

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MSt in Practical Ethics



Course facts

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

About the course

The MSt in Practical Ethics offers high quality training in practical ethics through flexible, part-time learning.

This course is run jointly by the Uehiro Oxford Institute and the Department for Continuing Education, and draws on the internationally recognised research and expertise of the Uehiro Oxford Institute and the Ethox Centre.

The course is highly interdisciplinary in character but the primary focus is ethical and philosophical. Students will learn how to apply rigorous philosophical analysis to real-life ethical problems and will be provided with a grounding in key ethical concepts and methods, as well as in major debates in practical ethics. Students will also have the opportunity for in-depth research on a topic of their choice.

The course is relevant to students from a wide range of professional backgrounds, including philosophy and bioethics, medicine and health, the technology sector, and the legal and public policy sectors.

The University of Oxford was ranked as the top university for the study of ethics by the Centre for World University Rankings in 2017, and has consistently ranked as the top university in applied ethics and normative ethics by the Philosophical Gourmet Report, including its most recent report (2021-22).

In this course, students undertake six taught modules and a dissertation. There is one compulsory module and a choice of five out of eight option modules.

Compulsory module:

- Ethical Concepts and Methods

Option modules:

- Artificial Intelligence Ethics
- Climate, Environment and Animals
- Data Ethics
- Ethics of the Beginning and End of Life
- Neuroethics
- Philosophy, Psychiatry and Mental Health
- Research Ethics and Empirical Ethics
- Well-Being, Disability and Enhancement

The compulsory module runs yearly and five of the eight option modules should run each year. Each module will be taught over an intensive residential teaching week (~25 contact hours) in Oxford to include lectures, seminars, and discussion groups. Modules are normally provided in clusters, offering students options around the number of visits to Oxford each year. Online materials are available including essential readings, texts and online lectures, alongside forums where students can communicate and continue discussion when away from Oxford.

It is also expected that students undertake significant independent study in order to complete the assessments at the level expected. This will vary from student to student and over the life of the course according to the modules taken, but is expected to be around 16 hours of independent study per week for periods equivalent to the length of term (three sets of eight weeks) throughout the year, although the course will not stick rigidly to the term structure.

Attendance

This course is part-time. You will be required to attend six, five-day residential teaching weeks in Oxford over the duration of the course.

Face-to-face teaching is often carried out in teaching rooms within the Department for Continuing Education but may also be carried out in a college or other University venues.

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.

During the teaching blocks in Oxford and other study visits, students will also have physical access to university buildings, facilities and support, including libraries, IT services, career and counselling services, and sport and recreation, though many of Oxford's facilities are now also readily available online.

Books required for the taught course will be held on reserve in the department's library.

Students will be members of the Uehiro Oxford Institute, which hosts a large international community of scholars in practical ethics, and will be invited to join the centre's events and other activities.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Uehiro Oxford Institute and/or the Department for Continuing Education. It is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. In exceptional circumstances, a supervisor may occasionally be found outside the Uehiro Oxford Institute / or the Department for Continuing Education when appropriate.

Assessment

Assessment for each module is based on one essay per module. Students will also complete a dissertation on a topic chosen in consultation with a supervisor and the Course Director. The dissertation should not normally exceed 15,000 words.

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

Modular course fees

The fees for this course are charged on a modular basis. You will pay an annual course fee and an additional fee for each module studied. A minimum of two annual course fees are payable for this course. If this course includes a dissertation, three module fees will be charged for the dissertation.

Fees for the 2025-26 academic year

Fee status	Annual Course Fee	Fee per module	Total estimated fees
Home	£2,615	£2,195	Please see the department's website for further details
Overseas	£2,615	£2,195	

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

This course has residential sessions in Oxford. You will need to meet your travel and accommodation costs in attending these sessions. Further, as part of your course requirements, you may need to choose a dissertation, a project or a thesis topic. 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.

If you are studying part-time your living costs may vary depending on your personal circumstances but you must still ensure that you will have sufficient funding to meet these 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>).