

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2021-22: MPhil in Medical Anthropology



About the course

The two-year MPhil course offers coordinated training in both social and biological anthropological approaches to health and illness, with special emphasis on methods. It provides the necessary basis for future anthropological research and an excellent cross-cultural grounding for those aiming to pursue a career in anthropology, global health or other health-related fields.

The MPhil is similar in topical scope and breadth to the MSc, but it allows for a deeper engagement with the theory and practice of anthropological research. It is intended both as a standalone degree and as a broader and deeper preparation for doctoral research than is possible with the MSc.

During the first year of the MPhil you would follow the same course of instruction as MSc students through to the June examinations.

In the first year there is one option paper and three core papers, as follows:

- Paper 1: Critical Medical Anthropology
- Paper 2: Biocultural Approaches to Medicine
- Paper 3: Anthropologies of the Body

At the end of the first year, you then use the summer vacation to acquire a firm grounding in medical anthropological literature and develop your dissertation outline based on this background reading. Fieldwork is not a necessary component of the MPhil degree, although you can undertake it over the vacation.

Study towards the MPhil degree in the second year consists of class-based course work, participation in seminars and individual research, written up in a dissertation.

Coursework in the second year has three components: critical reading classes in Michaelmas term and participation in two different methods classes in Michaelmas term and/or Hilary term.

The range of methods classes varies yearly and includes (but is not limited to):

- Ethnographic Fieldwork Methods
- Ethnographic Portraiture
- Statistical Fieldwork Methods for the Analysis of Quantitative Social Science Data
- Critical Methods of Numerical Analysis
- Language-Focused Methods
- Ethnobiology Fieldwork Methods

There is one core seminar series in medical anthropology, the Medical Anthropology Research Seminars in Michaelmas term. In addition to those, there is a rich seminar culture of the Institute for Social and Cultural Anthropology (ISCA) and the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography (SAME), and students are expected to actively participate in those.

The research component is comprised of a 30,000-word dissertation. MPhil students receive throughout the second year individual tuition from their supervisor on their dissertation writing. They also attend MPhil classes in Hilary Term of the second year, during which MPhil dissertation projects from across the School of Anthropology are presented and discussed among students and faculty.

The School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography takes the view that full-time degrees require full-time study (ie equivalent to typical employment, around 40 hours per week, throughout the year). MPhil students in their first year should expect to spend six to eight hours per week in term time in formal teaching contexts (lectures, seminar groups, tutorials, classes), which can be supplemented with attendance of the many research and visiting speaker seminars on offer; the remainder of their time (ie around 30 hours per week) should be spent on independent study and preparation of submitted work. In their second year MPhil students focus principally on research and writing for their 30,000-word thesis so the emphasis is on independent study, but they will still be expected to spend three to four hours per week in term time in formal teaching contexts, including a writing-up seminar and field research training, as well as regular meetings with their thesis supervisor, again supplemented by attendance of research seminars and lectures as they choose. The periods outside term time are considered to be opportunities for further independent study, consolidating and supplementing the knowledge gained during the preceding term and preparing work for examination, as well as for an appropriate break from study.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography 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 School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography.

Students meet regularly with their supervisor in the second year, receiving tuition on their dissertation writing.

Assessment

During the first year, assessment will follow that of the MSc in Medical Anthropology, ending with the same examinations in June which serve as qualifying (rather than final) exams for MPhil students to progress to the second year.

Critical thinking classes in Michaelmas term are assessed by the writing of a research proposal and the two chosen methods courses in Michaelmas and/or Hilary term will be assessed by submitted coursework. Together, these three components comprise one examined paper, Methods of Fieldwork and Social Research, which is assessed by a dossier of written work completed over the course of the year rather than by a final written examination.

Finally, you will submit your 30,000 word dissertation in May of the second year.

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	21 months

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2021-22

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home (UK, Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands & Isle of Man)	£19,200
Overseas (including EU)	£29,160

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.

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. Standard travel insurance can be provided by the University. However, students may be required to pay any additional insurance premiums associated with travel to areas with an increased level of risk, and should factor this into their planning for fieldwork.

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>).