which are held at the beginning of Michaelmas term (October). Part time DPhils are expected to be active members of the Blavatnik School of Government Research Community even when not in Oxford.

The DPhil specialises in discipline-based, policy-driven research, applying rigorous social science to analysing policy issues with the explicit goal of prescribing solutions for policymakers. You will concentrate on research that answers policy questions with rigorous conceptual design, theoretical insight, and empirical methods. As well as honing your research skills and developing your interdisciplinary understanding of policy challenges, you will also enhance your ability to communicate your research findings to the policy community in a way that ensures real-world impact. You will join a school which conducts groundbreaking academic research where international leaders will engage with you and your scholarly community on the most pressing issues of our time.

The DPhil in Public Policy is one of Oxford's most selective degree courses and recruits those who are highly academically and professionally capable. Your peer group will include economists, lawyers, political scientists, behavioural scientists, and philosophers with professional backgrounds at international organisations such as the World Bank and the World Economic Forum and senior levels of government.

You will be expected to focus your research on practical challenges facing a range of different governments and publicly-oriented agencies. As well as developing your academic expertise, you will learn how to communicate your findings and analysis effectively so as to have real impact on government and public policy development throughout the world.

You will benefit from the DPhil Research Development seminar series and will be given ample opportunities to present your work in the department, and develop your research ideas and proposals with the advice and support of your peers.

As a part-time student you will be required to attend a minimum of 30 days on student related business in Oxford each year.

There will be limited flexibility in the dates and pattern of attendance, which will be determined by mutual agreement with your supervisor.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Blavatnik School of Government and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming students to work with a particular member of staff.

Your supervisors are carefully selected and will include a member of core member of faculty, together with other academics from the school or the University. You will usually have two supervisors during your DPhil research.

Your primary supervisor will establish a timetable of regular meetings for detailed discussion of your work and progress, normally a minimum of nine one-hour meetings (or equivalent) each year, although the frequency of meetings will vary depending on your stage of research.

Assessment

In your first year, you will be admitted to Probationer Research Student (PRS) status in the first instance. As a PRS, you will focus on the development and early work of your thesis.

Within a maximum of four terms as a full-time PRS student or eight as a part-time PRS student, you will be expected to apply for, and achieve, transfer of status from Probationer Research Student to DPhil status. This application is normally made by the third term for full-time students and by the sixth term for part-time students by submitting a research outline and a substantial piece of written work. These are assessed by two academics (at least one of whom will usually be a Blavatnik School faculty member), who

will also interview you about your work. A similar exercise then takes place in your ninth term (fourteenth term if you are part-time) when you will apply for confirmation of DPhil status.

After three or at most four years (no later than eight years if you are part-time) you are expected to submit your final thesis. Your thesis will be read by two examiners who conduct an in-depth oral examination with the student, known as a viva voce. On the basis of their report, you will either be awarded the DPhil (which may be subject to major or minor corrections) or referred back to make revisions to the 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	Part Time
Expected length	3 years	6-8 years

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2023-24

Full-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£26,450
Overseas	£26,450

Part-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£13,225
Overseas	£13,225

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

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, should you and your supervisor(s) agree on placements or research trips, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel expenses, research expenses, and field trips. You will need to meet these additional costs. The Blavatnik School of Government has limited funding for doctoral students, to which you can apply for help to attend conferences or to defray fieldwork expenses, and you may be able to apply for small grants from your 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, please note that, should you and your supervisor(s) agree on placements or research trips, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel expenses, research expenses, and field trips. You will need to meet these additional costs. The Blavatnik School of Government has limited funding for doctoral students, to which you can apply for help to attend conferences or to defray fieldwork expenses, and you may be able to apply for small grants from your 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 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>).