

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2020-21

MSc in Sociology



About the course

The MSc in Sociology is an intensive one-year master's degree. Students are given high quality research training in sociology, which includes knowledge of relevant theoretical approaches, an understanding of their application to substantive problems and skills in the use of major research techniques.

The MSc in Sociology is offered on both a full-time (one-year) and part-time (two-year) basis. The degree and expectations for both modes of study are equally rigorous: part-time students take their classes with the full time students, but spread their study over two years to accommodate work and personal circumstances. Regardless of whether you choose to apply for the part-time or full-time course, you will be part of a close knit cohort of students from diverse backgrounds.

The MSc Sociology consists of the following four elements.

Sociological analysis

A compulsory core paper is on sociological analysis, for which you sit a three-hour unseen examination at the end of Trinity Term. The paper examines the nature of different sociological explanations, their potentials and methodological implications and their relationship with concepts from other disciplines. It also examines the interrelationships between description and explanation, theory and empirical data.

In Michaelmas term, the course consists of eight lectures (one hour each) followed by two seminars (also one hour each) where the class is split into groups. Part-time students take this course in the first term of their second year of study.

Research methods

The MSc also includes a compulsory research methods paper, for which you are examined via a mixture of a formal examination and take-home assignments. This course comprises three sections: research design, qualitative methods and statistics.

The statistics section consists of eight statistics lectures and eight computer-based sessions in the IT Laboratory (Michaelmas term). The qualitative methods section (Michaelmas term) consists of eight lectures. The research design section (Hilary term) consists of eight lectures and classes. Part-time students take the three sections of the research methods course in the listed term of the first year of study.

Option papers

You will take two option papers in Hilary term, for which you sit either an unseen examination or complete appropriate coursework. You should note that the options available may vary from year to year. There are normally eight weekly classes for each paper. Part-time students take one option paper in the second term of each year of study.

Dissertation

You will write an MSc thesis of up to 10,000 words, consisting of a sociological analysis which you carry out under the guidance of your supervisor.

Part-time students will write their dissertations in the third term of their second year and submit by 1 September of that second year, but will be encouraged to start planning their thesis from their first year.

Supervision

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

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. For further information, please see the University's Terms and Conditions.

Expected length of course

Mode of study	Full Time	Part Time
Expected length	12 months	2 years

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2020-21

Full-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home/EU (including Islands)	£18,455
Overseas	£28,040

Part-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home/EU (including Islands)	£9,230
Overseas	£14,020

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

Full-time study

You will normally be required to carry out a small fieldwork training exercise as part of the qualitative methods course. This may require a short trip out of Oxford, but usually not an overnight stay. You will need to cover any costs (eg travel) related to this training exercise, which the department estimates to range from between £20 to £100. As part of your course requirements, you may need to choose a dissertation, a project or a thesis topic. You are not formally required to undertake field research for your dissertation. However, if you decide to undertake fieldwork as part of your studies, you should note that you will ordinarily have to meet all the costs yourself. These costs are likely to include, but may not be limited to travel, accommodation and living expenses, insurance premiums and, where appropriate, visa and medical fees (eg for vaccinations). Costs can vary considerably according to the duration and location of the fieldwork, but the department would generally expect the cost of such field research to range from £200 to £1,000. If you choose to collect your own data, you may also incur transcription costs. There may also be costs if you choose to acquire quantitative data from non-ESRC sources. The department has no funds available to help with these costs, however, 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 this course requires that you attend in Oxford for teaching, and you may incur additional travel and accommodation expenses for this. Further, as part of your course requirements, you may need to choose a dissertation, a project or a thesis topic. Depending on your choice of research topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel expenses, insurance, research expenses and field trips. There may also be costs if you choose to acquire data. You will need to meet these additional costs, although 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 2020-21 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 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	£270	£385	£2,430	£3,465	£3,240	£4,620
Accommodation	£630	£760	£5,670	£6,840	£7,560	£9,120
Personal items	£130	£245	£1,170	£2,205	£1,560	£2,940
Social activities	£45	£110	£405	£990	£540	£1,320
Study costs	£40	£95	£360	£855	£480	£1,140
Other	£20	£55	£180	£495	£240	£660
Total	£1,135	£1,650	£10,215	£14,850	£13,620	£19,800

When planning your finances for any future years of study at Oxford beyond 2020-21, 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.