



# Graduate Studies Handbook

**2016-17**

Notes of Guidance for the Programme *Master of Science by Coursework in Social Science of the Internet* for Students and Supervisors at the Oxford Internet Institute

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Issued by the Graduate Studies Committee

**Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford**

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# 1 Introduction

Welcome to Oxford and the Oxford Internet Institute. We hope that you will enjoy your time living and studying in Oxford, and will find it a rewarding experience.

*As the Director of Graduate Studies for the Oxford Internet Institute, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the OII community. You join a growing group of current and former OII students who have studied for degrees here on our MSc and DPhil programmes, but also students who have taken part in shorter engagements such as our annual 'Connected Life' student conference, our annual Summer Doctoral Programme, and of course the many public events we hold at the OII. All the faculty and staff here at OII want to make your time here productive and rewarding, and we look forward to the opportunities we will have to get to know you and to learn from you and your diverse experiences as we teach and supervise you in your work. As you will soon discover, the OII is a department with multidisciplinaryity at its core, which is reflected both in the wide range of academic backgrounds of the faculty but also in the diversity of students who come here to better understand life online. Welcome!*

Eric T. Meyer, Director of Graduate Studies, OII

## 1.1 Scope and purpose of this handbook

This handbook applies to students starting the MSc in *Social Science of the Internet* programme in 2016-17. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years. It is hoped that you will find the information contained within the handbook to be a useful guide both while you are new to studying your course and throughout the duration of your studies. The handbook is also a source of reference for academic staff appointed as your supervisors and anyone else involved in teaching you, including in classes, seminars and lectures.

The information given here is an informal description and interpretation of some of the most relevant rules in *Examination Regulations*. Any formal question has to be settled by reference to the Regulations and not to this handbook.

To be kept up to date, a copy of this handbook is available on Plato at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/generalinfo>. Comments and criticisms of this handbook are welcome and should be sent to the OII's Graduate Studies Coordinator at [teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk). Students should refer to the Graduate Studies Handbook on Plato as corrections may be made and this will be the most up to date version.

### 1.1.1 Disclaimer

The Examination Regulations relating to this course are available at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>. If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination Regulations then you should follow the Examination Regulations. If you have any concerns please contact Victoria McDermott at [victoria.mcdermott@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:victoria.mcdermott@oii.ox.ac.uk).

The information in this handbook is accurate as at 03 October 2016, however it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at [www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges](http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges). If such changes are made the department will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.

### 1.1.2 Key Sources of Information

OII Website: <http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/graduatestudy>

College Handbooks: Please refer to individual College websites at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/colleges>

Internal Course Information Site (Plato): <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/login>

Summative Assignment Submission Site (WebLearn): <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site:/socsci:internet:assignments>

Oxford Students: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students>

International Students: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa>

Student Health and Welfare: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare>

Examination Regulations: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>

Policy and Guidance on Postgraduate Taught Courses:

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgpptaughtcourses/>

Dates of Term: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/facts-and-figures/dates-of-term>

### 1.1.3 Academic Progress - Who to Contact

Students are ultimately responsible for their own academic progress.

The Course Director for the MSc Social Science of the Internet is Dr Greg Taylor and has immediate responsibility for students on this course. The Graduate Studies Coordinator Mrs Victoria McDermott is responsible for course administration and is the person you should contact in the first instance with any queries.

The thesis supervisor (see section 4 for further details) will remain the main point of contact for keeping an eye on academic progress, and will liaise with the student and with other faculty members with whom the student is working on the thesis.

Students who wish to discuss any issues that they prefer not to discuss with the Course Director or their Supervisor can also speak to the Director of Graduate Studies, Prof Eric T. Meyer.

It is usually expected that students contact their college for any welfare or health related issues, but if a student wishes to speak to someone who is not directly involved in teaching or supervision please speak to Emily Shipway who is the Head of Administration and Finance at the OII. She can be contacted at [emily.shipway@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:emily.shipway@oii.ox.ac.uk) or on 01865287210.

### 1.1.4 Laptop Specification for Students

All software taught on courses is available on PCs in the student room at 1 St Giles.

These are some suggested minimum specifications for laptops in case students wish to install the software on their own personal laptops.

Most modern laptops should work with the software used on the course, but as a guideline, a CPU with a 1.5 GHz processor or faster, memory of 4 GB or more, a display of 1280 x 1024 or higher, an operating system running Windows or MacOSX, and a hard disk with 40GB or more storage should be sufficient.

Generally most software taught on the course is available on Windows, Mac or Linux based operating systems. We cannot recommend other operating systems such as Android (Chromebook), Netbooks or Tablets. Microsoft Surface and other 2-in-one computers are marginal and not recommended. Please note that some packages might be Windows only, however Mac users can use software such as Parallels to run the Windows applications although there may be associated costs such as for a Windows license.

## 1.2 Induction

### 1.2.1 Induction Programme

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 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 be followed by separate meetings dealing with induction matters for the DPhil and MSc courses. In addition, students will be offered a tour of the OII and will be formally introduced to faculty members.

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

As soon as you arrive in Oxford you should obtain your **University Card** from your college. This is essential for access to the University's email and computing systems and for registration as a reader at the OII's Library, the *Bodleian Library* (see Section 8.4), and the Social Sciences Library in the Manor Road Building. It is also used to access the OII's premises at 1 St Giles.

Your college will also provide you with:

- information about *Examination Regulations*
- a leaflet on Oxford Libraries and how to register with them;
- a statement on data protection regarding personal student data, including a declaration for you to sign indicating your acceptance of that statement. Please contact your college's Data Protection Officer if you have not received it.

### 1.2.2 Induction Information

Induction information covering non-academic matters and facilities at the OII is available (via login) on the OII intranet site at <https://intranet.oii.ox.ac.uk/default.aspx>.

### 1.2.3 Other sources of information

The OII's **website** is found at <http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk>. It includes:

- Lists of staff and their research interests, which can help identify those working in fields similar to your own;
- A regularly-updated events section, with information on OII activities.

The OII **intranet** at <https://intranet.oii.ox.ac.uk/> contains information on teaching and academic issues.

The **University's web** pages contain extensive information on numerous key aspects of graduate work. Please check your **Oxford email** regularly as it will be used to send you important information about your course.

The **University Gazette** <http://info.ox.ac.uk/gazette>, published at least weekly in term time, contains a wide range of other University announcements, including forthcoming seminars and lectures. It can be consulted in most libraries including the OII Library and can be bought at the OUP Bookshop, 116 High Street.

The OII Teaching website is **Plato**, <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk>. There you will find the most up to date reading lists and course deadlines along with threaded discussion forums and general information. To set up an account, select the 'Sign Up' tab on the homepage. You will receive a confirmation email to your Oxford email account along with additional login details. If you have any technical issues or queries on content such as reading lists please contact the Graduate Studies Coordinator at [teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk).



## 2 MSc Programme

### 2.1 Aims of the programme

#### 2.1.1 Educational Aims of the Programme

The MSc programme is designed to contribute to the education of current and future researchers, policy makers, analysts and practitioners from both public and private sectors, providing them with the toolkit (concepts, theories, methods and principles) to carry out innovative, high quality research, analysis and policy formulation. The principal aims of the MSc programme are:

- To provide advanced training in four types of research skill: research methodologies; written and oral communication; critical theoretical and analytical skills; research project planning and completion.
- To provide students with good empirical and theoretical knowledge and understanding of the major topics and concepts in Internet research as well as a general understanding of the technological and social shaping of the Internet.
- To provide students with advanced empirical and theoretical knowledge and understanding of key topics and concepts in areas relating to the student's particular interest.
- To enable students to think strategically about the Internet and its evolving technologies and their implications for policy and practice.
- To assess students' progress through supervision and mechanisms of formal assessment.
- To provide appropriate pastoral support through the allocation of personal supervisors in conjunction with the system in place at College level.

#### 2.1.2 Programme Objectives and Outcomes

The objectives of the MSc in Social Science of the Internet are that, on completion of the course, students will have:

- Acquired skills in both quantitative and qualitative research methods including leading-edge methods of particular relevance to on-line activity;
- Learnt how to apply approaches from one or more of the social sciences to consideration of the Internet and related technologies and their societal implications;
- Gained empirical and theoretical knowledge and understanding of the major topics and concepts in Internet research as well as a general understanding of the technological and social shaping of the Internet.
- Gained wide-ranging critical knowledge and understanding of the scholarly literature, key topics and concepts in areas relating to the student's particular research interests.
- Learnt to think strategically about the Internet and its evolving technologies and their implications for policy and practice.
- Participated in, and learnt from, the range of intellectual activities ongoing in the OII and the wider University.
- Achieved a high standard of written work through the preparation and presentation of essays and assessed coursework.

In summary, the course equips students with both theoretical tools and introduces them to the empirical evidence necessary for an in-depth understanding of the role of the Internet in society, including the changing nature of governance and the theoretical, practical and ethical questions surrounding internet use.

