

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: DPhil in English



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time	Part Time
Expected length	3-4 years	6-8 years

About the course

The DPhil in English is intended to develop the skills and understanding necessary to undertake and present original research at a high level, and provide a thorough foundation for a career in research.

The study of English language, literature and related interdisciplinary fields is continually reshaped by the new questions that DPhil students and faculty members pursue.

Current research topics include:

- English language and literature from anywhere in the world;
- the other languages and literatures of Great Britain, Ireland, neighbouring islands (including Iceland) and of other Anglophone countries;
- the above literatures in comparison with, or in translation into, other languages and literary traditions.
- performance arts in English anywhere in the world or in the other languages of Anglophone countries; and
- theoretical, interdisciplinary and philosophical reflection on literature composed in any language.

Under the guidance of your supervisor, you will complete a thesis of 80,000 to 100,000 words. A typical term will involve a great deal of independent research, punctuated by meetings with the supervisor who will be able to suggest direction and address concerns throughout the writing process.

In addition you will have the opportunity to attend a wide range of classes, seminars and lectures in order to learn bibliographic and research skills, interact with other researchers or gain new perspectives on your work. You may also be encouraged to attend the research skills courses available as part of the master's (MSt) course, depending how much of this training has been covered previously.

The English Faculty is not responsible for providing teaching opportunities for research students as most undergraduate teaching in Oxford is organised by individual colleges. Teaching is not a compulsory part of the DPhil. But research students may wish to gain some teaching experience, so long as it does not interfere with their own progress. Those research students who wish to gain teaching experience are invited to attend faculty-run preparatory teaching workshops and seminars, as well as enrolling on a Teaching Mentor Scheme.

You will have the opportunity to hear lectures and papers by leading writers, critics, and theorists from inside and outside the University. You are encouraged to participate in the many research seminars and reading groups that run throughout term time, many of which are coordinated by graduates themselves.

Attendance

The course can be studied full-time or part-time with both modes requiring attendance in Oxford. Full-time students are subject to the University's Residence requirements. Part-time students are required to attend course-related activities in Oxford for a minimum of 30 days each year.

The full-time course is studied over three to four years. The part-time course has the same requirements, but is studied over six to eight years. If studying full-time, you are expected to submit your thesis three, or at most four, years from the date of admission. If studying part-time, you are expected to submit your thesis six, or at most eight, years from the date of admission.

Part-time research students are not required to live in Oxford but must attend the University on a regular basis (particularly in term-time: October and November, mid-January to mid-March, and late April to mid-June) for supervision, study, research seminars and skills training.

The faculty appreciates that part-time research students will have non-standard attendance and work patterns. There will be some flexibility in the dates of term-time attendance, but part-time students are expected to spend some periods in Oxford in at least two terms per year in the first two years in order to participate in key faculty activities, which will occupy on average 20 days per term. Attendance during and outside of term-time is determined by mutual agreement with your supervisor.

Part-time students are expected to be present in Oxford for faculty induction, college induction, and an initial meeting with supervisors in order to decide upon the programme of study for that term and to develop a plan for the coming year's work.

These are usually all held at the beginning of the first term of the first year.

To ensure a comprehensive integration into the faculty's and University's research culture and with full-time peer groups, a pattern of attendance at training events and research seminars would form part of the general study agreement for part-time students, alongside the individualised arrangements between supervisor and student. Part-time students are expected to attend at least half of the faculty's (usually weekly or fortnightly) research seminar meetings in their subject area and to contribute to them as much as full-time students do over the length of their course.

There is an active and lively graduate organisation funded by the faculty, English Graduates at Oxford (EGO), that organises study skills, training and career development seminars, as well as social events and conferences.

Resources to support your study

As a graduate student, you will have access to the University's wide range of world-class resources including libraries, museums, galleries, digital resources and IT services.

