

Template of Provision for Postgraduate Research courses at the OII

1. What arrangements will be put in place for supervising the graduate's work?

A primary supervisor is assigned provisionally by the OII's Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) prior to the student's arrival based on his or her proposed research subject area. The supervisor has overall responsibility for the direction of a student's research. This arrangement is reassessed at the end of the first term in the light of the student's thesis proposal and the primary supervisor is confirmed or adjusted.

Students will normally have the opportunity of individual supervision at least four times a term. The intensity of supervision varies depending on what stage they have reached in their theses but at an absolute minimum will be at least twice a term for reporting purposes.

The multi-disciplinary nature of Internet studies means that some students will require on-going access to expertise in a range of academic disciplines. This can be provided in part through the multi-disciplinary faculty of the OII. In addition, the OII has identified a range of potential co-supervisors within other departments and in particularly pertinent cases, appoints them as Research Associates to the OII to further facilitate co-supervision. Supervisors continue to identify staff with appropriate disciplinary expertise, responding to the requirements of specific students.

At the end of each term the supervisor writes a report on the Graduate Supervision System on the student's progress. In these reports, supervisors should give a full account of the student's work during the term and indicate the nature and extent of their contact with the student. The Director of Graduate Studies views all reports on the system and raises any concerns with the OII Graduate Studies Committee where any problems are discussed and followed up.

2. What induction arrangements will be made?

The main induction to the department which is compulsory is provided in the week preceding the start of Michaelmas Term, when each student receives an induction pack of essential information and guidance. The department induction is always scheduled on different days to the college inductions. The students are e-mailed the induction timetable about a week before. The induction is run over two days and consists of an IT, Health and Safety & Library introduction & several sessions detailing academic practice at Oxford & and the OII's expectations of doctoral candidates. Students are provided with a tour of the OII and are formally introduced to all the research staff.

Supervisors arrange the first meetings with their students by the end of the induction week and aim to meet with all students by the end of week one in Michaelmas term.

3. What workspace will be provided?

The OII is currently located over two separate sites (1, St Giles and 66 Banbury Road). The OII has 10 hot desks allocated for DPhil students at 66 Banbury Road (also known as OII North). DPhil Students will be allocated locker space and 24 hour access at 66 Banbury Road.

4. What IT support/ library facilities/ experimental facilities will be available?

The OII has its own IT support and web development team. Details of how to contact both teams can be found at <http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/contact/>. There is a small specialist library onsite which supports teaching and research on Internet related issues and includes online resources such as Lexis-Nexis and other databases accessible through the University Library service. The library is open 9:00am to 5:00pm Monday to Friday. All students also have access to other University libraries and the centrally provided electronic resources. For full and up-to-date information on all Oxford libraries see: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/libraries>.

5. Which research seminars will be available?

The OII holds weekly lunch time brownbag seminars during term time which involve students and OII research staff discussing research interests. Students are able to sign up to other OII organised seminars and those which individual research groups or groups with common areas of interest organise for their own members and others within the department. Full details of forthcoming events are available on the OII website.

6. What access to research funds will be available?

OII students can apply to the OII's student research expenses fund throughout their degree to help with fieldwork expenses or conference attendance of up to a total of £500.00 per student.

7. What formal graduate skills training will be provided?

In the first-year of a student's doctoral programme the focus is on formulating his or her research questions and on identifying and providing for individual needs in research skills training. Each student must attend the OII's compulsory research methods course 'Social Research Methods and the Internet.' This course examines issues concerning the application of traditional social research methods to the study of emerging ICTs as well as the use of new methods, enabled by the Internet and ICTs, in the study of an array of social research problems (see Social Research Methods and the Internet reading list).

Each student will undertake further research training which is specifically geared to the task of completing a DPhil. This is delivered via a dedicated seminar series for graduate students running from October each year for three terms. The programme also includes a series of seminars at which students will present research from some aspect of their thesis to their peers. Supervisors attend these sessions, in order to assess each student's progress.

Students will have access to a wide range of subject specific expertise within the OII and across the University of Oxford more generally. Within the OII, DPhil students may attend courses provided as part of the MSc in Social Science of the Internet providing they have the permission of their supervisor and the course provider.

All DPhil students are eligible to attend all or part of any relevant courses provided for postgraduate students as part of programmes run by any other department or faculty of the university with the agreement of the relevant course lecturer and their supervisor. Students are encouraged to speak to their supervisors about possible courses.