#### 2.1.3 Related teaching and learning strategies and methods

Teaching methods are a combination of lectures, classes, and one-on-one supervision meetings. Detailed reading lists are available for each paper, and students are expected to undertake whatever assignments are set by course providers in addition to work required for formal assessment. Regular essay writing will ensure that students practice and develop skills of analysis, explication and argumentation as well as ensuring that they have an in-depth understanding of the material covered. To ensure that students develop oral as well as written communication skills, they will be asked to give class presentations in addition to, or in place of written work, and reading lists will be provided to support both purposes. Formative written work will be marked and returned to students with comments to support student progress through the course. Summative work will be marked, and feedback provided for written summative work as allowed by the examining conventions.

### 2.2 Skills and Attributes

Students will have the opportunity to develop the following skills over the course of the MSc:

#### 2.2.1 Intellectual skills

1. The capacity to read and evaluate original research articles.
2. Theoretical knowledge and understanding of the major topics, approaches and research methods appropriate for study of the Internet.
3. Ability to think strategically about the Internet and its implications for policy & practice.
4. General critical and analytical skills.
5. The ability to plan, conduct and write up a programme of original research.

**Related teaching and learning strategies and methods**

1-4 are taught mainly through class teaching and supervision; 5 is taught through the completion of the thesis, during which time the student will have individual tutorials to discuss the research question and research design, monitor progress and review drafts. Research methods teaching will also contribute to the development of 2 & 5.

**Assessment**

These intellectual skills will be assessed through the completion of coursework, through unseen examinations, and through the thesis.

### 2.2.2 Practical skills

1. Effective oral and written presentation and communication skills
2. Research methods skills
3. Use of ICTs for communication and collaborative working

**Related teaching and learning strategies and methods**

1 is taught mainly through class teaching and supervision as all students will write regular essays as well as making presentations to the class. 2 is taught through the 16 weeks of compulsory research methods training. 3 is taught mainly through class teaching and the regular use of blogs, wikis and other similar tools across the course.

**Assessment**

These skills will be assessed through satisfactory completion of all class assignments, the completion of coursework, through the unseen examinations, and by means of the thesis. 3 is formatively, not summatively assessed, through students' interaction with supervisors and class teachers.

### 2.2.3 Transferable skills

1. Critical analysis
2. Oral and written communication skills
3. Self-organisation, including time management
4. Research design and project planning
5. Use of ICTs for communication and collaborative working

**Related teaching and learning strategies and methods**

1-3 are taught mainly through class teaching and supervision and specifically in the work which students prepare for class essays and presentations, and in preparation of coursework and the thesis. 4 is taught through the 16 weeks of compulsory research methods training and through engagement with supervisors in the preparation of the thesis. 5 is taught mainly through class teaching and the regular use of blogs, wikis and other similar tools across the course.

**Assessment**

These transferable skills will be assessed through satisfactory completion of all class assignments, the completion of coursework, through the unseen examinations, and by means of the thesis. 3 is formatively, not summatively assessed, through students' interaction with supervisors and class tutors.

### 2.2.4 Achievement of learning outcomes

In summary, to ensure that all OII MSc students achieve the learning outcomes identified in the previous section, they must:

1. Attend all classes, seminars, lectures or meetings as the OII Graduate Studies Committee deems necessary;
2. Complete all assignments (written or oral) as set by class teachers for the options taken;
3. Submit to the examiners the coursework essays required for formal assessment;
4. Sit and pass the required unseen examinations required for the courses they have taken which use examinations as the assessment method;
5. Submit to the examiners a thesis of up to 15,000 words.

1 & 2 will be assessed by the supervisor, class teacher and course provider. 3, 4 & 5 will be assessed and marked in accordance with Examiners' Guidelines. Supervisors will also provide guidance, informal advice and assessment during meetings with their student supervisees.

## 2.3 Programme structure and schedule

The MSc degree is a one-year (full-time) or two-year (part-time) taught course running from the beginning of Michaelmas term until August 1st in the year of completion, or the nearest working day if 1st 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). Please note, however, that the MSc in Social Sciences of the Internet has an **extended Hilary term which lasts 10 weeks**.

Full-time students will be expected to be in residence at Oxford for each of the 8 weeks of Michaelmas and Trinity terms and the 10 weeks of Hilary 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 full-time students are required to sit written examinations in week 9 of their first term and 0<sup>th</sup> week and (for certain courses) 10<sup>th</sup> week in their second term and thus must be resident in Oxford at these times.

Part-time students are not required to be resident in Oxford, but will need to plan to attend examinations which fall outside the main weeks of term. The details of when examinations are held are noted below.

You will need to submit your thesis via the Assignment Submission WebLearn site by August 1st (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.

This course is comprised of the following eleven components:

### **Part 1: Digital Social Research Methods: Methods Core**

### **Part 2: Digital Social Research Methods: Statistics Core**

The two core *DSR* components of the degree will be examined through assessed written work consisting of one 5,000 word essay due by 12:00pm on Friday of 8<sup>th</sup> week of Michaelmas term (in the case of the Methods Core) and through one 3 hour unseen written examination to be held in 9<sup>th</sup> week of Michaelmas term (in the case of the Statistics Core).

Both components will allow students to explore the applicability of different methods and give them a chance to consider methods that they might apply in their thesis. Apart from the assessed examination and coursework, the courses will have a number of formative assessments, including laboratory and practical exercises, to ensure that students are competent with particular techniques and able to use statistical and other software packages.

### **Parts 3-6: Methods Options**

The four *DSR* methods option components of the degree lasting four weeks each will be chosen from two groups of option papers – two each from Group A and Group B (see sections 2.3.5 and 2.3.6). Each will be examined through a combination of assessed written work and/or by unseen written examinations, depending on the course. The summative assessments for the methods modules will be due by 12:00pm on Friday in the week following the final teaching session for the module in the case of written work, and held at a time during the week following the final teaching session for the module as scheduled by the Examination Schools for the examined work.

### **Parts 7-8: Compulsory Papers (i) Social Dynamics of the Internet and (ii) Internet Technologies and Regulation**

Both these papers are examined by means of a 3 hour examination in 0<sup>th</sup> week of Hilary term, with students choosing 3 questions from a list of eight in each examination. These two courses provide foundational knowledge in this area of research, and the examination format will allow us to evaluate if this ground has been thoroughly covered and a critical understanding reached. Both courses will require at least one formative piece of written coursework each in preparation for the exam. This will help students understand what kind of analysis and writing is expected of them, and will benchmark their performance.

### **Parts 9-10: Two Option Papers**

The two option papers lasting eight weeks each will be chosen in a specialized subject area from the list of option courses offered by the OII (see section 2.3.4). All option papers will be assessed by coursework, typically one or two long essays and adding up to no more and not less than a total of 5,000 words. All options will have some formative assessed coursework.

In exceptional circumstances an option paper from another Oxford Master's degree may be taken, as long as this is relevant to your studies and formally agreed with your supervisor and the course convenor.

### **Part 11: Thesis**

A thesis not to exceed 15,000 words (excluding the bibliography, but including footnotes and tables, see section 3.2.4 Thesis length for detailed guidance) on a topic within the remit of the course, to be specified jointly by supervisor and student, and approved by the Board of Examiners. One digital copy of the thesis must be submitted via the Assignment Submission WebLearn site by noon of the weekday on or nearest to the 1<sup>st</sup> of August of the year in which the degree is to be completed. Candidates earning a Distinction on the thesis may be invited to deposit a copy of their thesis in the Oxford Internet Institute Library.

### Weightings

Parts 1 and 2 each have weightings of 6.25%, each of parts 3-6 has a weighting of 3.125%, each of parts 7, 8, 9 and 10 has a weighting of 12.5% and part 11 (thesis) has a weighting of 25%.

### 2.3.1 Programme schedule

The following tables demonstrate the basic structure of the courses each term and is the minimum set of lectures, seminars and classes that an MSc student is expected to attend (see Appendix F: Term Schedules for further details of draft timetables). Students need to seek permission from supervisor and course tutor if they plan to miss any of these sessions.

You will also be expected to be fully engaged in the intellectual life of the department throughout your studies, including attendance at MSc workshops, participation in departmental seminars and our events programme. You are encouraged to participate in discussions at workshops or events, and students should consider ways throughout their studies to express their work to the world at large through the Internet.

#### Full-time Programme

Michaelmas Term (MT) 2016	Hilary Term (HT) 2017	Trinity Term (TT) 2017
Social Dynamics of the Internet	DSR: Methods Option Paper 1 Group A (weeks 1-4)	MSc Research Seminars
Internet Technologies & Regulation	DSR: Methods Option Paper 2 Group A (weeks 1-4)	Thesis
Digital Social Research: Methods Core	DSR: Methods Option Paper 3 Group B (weeks 6-9)	
Digital Social Research: Statistics Core	DSR: Methods Option Paper 4 Group B (weeks 6-9)	
	Option Paper 1 (weeks 1-9)	
	Option Paper 2 (weeks 1-9)	

#### Part-time Programme<sup>1</sup>

Michaelmas Term (MT) 2016	Hilary Term (HT) 2017	Trinity Term (TT) 2017
Social Dynamics of the Internet	DSR: Methods Option Paper 1 Group A (weeks 1-4)	MSc Research Seminar (choose 4-8 sessions)
Digital Social Research: Methods Core	DSR: Methods Option Paper 3 Group B (weeks 6-9)	Thesis Proposal
	Option Paper 1 (weeks 1-9)	
Michaelmas Term (MT) 2017	Hilary Term (HT) 2018	Trinity Term (TT) 2018
Internet Technologies & Regulation	DSR: Methods Option Paper 2 Group A (weeks 1-4)	MSc Research Seminars (choose 4-8 sessions)
Digital Social Research: Statistics Core	DSR: Methods Option Paper 4 Group B (weeks 6-9)	Thesis
	Option Paper 2 (weeks 1-9)	

<sup>1</sup> Requests to follow a different pattern of courses should be made to the MSc Course Director in writing. We will attempt to accommodate all reasonable requests by part-time students who need to adjust this default approach to accommodate their other commitments.

