

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MPhil in Socio-Legal Research



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	12 months

About the course

The MPhil in Socio-Legal Research is a one-year research master's degree offered by the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies (CSLS). It can either serve as a qualification in its own right or as a route into the Doctor of Philosophy (DPhil) degree, including the DPhil in Socio-Legal Studies.

The course normally takes place over a full academic year (October to September). You will attend weekly seminars convened by senior members of staff at the CSLS on 'Theory and Methods in Socio-Legal Research', mainly during your first two terms. This is intended to develop your appreciation of law as a social phenomenon, to introduce various theoretical perspectives and to consider the variety of empirical techniques by which research questions may be addressed.

You will be able to take part in an extensive range of seminar programmes and discussion groups, affording plentiful opportunities for interaction both with your peers and with academics working in the same or similar research areas. But you can expect to spend the majority of your time working on your own research project.

The CSLS community is vibrant. Members convene research seminars, workshops, book colloquia, and an annual Socio-Legal Lecture. In addition to participating in these academic events, our students have initiated and run their own Socio-Legal Discussion Group, along with other, more specialist events. All these events bring staff and students together to exchange ideas, to meet visiting speakers and to engage in discussion of a variety of socio-legal issues. You will receive multiple opportunities to gain experience of presenting and discussing your work in progress.

Attendance

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

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 Centre for Socio-Legal Studies (CSLS) will provide you with an individual study space in the form of a desk and a PC that is supported by the University's IT services.

During the MPhil you will be engaged in interdisciplinary research and will have access to the Social Science Library (SSL) which is housed on the ground floor of the Manor Road Building, and the Law Library which is in the adjacent building, the St Cross Building. Both libraries offer a selection of study spaces including graduate study rooms, individual study carrels and group discussion rooms which are available for booking. You will also have access to all the other Bodleian Libraries and in some cases also to one or more college libraries.

The CSLS benefits from having seminar rooms in the Manor Road Building available for academic events. The CSLS holds social events, including weekly afternoon tea, throughout the year, so that staff and students can interact and network.

Supervision

Throughout the period of your studies, you will work with a supervisor with whom you should arrange to meet to discuss your project and who will provide feedback and advice.

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

In the case of students who require specific help to adjust to an academic programme or to acquire a new range of skills, the supervisor will work with them to ensure that they have additional support.

Assessment

During the course, you will write a thesis. You will work with your supervisor to develop a topic that contributes to an understanding of law in society, drawing on empirical and theoretical perspectives.

The examination method is the same as that used for the DPhil – two examiners are appointed who read the thesis and then conduct an intensive oral examination with you, known as a viva voce, before providing a written report to the Law Faculty. On that basis your thesis may be judged to have passed, so that you can be awarded the MPhil degree, to be deserving of a Distinction or to be in need of revision, in which case it is referred back to you for re-submission at a later date; in extreme cases it may be rejected.

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	£10,290
Overseas	£29,350

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.

Additional cost information

There are no compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees and living costs. However, as part of your course requirements, you may need to choose a dissertation, a project or a thesis topic. Please note that, depending on your choice of 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>).