

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: DPhil in Medical Sciences



Course facts

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

About the course

Based in the Radcliffe Department of Medicine (RDM), this DPhil research programme is aimed at basic scientists and clinicians with an interest in pursuing research in a scientific field related to medicine, particularly in cardiovascular medicine, diabetes, endocrinology and metabolism, epidemiology and clinical trials, haematology and pathology, immunology, regenerative medicine and stem cells, and acute stroke.

You will be admitted directly onto a research project with one of RDM's world-leading scientists, who will act as your supervisor. In most cases, students choose a project from our advertised project list, but in some cases, students design their own project in collaboration with their proposed supervisor. In either case, you will be expected to play an active role in shaping your project over the course of the DPhil. Graduate students are a valuable part of the department and they are encouraged to be involved with the scientific and social life of the department at all levels.

Your project and development during your DPhil studies will be guided by a specialised team led by your academic supervisor.

Your training will be tailored to your particular needs, drawing from the vast range of training available at Oxford and covering both specialist scientific methods and techniques and transferable skills. Please note that there is no formal taught component of the DPhil in Medical Sciences.

Much of your training will take place in the lab, where you will be trained by your supervisor or members of the lab team in the variety of techniques and protocols used. A brief statement of the training you will receive in the lab is included in the training description of your chosen project.

As a member of the Medical Sciences Graduate School you will be entitled to enrol on courses run by the Medical Sciences Skills Training programme. You will be able to attend the wide variety of sessions covered through the MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine (WIMM) Methods and Techniques course.

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.

Completing the DPhil on a part-time basis has the same requirements as the full-time DPhil and normally takes between six and eight years of study, compared with a full-time DPhil which normally takes three to four years to complete.

Part-time study is not suitable for all projects and you will need to check with your supervisor that they are able to accommodate part-time study.

As a part-time student, attendance is to be arranged with the agreement of your supervisor, for the period that your name remains on the Register of Graduate Students unless individually dispensed by the Board. During a candidate's probationary period the attendance arrangements must take account of relevant induction and training events scheduled by the Board. You will have the opportunity to tailor your part-time research in liaison with your supervisor and agree your pattern of attendance.

Provision exists for students on some courses to undertake their research in a 'well-founded laboratory' outside of the University. This may require travel to and attendance at a site that is not located in Oxford. Where known, existing collaborations will be outlined on this page. Please read the course information carefully, including the additional information about course fees and costs.

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.

You will be allocated space within your supervisor's lab. Radcliffe Department of Medicine (RDM) has state-of-the-art research facilities across the spectrum of our research expertise and where specialist facilities do not exist within RDM itself it is usually possible to use facilities elsewhere in Oxford.

RDM provides students with the facilities, support and career development opportunities needed to thrive. The department recognizes the importance of a good work-life balance and has developed policies and support mechanisms to help staff and students find the right balance for them.

The RDM Career Development Committee organises an annual Career Day at which RDM alumni and other speakers look at different career paths that can be taken after your DPhil. There is also an RDM Researcher Association which aims to enrich the RDM researcher experience through social events, career development and advice. They liaise with the RDM Career Development Committee to address any concerns and suggestions raised by RDM researchers.

RDM's mentoring scheme is open to all students and staff and aims to assist them in achieving personal and professional growth through a mentorship relationship that provides support as they progress and develop within the University.

The department has a Student Forum comprised of a number of student representatives from across RDM. It meets termly to discuss any concerns students may have and to provide feedback on the various aspects of life as an RDM student. Two members of the forum also sit on the Graduate Studies Committee. They act as the point of contact for students and ensure that any concerns amongst students can be heard by the department and acted upon.

Supervision

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

As well as your academic supervisor, students also have one or more formal co-supervisors, who can provide additional scientific and/or practical advice in their specialist areas and offer another viewpoint on the student's project. Together, they form the specialised team that will advise you on your academic progress. Typically, you should expect to have meetings with your supervisor or a member of the supervisory team with a frequency of once every two weeks averaged across the year. The regularity of these meetings may be subject to variations according to the time of the year, and the stage you are at in your research.

You will also have the support of a local Director of Graduate Studies, the RDM Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Studies Manager. All activity relating to graduate students within the department is overseen by the Graduate Studies Committee.

Assessment

All students will be initially admitted to the status of Probationer Research Student (PRS). Within a maximum of six terms as a full-time PRS student or twelve 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 fourth term for full-time students and by the eighth term for part-time students.

A successful transfer of status from PRS to DPhil status will require a written report outlining your project plans and data obtained so far. 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 two assessors who are not directly involved in your supervision and therefore provide important experience for the final oral examination.

Full-time students will be expected to submit an original thesis of 50,000 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 Medical Sciences 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	£10,070
Overseas	£33,370

Part-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£5,035
Overseas	£16,685

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>).