There are many other lectures and seminars in Oxford that are of interest to OII students. Please consult the lecture list published by the University at the beginning of each term for details. Lecture lists are available online at [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/pubs/lectures/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/pubs/lectures/).

Students are responsible for their own academic progress and are expected to spend at least 40 hours (or 20 hours in the cases of part-time students) in coursework and studying each week during term. You will also need to do some study during vacations.

- During Michaelmas and Hilary terms, MSc students are advised to allocate between 10 and 15 hours of preparation each week for each course and/or paper they undertake.
- This includes classroom time of 2 hours of seminars per week for each course (totaling 8 hours per week). In addition to the seminars, there are labs and exercises along with Teaching Assistant sessions. Details of the TA sessions will be circulated during induction week.
- In Trinity term students should devote all their time to their thesis, which includes attending the weekly MSc Research Seminar (weeks 1-8).

Full-time students should note that this leaves very little time during the week for any paid employment.

Please see Appendix F for draft course timetable for 2016-17. Please note that this may be subject to further changes but students will be notified and the most up to date schedule will be uploaded on Plato (see section 8.5.3 for further details on Plato).

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, students will be expected to meet regularly with their supervisors while 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 students may be invited.

### 2.3.2 Programme deadlines

These are the main assessment deadlines for the course. For full details on all assessments due including formative please see **Appendix D: Assessment Timetable**. Part-time students should refer to the part-time programme schedule in section 2.3.1 for details on which assessments are normally taken in Year 1 and Year 2 of the course.

Term	Essay Submission Deadline / Date of Exam	Marks Available
Michaelmas Term		
Social Dynamics of the Internet	0 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term	End of February
Internet Technologies & Regulation	0 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term	End of February
Digital Social Research Methods: Methods Core	12:00pm on Friday, 8 <sup>th</sup> week, Michaelmas Term	End of February
Digital Social Research Methods: Statistics Core	9 <sup>th</sup> week, Michaelmas Term	End of February
Hilary Term		
4-week Methods Options – Group A (2 courses)	12:00pm on Friday, 5 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term	End of May
4-week Methods Options – Group B (2 courses)	12:00pm on Friday, 10 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term	End of May
8-week Options (2 courses)	12:00pm on Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> week, Trinity Term	End of May
Trinity Term		
Thesis	1 <sup>st</sup> August (or the closest working day when this falls on a weekend.)	End of September

### 2.3.3 Course Details: Core Papers

As reading lists are likely to be updated by course tutors throughout the academic year please refer to the lists posted at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk> (see section 8.5.3) for the most up to date versions.

#### Social Dynamics of the Internet

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/social-dynamics>.

#### Internet Technologies & Regulations

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/internet-technologies>.

#### Digital Social Research

Study of the Internet and related information and communication technologies (ICTs) provides new opportunities and challenges for social science research methods. Digital Social Research (DSR) introduces students to the knowledge and skills of value to the conduct and critical evaluation of empirical research on the social shaping of the Internet and its societal implications, as well as introducing the Internet and related digital technologies as tools for social research.

There are six components to the Digital Social Research element of the degree. The combined total of these six components accounts for 25% of the final mark for the year. All students must take Digital Social Research: Methods Core and Digital Social Research: Statistics Core in Michaelmas term. At the beginning of the academic year, full-time students will select four 4-week methods option courses taught in Hilary term, each focusing on advanced methods topics. There are twelve methods option courses divided into two groups of six – Group A and Group B. Students will choose two methods options from each group. Part-time students will select two methods option courses per year, normally one from Group A and one from Group B.

The weighting of each component within DSR is as follows:

Digital Social Research	Weighting	Scheduling
DSR: Methods Core	25% of the DSR mark	Weeks 1-8, Michaelmas Term
DSR: Statistics Core	25% of the DSR mark	Weeks 1-8, Michaelmas Term
DSR: Methods Option Course 1 (A)	12.5% of the DSR mark	Weeks 1-4, Hilary Term
DSR: Methods Option Course 2 (A)	12.5% of the DSR mark	Weeks 1-4, Hilary Term
DSR: Methods Option Course 3 (B)	12.5% of the DSR mark	Weeks 6-9, Hilary Term
DSR: Methods Option Course 4 (B)	12.5% of the DSR mark	Weeks 6-9, Hilary Term

Through this methods sequence, students will learn:

- The significance of alternative methodological approaches that provide the context for theory construction, research design, and the selection of appropriate analytical techniques;
- To conduct and manage all stages of the research process from developing research questions and hypotheses to disseminating findings;
- How to devise appropriate research questions and research designs;
- Analytical and interpretive skills for a range of quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection; and
- How to use online tools that support the research process (e.g. from statistical software to computer-assisted qualitative analyses).

#### Digital Social Research: Methods Core

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/methods-core>.

#### Digital Social Research: Statistics Core

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/dsr-statistics-core>.

### 2.3.4 Course Details: Optional Papers

Students need to agree with their supervisor which 2 option papers they would like to take. Students are then responsible for informing their college and the Graduate Studies Coordinator by **Friday of Week 4 in Michaelmas Term**. Teaching in some options may not be available every year. Depending on the option paper, students may be required to submit a 'Summative Title Approval Form' by Monday of Week 8 in Hilary Term to the individual course convenor. Individual course conveners will communicate if this is required during the first lecture. This form can be obtained from Plato.

Students are strongly encouraged to watch the **short videos** available for many of the option courses (<http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/graduatestudy/msc/option/>). These videos have been created by the faculty to help you decide which course to take.

Details on the timetables for the courses can be found in Appendix F: Term Schedules, and on Plato.

**Internet Economics**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/internet-economics>

**Online Social Networks**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/social-networks>

**Law and the Internet (Not available for 2016-17)**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/law-internet>

**Digital Era Government and Politics**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/government-politics>

**Subversive Technologies**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Subversive%20Technologies>

**ICT & Development**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/ict-development>

**Big Data in Society**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Big%20Data%20in%20Society>

**Learning, the Internet and Society**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/internet-society>

**The Philosophy and Ethics of Information**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/The%20Philosophy%20and%20Ethics%20of%20Information>

**Digital Technology and Economic Organization**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Digital%20Technology%20and%20Economic%20Organization>

### 2.3.5 Course Details: Methods Options Papers – Group A

Students need to agree with their supervisor which 2 Methods option papers they would like to take from Group A. Group A Methods options are taught in weeks 1-4 of Hilary term with the assessment due in week 5.

Students are then responsible for informing their college and the Graduate Studies Coordinator by Friday of Week 4 in Michaelmas Term. Teaching in some options may not be available every year. Depending on the option paper, students may be required to submit a 'Summative Title Approval Form' to the individual course convenor. Individual course conveners will communicate if this is required during the first lecture. This form can be obtained from Plato.

Students are strongly encouraged to watch the **short videos** available for many of the methods option courses (<http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/graduatestudy/msc/dsr/>). These videos have been created by the faculty to help you decide which course to take.

Details on the timetables for the courses can be found in Appendix F: Term Schedules, and on Plato.

#### **Advanced Statistics for Internet Research, part 1**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Advanced%20Statistics%20for%20Internet%20Research%2C%20part%201>

#### **Wrangling Data**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Wrangling%20Data>

#### **Digital Ethnography**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Digital%20Ethnography>

#### **Digital Interviewing**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Digital%20Interviewing>

#### **Experimental Approaches**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Experimental%20Approaches>

#### **Accessing Research Data from the Social Web**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Accessing-ResearchData>

### 2.3.6 Course Details: Methods Options Papers – Group B

Students need to agree with their supervisor which 2 Methods option papers they would like to take from Group B. Group B Methods options are taught in weeks 6-9 of Hilary term with the assessment in week 10.

Students are then responsible for informing their college and the Graduate Studies Coordinator by Friday of Week 4 in Michaelmas Term. Teaching in some options may not be available every year. Depending on the option paper, students may be required to submit a 'Summative Title Approval Form' to the individual course convenor. Individual course conveners will communicate if this is required during the first lecture. This form can be obtained from Plato.

Students are strongly encouraged to watch the **short videos** available for many of the methods option courses (<http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/graduatestudy/msc/dsr/>). These videos have been created by the faculty to help you decide which course to take.

Details on the timetables for the courses can be found in Appendix F: Term Schedules, and on Plato.