The Bodleian Libraries is the largest library system in the UK. It includes the main Bodleian Library and libraries across Oxford, including major research libraries and faculty, department and institute libraries. Together, the Libraries hold more than 13 million printed items, provide access to e-journals, and contain outstanding special collections including rare books and manuscripts, classical papyri, maps, music, art and printed ephemera.

The University's IT Services is available to all students to support with core university IT systems and tools, as well as many other services and facilities. IT Services also offers a range of IT learning courses for students, to support with learning and research.

The Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities

The Faculty of English Language and Literature will be based in the Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, a brand-new building at the University of Oxford due to open in 2025, which will accommodate seven faculties, two institutes, a new library, a large number of well-equipped teaching and seminar rooms, and performance and arts venues. The faculty will have its own centre and social hub within the building which will also facilitate interdisciplinary and collaborative work. At the heart of the building will be a large atrium – called the Great Hall – which will be a beautiful space, bringing light into the building, and serving as a space for informal work, relaxation, meeting with friends, taking breaks, having refreshments – and much more.

The library, part of the Bodleian Libraries, will house lending collections for English. There will be 340 general reader seats, and around 80 graduate study seats – with a further 320 formal and informal study seats throughout the building outside the library. Open-shelf lending collections will be complemented by access to electronic resources, scan on demand, and material requested from the Bodleian's Collections Storage Facility. As well as the Library's extensive staffed hours, there will be a 24/7 study space, including smart lockers for self-collect of borrowable items out of hours. Subject support is provided by a team of subject librarians.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Faculty of English 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 Faculty of English.

Most students have the opportunity to receive at least two substantial supervisions in each term (or for part-time students, at least one each term). 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

You will be enrolled initially as a Probationary Research Student and will then apply to transfer to full DPhil status during your first year (or for part-time students, by the end of your second year). A further assessment of your work and progress takes place during the third year of the course (for part-time students, this would be completed by the first term of your sixth year).

In the final year of your course, you will need to submit a thesis of 80,000 to 100,000 words for assessment by an internal examiner, from within the University, and an external examiner, from beyond. There will then be a 'viva voce' oral examination with the two examiners.

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 2025-26

Full-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£13,380
Overseas	£34,980

Part-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£6,690
Overseas	£17,490

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.

Graduate students who have reached the end of their standard period of fee liability may be required to pay a termly University and/or a college continuation charge.

The University continuation charge, per term for entry in 2025-26 is £672, please be aware that this will increase annually. For part-time students, the termly charge will be half of the termly rate payable by full-time students.

If a college continuation charge applies (not applicable for non-matriculated courses) it is likely to be in the region of £100 to £600. Please contact your college for more details, including information about whether your college's continuation charge is applied at a different rate for part-time study.

Additional cost information

Full-time study

There are no compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees (or, after fee liability ends, continuation charges) and living costs. However, please note that, depending on your choice of research 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.

Part-time study

Please note that you are required to attend in Oxford for a minimum of 30 days each year, and you may incur additional travel and accommodation expenses for this. Also, depending on your choice of research topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur further 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 and any additional course-specific costs, 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 the 2025-26 academic year 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
Food	£330	£515
Accommodation	£790	£955
Personal items	£200	£335
Social activities	£45	£100
Study costs	£40	£90
Other	£20	£40
Total	£1,425	£2,035

Likely living costs for nine months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£2,970	£4,635
Accommodation	£7,110	£8,595
Personal items	£1,800	£3,015
Social activities	£405	£900
Study costs	£360	£810
Other	£180	£360
Total	£12,825	£18,315

Likely living costs for twelve months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£3,960	£6,180
Accommodation	£9,480	£11,460
Personal items	£2,400	£4,020
Social activities	£540	£1,200
Study costs	£480	£1,080
Other	£240	£480
Total	£17,100	£24,420

When planning your finances for any future years of study at Oxford beyond the 2025-26 academic year, it is suggested that you allow for potential increases in living expenses of 4% 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.

Document accessibility

If you require a more accessible version of this 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/form>).