

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2021-22: MSc in Political Theory Research



About the course

The MSc in Political Theory Research is an intensive one-year research preparation master's degree. It is not a stand-alone course, but rather it is intended for students who would like to proceed directly to doctoral study at Oxford or elsewhere but who must first obtain the necessary research training in political theory.

The MSc in Political Theory Research provides an advanced level of formal training in research techniques and methodology, and will equip you with advanced level substantive knowledge in this sub-area of the discipline. If you are successful in the degree you will attain a proven competence in reasoning in political philosophy and methods and approaches in political theory. You will design your research project and write a short thesis under expert supervision.

Upon the successful completion of your MSc you will be expected to continue your studies in pursuit of a research degree (DPhil) in a relevant area of political theory. You should include at least some indication of the topic of your eventual doctorate in your application. Do not worry if you do not yet have a detailed thesis outline: the MSc programme is intended to help you to develop a detailed research proposal.

The Department of Politics and International Relations (DPIR) is internationally recognised as a leading centre for teaching and research in political theory and counts among its members a number of acknowledged authorities within this discipline. It is also home to research centres and programmes within this field, including the Oxford Political Theory Network and the Centre for the Study of Social Justice.

During the MSc in Political Theory Research you will be required to attend and complete the core classes and tutorials in the theory of politics and a programme of research methods training, which includes core courses in reasoning in political philosophy and in approaches to the study of political theory.

The approach to teaching comprises intensive and interactive work between you and your supervisor and course teachers, combined with a carefully planned programme of classes, seminars and lectures, as well as directed self-study. Work on the thesis is individually supervised.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Department of Politics and International Relations 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 Politics and International Relations.

Assessment

The MSc examination comprises four parts and you must pass all parts of the examination to be awarded the degree:

- a single, three-hour written examination paper in the theory of politics
- a research design proposal in preparation for your thesis
- research methods training courses assessment
- a thesis of no more than 15,000 words.

There are two research methods options which are Problems of Method in the History of Political Thought, and Epistemology.

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	12 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 and vaccination expenses, conference attendance, 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>).