#### **Advanced Statistics for Internet Research, part 2**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Advanced%20Statistics%20for%20Internet%20Research%2C%20part%202>

#### **Big Data Analytics**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Big%20Data%20Analytics>

#### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Qualitative%20Data%20Analysis>

#### **Information Visualisation**



Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Information%20Visualisation>

### **Metrics, Measurement and Online Visibility**

Further information can be found at

<http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Metrics%2C%20Measurement%20and%20Online%20Visibility>

### **Simulating Society**

Further information can be found at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/courses/Simulating%20Society>

## **2.4 Option Selection**

Students will receive an examination entry form in Michaelmas term where they must select all core courses and option papers they will be taking in addition to the thesis. The college will send the forms to the students which they must complete and return by the specified entry date to the Examinations Schools. The deadline is usually around week 4 in Michaelmas Term. Students also need to send a copy of the form to the Graduate Studies Coordinator at the OII for the departmental records. For further information on examination entry please refer to <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams>

If a student wishes to change their options after they have submitted the entry form to the Examination Schools they must submit a new form through the college and pay an administration fee.

## **2.5 Examination Entry**

### **2.5.1 Examination Timetable**

The Examination Schools publish the timetables as early as possible and no later than five weeks before the start of the examination. Please see further details on where to access the timetables at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/timetables>.

### **2.5.2 Sitting your examination**

Information on (a) the standards of conduct expected in examinations and (b) what to do if you would like examiners to be aware of any factors that may have affected your performance before or during an examination (such as illness, accident or bereavement) are available on the Oxford Students website: [www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance).

### **2.5.3 Exam resits**

If a student fails an exam they will be permitted to retake it on one further occasion only. The exams must be resat in the following academic year (see section 2.7 for more details). Students will need to complete another examination form which will be sent by the college to complete and must be completed by the stated entry date. The Examinations Schools will confirm examination details nearer the time and date. For further information please refer to the Examination Schools at: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/entry>.

## **2.6 Submission of coursework**

All written assignments, including the thesis, must be submitted electronically via the Assignment Submission WebLearn site by the stated deadline and should include an official OII assignment cover sheet. A copy of the assignment should also be emailed to [teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk) by 17.00 on the date of the deadline.

Students should go to the [Assignment Submission](https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site/:socsci:internet:assignments) site at <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site/:socsci:internet:assignments>, click on Assignments on the left hand menu, select the assignment that they would like to submit, and follow the instructions.

**Please note that assignments should only ever be identified by candidate number. Students should not put their name or college anywhere on the submitted work.**

Students will be asked to tick a box to certify that they are the sole author of the work and the assignment will automatically be put through plagiarism detection software.

Work submitted after the deadline will be processed in the standard manner and, in addition, the late submission will be reported to the Proctors' Office. If a student is concerned that they will not meet the deadline they must contact their college office or the Graduate Studies Coordinator for advice.

If anything goes wrong with a student's submission then they should email a copy of their assignment to [teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk) immediately. In cases where a technical fault that is later determined to be a fault of the Weblearn system (and not a fault of your computer) prevents a student from submitting the assessment on time, having a time stamped email message will help the Proctors determine if the assessment will be accepted. Students should note that waiting until the last minute to submit materials is not advisable since Weblearn can run slowly at peak submission times and this is not considered a technical fault.

Further instructions on using the Assignment Submission Weblearn site, and the official OII assignment cover sheet, can be found on Plato.

### 2.6.1 Resubmission of coursework

If a student fails any coursework they must resubmit. Students will need to complete another examination form which will be sent by the college to complete and must be completed by the stated entry date. Please refer to the Examiners Conventions on Plato regarding resubmission deadlines. For further information please refer to the Examination Schools at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/entry>.

### 2.6.2 Potential overlap between summative essays for option courses and thesis topic

The MSc core and option papers constitute preparation for the student's thesis, and inevitably there may be some overlap between the subject matter covered as students develop their interests throughout the course. However students should note that a course essay and dissertation are distinct pieces of work, and the essays and dissertation should therefore be treated (and will be marked) as separate units of assessed work, independent of each other. This has two implications: first, if a student feels that one should draw on the other, a citation or reference to that earlier piece of work should be provided. Second, students are reminded that they may not copy whole sections of earlier essays when writing their thesis. The thesis may build on work undertaken, for example in assessed coursework for the Methods paper, but the material must be rewritten explicitly for the thesis. Please also refer to section 3.3.2 for information on plagiarism.

## 2.7 Examination and Assessment

The degree will be examined by a combination of coursework and unseen examinations (see Appendix D: Assessment Timetable for an overall list).

The research methods components of the degree ("Digital Social Research" or DSR) will be examined partly through assessed written work for the core methods course (DSR: Methods Core), partly by means specified in each of the taught modules offered in Hilary term, and partly through one three-hour unseen written examination to be held in 9<sup>th</sup> week of Michaelmas term for DSR: Statistics Core. In Hilary Term students must choose 4 methods modules from a list of available options, each of which is taught over a period of 4 weeks. The assessment methods for these modules vary by module, but may include written work or examination.

The two compulsory core papers (Social Dynamics of the Internet and Internet Technologies and Regulation) will be examined by unseen written examinations to be held in 0<sup>th</sup> week of Hilary term. Students will be informed of the date, time and place of their examinations approximately 6 weeks beforehand.

The two options papers will each be examined by formally assessed coursework due at the beginning of 1<sup>st</sup> Week in Trinity term.

In addition, a dissertation of up to 15,000 words on a topic to be chosen by the student will be due on August 1<sup>st</sup> (or in the case August 1<sup>st</sup> falls when the University is closed, the nearest working day, e.g. Friday July 31<sup>st</sup> when August 1<sup>st</sup> falls on a Saturday, or Monday August 2<sup>nd</sup> when August 1<sup>st</sup> falls on a Sunday).

All students will be required to tick a box asserting that the work submitted for assessment is their own.

### 2.7.1 Examination Guidelines

All examination scripts and theses will be identified by candidate number only and will be assessed by two markers internally and referred to the external examiner in cases where the markers are unable to agree a mark.

Following standard university practice, all material will be marked on a marking scale with 50 per cent as the minimum pass mark and 70 per cent and above denoting distinction. Students with an average of 70 per cent and above across all elements of the course and a distinction-level mark on their dissertation will be awarded a distinction as set out in the OII exam

regulations. Students must achieve a mark of 50% for each of the components of the course and for each course within the components (core courses, methods courses, option papers, and the thesis) in order to be awarded the degree of MSc. Students whose work is considered to be on the borderline of a pass, or of a distinction, may be called to a viva-voce if it is felt that they may present further evidence that would enable them to be upgraded.

A candidate who fails the degree on the basis of only one summative essay, examination or thesis will be permitted to resubmit the failed assessment. Examinations may be resat, and summative essays resubmitted, in the following academic year at the usual examination times and submission deadlines. The thesis may also only be resubmitted in August of the following academic year at the usual thesis submission deadline.

A candidate who fails more than one summative essay, examination and thesis will be referred to the examiners board to determine whether the student will be allowed to resit or resubmit the failed assessment or the board may require to resit the entire course.

Please see the OII Examining Conventions (**Hilary Term Schedule 2017-18 (Year 2\* for Part-time students)**)

\* Note that the second year schedule is provided for part-time students to be able to plan. However, this schedule should be regarded as tentative, and is subject to minor changes and updates because of staff, space, and enrolment changes.

### Option Papers (Weeks 1-9)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:15-11:15	Digital Era Government & Politics	Digital Technologies and Economic Organization	Learning, Internet & Society (10-12:30)	Big Data & Society	Law and the Internet
11:30-13:30	Methods Modules (see below)				
14:00-16:00	Online Social Networks	ICT and Development		Subversive Technologies	Philosophy & Ethics (15-17:00)
					Internet Economics (14-17:00)

### Group A Methods Modules (Weeks 1-4)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:15-11:15					Accessing Research Data from the Social Web
11:30-13:30	Digital Ethnography	Experimental Approaches	Digital Interviewing	Advanced Stats I	Wrangling Data

### Group B Methods Modules (Weeks 6-9)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:15-11:15					Big Data Analytics
11:30-13:30	Qualitative Data Analysis	Information Visualization	Simulating Society	Advanced Stats II	Metrics

### Locations:

Colour	Location
Yellow	Isis Room OUCS

Blue	1 St Giles, OII Seminar Room (FF)
Red	1 St Giles, OII Meeting Room (SF)
Orange	41 St Giles, OII Meeting Room
Green	Balliol College, LR23
Purple	15 Norham Gardens, Seminar Room G, Dept of Education
Gray	To be announced

## Trinity Term Schedule 2016-18

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:00-10:00					
10:00-11:00					
11:00-12:00					
12:00-13:00					
13:00-14:00					
14:00-15:00	MSc Seminar (Weeks 2-8)*				
15:00-16:00					
16:00-17:00					

\* Note: Week 1 is all day on Thursday

### Locations:

Colour	Location
Yellow	St Luke's Chapel

Appendix G: Examining Conventions) for further information on resubmission and resits.

Coursework progress will be monitored by the Graduate Studies Committee and efforts will be made to identify students who require particular assistance.

No candidate shall be permitted to take an examination unless he or she has been admitted as a candidate for the examination in question by the body responsible for the course and has satisfied any other conditions prescribed in the regulations for that course.

### 2.7.2 Board of Examiners

There will be three internal examiners on the Board of Examiners, one of whom will be Chair of Examiners. There will be one External Examiner appointed by the board members, the appointment being ratified by the Graduate Studies Committee.

One Examiners' Meeting will be held in each term in order to agree and certify marks. The final Examiners Board meeting will be held in September to confirm final degree marks. Students whose work is considered to be on the borderline of a pass, or of a distinction, may be called to a viva-voce if it is felt that they may present further evidence that would enable them to be upgraded.

