

## Course Information Sheet for entry in 2024-25: MSc in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation



### Course facts

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Mode of study   | Full Time Only |
| Expected length | 12 months      |

### About the course

The MSc in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation (EBSIPE) emphasises research methods for evaluating interventions and policies, as well as the advanced study of evidence-based practice and policy.

The MSc is designed for students with a specific interest in understanding the effectiveness of policies, such as regulations concerning alcohol and drug abuse or gun control, public health or poverty policies, and social interventions, such as cash transfers, parenting education, or violence prevention programs. It prepares students for a career in, for example, development, public policy, or policy and programme evaluation. Applicants with a professional background, such as those in evaluation, public health or policy consulting, will enhance their research skills and develop a major piece of research in a world-class environment.

This course aims to develop your critical analysis, problem solving and research skills in the field of evidence-based interventions and policies for social problems, which will allow you to be both a critical consumer of research and to carry out evaluations and other research designs. Your studies will consider evidence-based practice and policy in relation to, for example, children and families, poverty and inequality, mental health, refugees, drug use, violence and injury prevention, and offending.

### Course structure

The MSc has the following major components:

- Pathway course, either Social Intervention or Policy Evaluation
  - research methods training (Evaluation Methods core course, Quantitative Analysis, Qualitative Methods, Systematic Reviews)
- specialist option, eg Children and Families, Social Policies and Health Inequalities, Understanding and Preventing Interpersonal Violence, or Community Analysis and Large-Scale Interventions
- MSc thesis.

During the first and second terms, the majority of learning is classroom-based, complemented by independent reading, tutorials, and formative and summative assessments. The third term involves largely self-directed study for remaining summative assessments, exam/assessment revision, and further development of the MSc thesis; additional lectures and question/answer are typically offered on an optional basis to support students in preparing for exams/assessments and using various methodologies for thesis projects.

### Pathway course

You will select one of two available pathways, to be taken over two terms. Whichever pathway you take, you will write a thesis on a topic agreed with your supervisor. The thesis is undertaken throughout the duration of the course.

The two pathways are:

- Social Intervention, covering evidence-based methods to evaluate social interventions, theories underlying interventions, ethical issues, and applying research in practice and policy, including the challenges of implementing programmes in the real world; *or*
- Policy Evaluation, introducing you to social policy analysis, policy formation, and the relationship between evidence and policy, and to different research methods for evaluating policies, eg quasi- experimental designs, natural experiments.

You may be able to change your choice of pathway in the first week of the programme.

### Core course on research methods training

Students following the social intervention or policy evaluation pathway take a core evaluation methods course. This course, taken over two terms, trains students to critically consume and produce evaluation research for policies and social interventions, focusing on multiple methods, including randomised controlled trials and quasi-randomised methods, and field methods, ie managing, costing and running real-world evaluations. The course has a strong focus on 'open science' and research

transparency.

In addition, all students in the MSc EBSIPE take the following methods courses: systematic reviews, quantitative analysis and qualitative methods

- systematic review i.e. finding, describing and synthesising the best available evidence, including meta-analysis and qualitative synthesis (2 terms)
- quantitative analysis i.e. key statistical concepts and learning statistical programming in the leading software, R (1 term)
- qualitative methods (including mixed methods) i.e. design, data collection, analysis and critical appraisal (1 term)

MSc students may attend advanced methods classes, such as Intermediate Statistics, in their first and/or second terms.

### **Specialist option**

You will take a one-term specialist course from a list of options which may include Children and Families, Social Policies and Health Inequalities, Understanding and Preventing Interpersonal Violence, or Community Analysis and Large-Scale Interventions. The set of options offered each year will vary slightly depending on student interest and staff availability.

MSc students may attend advanced methods classes, such as Intermediate Statistics, in their second term.

### **MSc thesis**

You will write a research thesis to acquire expert knowledge in your area of interest, to apply the research methods, and contribute to new scientific knowledge.

### **Supervision**

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Department of Social Policy and Intervention and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. Students are able to meet their potential supervisor in the first week of term. Under exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be found outside the Department of Social Policy and Intervention.

In the case of students who require specific help to adjust to an academic programme or to a new range of skills, the supervisor will work with them to ensure that they have additional support.

### **Assessment**

Whichever pathway you take, you will write a thesis on a topic agreed with your supervisor. The thesis is undertaken throughout the duration of the course. You will also be assessed by a series of assessments throughout the year using a combination of examinations and/or submitted coursework assignments ("summative assessments").

### **Changes to this course**

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 you commence your course. These might include significant changes made necessary by any pandemic, 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>).

## Costs

### Annual fees for entry in 2024-25

| Fee status | Annual Course fees |
|------------|--------------------|
| Home       | £21,930            |
| Overseas   | £33,970            |

### Information about course fees

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 (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/terms>).

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.

## 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 2024-25 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 one month

|                          | Lower range | Upper range |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Food</b>              | £315        | £495        |
| <b>Accommodation</b>     | £745        | £925        |
| <b>Personal items</b>    | £190        | £320        |
| <b>Social activities</b> | £40         | £95         |
| <b>Study costs</b>       | £35         | £85         |
| <b>Other</b>             | £20         | £35         |
| <b>Total</b>             | £1,345      | £1,955      |

### Likely living costs for nine months

|                          | Lower range | Upper range |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Food</b>              | £2,835      | £4,445      |
| <b>Accommodation</b>     | £6,705      | £8,325      |
| <b>Personal items</b>    | £1,710      | £2,880      |
| <b>Social activities</b> | £360        | £855        |
| <b>Study costs</b>       | £315        | £765        |
| <b>Other</b>             | £180        | £315        |
| <b>Total</b>             | £12,105     | £17,595     |

### Likely living costs for twelve months

|                          | Lower range | Upper range |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Food</b>              | £3,780      | £5,940      |
| <b>Accommodation</b>     | £8,940      | £11,100     |
| <b>Personal items</b>    | £2,280      | £3,840      |
| <b>Social activities</b> | £480        | £1,140      |
| <b>Study costs</b>       | £420        | £1,020      |
| <b>Other</b>             | £240        | £420        |
| <b>Total</b>             | £16,140     | £23,460     |

When planning your finances for any future years of study at Oxford beyond 2024-25, it is suggested that you allow for potential increases in living expenses of 5% or more each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation.

More information about how these figures have been calculated is available at [www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/livingcosts](http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/livingcosts).

## Document accessibility

If you require an accessible version of this document please contact Graduate Admissions and Recruitment by email ([graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk)) or via the online form (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/ask>).