

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MSc by Research in Chemistry



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	2 to 3 years

About the course

This is a research degree leading to the award of an MSc(Res) in Chemistry. The course admits students across the full breadth of research in the department, which focuses on fundamental science aimed at making significant and sustained long-term impact.

The main aspect of the course is an original research project, which develops research skills, knowledge and expertise in an area of cutting-edge chemistry. In many ways, the course is very similar to the DPhil in Chemistry, the key difference being that a DPhil project would normally take longer to complete and would be expected to make more significant advances in the field of research. The MSc(Res) offers an alternative to a DPhil, for students wishing to undertake a shorter research degree.

You will work with one or more academic supervisors, on a project that falls within the department's research themes:

- Advanced Functional Materials and Interfaces
- Catalysis
- Chemistry at the interface with Biology and Medicine
- Energy and Sustainable Chemistry
- Innovative Measurement and Photon Science
- Kinetics, Dynamics and Mechanism
- Synthesis
- Theory and Modelling in the Chemical Sciences

Many students work on projects that cut across the traditional boundaries of chemistry, and some work in interdisciplinary fields that exploit the Department of Chemistry's strong connections with other departments of the University. Students are supervised by some of the country's most gifted research chemists, many of whom have world-class reputations.

You will work in an environment which encourages and inspires you to acquire and develop a wide range of communication, study, and research skills.

A typical week would primarily be spent carrying out your research, along with attending research group meetings, preparing reports, and keeping up-to-date with the scientific literature. You will also have access to a range of training opportunities, including specialist training within the department on key research techniques. Alongside your research project, you will be expected to develop your transferable skills, and many courses and opportunities for this are provided by the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences division and the wider University.

The Department of Chemistry has a strong and vibrant research community, of which you will become part, and you will be encouraged to attend a range of events including seminar series, lectures from distinguished visiting researchers, and the annual Graduate Symposium.

Attendance

The course is full-time and requires attendance in Oxford. Full-time students are subject to the University's Residence requirements.

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.

Workspace will be related to individual circumstances. If undertaking experimental work, you will be provided with space in a laboratory with access to all the required equipment. If undertaking theoretical research, you will have shared office space.

The Department of Chemistry has one of the largest and well-resourced research laboratories in the world. You will have access to the department's IT support staff, to the Radcliffe Science Library and other University libraries, and centrally provided electronic resources, technical workshops and glass workshops. Experimental facilities are available as appropriate to the research topic. The provision of other resources specific to your project should be agreed with your supervisor as a part of the planning stages of the agreed project.

Supervision

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

You will join a research group supervised by one or more members of the Department of Chemistry, sometimes in collaboration with other departments.

If you require specific help to adjust to an academic programme or to develop a new range of skills, your supervisor will work with you to ensure that you have additional support.

Most students have the opportunity to meet with their research supervisor to discuss and review their progress on a weekly or fortnightly basis.

Assessment

You will be admitted as a Probationary Research Student. At the end of the first year, you will undergo a Transfer of Status assessment, to ensure that you have the potential to gain an MSc by Research degree. This assessment is made by independent assessors on the basis of a report, a short presentation and an oral examination. Assuming that you satisfactorily transfer to MSc by Research status, your research proceeds with quarterly reporting throughout the remainder of the course.

You will be expected to submit an MSc by Research thesis within, at most, three years from the date of admission. The vast majority of students submit their thesis within two years. Your thesis will be read by two examiners, one of whom is normally from Oxford and one from elsewhere, and you will be assessed via the thesis and an oral (viva voce) examination. The examiners will judge, along with other requirements, whether you have made a worthwhile contribution to your particular field of learning.

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

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£10,070
Overseas	£33,370

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

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.

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.

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>).