### 2.7.3 Internal Examiners

The internal examiners for 2016-17 are Professor Eric T. Meyer (Chair), Professor Rebecca Eynon, and a third member to be appointed by the Graduate Studies Committee.

### 2.7.4 External Examiner

The external examiner for 2016-17 is Dr Nick Anstead. He is the Programme Director for the MSc in Politics & Communication at the London School of Economics.

### 2.7.5 Complaints and Appeals

Students are strictly prohibited from contacting the assessors or examiners directly about any aspect of marking and examination.

If you are unhappy with an aspect of your assessment you may make a complaint or appeal (see section 5.4 for more details).

### 2.7.6 Regulation of Assessment

The assessed coursework, examinations and thesis will be under the supervision of the Social Sciences Divisional Board. The subjects of each examination will be determined by regulation by the OII, which shall have the power to arrange courses of instruction for the examination. The OII Graduate Studies Committee will appoint the Board of Examiners consisting of three internal examiners, one of whom will be chair each year. One external examiner will be nominated by the Board and confirmed by the Graduate Studies Committee, and invited to serve by the Vice Chancellor. Internal marking of coursework and exams will be assessed by the relevant course providers and by another qualified assessor. One examiners' meeting will be

held after each term's marking has been completed. Internal and external examiners will be required to produce reports after the examinations for consideration by the Graduate Studies Committee, and the Social Sciences Board.

Examinations will be governed by the Regulations of the Proctors.

External examiners will verify that standards appropriate to the award, in part by comparison with standards of comparable institutions, are applied. They ensure that the assessment procedures and the regulations governing them are fair and appropriate, that the conduct of the examination and the determination of the awards have been fairly made and that individual student performance has been judged in accordance with the regulations and conventions of the examining board. The external examiners recommended by the Committee will have some experience in teaching and examining at a post-graduate level, and will be research active.

Examiners are expected to report to the Vice-Chancellor in each year in which they act, upon the above issues. This includes:

- the standards demonstrated by the students
- the extent to which the standards are appropriate to the award
- the design of assignments and internal marking
- access by externals to all of the necessary material for assessment
- students' performance in relation to their peers in this and comparable courses, and the basis for comparisons
- the policies and procedures relating to external examiners
- the strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort
- the quality of teaching and learning as indicated by student performance.

Please see Appendix C: Marking Scales for more information on marking scales.

#### Examination conventions (see **Hilary Term Schedule 2017-18 (Year 2\* for Part-time students)**)

\* Note that the second year schedule is provided for part-time students to be able to plan. However, this schedule should be regarded as tentative, and is subject to minor changes and updates because of staff, space, and enrolment changes.

#### Option Papers (Weeks 1-9)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
09:15-11:15	Digital Era Government & Politics	Digital Technologies and Economic Organization	Learning, Internet & Society (10-12:30)	Big Data & Society	Law and the Internet	
11:30-13:30	Methods Modules (see below)					
14:00-16:00	Online Social Networks	ICT and Development		Subversive Technologies	Philosophy & Ethics (15-17:00)	Internet Economics (14-17:00)

#### Group A Methods Modules (Weeks 1-4)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:15-11:15					Accessing Research Data from the Social Web
11:30-13:30	Digital Ethnography	Experimental Approaches	Digital Interviewing	Advanced Stats I	Wrangling Data

#### Group B Methods Modules (Weeks 6-9)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:15-11:15					Big Data

					Analytics
11:30-13:30	Qualitative Data Analysis	Information Visualization	Simulating Society	Advanced Stats II	Metrics

### Locations:

Colour	Location
Yellow	Isis Room OUCS
Blue	1 St Giles, OII Seminar Room (FF)
Red	1 St Giles, OII Meeting Room (SF)
Orange	41 St Giles, OII Meeting Room
Green	Balliol College, LR23
Purple	15 Norham Gardens, Seminar Room G, Dept of Education
Gray	To be announced

## Trinity Term Schedule 2016-18

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:00-10:00					
10:00-11:00					
11:00-12:00					
12:00-13:00					
13:00-14:00					
14:00-15:00	MSc Seminar (Weeks 2-8)*				
15:00-16:00					
16:00-17:00					

\* Note: Week 1 is all day on Thursday

### Locations:

Colour	Location
Yellow	St Luke's Chapel

Appendix G: Examining Conventions) are the formal record of the specific assessment standards for the course or courses to which they apply. They set out how examined work will be marked and how the resulting marks will be used to arrive at a final result and classification of the award. They include information on: marking scales, marking and classification criteria, scaling of marks, progression, resits, use of viva voce examinations, penalties for late submission, and penalties for over-length work.

### 2.7.7 Indicators of Quality and Standards

Standards are monitored by Internal and External Examiners' Reports, and by the comments submitted to examiners by coursework markers, supervisors and tutors. The OII, in turn, monitors standards through the discussions of the Graduate Studies Committee on the basis of the Examiners' reports, evaluation forms and general feedback received. The Examiners reports can be found on Plato at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/files/courses/general>.

The course has been designed to meet the stringent criteria set out in the ESRC's Postgraduate Training Guidelines, and is a recognized pathway to the OII's ESRC-recognised doctoral programme.

Some further indication of quality and standards may be gauged by following the success of OII MSc students in winning places for further study at prestigious universities or in presenting research in leading academic conferences.

## 2.8 MSc extensions

Under exceptional circumstances, for example due to personal or family illness, students can apply for a deadline extension for any coursework that counts towards their final mark. Students will need to apply to the Senior Tutor in their college who will then write to the Proctors. Deadline extensions need to be applied for in advance and have to be accompanied by a medical note. The Proctors then decide if the reason is valid and inform the examiners. The department and individual course convenors or lecturers **cannot** grant extensions.

### 2.8.1 Suspension of status

Since students are expected to complete a graduate taught course within the time-scale of the course in question, suspensions of status are rare. If a student cannot work for a particular reason, e.g. illness, family circumstances, and so forth, then application for suspension of status can be sought. MSc students must suspend for an entire year, and cannot suspend for one term, as research students can. Please see section 7.3.1 for further information.

### 2.8.2 Illness

Students whose work is unavoidably interrupted for any significant period due to illness should consider applying for a suspension of status until the following academic year. A student whose illness is not serious enough, or of too short duration to justify suspension of status, may, nevertheless, feel that it is likely to have an adverse effect on their performance in the examination. In this case they must ask their College Senior Tutor (not Academic Supervisor) to inform the University Proctors who, with sufficient evidence (including a doctor's report) have the option, at their discretion, of writing to the examiners and asking that the candidate's illness be taken into account. Candidates should not write directly to the Proctors or seek advice on



this process from the Director of Graduate Studies. The Students College Secretary should be able to further advise you on this matter.

## 3 Thesis Preparation & Submission

This section expands upon the provisions of the *Examination Regulations*, which should always be consulted. The following suggestions, in so far as they go beyond the printed regulations, are not obligatory, but they are what the department recommends as clear and acceptable.

Bear in mind that success in writing a thesis is achieved in a number of ways: by an imaginative search for sources, by a thorough investigation of evidence, by rigour of analysis, by originality of interpretation, and by clarity of presentation.

Students should also consult the *Examination Regulations* for the Degree of Master of Science by Coursework:

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2016-17/mosbcissoftheinte/studentview/>

### 3.1 Overall Thesis Guidance

Students are required to submit a thesis which must not exceed 15,000 words thesis on a topic of the student's choice, subject to the agreement of their supervisor and the Board of Examiners. Students are expected to write up their thesis in Trinity Term and over the summer. The thesis is to be submitted via the Assignment Submission WeLearn site by the deadline of noon on August 1st (or the nearest working day when this falls at the weekend). Part-time students will write their thesis in the second year of the MSc.

Students will be expected to present their initial ideas for their thesis at an MSc Research Seminar in Trinity term. Student presentations will be discussed and feedback provided. Workshops are attended by fellow students, supervisors and the MSc Programme Director.

Students should avoid thesis topics that have been done by previous students. For details of previous thesis topics, please refer to our website under alumni at: <http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/people/students/>.

MSc students must submit an electronic copy of their thesis via the Assignment Submissions Welearn site by noon on 1<sup>st</sup> August (or the nearest working day when this falls at the weekend). The thesis should include the official OII Summative Assignment Coversheet, which is available to download from Plato. A copy of the thesis should also be emailed to [teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk) by 17.00 on the date of the deadline. The thesis should bear the student's candidate number (to ensure anonymity), word count, degree and college on the title page.

Students who are awarded a Distinction mark for their thesis may be invited to submit a hard bound copy for the OII Library. In the hardbound copy of the thesis the student's candidate number must be replaced by their name but everything else should remain the same (although students may correct minor typos).

For further information about the format and presentation of the thesis, see below.

