

## Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: DPhil in International Relations



### Course facts

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

### About the course

The DPhil in International Relations a programme of doctoral research in the academic study of International Relations.

Doctoral students spend the first year of full-time study, or the first two years of part-time study, in the development of, and early work on, the thesis topic; in improving knowledge of research methods; in attendance at relevant lectures, seminars and classes; and in preparing to transfer from Probationer Research Student (PRS - the status with which you will normally be admitted - see *Assessment*) to full DPhil status.

An academic supervisor will advise and guide you as you progress through the different stages of your doctoral research. In the first year, you will take the Research Design and Methods (RDM) in International Relations course, and you are also recommended to complete one other methods course (either a statistics course in Michaelmas term or one of the courses in Hilary term). You are expected to attend the International Relations DPhil Research Seminar throughout the year and eventually to present your work there. For part-time students, these obligations are distributed across six terms.

Subsequent years are largely devoted to the development of the thesis project.

Doctoral theses will normally require substantial original research, often involving archives, fieldwork, interviewing or other forms of data generation and collection. For the doctoral degree the most crucial requirement is that the thesis makes a 'significant and substantial contribution to the field of knowledge within which it falls'. There are many ways of achieving this.

The department is committed to the rigorous use of a plurality of approaches and methods. There are many different ways of conducting research for a thesis. Any or all may be valid in a given case, depending on the subject of the research and the questions addressed. Some theses may involve an analytical-descriptive attempt at understanding different events, perspectives and traditions of thought. Others may have a strong historiographical element - exploring, for example, the relation between events and ideas, or involving an original and expert use of sources.

Others may involve advancing a hypothesis about a subject and then testing it with a range of qualitative and/or quantitative approaches. Apart from meeting the highest scholarly standards, there is no set template. There is also a strong and successful tradition of normative and critical work. The Oxford International Relations Network seeks to combine the best of North American political science with deep engagement with the international relations of different parts of the world and with the history of different traditions of thought on the subject.

As a DPhil student you will be a member of a distinguished academic community that is renowned for its cutting-edge research and its intensive and individualised teaching and supervision. The programme has received the highest level of recognition in UK national and global assessment exercises. It is a community from which you will draw support and guidance but which will also learn from your own contribution to its work.

You will have rich opportunities for connecting with fellow-students, postdoctoral fellows, and temporary and permanent academic staff involved in disciplinary and cross-disciplinary research programmes. The department attracts many of the world's leading figures in International Relations (IR) - as visiting scholars, speakers in the regular IR Colloquium, and participants in research conferences and workshops.

The Department of Politics and International Relations (DPIR) works with a range of research centres and programmes, such as the Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict (ELAC), the Centre for the Resolution of Intractable Conflict (CRIC), and the Changing Character of War Centre (CCW).

Research centres actively seek to develop collaborative research activity via conferences, workshops and other academic events. They provide opportunities for you to present your own work in research seminar series. The research centres have an established and popular visitors' programme which has allowed many scholars of international repute to participate in the DPIR's research activities.

### 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.

Full-time and part-time students are required to attend classes, seminars, supervision meetings and other obligations in Oxford.

There will be limited flexibility in the dates and pattern of attendance. Attendance by part-time students will be required between one to three days a week during term-time throughout the first two years of your study on days determined by your class and seminar attendance and by your supervisor. Attendance may be required outside of term-time on dates to be determined by mutual agreement with your supervisor.

It is therefore likely that this course may be better suited to part-time students who are either already resident in Oxford or will live within commuting distance of the city.

### **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.

As a doctoral student of the department, you will have access to outstanding library and computing resources within the Social Sciences Division (of which the Department of Politics and International Relations is a major part), elsewhere in the University and, in most cases, in your college. The division runs network events to enable DPhil students to meet and network with their colleagues not only within Politics and International Relations but with other Social Science disciplines.

The Bodleian Social Science Library located on the ground floor of the Manor Road Building houses the main collection for Politics and International Relations alongside a wide range of other social sciences resources.

The Politics and International Relations subject guide provides up-to-date advice and the contact details of your Subject Librarian for further support.

### **Supervision**

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Department of Politics and International Relations and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. Supervisors are usually selected from the academic staff within the Department of Politics and International Relations. Under exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be found outside the Department of Politics and International Relations.

You will conduct your own research under the guidance of your supervisor. You must be prepared to work on your own a good deal, and will need considerable personal motivation.

### **Assessment**

Most applicants are admitted to the DPhil with Probationer Research Student (PRS) status. As a PRS, you will develop your research proposal and skills, complete a programme of research methods training (and associated assessments), and produce a draft section or sections of the thesis, in order to apply for the Transfer of Status that will end your probationary period.

If you are entering the DPhil directly from the related MPhil at Oxford, you will normally be able to bypass the PRS stage and progress straight to DPhil status. Further guidance about transferring to DPhil status can be found under option two on the Readmission, transfer and confirmation of status page.

Once you have been admitted to full DPhil status, you must achieve confirmation of that status by the end of your ninth term as a full-time doctoral student, or by the end of your eighteenth term as a part-time student. Once you have completed your thesis, you will be examined orally (*viva voce*).

### **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	£16,330
Overseas	£31,090

#### Part-time study

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£8,165
Overseas	£15,545

### 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 and vaccination expenses, conference attendance, 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

There are no compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees (or, after fee liability ends, continuation charges) and living costs.

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 and vaccination expenses, conference attendance, 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
<b>Food</b>	£330	£515
<b>Accommodation</b>	£790	£955
<b>Personal items</b>	£200	£335
<b>Social activities</b>	£45	£100
<b>Study costs</b>	£40	£90
<b>Other</b>	£20	£40
<b>Total</b>	£1,425	£2,035

### Likely living costs for nine months

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

### Likely living costs for twelve months

	Lower range	Upper range
<b>Food</b>	£3,960	£6,180
<b>Accommodation</b>	£9,480	£11,460
<b>Personal items</b>	£2,400	£4,020
<b>Social activities</b>	£540	£1,200
<b>Study costs</b>	£480	£1,080
<b>Other</b>	£240	£480
<b>Total</b>	£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](http://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](mailto:graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk)) or via the online form (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/ask/form>).