

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MSc in Economics for Development



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	9 months

About the course

This is a nine-month degree in development economics with a strong emphasis on bringing methods of modern economic analysis to economic development theory and policy. The course will prepare you for further academic research or for work as a professional development economist in international agencies, governments or the private sector.

Course objectives

The course seeks to cultivate the analytical and critical skills relevant to economic development, in particular those needed to assess alternative approaches to policy. It provides the rigorous quantitative training that development work now requires, helping you develop the ability to access, process and interpret a variety of data. It aims to provide the research tools and approaches needed for those who wish to proceed to doctoral research in development economics.

Courses structure

You will take courses in economic theory (split between macroeconomics, microeconomics and international trade), a course in quantitative methods (ie econometrics) and a choice of four or five from a series of at least eight elective modules in development economics. Topics vary from year to year. In recent years, modules have covered topics such as agriculture, political economy and institutions, globalisation, macroeconomic policy, behavioural economics, risk and microfinance. With the approval of the Course Director, a candidate may substitute one topic from the Development Economics course with an appropriate option from the MPhil Development Studies, MSc Global Governance & Diplomacy, MSc Migration Studies, or MSc Refugee & Forced Migration Studies.

A central component of the course is a dissertation written on a subject which you choose in consultation with your supervisor and with the agreement of your Course Director. More information on the structure of the course is available in the course handbook on the departmental website's course page.

Teaching and learning

The course is taught through lectures and classes and, for the development modules, student presentations. The quantitative methods course also includes hands-on training in the use of specialist statistical software. Class sizes are small – usually between 5 and 30 students – encouraging active participation and enabling students to learn from each other.

During the course you will be required to complete a number of problem sets and write essays for individual supervisors (the tutorial system). This system is used to build critical and analytical skills and is particularly beneficial to students from a different background of instruction.

Around 65% - 75% of your time will be spent on lectures and guided study, with the remaining 25% - 35% devoted to self-directed work, much of which will be spent on your dissertation.

As a student on the course you will be able to attend a wide range of public seminars organised within both ODID and the Economics Department, in particular the seminars run by the Centre for the Study of African Economies. Beyond the immediate degree, Oxford offers a great variety of events, including seminars and lectures by distinguished academics and policy-makers in related fields.

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.

Libraries

In addition to the world-class resources of the Bodleian Libraries, the Social Sciences Library, the largest freestanding social science library in the UK, is nearby. As alumni of the University, students can sign up for lifetime access to key online journals.

IT support

You will have access to high-quality IT facilities and will be provided with licences for econometric and data-analysis software. Most students choose to bring their own laptop computers and to use these for data analysis, but ODID provides hot-desking areas with desktop computers and printing, as well as wireless internet access. Technical support is available through ODID and the Economics Department, your college and the University's IT Services, which also offers training courses. Course materials are available online via Canvas, the University's Virtual Learning Environment.

Departmental facilities

Teaching takes place in seminar rooms in ODID or the Manor Road Building. In ODID there is a common room area where students from all the department's courses can gather. Light lunches in the Cafeteria are available during term. The Manor Road Building also offers a cafeteria and common room for students' use.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision is the responsibility of the Oxford Department of International Development, in conjunction with the Department of Economics, and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff.

You will be allocated a general supervisor who will support your academic development and with whom you will meet regularly throughout the course. Allocation is based on your research interests, optimal fit with the supervisor's expertise, and staff availability. In cases where dissertation supervision requires expertise that is not available among the core staff, an additional dissertation supervisor with expertise in the chosen field may be identified.

In addition, you will have a college advisor whom you may consult on issues concerning your personal wellbeing.

Assessment

On-course assessment, which will not count towards your final degree, will be provided through feedback on problem sets and essays. In addition, there will be five informal examinations during the year. Again, these will not count towards your final degree but they will provide an invaluable opportunity to assess your progress and for you to practise exam technique.

The degree is formally assessed through examination at the end of the final term. This normally comprises four written papers: microeconomic theory, macroeconomic theory and international trade, quantitative methods, and development economics. Students permitted to substitute one topic from the development economics course with an option course will sit a pro-rata development economics examination and the assessment from the option course.

The dissertation will be submitted before the examinations and your final mark will be aggregated from the results of the examinations and the dissertation.

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	£30,210
Overseas	£38,410

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

You must attend a pre-sessional Maths course in the week before the Induction Week sessions for the MSc in Economics for Development begins. There is no charge for the course, but you will need to pay for accommodation and living expenses during this period. The department estimates that this accommodation will cost between £250 and £500 depending on the college and the type of accommodation. Also as part of your course requirements, you will choose a dissertation 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>).