

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: DPhil in Women's and Reproductive Health



Course facts

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Mode of study | Full Time | Part Time |
| Expected length | 3 to 4 years | 6 to 8 years |

About the course

The DPhil in Women's and Reproductive Health offers a wide range of opportunities to carry out multidisciplinary research on important issues in human reproduction and applied basic science.

Research carried out in the Nuffield Department of Women's & Reproductive Health encompasses a broad range of topics, with groups working on oocytes and sperm, preimplantation genetic diagnosis, genetic studies, molecular and cellular mechanisms underlying normal and aberrant reproductive function, immunology of pregnancy, gynaecological cancer, pelvic pain and endometriosis, chronic fatigue syndrome, lactation, clinical studies in women's health and pregnancy and epidemiological and health services research.

As a student in Department of Women's and Reproductive Health, you will be expected to regularly attend the weekly department seminars, and undertake any relevant training required for your project (i.e. statistics, bioinformatics, flow cytometry, proteomics etc).

As well as carrying out research projects, you will also have the opportunity to attend a variety of skills training sessions and career planning events offered by the Medical Sciences Division.

The Women's Centre has a lecture theatre where weekly research and clinical seminars are held during term time. You will be strongly encouraged to participate in these activities which bring research students together with academic and other research staff in the department to hear about ongoing research, and provide an opportunity for networking and socialising.

The department holds an annual Graduate Student Symposium and an annual Science Day where you will have the opportunity to develop your presentation skills. The Medical Sciences Division hosts a DPhil Open Day where you will be able to meet and present your work to a wider audience of students and staff from other departments.

Course outline

Year one

In the early stages of your DPhil, you will spend the first few months reading scientific literature and planning your first set of experiments. The nature of the work will differ depending upon whether the project involves work in a laboratory or a computer based project. A variety of types of projects are possible, mixing laboratory work with data analysis. Experimental work will be mixed with group discussions with the research team with an opportunity for you to present your results and future plans. Termly reports are submitted by you, your supervisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. You will also have the opportunity to interact with your college tutor. Various training courses are required to be taken in each year of the DPhil and these depend on the nature of the project. Towards the end of your first year, you will be planning your transfer report, which is an important milestone to assess progress and next steps.

Year two

A very similar year to year one with ongoing research work and a significant amount of literature reviewing to make sure the project fits in with current knowledge. During this year, many DPhil students start putting down the basis of their thesis introduction. There will be opportunities to attend local conferences and if significant progress has been made, you will submit abstracts, normally in the form of a poster presentation. During year two, you should start putting your research results into a thesis plan.

Year three

This is a key year for you where the thesis needs to take shape. You should have a degree of autonomy during the final year, managing your future direction in discussions with your supervisor. Day to day tasks are very similar to year two but you will start putting results in a chapter format. Many students submit or start compiling research papers in year three. Submitting a research abstract to a large international conference should be a target for all DPhil students in year three. By term nine you will undergo a confirmation of status with two internal assessors. This will go over the background to the research, the contents of chapters and the plan for completing the research work and writing the thesis. It is expected that all DPhil students give a WRH departmental seminar in the final year of their DPhil.

Attendance

The course can be studied full-time or part-time with both modes requiring attendance in Oxford. Full-time students are subject to the University's Residence requirements. Part-time students are required to attend course-related activities in Oxford for a minimum of 30 days each year.

Part-time study is not suitable for all projects and you will need to check with your supervisor that they are able to accommodate part-time study.

As a part-time student, attendance is to be arranged with the agreement of your supervisor, for the period that your name remains on the Register of Graduate Students unless individually dispensed by the Board. During a candidate's probationary period the attendance arrangements must take account of relevant induction and training events scheduled by the Board. You will have the opportunity to tailor your part-time research in liaison with your supervisor and agree your pattern of attendance.

Provision exists for students on some courses to undertake their research in a 'well-founded laboratory' outside of the University. This may require travel to and attendance at a site that is not located in Oxford. Where known, existing collaborations will be outlined on this page. Please read the course information carefully, including the additional information about course fees and costs.

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.

You will have access to the department's IT support and University library services both online and through the Radcliffe Science Library and Cairns Library at the John Radcliffe Hospital.

Students undertaking experimental work are provided with bench space in a laboratory and those undertaking theoretical research have shared office space. All students are provided with personal desk space and a computer.

There is a coffee area where you will be able to meet with other students to discuss your studies.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Nuffield Department of Women's & Reproductive Health 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 Nuffield Department of Women's & Reproductive Health.

You will be a member of your supervisor's research group in which you will develop your research skills with one to one supervision. Your core supervision team will consist of your principal supervisor, and one or more additional supervisors, which can also include scientists external to Oxford University.

Most students have the opportunity to meet individually with their supervisor every two weeks to plan their research and review their progress. In addition, where needed, support from the Director of Graduate Studies and a college advisor can be provided.

In the case of students who require specific help to adjust to an academic programme or to a new range of skills, the supervisor will ensure additional support is provided.

Assessment

All students will be initially admitted to the status of Probationer Research Student (PRS). Within a maximum of six terms as a full-time PRS student or twelve terms as a part-time PRS student, you will be expected to apply for transfer of status from Probationer Research Student to DPhil status. This application is normally made by the fourth term for full-time students and by the eighth term for part-time students.

A successful transfer of status from PRS to DPhil status will require a written report outlining your project plans and data obtained so far. Students who are successful at transfer will also be expected to apply for and gain confirmation of DPhil

status to show that your work continues to be on track. This will need to be done within nine terms of admission for full-time students and eighteen terms of admission for part-time students.

Both milestones normally involve an interview with two assessors who are not directly involved in your supervision and therefore provide important experience for the final oral examination.

Full-time students will be expected to submit an original thesis of 50,000 words after three or, at most, four years from the date of admission. If you are studying part-time, you be required to submit your thesis after six or, at most, eight years from the date of admission. To be successfully awarded a DPhil in Women's & Reproductive Health you will need to defend your thesis orally (viva voce) in front of two appointed examiners.

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

Full-time study

| Fee status | Annual Course fees |
|------------|--------------------|
| Home | £10,070 |
| Overseas | £33,370 |

Part-time study

| Fee status | Annual Course fees |
|------------|--------------------|
| Home | £5,035 |
| Overseas | £16,685 |

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.

Graduate students who have reached the end of their standard period of fee liability may be required to pay a termly University and/or a college continuation charge.

The University continuation charge, per term for entry in 2025-26 is £672, please be aware that this will increase annually. For part-time students, the termly charge will be half of the termly rate payable by full-time students.

If a college continuation charge applies (not applicable for non-matriculated courses) it is likely to be in the region of £100 to £600. Please contact your college for more details, including information about whether your college's continuation charge is applied at a different rate for part-time study.

Additional cost information

Full-time study

There are no compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees (or, after fee liability ends, continuation charges) and living costs. However, please note that, depending on your choice of research 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.

Part-time study

Please note that you are required to attend in Oxford for a minimum of 30 days each year, and you may incur additional travel and accommodation expenses for this. Also, depending on your choice of research topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur further 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>).