#### 3.1.1 Choice of thesis topic

The exact topic and title of your thesis require careful thought. At the risk of stating the obvious, it should be a topic which:

- is of interest to you
- addresses interesting questions
- is researchable (in the sense that there is information in respect of the subject – preferably neither too little nor impossibly much)
- can be supervised and researched in Oxford (in terms of the resources available, such as supervisors and libraries)
- has not been covered before (check through lists of previously accepted theses in the Bodleian, [www.theses.com](http://www.theses.com), and a full literature search)
- does not depend too heavily on confidential information (see below)

The University works upon the assumption that the results of research contained in a thesis belong in the public domain and that subsequent readers should be able to verify any documentary references. You should not therefore embark on research that is heavily dependent on confidential information without first checking with your supervisor that this is likely to be acceptable, and then applying to the Graduate Studies Committee. For the reasons given above, the Graduate Studies Committee is very reluctant to accede to requests to exempt a thesis from consultation, particularly if this request is made only when the thesis is submitted. Under no circumstances should you give undertakings to providers of sources that access to the completed work will be restricted, unless you have first sought the agreement of the Committee. As a centre devoted to the understanding of the Internet, it is also expected that to the extent practicable, data and results will be published on the web, at least through the OII site.

It is important to be clear not only about the overall topic of the thesis, but also about the particular questions regarding your topic that you seek to answer.

### 3.1.2 Title

Thesis titles should be concise, clear and specific. They should be comprehensible to a non-specialist. A sub-title, if used, should be separated from the first part of the title by a colon, and it should begin with a capital letter. Titles should contain indications of the precise scope or focus of the work. Many students find that ensuring that the title includes a researchable **question** helps to focus the thesis by then answering that question, rather than just describing a phenomenon.

Students will need to submit the 'Thesis Approval Form' by noon on Friday **Week 4 of Hilary Term** indicating their thesis title and short abstract. The form must be signed by the student's supervisor (in person or electronically through email) and submitted by email to the Graduate Studies Coordinator. These forms are available to download from Plato. The Board of Examiners will then approve thesis titles by Week 9 in Hilary Term for each student. The supervisor will provide academic guidance and oversee the thesis progress. For further information on supervisors responsibilities, please refer to section 4 below.

Students and supervisors are reminded that the thesis must have an integrated argument, and must stand alone as a finished and informative piece of work. The thesis title must be formally registered on the MSc examination entry form which students will receive from their college to complete and submit to the Examinations Schools.

### 3.1.3 Change of title

Should the focus of the students' research change during their work on their thesis, it is important that they consider whether their current title is still appropriate or whether it should be revised.

If subsequently a student needs to change their thesis title, then they need to write by letter or e-mail to the Graduate Studies Coordinator, who will ask the Chair of the Board of Examiners for permission to change the title. Any such request must indicate both the former title and the proposed new title. In cases where the topic has remained the same but the title has changed, only the new and previous titles are required in this request. If the topic of the research has changed significantly, the request should also include an updated short abstract. The final deadline for receipt of requests is **Thursday 6th July 2017 by 5:00pm** (or three weeks in advance of the thesis deadline for students who have been given an approved extension by the Proctors).

Please note that MSc Students should submit thesis proposal title changes to supervisor at least **one week** ahead of the July deadline. Late submission of thesis proposal changes will not be tolerated unless this has been communicated in advance or only for exceptional circumstances such as when a supervisor is unavailable or there is major shift in emphasis of the thesis.

### 3.1.4 MSc CUREC form submission

Students will need to submit a form detailing research ethics considerations, which is called a CUREC form at Oxford, to [drec@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:drec@oii.ox.ac.uk). Most students will require CUREC1A, but cases that raise specific ethical questions require the completion of CUREC2 form. Students should submit their CUREC (approved and signed by their supervisor) by **5:00pm Friday of week 7 of Hilary Term**. The CUREC1A form and guidance for its completion can be found at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/curec/>. All students must complete either a CUREC1A or CUREC2 form. Failure to do so will result in a significant delay in the student's research.

For any CUREC queries, please speak to the OII Research Facilitator, Tim Davies.

## 3.2 Thesis Preparation

### 3.2.1 Introduction

An introduction to a thesis is crucial to clarifying the thesis's purpose and character. The following are among the items which you might wish to consider including in an introduction:

- A short explanation of the thesis topic and the reasons for choosing it.
- A listing of the principal questions that the thesis seeks to answer.
- A summary of the main existing views or conventional wisdom about your subject.
- An indication of how the thesis confirms or challenges these views.
- An account of the types of primary and secondary sources used, and a discussion of the problems associated with these sources.
- An explanation of the main methods of analysis/intellectual approaches used in the thesis.

- An indication of what the thesis has not done: what parts of the subject were neglected, what sources were ignored or unavailable, what questions were not asked, what methodologies were not used.

### 3.2.2 Writing

#### Habits and timetable

It is essential to keep in the habit of writing, and not to procrastinate on the grounds that further sources are sought or more reading is necessary. Often the process of writing itself helps to clarify the precise areas on which more information is still needed, and to refine the questions that should be asked in respect of the topic. In consultation with the supervisor, it is important to set a business-like timetable for completion of each chapter of the thesis, and stick to it.

#### Back-up copies

Please keep ample back-up copies of all parts of your work, and keep them where they cannot be corrupted or lost. You are strongly advised to set your computer to save work automatically every 5 minutes or so.

#### English

A thesis must be in the English language and should, as far as humanly possible, be written in plain and comprehensible English. Good syntax and punctuation is vital. You should not think that because you are writing an academic thesis you must use long and complicated sentences.

For practical (and sometimes entertaining) guides to good (and bad) English, see:

- Sir Ernest Gowers, *The Complete Plain Words*, rev. edn., Penguin Books, London, 1987.
- William Strunk and E.B. White, *The Elements of Style*, 4th edn., Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1999.
- Lynne Truss, *Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*, Profile Books, London, 2003.

See also Fowler's *Modern English Usage*, published by Oxford University Press.

Correcting English is not the responsibility of your supervisor. If you are not a native speaker of English, it is your responsibility to ensure that your thesis is written in correct and lucid English. Courses in English as a second language and in academic writing are available at the University's language centre.

#### Style

A thesis should have a clear and consistent style so far as matters of spelling, capitalisation, abbreviation, dates, foreign words, references, bibliography etc. are concerned.

Dates should be rendered consistently both in text and footnotes, preferably as follows: 30 June 1999.

Students should be similarly consistent about their use of quotation marks. They should use *either* single *or* double as the default, not a mixture. The use of single quotation marks is generally preferred, with double quotes only being used for a quote within a quote. The precise choice of style in such matters partly depends on what is most appropriate to the particular subject matter of the thesis, and in some cases on the form of publication ultimately sought.

Useful guides to style containing much material of particular relevance to academic theses include:

- P.J. Dunleavy, *Authoring a PhD: How to plan, draft, write and finish a doctoral dissertation or thesis*. Palgrave, 2003
- R. E. Allen, *The Oxford Writers' Dictionary* (or else its immediate predecessor, *The Oxford Dictionary for Writers and Editors*), Oxford University Press.
- Robert Ritter, *The Oxford Guide to Style*, Oxford University Press.
- Margaret Mahan, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, University of Chicago Press.
- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Heinemann, London, 1982; and University of Chicago Press, sixth edition 1996.

Most academic journals also contain at least brief guidance on style and footnoting.

#### Figures

Figures should, if at all possible, be near the text that refers to them.

#### Headings and subheadings

In most theses it is important not only that each chapter has a clear and informative title, but also that there is a consistent system of headings and sub-headings to assist the reader (and possibly the writer too) in following the narrative argument of the thesis. Very often a hierarchy of headings is needed. One quite common way of establishing a hierarchy is to have major section breaks centred and in larger type, and lesser ones set left and in the same size type as the main body of the text (albeit distinguished from it by being in bold, italics or similar). Many variations in between are possible, the number of levels being dependent on the nature of the material. Work out a clear and consistent hierarchy of headings appropriate to your subject, and then stick to it.

### 3.2.3 References

References are an important part of a thesis. They enable you to provide an indication of your skill and judiciousness in use of sources, and they assist the reader in understanding and evaluating what you are saying. They can also be one line of protection against accusations of plagiarism – the presentation of another person’s work as your own. The American Psychological Association’s style, otherwise known as **APA style**, is the OII recommended referencing style. The OII library has copies of the APA style guide and related reference works; additional information is available online at <http://www.apastyle.org/>.

Apart from indicating a clear preference that footnotes should be at the bottom of each page, the *Examination Regulations* give no guidance on a preferred style for reference notes. The Graduate Studies Committee has therefore issued the following guidelines for footnotes:

- Any system of footnoting is acceptable, provided it is **rational, unambiguous and consistent**. Guidance may be sought from works mentioned above.
- Footnotes should, if at all possible, be at the foot of the page to which they refer. Alternatively, they may be grouped at the end of the thesis. They should not be grouped at the ends of chapters. When they are grouped at the end of a thesis, two separate copies of footnotes, separately bound or stapled, should be enclosed with the thesis for the examiners’ use.
- In almost all footnoting systems, book and journal titles should be either underlined or italicised. Italics are preferred. Article and chapter titles should be in quotation marks.

Be consistent about these matters.

### 3.2.4 Thesis length

The maximum length for an MSc thesis is not to exceed 15,000 words. Please note the top of this word limit should be used for theses that need to make use of much qualitative material, while students undertaking quantitative analysis or formal modelling (for example in Internet Economics) are likely to be shorter. All theses should take a parsimonious approach to word length. This limit must be observed. It is a maximum, not a norm: many successful theses have been significantly shorter. Over-length theses are liable to be rejected unless you have, with the support of your supervisor, secured in advance permission through the Board of Examiners to exceed the limits. Such permission is granted only very exceptionally.

