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Computer Science Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025

Computer science is about understanding computer systems and networks at a deep level.

Computers and the programs they run are among the most complex products ever created; designing and using them effectively presents immense challenges. Facing these challenges is the aim of computer science as a practical discipline, and this leads to some fundamental questions:

- How can we capture in a precise way what we want a computer system to do?
- Can we mathematically prove that a computer system does what we want it to?
- How can computers help us to model and investigate complex systems like the Earth's climate, financial systems or our own bodies?
- What are the limits to computing? Will quantum computers extend those limits?

The theories that are now emerging to answer these kinds of questions can be immediately applied to design new computers, programs, networks and systems that are transforming science, business, culture and all other aspects of life.

The course concentrates on creating links between theory and practice. It covers a wide variety of software and hardware technologies and their applications.

We are looking for students with strong mathematical ability. You will develop these skills to reason rigorously about the behaviours of programs and computer systems.

You will also gain practical problem-solving and program design skills; the majority of subjects within the course are linked with practical work in our well-equipped laboratory.

A typical week

During the first part of the course, your work will be divided between about ten lectures and two tutorials each week, in addition to about two practical sessions.

In tutorials you will discuss ideas in depth with an experienced computer scientist, usually with just one or two other students.

You will be expected to spend a considerable amount of time developing your own understanding of the topics covered in lectures, answering questions designed to check your understanding, and preparing for tutorials.

As the course progresses, you will also begin to work in small classes of up to ten people on more specialised topics. Class sizes may vary depending on the options you choose. There would usually be around 8-15 students, though classes for some of the more popular papers may be larger.

In the second year you will take part in a group design practical, which may be sponsored by industry.

In Years 3 and 4 about a third of your time is spent working on your chosen individual project.

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Most tutorials, classes, and lectures are delivered by experts in their field, who have years of experience in teaching and research. Some teaching may also be delivered by postdoctoral researchers or postgraduate students who are studying at doctoral level.

To find out more about how our teaching year is structured, visit our [Academic Year](#) page.

Course structure

Computer Science can be studied for three years (BA) or four years, leading to an award of Master of Computer Science (MCompSci).

The fourth year allows the study of advanced topics and an in-depth research project. Students do not need to choose between the three-year and four-year options when applying to the course. All students apply for the four-year course, and then decide by the end of their third year whether they wish to continue to the fourth year. In order to proceed into the fourth year (part C), students will need to achieve a 2:1 or higher classification at the end of their third year.

YEAR 1

COURSES

Core courses (100%):

- Continuous mathematics
- Design and analysis of algorithms
- Digital systems
- Discrete mathematics
- Functional programming
- Imperative programming
- Introduction to proof systems
- Linear algebra
- Probability

ASSESSMENT

Four exam papers

YEAR 2

COURSES

Core courses (50%):

- Algorithms and data structures
- Compilers
- Concurrent programming
- Group design practical
- Models of computation

Current options (50%) include:

ASSESSMENT

Eight exam papers.

Group Design Practical is assessed by a demonstration and presentation.

YEAR 2

- Artificial intelligence
- Computer architecture
- Computer graphics
- Databases
- Quantum information
- Logic and proof

YEAR 3

COURSES

Current options (67%) include:

- Computer-aided formal verification
- Computational complexity
- Computer security
- Geometric modelling
- Knowledge representation and reasoning
- Machine learning
- Lambda calculus and types
- Principals of programming languages

Optional project work (33%)*

ASSESSMENT

Six exam papers plus project report, or eight exam papers

YEAR 4

COURSES

Current options (62%) include:

- Advanced security
- Concurrent algorithms and data structures
- Computational biology
- Computational game theory
- Computational learning theory
- Database systems implementation
- Deep learning in healthcare
- Foundation of self-programming agents
- Geometric deep learning
- Graph representational learning
- Probabilistic model checking
- Probability and computing
- Quantum software

ASSESSMENT

Five take-home exams or written papers plus project report

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YEAR 4

Project work (38%)

*To be confirmed

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 registration. For further information, please see the University's [Terms and Conditions](#).

Fees

These annual fees are for full-time students who begin this undergraduate course here in 2025.

Information about how much fees and other costs may increase is set out in the University's Terms and Conditions.

Please note that while the University sets out its annual fees as a single figure, this is a combined figure for both your University and college fees. More information is provided in your [Terms and Conditions](#).

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home (UK, Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands & Isle of Man)	£9,535
Overseas (including most EU students – see Note below)	£59,260

Note: Irish nationals living in the UK or Ireland, EU, other EEA, and Swiss nationals who have been granted settled or pre-settled status in the UK under the EU settlement scheme are eligible for 'Home fee' status and student loan support, subject to meeting residency requirements. We will contact you directly if we need further information from you to determine your fee status.

Please refer to the [Undergraduate fee status](#) pages for more information.

Living costs

Living costs for the academic year starting in 2025 are estimated to be between £1,425 and £2,035 for each month you are in Oxford. Our academic year is made up of three eight-week terms, so you would not usually need to be in Oxford for much more than six months of the year but may wish to budget over a nine-month period to ensure you also have sufficient funds during the holidays to meet essential costs. For further details please visit our [living costs webpage](#).

Living costs breakdown

	Per month		Total for 9 months	
	Lower range	Upper range	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£330	£515	£2,970	£4,635
Accommodation (including utilities)	£790	£955	£7,110	£8,595

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	Per month		Total for 9 months	
Personal items	£200	£335	£1,800	£3,015
Social activities	£45	£100	£405	£900
Study costs	£40	£90	£360	£810
Other	£20	£40	£180	£360
Total	£1,425	£2,035	£12,825	£18,315

In order to provide these likely living costs (which are rounded to the nearest £5), the University and the Oxford SU conducted a living costs survey to complement existing student expenditure data from a variety of sources, including the UK government's Student Income and Expenditure Survey and the National Union of Students (NUS).

The current economic climate and high national rate of inflation make it very hard to estimate potential changes to the cost of living over the next few years. When planning your finances for any future years of study in Oxford beyond 2025-26, it is suggested that you allow for potential increases in living expenses of around 4% each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation.

[Additional Fees and Charges Information for Computer Science](#)

There are no compulsory costs for this course beyond the fees shown above and your living costs.