

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2021-22: 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. There is also a significant element of self-directed study, including further reading and research, that will complement the hours of teaching. The time spent on further research will be determined partly by your academic background so far, and partly by your own interest in and curiosity for the subject.

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.

Course structure

The MSc Sociology consists of the following four elements.

Sociological analysis

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.

It 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.

Research methods

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

In Hilary term, you will prepare for two option papers. You should note that the options available may vary from year to year; a typical offering is listed below:

- Sociology of the Family
- Sociology of Mafias
- Social Movements
- Political Sociology
- Causality
- Social Stratification
- Sociology of Japanese Society
- Sociogenomics
- Gender
- Sociology of Latin America
- Online Social Networks
- Sociology of China
- Sociology and Global Health

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 dissertation which you will 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. You can expect to meet with your supervisor at least twice a term, and at least three times over the summer vacation when you are writing your thesis.

Assessment

For the compulsory core paper on sociological analysis, you will sit a three-hour unseen examination at the end of Trinity term. 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. For the option papers, you will sit either an unseen examination or complete appropriate coursework. Finally, you will also be assessed on your dissertation of up to 10,000 words, which will consist of a sociological analysis.

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	12 months	2 years

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2021-22

Full-time study

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

Part-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home (UK, Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands & Isle of Man)	£9,597
Overseas (including EU)	£14,581

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 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>).