

## Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MPhil in Development Studies



### Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	21 months

### About the course

The two-year MPhil in Development Studies will provide you with a rigorous and critical introduction to development as a process of managed and unmanaged change in societies in the Global South. Our students go on to careers in development policy or practice or for further study in the field.

### Course objectives

The course will introduce you to development studies as an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary subject. It covers the intellectual history of development, the paradigm shifts and internal conflicts within the discipline and the contemporary relevance of research to development policy and practice.

### Course structure

The course comprises five elements: foundation courses, research methods, the core course, the thesis and two option courses.

In the first year, you will study two out of three foundation courses:

- Economics
- History and Politics
- Social Anthropology

If you have no previous training in economics you must take this as one of your foundation courses; otherwise you must take the other two.

You will learn about research methods for the social sciences, comprising sessions on research design and qualitative and quantitative methods. Thesis workshops offer preparation for your research. Additional sessions will be held on aspects of fieldwork ethics and safety, library resources and software and computerised databases.

The core course, also taken in the first year, is an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary course with two component modules:

- Theories of Development
- Key Themes in Development

You will spend the summer following your first year working on a thesis. You will choose the topic, with the guidance of your supervisor, and, in most cases, spend some of the summer doing research and gathering data.

In the second year, you will take your chosen option courses and continue work on your thesis. More information can be found in the course handbook on the department's course page.

### Teaching and learning

Each course entails up to four hours of teaching per week, delivered through lectures, classes and workshops. Class sizes are small – between 5 and 30 students – encouraging active participation and enabling students to learn from each other. You prepare for sessions by reading a selection of recommended books, book chapters and articles.

As an MPhil student you will be able to attend the wide range of public seminars organised by the department and the individual research groups. Beyond the department, Oxford offers access to a large number 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 Library, the Social Sciences Library, the largest freestanding social science library in the UK, with considerable print and digital strengths in development studies and a specialist librarian, is nearby. As alumni of the University, students can sign up for lifetime access to key online journals.

### **IT support**

The department provides hot-desking areas with desktops and printing, as well as wireless internet access. Technical support is available through the 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.

### **Department facilities**

Teaching takes place in the department's seminar rooms, and there is a common room area where students from all the department's courses can gather. Lunches in the cafeteria are available during term.

### **Supervision**

You will have the opportunity to meet with a supervisor to assess progress and discuss academic issues. Supervisors are allocated based on your research interests, fit with the supervisor's expertise, and staff availability. In your first year, you will identify someone to supervise your thesis, typically someone from the MPhil core staff. You will also have a college advisor whom you may consult on issues concerning your personal wellbeing.

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Oxford Department of International Development. 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 Oxford Department of International Development.

### **Assessment**

#### **Year one**

Formal assessment will normally comprise a written examination at the beginning of the third term for each foundation course; a written examination at the end of the third term and a research design essay, submitted in the same term, for research methods; and two essays for the core course. You must pass all summative assessments to continue into Year 2. There is an opportunity to re-sit in September.

#### **Year two**

You will be formally assessed for your two option courses as well as the thesis submitted during the final term. Further information on the thesis can be found on the departmental website.

### **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	£27,520
Overseas	£35,000

### 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 will need to choose a dissertation, a project or a thesis topic. Most students will choose a topic which will require them to do fieldwork for their thesis. This fieldwork will be conducted during the long vacation between the first and second year. Students should note that they will have to meet all costs of fieldwork themselves and these costs are likely to include travel and related costs such as visas, accommodation, subsistence, translation and research assistant services if required. These costs will vary according to the location and length of the fieldwork and the department estimates that these costs may range from £1,500 to £20,000 or more. Each MPhil student is able to apply for a fieldwork grant of £800. This is awarded once only usually at the end of Trinity Term of their first year, before they go to the field during the summer vacation. Further information will be provided in the course handbook. You may also be able to apply for small grants from your 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
<b>Food</b>	£330	£515
<b>Accommodation</b>	£790	£955
<b>Personal items</b>	£200	£335
<b>Social activities</b>	£45	£100
<b>Study costs</b>	£40	£90
<b>Other</b>	£20	£40
<b>Total</b>	£1,425	£2,035

### Likely living costs for nine months

	Lower range	Upper range
<b>Food</b>	£2,970	£4,635
<b>Accommodation</b>	£7,110	£8,595
<b>Personal items</b>	£1,800	£3,015
<b>Social activities</b>	£405	£900
<b>Study costs</b>	£360	£810
<b>Other</b>	£180	£360
<b>Total</b>	£12,825	£18,315

### Likely living costs for twelve months

	Lower range	Upper range
<b>Food</b>	£3,960	£6,180
<b>Accommodation</b>	£9,480	£11,460
<b>Personal items</b>	£2,400	£4,020
<b>Social activities</b>	£540	£1,200
<b>Study costs</b>	£480	£1,080
<b>Other</b>	£240	£480
<b>Total</b>	£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](http://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](mailto:graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk)) or via the online form (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/ask/form>).