Information about training and other courses offered across the University is available through the University SkillsPortal at <http://www.skillsportal.ox.ac.uk>. This site provides information about transferable skills development for research students and research staff at Oxford University, and includes a searchable database of skills training opportunities, links to articles on subjects such as project management, teaching and career planning, and message boards for asking questions and discussing issues with other researchers. An online Personal Development Plan system is now available on the Skills Portal site.

8. What opportunities will be available for developing and practising teaching skills (for second and third year graduates)?

The University has established a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), which will support the development of research students who wish to follow an academic career, including training in teaching skills. The CETL will advise students of how to register on other departments' teaching lists.

Senior doctoral students can apply to work as Teaching Assistants at the OII for the MSc core courses. Application forms will be made available around September.

In addition, students are also encouraged to offer tutorial teaching to visiting under-graduates.

There may also be opportunities to undertake tutorial teaching in colleges.

9. What arrangements for accommodation, meals and social facilities, will be made, on a year round basis?

Department:

OII premises at 1, St Giles house a small common room area with coffee machine and leather chairs. OII North also has a coffee machine with some leather chairs. Kitchen facilities are also provided in both sites, including use of a fridge and microwave but most students buy their lunch from one of the many surrounding cafes, sandwich bars or supermarkets.

Monthly 'coffee and cakes' sessions provide students with an informal way of networking with OII staff and students. In addition, the department holds two parties each year for staff and students.

Many colleges will provide their graduate students with accommodation and meals, although the cost of these is not likely to be included in college fees. Most colleges also have a graduate common room (often called the MCR or Middle Common Room) which organises social and sporting activities.

College:

Many colleges will be able to provide their students with at least one year's accommodation. Generally speaking colleges will provide meals throughout the year, but provision will vary

from college to college, especially during vacations, and students will need to familiarise yourself with their college's detailed arrangements. In addition there are usually self-catering facilities available in graduate accommodation. Students will be members of the Middle Common Room, or equivalent, of their college, which is the main social centre for graduates. The MCR provides a common room and usually organises a programme of social events throughout the year. The college will also provide a bar, some computing facilities and a library, and may often have dedicated funds for research (conference and field grants). It also represents the interests of its members to the college through an elected Committee or through elected representatives to College Committees. Again, details will vary from college to college. Graduates are also welcome to participate in all other social and sporting activities of the college. Please see individual college websites for further details about all aspects of college provision.

Central:

Graduate Research Students may become members of the University Club in Mansfield Road, and participate in the range of sporting and cultural activities provided by the University.

10. What arrangements are in place for pastoral and welfare support?

Department:

Within the OII a student's supervisor, Director of Graduate Studies (Victoria Nash) and Graduate Studies Coordinator (Laura Maynard) are available to offer support or advice on where to get appropriate support.

College:

There is an extensive framework of support for graduates within each college. Each college will allocate a College Advisor from among its Senior Members, usually in a cognate subject, who will arrange to see their student from time to time and whom they may contact for additional advice and support on academic and other matters. In college the Tutor for Graduates and/or the Senior Tutor may also be approached for advice. The Tutor for Graduates is a fellow of the college with particular responsibility for the interests and welfare of graduate students. In some colleges, the Senior Tutor will also have the role of Tutor for Graduates. Each college will also have other named individuals who can offer individual advice. The University also has a professionally staffed confidential Student Counselling Service which offers assistance with personal, emotional, social and academic problems.

Central:

The University provides a Student Counselling Service (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/shw/counserv.shtml>) and Careers Service (<http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/>).

11. What arrangements are in place for gaining the views of research students?

Students are expected to first raise any concerns relating to their work with their Supervisor, or alternatively the Director of Graduate Studies. Being a small department, there is no need for a Joint Consultative Committee; instead the DGS holds formal consultation meetings with all DPhil students on academic and other issues at the end of every term. The issues raised in these meetings are formally recorded by the Graduate Studies Coordinator and the DGS has to provide a written response. The Graduate Studies Committee receives these documents at their first meeting each term. In addition student representatives sit on two of the OII's internal Committees; the Academic Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee. Each term the Department actively solicits feedback upon its courses, by distributing a questionnaire form to students at the conclusion of every series of lectures and seminars. Students are invited to provide feedback on their experience as a graduate at the end of every term, via comment at the DPhil student feedback sessions held at the end of every term, on the Graduate Supervision System, and at the end of every academic year via a 300 word self assessment letter that is submitted to the Graduate Studies Office (GSO).

Evaluation questionnaires will be issued at the end of every course, and the results will be fed back to the GSC who will review all courses on an annual basis.