

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



Course facts

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

About the course

The MSc by Research is an advanced research degree which provides the opportunity to investigate a project in depth and write a thesis which makes a significant contribution in the field.

The research project is designed to take less time than a doctorate degree (normally two years, though it is possible to complete the requirements in a single year). It is not intended as a first step towards a DPhil, but rather as an alternative to a DPhil. Few students opt to apply for the MSc by Research unless there are limitations on the time or funding available.

There are no associated lectures, classes or written examinations. Your project can be in any of the subject areas for which supervision is available. The department's research covers the entire spectrum of mathematics, with subject areas including:

- Algebra (primarily group theory and representation theory)
- Geometry
- Topology
- Mathematical biology and ecology
- Industrial and applied mathematics (including fluid and solid mechanics, geosciences, mathematical physiology, methodologies, and networks)
- Numerical analysis.

You will be expected to acquire transferable skills as part of your training, which will require you to attend courses, lectures, workshops and colloquia. You will have the opportunity to develop other valuable skills and to contribute to the teaching work of the department, both by marking students' work and later by leading classes of around eight to twelve students.

The department offers extensive support to students, from regular skills training and career development sessions to a variety of social events in a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere. You will have the opportunity to interact with fellow students and other members of your research groups, and more widely across the department. The department is committed to offering you the best supervision and to providing a stimulating research environment.

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.

The Mathematical Institute's home is the purpose-built Andrew Wiles Building, opened in 2013. This provides ample teaching facilities for lectures, classes and seminars. Each research student is allocated an office in the Andrew Wiles Building that they will share with three or four other students: each student has their own desk, with a computer. The Mathematical Institute provides IT support, and students can use the department's Whitehead Library, with an extensive range of books

and journals.

In addition to the common room, where graduate students regularly gather for coffee and other social occasions, there is also a café in the Andrew Wiles Building.

Supervision

You will be invited to suggest a specific supervisor or supervisors in your application form, and your preferences will be taken into account in allocating you a supervisor (which will be done before your arrival).

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Mathematical Institute 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 co-supervisor may be found outside the Mathematical Institute.

You will have the opportunity to meet individually with your supervisor.

Assessment

Initially, you will be admitted as a Probationer Research Student in the same way as those intending to do a DPhil.

Within four terms of admission as a PRS student you will be expected to apply for transfer of status from Probationer Research Student to MSc by Research status.

A successful transfer of status from PRS to MSc by Research status will require satisfactory attendance and a successful performance in an oral examination in front of two appointed assessors.

You will be expected to submit a substantial original thesis after two or, at most, three years from the date of admission. To be successfully awarded a MSc by Research in Mathematics 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

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£10,070
Overseas	£27,870

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>).