

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: DPhil in History (Economic and Social History)



Course facts

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

About the course

The DPhil in History (Economic and Social History) is an advanced research degree, awarded on the basis of successful completion of an individual research thesis and an oral examination.

Economic and social history is the study of economic activities and social organization in the historical past. If you are thinking about applying for a DPhil researching economic and social history, you should consider whether your proposed topic falls within the remit of economic and social history or whether it would be more appropriate to apply for the DPhil in History.

Current topics of research for the DPhil History (Economic and Social History) include:

- The Institutional Origins of Chinese Lineages
- Enterprise and Institutions in the early Industrial Revolution
- The Role of Human Capital in Industrialisation
- Central Banking and the International Monetary System in South America's Southern Cone
- The GDP of the Baltic States 1919 – 2019.

You will be expected to attend and to contribute to two weekly research seminars: the Tuesday Evening Research Seminar and the Wednesday Lunchtime Graduate Student Seminar. You will also be expected to attend the Annual Graduate Workshop in Economic and Social History in the first week of Trinity term, at which MSc and MPhil students present their dissertation projects.

You will also be strongly encouraged to participate in the wide range of other research seminars, conferences and workshops organised by the faculty and the division. Your supervisor will advise you on which seminars will be most beneficial for your chosen research area. You will also have access to specialist training courses offered by the Bodleian Libraries and IT Services. You can attend any lectures, across the University, that you wish to (subject to any specific restrictions), and we encourage students to take advantage of this and explore areas outside their specific research topic.

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 will be expected to submit your dissertation three, or at most four, years from the date of admission. If studying part-time, you will be expected to submit your dissertation six, or at most eight, years from the date of admission.

Although there will be no requirement to live in Oxford, part-time research students must attend the University on a regular basis (particularly in term-time) for supervision, study, research seminars and skills training. The dates of attendance will be determined by mutual agreement with your supervisor.

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 explicitly interdisciplinary nature of this DPhil means that the faculty collaborates with other divisions and departments within the University, predominantly with the departments of Economics, Politics and International Relations, Sociology and Management Studies within the Social Sciences Division.

History in Oxford stretches from around c. 300 to the present, and embraces an exceptionally broad geographical range. It comprises an active research community of up to 800 academics and graduate students. The faculty's research is organised around historical periods, research centres, or in collaborative and individual research projects, and graduates are key participants in the wide range of seminars, workshops and conferences run by the History Faculty. Further opportunities for exchange are provided by the interdisciplinary communities fostered within individual colleges, which also offer dedicated support for graduates by means of personal advisors. The Oxford Centre for Research in the Humanities (TORCH) offers a stimulating range of interdisciplinary activities, as does the Oxford Martin School and the new Wellcome Centre for Ethics and Humanities. History graduates are also encouraged to join the Oxford History Graduate Network (OHGN), which fosters friendships, conversations and collaboration.

The Oxford environment provides a unique opportunity to develop intellectual curiosity whilst remaining focused on your own work without becoming blinkered - an integral part of a successful graduate career.

The University's core research resource in the Humanities are the Bodleian Libraries, whose combined collections contain more than eleven million printed items, in addition to more than 50,000 e-journals and a vast quantity of manuscripts, maps, music and other materials.

The Bodleian Libraries' Special Collections Department attracts scholars from all over the world. Further strengths include the countless databases and digital resources currently offered by the Bodleian and being developed through Oxford's Digital Humanities programme.

You will also be able to draw on the specialist resources offered by the Bodleian History Faculty Library which provides dedicated support and training courses for all graduates. You also have access to the many college libraries and to college archives which can house significant collections of personal papers as well as institutional records dating back to the middle ages.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Faculty of History and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. Offers will only be made if appropriate supervision is available.

DPhil students usually have one or two supervisors. For the DPhil in History (Economic and Social History), one supervisor must be a full member of the Faculty of History or the Department of Economics. Co-supervisors can be appointed from a different department if specialist knowledge is required. In exceptional circumstances, a co-supervisor from outside the university may be appointed. You do not need to contact potential supervisors before applying, but all applicants are strongly advised to make sure that full supervision is available before applying.

Your supervisor(s) is there to provide advice, guidance, and support throughout your DPhil. You should arrange to meet your supervisor(s) early in your first term to establish a clear framework for your research and writing, and identify any skills training needed to undertake your research. It is up to you and your supervisor to decide on the frequency of future meetings. In the first year, you should meet your supervisor at least twice a term, and keep in frequent contact. As you become more engaged with your research, you may meet your supervisor less frequently, but you should maintain regular contact with them.

Your supervisor or supervisors will help you develop a programme of research and writing. You will also have the opportunity to benefit from the advice and support of other members of the faculty who will be involved in your progression through the transfer and confirmation stages of the degree, and you will be able to draw on the expertise of scholars and colleagues throughout the faculty and University.

Assessment

All students will be initially admitted to the status of Probationer Research Student (PRS). Within a maximum of four terms as a full-time PRS student, or eight terms as a part-time PRS student, you will be expected to apply for transfer of status from Probationer Research Student to DPhil status. This application is normally made by the second term for full-time students and by the fifth term for part-time students.

A successful transfer of status from PRS to DPhil status will require the submission of a thesis outline and a piece of written work. Students who are successful at transfer will also be expected to apply for and gain confirmation of DPhil status to show that your work continues to be on track. This will need to be done within nine terms of admission for full-time students and eighteen terms of admission for part-time students.

Both milestones normally involve an interview with one or two assessors (other than your supervisor) and therefore provide an important experience for the final oral examination.

Full-time students will be expected to submit a substantial thesis of not more than 100,000 words after three or, at most, four years from the date of admission. If you are studying part-time, you will be required to submit your thesis after six or, at most, eight years from the date of admission. To be successfully awarded a DPhil in History (Economic and Social History) you will need to defend your thesis orally (*viva voce*) in front of two appointed 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>).