In calculating the MSc thesis length this should include the following:

- Main body
- Footnotes
- Figures-counts in terms of word equivalents in the figure

The following sections are not counted in the word length:

- Title Page
- Abstract
- Table of contents
- Table of figures
- Appendices: Any appendix does not count toward the word count, but students should be advised that examiners are not required to read appendices as part of the marking process, although they may choose to do so. As such, it should contain only supporting material
- Bibliography

## 3.3 Intellectual Property Rights and Plagiarism

### 3.3.1 Intellectual property rights

As someone undertaking research and writing, students need to be aware of the importance of copyright and other intellectual property rights issues in relation to your own and other people’s work. Students need to learn about the possibilities and problems of academic and commercial exploitation of their research and writing. This includes the terms of contracts with publishers, universities and other bodies. It also includes the avoidance of plagiarism, addressed below.

Much help and advice is available on these matters, including from the students supervisor and other members of the OII’s staff with experience of different types of research, publication and employment contract. For information about Oxford University’s facilities for help in this area, and its intellectual property policy generally, see <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/researchsupport/ip/>.

### 3.3.2 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of any part, or the substance of any part, of another person's work (including the work of other students) as if it were their own. It can take the form of unacknowledged quotation and of substantial unattributed paraphrase. It is not acceptable for any of your academic work to incorporate plagiarized material. This includes essays and presentations as well as material submitted as coursework or as part of a formal examination.

If a student employs good scholarly practice in their written work – for example, by attributing quotations and using only legitimate and acknowledged paraphrase – there is little danger that they will be accused of plagiarism unjustifiably. Written work should involve the use and discussion of material written by others with due acknowledgement and with references given. This is standard scholarly practice and can be clearly distinguished from appropriating without acknowledgement and presenting material produced by others as their own.

The University employs a series of sophisticated software applications and other methods to assess plagiarism in submitted work. They regularly monitor on-line essay banks, essay-writing services, and other potential sources of material. When submitting an assignment through the Summative Assignment Submission Weblearn page students must certify that they agree to their work being checked for plagiarism using Turnitin software. 'Turnitin' is an electronic plagiarism detection software. It helps detect potential plagiarism by comparing submitted assignments to databases of electronic written work. Each assignment that is submitted through Turnitin is given a report with information about which parts of the work might have been improperly cited or plagiarised.

Plagiarism is a disciplinary offence for which offenders can expect to receive severe penalties. For example, the University has the statutory power to deprive somebody of a degree or other qualification after it has been awarded, if it is proved that it was obtained unfairly (for example, if a thesis or submitted coursework is found to contain plagiarised material). The relevant disciplinary regulations are:

4. No candidate shall present for an examination as his or her own work any part or the substance of any part of another person's work.
5. In any written work (whether thesis, dissertation, essay, coursework, or written examinations) passages quoted or closely paraphrased from another person's work must be identified as quotations or paraphrases, and the source of the quoted or paraphrased material must be clearly acknowledged.

For complete details, see The Proctors' and Assessor's Memorandum 'Essential Information for Students Section 9.5 at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism>.

Please also see the Oxford Students skills webpage at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills> for further information on advice on academic good practice.

## 3.4 Thesis submission

### 3.4.1 Overall

The thesis must:

- be of no more than the maximum word count (no more than 15,000 words for MSc students), not counting bibliography (see above for details)
- include a title page (see below)
- include an abstract (see below)
- be submitted in English

### 3.4.2 Title page

The title page (i.e. the first printed page after the front cover etc.) should contain the following information:

- Title (and subtitle, if any).
- Master's thesis submissions should **not** include the author's name on the title page, but must include the student's candidate number and the name of their college.
- Words to the effect of "Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of MSc in Social Science of the Internet at the Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford".
- Month and year, or else the Oxford term and year, in which the thesis was submitted.
- The exact word count of the whole thesis. This word count must include footnotes and figure-counts but exclude the bibliography (see above for details).

### 3.4.3 Abstract

Theses must have an abstract of up to 300 words, which should fit on one side of a single sheet of A4 paper and should be placed immediately after the title page.

If a student is asked to provide a copy of their thesis for the library, then they supply an extra copy of the abstract, which may be despatched to Aslib and published.

The abstract should be a very clear summary of the subject matter of the thesis, its aims, scope, principal sources, central argument and conclusions. The abstract should be self-standing, and contain all the information on the title page of the thesis. It should be comprehensible to non-specialists, and be suitable for use in general surveys such as Aslib, *Index to Theses*, 'Choice of thesis topic', etc.

### 3.4.4 Printing

The thesis should be:

- word processed
- with a margin of 3.0 to 3.5 cms on the left-hand side of pages
- the main text should be in double spacing (taken to mean a distance of about 0.33 inch or 8 mm between successive lines of text), but indented quotations and footnotes may be in single spacing.
- the print must be of an adequate size, definition and standard of legibility
- the pages of the thesis must be numbered consecutively from beginning to end and should include any appendices, such as the bibliography

### 3.4.5 Binding

Students who are requested to supply a final copy of their thesis for submission to the Bodleian Library should note carefully what is said in *Examination Regulations* regarding the method to be used for binding.

### 3.4.6 Submitting

Masters students must submit an electronic copy of their thesis via the Assignment Submission Weblearn site on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of August (or the nearest working day). Students should also email a copy of their thesis to [teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk) by 17.00 on the date of the deadline.

### 3.4.7 Viva voce

MSc students are not expected to undergo a viva unless their results are borderline. An MSc student may need to be available to return to Oxford in late August or September in the event of being called back for viva voce.

### 3.4.8 Resubmitting your thesis

If a student fails their thesis they must resubmit. Students will need to complete another examination form which will be sent by the college to complete and must be completed by the stated entry date. The resubmission deadlines will be the following August (i.e. 1 year after submitting original thesis) and the Examination Schools will confirm the exact date nearer the time. For further information please refer to the Examination Schools website at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/entry>.

## 3.5 Notification of results of MSc

The *MSc in Social Science of the Internet* is formally examined by the Board of Examiners in the OII. Students are examined on the basis of written examination, coursework and thesis. The Examiners for the MSc will normally complete their examination and release their marks by the end of September.

## 3.6 MSc thesis prize

There is one thesis prize each year which is awarded to the student with the highest thesis mark. The winner will receive a sum currently set at £150. The prize will be decided at the final Board of Examiners meeting in September based on nominations from thesis assessors. At its discretion, the Board may also recognize other thesis/theses which did not win the prize, but nevertheless were notable for exceeding the usual standard with an award of "Highly Commended Thesis".

Students awarded the thesis prize or recognized for producing a highly commended thesis will be publicised on the OII website and encouraged to note this achievement on their curriculum vitae.

### **3.7 Library & digital copies for MSc thesis**

Students who are awarded a Distinction mark for their thesis may be invited to submit a hard bound copy for the OII Library. The Graduate Studies Coordinator will contact those students directly if their thesis is being added and students should be aware that this is considered an honour.

### **3.8 Conferral of degree**

The arrangements for the conferral of the students' degree are made through their college. Degrees are conferred at the Sheldonian Theatre and a list of dates is available at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/graduation/ceremonies>.



## 4 Supervision and Teaching

### 4.1 Supervision

All graduate students have a University thesis supervisor. The University thesis supervisor guides the student through his or her course of study. The supervisor reports on the student's progress to the Graduate Studies Committee at the end of each term and will also provide feedback to the student.

The advice of the supervisor will always be sought by GSC before recommending any change in status, transfer between courses, and so on.

Graduate students will also all have a College Adviser. The role of the College Adviser is to provide pastoral and general academic advice. They can be particularly helpful if the student has any academic or other difficulties that he or she does not feel able to discuss with the University Supervisor.

If you have any issues with teaching or supervision please raise these as soon as possible so that they can be addressed promptly. Details of who to contact are provided in section 5.4 on complaints and appeals.

#### 4.1.1 Appointment of supervisor(s)

Before arriving in Oxford for induction week, new MSc students will be asked to submit a brief description of their proposed thesis topic to the Graduate Studies Coordinator. The Graduate Studies Committee will use this to help decide who to appoint as a thesis supervisor.

All MSc students are assigned a supervisor at the beginning of Michaelmas Term in their first year at the OII.

Except in exceptional circumstances, the supervisor assigned at the beginning of the programme will remain the student's supervisor throughout their time at the OII. If an assigned supervisor becomes unavailable, the MSc Director will assign a new supervisor, taking into account any expressed preferences from the student and potential supervisor(s).

It is also recognized that students may develop new interests or change focus over their time at the OII. Where a student finds that a faculty member other than their supervisor would help their dissertation research progress, there are two possibilities open to the student:

1. The student, with agreement of the potential additional supervisor and their existing supervisor, can request the addition of a second supervisor. This should be done by filling out form GSO.25 (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>) and submitting it to the OII Graduate Coordinator ([teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk)). Normally all such requests will need to be made before the beginning of Trinity Term in which the student's dissertation is due so there is time for the co-supervision to be effective. If approved, the student and the two supervisors will be responsible for discussing the best co-supervision arrangements.
2. The student can always request meetings with any member of the OII faculty. The OII faculty are very open to informally supporting students for whom they are not the official supervisor, and students are encouraged to take advantage of this by approaching faculty members who can help advance their research. This can take place at any time, and requires no formal permission or arrangements.

