

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: DPhil in Theology and Religion



Course facts

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

About the course

The DPhil in Theology and Religion is the research degree for graduate students in the Faculty of Theology and Religion. It involves extensive independent study and the opportunity to undertake and present original research at an advanced level.

This degree offers access to a wide variety of experienced specialists in many different fields of theology and religion, including the study of the world religions; biblical studies; science and religion; ecclesiastical history; systematic theology; ethics; patristics, and philosophical theology. You will develop an extensive range of research skills and expertise in your chosen field of research.

Students who have previously completed an MSt or MPhil degree in a relevant subject area at the University of Oxford, typically find that this aids preparedness and accelerates completion of this DPhil.

As a DPhil student you will become part of an active and vibrant community of graduate research students within the Faculty of Theology and Religion. You will be encouraged to attend and contribute to a wide range of research seminars, workshops and conferences held within the faculty and across the wider Humanities Division. You will also be encouraged to attend and participate in the faculty's professional development sessions, preparatory teaching workshops and graduate teaching training scheme.

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 years and the part-time course has the same requirements, but is studied over six to eight years.

Part-time study requires prior arrangement with a potential supervisor about time spent in Oxford. Some attendance in term time is normally required.

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 Theology and Religion 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 Theology. 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.

Further libraries

The Philosophy and Theology Faculties Library (PTFL) is located in the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter on the same site as the Schwarzman Centre.

The PTFL is a lending library primarily for staff and students of the two faculties, in support of research, teaching and learning. It has a collection of c. 30,000 books for loan on open access, with a further 20,000 available by request from remote store. It is also a delivery location for books from the Bodleian stacks for reference use in the library. Many books are now also available in electronic format; some are downloadable for 24-hour loan.

Languages

The Oxford University Language Centre offers free or discounted courses to members of the University who wish to learn or improve a foreign language relevant to their academic work – or indeed for their general interest and education. If a course is required for study or research, there is a priority enrolment scheme.

Supervision

You will be assigned a supervisor or supervisors, who will provide support and guidance to help you develop your ideas, direction and a programme of research. A supervisor is expected normally to meet with a research student for a detailed discussion of the student's progress at least twice a term during the period of study. Meetings are likely to take place more frequently during the early stages of a research programme, and to involve reading and commenting upon substantial amounts of written work during the latter stages.

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Faculty of Theology and Religion 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 Theology and Religion. In such circumstances, a second internal supervisor may be appointed.

Assessment

DPhil students join the faculty as a Probationary Research Student (PRS) and apply for 'Transfer of Status' usually within their first year (if full-time), or their second year (if part-time). The Transfer of Status process involves the submission of a 5,000 word writing sample, and an interview with two specialist assessors. There is a further assessment of candidates' work and progress at a more advanced stage of their research, known as 'Confirmation of Status', which requires submission of a 10,000 word extract from the thesis, abstracts, and a further interview with assessors. The degree is awarded on the successful completion of the research dissertation (no more than 100,000 words in length) and an oral examination, commonly called 'the viva' (viva voce). The final viva is conducted by an internal and an external examiner with relevant scholarly expertise.

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>).