

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



About the course

Social anthropology considers people, through and through, as social beings. Everything that all of us do, in whatever society or culture at whatever period of history, rests on assumptions, which usually are not stated but which are largely shared with our particular neighbours, kin, friends, or colleagues.

Everything social is open to question, including solidly held beliefs and attitudes and ideas about causality, the self in society, and nature and culture. Learning to relate different versions of the world to each other is learning to be a Social Anthropologist and is what we hope you will learn over the course of your degree.

The MPhil in Social Anthropology aims to provide a solid background in analytical and methodological issues as they apply to social anthropology and allows you to develop an extended research project, which may involve fieldwork. It is intended both as a standalone degree and as a broader and deeper preparation for Doctoral research than is possible with the MSc in Social Anthropology.

Course structure

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). 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.

First year

During your first year you will critically read key intellectual contributions to the discipline and you will be introduced to ethnographic methods and experiences of living among, and writing about, people. You will learn how to comparatively study what makes humans simultaneously similar and yet different. You will follow core courses in social anthropology as well as choosing an option course from a range offered within the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography. You may also consider doing fieldwork over the summer in preparation for your MPhil thesis if appropriate (and the School approves).

Teaching is by a mixture of lectures, where you will be listening to a specialist in the topic, classes, where you will be presenting and discussing texts in small groups (8 to 9 students), and tutorials, where, in small groups of 3 or 4, you will be exploring with one another and with the tutor issues and ideas raised in your own essays and other work on the topic they have assigned; the tutor will also provide written feedback on the essays.

In your first year you 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 your time (ie around 30 hours per week) should be spent on independent study and preparation of submitted work.

Second year

During your second year you will take a further specialist option course from the range on offer within the school, you will take your choice of two research methods training modules, and you will research and write your MPhil thesis.

In your second year you will focus principally on research and writing for your 30,000-word thesis so the emphasis is on independent study, but you 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 your thesis supervisor, again supplemented by attendance of research seminars and lectures as you choose.

Assessment

The MPhil is examined in two stages, the MPhil Qualifying stage (MPQ), completed in the first year, and the MPhil Examination, in the second year. Assessment in the first year is by coursework as well as timed unseen examination, completed by the end of June. The core courses are assessed by both 5,000-word essay and by sat exam; some option courses are assessed by essay and/or review (5,000 words total), others by sat exam. The second stage consists of examination of your second-year option course, a 5,000-word essay, and your MPhil thesis of 30,000 words, completed in June of the second year. You receive support from your tutors in

devising a viable thesis project, including discussion of relevant literature, questions of methodology and research implementation.

Supervision

You will receive supervisory guidance in carrying out your research and writing, developing your skills and qualities as an independent researcher.

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.

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>).