

## **Template of Provision for Postgraduate taught courses offered by the OII**

### **1. Who is the Course Director with overall responsibility for students on this course?**

The Course Director (called Programme Director) for the MSc Social Science of the Internet is Dr Ralph Schroeder and has immediate responsibility for students on this course. The Graduate Studies Coordinator Mrs Laura Maynard is responsible for course administration and is the person you should contact in the first instance with any queries.

### **2. What induction arrangements will be made?**

A general compulsory introductory meeting for all newly admitted graduates at the OII will be held at the beginning of the academic year in the week preceding the start of Michaelmas Term. During that first meeting they will be introduced to the OII's Director, Director of Graduate Studies, MSc Programme Director and the Graduate Studies Coordinator. This general introductory meeting will be followed by induction sessions introducing the new graduate students to OII premises, IT resources and departmental policies. These general meetings will then be followed by separate meetings dealing with induction matters for the DPhil and MSc courses. In addition, students will be given a tour of the OII and will be formally introduced to all faculty members.

All new students will be e-mailed the induction timetable, reading lists and Graduate Studies Handbook at least a week before the induction meetings.

### **3. What is the overall length of the course, and for how many weeks are students expected to work in Oxford?**

The MSc degree is an eleven-month taught course running from the beginning of the Michaelmas term until August 1<sup>st</sup> the following year, or the nearest working day if the 1<sup>st</sup> August falls at the weekend.

Oxford University has three terms each of 8 week duration. These terms are called: Michaelmas Term (October to December); Hilary Term (January to March); Trinity Term (April to June). You will be expected to be in residence at Oxford for each of the 8 weeks of term. You will be free to leave Oxford after the end of each term but are advised to return during the week prior to the start of the next term (referred to as 0<sup>th</sup> week). In addition students are required to sit written examinations in week 9 of their first term and 0<sup>th</sup> week and 9<sup>th</sup> week in their second term and thus must be resident in Oxford at these times. You will need to submit your thesis in person to the Examination Schools by August 1<sup>st</sup> (or the nearest working day if this falls at the weekend) and you will also need to be available to return to Oxford in late August or September in the event of being called back for viva voce.

**4. What is the pattern of lectures, classes, seminars, tutorials and self-directed work for this course?**

Teaching for the MSc in Social Science of the Internet will mainly be delivered through a combination of seminars, classes and lectures. Each student will be required to complete Research Methods training, two core papers and two further option courses in addition to completing their thesis. Research Methods training will be provided in weekly classes, with students having to undertake a number of class-based exercises. The two core papers will be taught in large classes, with course tutors delivering lectures, to be followed by group discussion. The optional papers will be taught in small classes.

It is a fundamental component of the Oxford educational system that students engage in individual reading and study in order to broaden and deepen their knowledge of their chosen field. All students will be expected to read widely in preparation for weekly classes and lectures, moving beyond the core texts on reading lists to develop both breadth and depth in their understanding of the literature. In addition, whilst students will be expected to meet regularly with their supervisors whilst completing their dissertation, and may be asked to present their research to their peers, thesis research is a largely self-directed process.

The OII has a lively research community with weekly internal research seminars at which work in progress is discussed and in which you are expected to participate. It also has a strong programme of conferences, policy forums and seminars with invited external speakers to which all are invited.

**5. What one-to-one or small group teaching will students on this course receive?**

The taught elements of the course is given through seminars but students receive regular one-to-one tuition from their supervisor when they are working on their thesis.

**6. Who will take overall responsibility for an individual student's progress and for completing the joint progress report form in each term of the course?**

Every MSc student will be assigned an academic supervisor by the end of week 2 in the first term, who is responsible for the academic well-being and progress of the student. Students should normally meet with their supervisor at least twice in each term, and the academic supervisor is responsible for completing the supervision reports on the Graduate Supervision System (GSS). Ordinarily the academic supervisor is also responsible for the supervision of the student's thesis work. Sometimes, however, an additional thesis supervisor may be found if he or she has specialised knowledge of the research field in question.

Beyond the University supervisor, every MSc student falls under the responsibility of the MSc Programme Director. Students' can consult the MSc Programme Director about any academic issues related to the programme and to their own progress, including

supervision queries. Each term the MSc Programme Director reviews the GSS progress report of the students under his or her jurisdiction and draw any concerns on GSS and to the attention of the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). The relevant Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) has a general responsibility for the graduate programme and s/he also reviews the reports on GSS at the end of each term.

Each student is based in one of the University's colleges, and students will be allocated an advisor at college level.

## **7. What workspace will be provided? What IT support/library facilities/experimental facilities will be available?**

The OII is currently located across two separate sites (1, St Giles and 66 Banbury Road). There are 4 hot desks allocated for MSc students at 66 Banbury Road (also known as OII North).

Masters students will only have access to both buildings in office hours, 9am- 5pm Monday to Friday.

There is a small specialist library onsite at 1, St Giles which supports teaching and research on Internet related issues and includes hard copies of several journals not found elsewhere in the University. Copies of core texts from all the MSc reading lists will be found in this library. 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. There are also required texts at 66 Banbury Road but these cannot be borrowed and must remain at this office.

The OII has its own IT support and web development team. They can be contacted at [help@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:help@oii.ox.ac.uk) and [webhelp@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:webhelp@oii.ox.ac.uk).

## **8. What opportunities are provided for students to take part in research seminars or groups? What formal graduate skills training will be provided?**

The OII holds weekly lunch time brownbag seminars during term time in which students and OII research staff discuss ongoing research projects. 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.

The compulsory Research Methods training will provide students with the basic methods required in order to undertake, analyse or apply Internet research, whilst the two core papers will provide students with the theoretical, conceptual and technical understanding needed for sophisticated analysis of Internet-related issues, whether this be for the purposes of academic or practical research, or policy-making. More specialised development of particular research methods will be supported through the process of thesis preparation, in which students will be closely supported by their personal supervisors. Students may also attend the specialist research methods and skills training provided by ReMISS (Centre for Research Methods in the Social Sciences) with the

consent of their supervisor and the Course Provider. Students will also be given the opportunity to take two option papers, which will give them specialist knowledge of particular areas of internet research, such as economics, law, or social network analysis

All OII MSc students will receive specific training within the department on academic writing and thesis preparation if needed.

### **9. What are the arrangements for student feedback and for responding to student concerns?**

Students are expected to first raise any concerns relating to their work with their Supervisor, or alternatively the Programme Director or Director of Graduate Studies. Being a small department, there is no need for a Joint Consultative Committee; instead the Course Convenor and DGS hold formal consultation meetings with all MSc 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 Course Convenor 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. The results of these forms will be fed back to the GSC who will review all courses on an annual basis. Students are invited to provide feedback on their experience as a graduate at the end of every term, via comment at the MSc 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).

### **10. What arrangements for accommodation, meals and social facilities will be made for students on a graduate taught course?**

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.

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

The post-holders named in Section 1 provide support within the OIL.

There is also an extensive framework of support for graduates within each college. Each student is allocated a College Advisor from among its Senior Members, usually in a cognate subject, who will arrange to see students from time to time, and who may be contacted for additional advice and support on academic and other matters. Students may also approach the Tutor for Graduates and/or the Senior Tutor 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 student union can also offer help and advice.

The University also has a professionally staffed confidential Student Counselling Service, which offers assistance with personal, emotional, social, and academic problems (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/shw/counserv.shtml>) and a Careers Service (<http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk>).