#### 4.1.2 Change of supervisor

##### Incompatibility

The Department and all University supervisors recognise that occasionally a new supervisor may be assigned where a student requests a change in supervisory relationship on the basis that the student feels there are good grounds for contemplating a change in supervisor; in these cases, this should first be discussed with the supervisor concerned, or if this seems difficult, with the MSc Course Director, the Director of Graduate Studies, or the Graduate Studies Coordinator. If this involves concerns over the quality of supervision, students are encouraged to seek to resolve the matter by informal means where possible, but should also be aware of the University's formal complaint procedures. The procedures adopted by the Proctors for the formal consideration of complaints and appeals are described in the University Student Handbook (Proctors and Assessor's Memorandum) <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/student-handbook> and the relevant Council regulations <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/>.

##### Periods of absence

If a supervisor is to be on leave and away from Oxford, or is leaving Oxford permanently, he or she is expected to make clear arrangements through the Graduate Studies Committee to cover the period of absence. This may involve continuing to supervise some students and transferring the supervision of others.

### 4.1.3 Role of supervisors

The thesis supervisor is responsible for planning the student's course of study and for keeping an eye on their overall progress. The thesis supervisor's approval and signature is required on applications to the Graduate Studies Committee on a wide range of matters.

The thesis supervisor(s) will be the main source of information and advice throughout the course of the student's research. Their responsibilities include:

- planning the framework of your research programme
- advising you about lecture courses, both specialist and broadening
- advising you about skills-training courses including research techniques
- advising you about literature sources
- meeting regularly with you to discuss your work (see below)
- keeping you informed of your progress (both informally and through the formal termly report)

MSc students will primarily meet with their supervisor at least once a term in Michaelmas and Hilary Term and then at least three to four times throughout Trinity Term and the summer vacation.

MSc supervisors are expected to:

- Hold meetings with the student to discuss progress of thesis
- Discuss progress, feed-back comments to course providers, course directors and DGS, and report on progress to termly teaching meeting.
- Assist in choice of option papers, and ensure that students are aware of deadlines and procedures for registration for courses, examinations etc.
- Help in the development of the thesis topic.
- Write termly reports on the student
- Comment in a timely manner to materials submitted
- In particular, comment on final drafts in good time for students to respond before final submission.

This last obviously depends on supervisors' availability in Oxford during the summer vacation months, and on students' timely submission of drafts. Best practice is for students to submit a complete draft one month before final deadline, allowing a response to students at least ten days before the deadline for submission. Supervisors should provide a reasonable level of availability during the summer; it is the student's responsibility to arrange dates for submission of work to supervisors – but it would be helpful if supervisors could warn students of any extended period of unavailability during the month before the thesis submission date.

### 4.1.4 Contact with supervisors

The tradition of graduate work at Oxford is one of individual supervision of each student, combined with small seminars and classes.

It is essential for you to keep in regular contact with your supervisor, irrespective of whether you are resident in Oxford or researching elsewhere. You should ensure that your supervisor has your full contact address and email address. These and any updates and changes of contact details should be provided via the OII's Graduate Studies Coordinator.

It would be a great help to your supervisors if you would contact them at or before the beginning of each term.

### 4.1.5 Supervision reports

A number of students and supervisors have found that a practical and convenient method of maintaining an agreed record of meetings is for the student, as a matter of course, to send the supervisor a short e-mail summarising the content of the meeting and the agreed outcomes.

At the end of each term your supervisor writes a formal report on the University's Graduate Supervision System (GSS) on your progress and is required by the University's regulations to communicate the contents of the report to you. In these reports, supervisors should give a full account of your work during the term and indicate the nature and extent of their contact with you. Supervisors are asked to give priority to prompt completion and return of the report forms. Copies of the report are sent to your college and to the Graduate Studies Committee where any problems are discussed and followed up. Completed report forms are subject to the Data Protection Act 1998, which stipulates that you as the 'data subject' may be given access to information held on you.

Continuation on the course depends on your satisfactory progress, so you should take very seriously any warnings expressed by your supervisor(s) that you are not working as well as you ought to. You should also bring to their attention, in good time, any problems that are seriously affecting your progress, before the situation becomes too serious.

For more information on the Graduate Supervision System (GSS) please refer to Appendix E: The GSS Graduate Supervision System.

#### 4.1.6 Role of College Adviser

In addition to the supervisor, your college will have assigned you to a College Adviser, who takes a general interest in your well-being, and from whom you can seek academic and other advice.

## 4.2 Responsibilities of graduate students

Graduate students have a wide range of responsibilities. Since for the most part these responsibilities are not specific to students at the Oxford Internet Institute, but apply equally to all graduate students, they are not outlined in detail here. They are, however, of critical importance.

They include:

- taking responsibility for your programme of work and research
- accepting the importance of constructive criticism within the supervisory relationship
- making positive use of the University's teaching and learning facilities
- providing regular reports on progress as required
- following the University's procedures (including those outlined in these Notes of Guidance) promptly and conscientiously
- doing everything to ensure a high standard of written and spoken work

You should consult the much fuller information on the role and responsibilities of graduate students obtainable in *Code of Practice on Supervision* available at <http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/students/for-postgraduates>.

### 4.2.1 Skills Training

A wide range of information and training materials are available to help you develop your academic skills – including time management, research and library skills, referencing, revision skills and academic writing - through the Oxford Students website <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/>.

Each student will undertake further research training which is specifically geared to the task of completing an MSc. This is delivered via a dedicated seminar series for graduate students running in Trinity Term. The seminar series will include presentations by speakers, including a session on the mechanics of writing a thesis. Each week students will present their thesis work for approximately 20 minutes (previous and related literature or work on their topic, gaps in previous work, preliminary findings, hypotheses, problems encountered). Students' training needs will be discussed with their supervisor at the beginning of each term. Further information about training needs, including the Training Needs Analysis Form, can be found at <https://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/training/tna>.

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 methods training will provide students with the basic methods required in order to undertake, analyze 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 specialized development of particular research methods will be supported by the 4-week methods option courses in Hilary term and 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.

## 5 Feedback, Concerns and Queries

### 5.1 Feedback to Students

Students will receive regular feedback through their supervisor and the reports uploaded on GSS. MSc students are also encouraged to speak to the course convenor about any issues or concerns.

Formative assessment does not contribute to the overall outcome of your degree and has a developmental purpose designed to help you learn more effectively. Summative assessment does contribute to your degree result and is used to evaluate formally the extent to which you have succeeded in meeting the published assessment criteria for your programme of study. Feedback on formative and summative assessment is an important element of all Oxford's Masters programmes. Feedback on formative assessment e.g. course essays/ assignments, should provide guidance on academic writing, will indicate areas of strength and weakness in relation to an assessment task, and will provide an indication of the expectations and standards towards which students should be working. Feedback on summative assessment e.g. theses and dissertations, should provide a critical review of the work and suggestions for improvements and future development of the research topic to enable students to develop their work for doctoral study, if appropriate.

In 2011, the University's Education Committee introduced new policies in response to requests from students for enhanced formal mechanisms for the provision of feedback on both formative and summative assessment. In addition to informal feedback, all students on taught Masters programmes can expect to receive formal written feedback on at least one designated piece of formative assessment during their first term.

Students can expect to receive informal feedback on their progress and on their formatively assessed work. Students will receive feedback on formative assignments for each course throughout the terms. These will come from the Course Tutors in either written or oral format. Please see Appendix D for further information on exact timings.

Students will receive formal written feedback on all their summative essay assessments submitted over the year via Plato.

All students will also receive formal written feedback on their thesis, submitted in the final term of the course via Plato by 31<sup>st</sup> October in the relevant year.

### 5.2 Feedback from Students

#### 5.2.1 Course evaluation

The OII is concerned that students also have the opportunity to comment on the structure, teaching and content of the programme and courses. Feedback will thus be sought through the use of student feedback meetings and student evaluation forms at the end of each lecture or seminar series. Further information about this will be given by course providers and the Graduate Studies Coordinator. The feedback received from students is anonymous. The evaluations are reviewed at the Graduate Studies Committee and if there appears to be a common topic that comes up this is discussed and students are notified of how this will be either resolved or changed for the next academic year.

#### 5.2.2 Opportunities to provide evaluation and feedback

The OII analyses any feedback received from any University wide surveys via the Graduate Studies Committee.

Students on full-time and part-time matriculated courses are surveyed once per year on all aspects of their course (learning, living, pastoral support, college) through the Student Barometer. Previous results can be viewed by students, staff and the general public at: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/aad/surveys/>.

The OII asks all MSc students to complete a survey in the last taught session each year. This survey is about the academic aspects of their course. This is analysed and discussed at the Graduate Studies Committee in October.

#### 5.2.3 Student representation

The OII has a Graduate Joint Consultative Committee (GJCC) which is a staff-student committee designed to enhance opportunities for feedback and participation amongst both MSc and DPhil students (see Appendix A: Graduate Joint Consultative Committee for further details).

Students have the opportunity to elect two representatives from each of the full-time and part-time MSc cohorts to sit on this committee. Details on student representatives and committee members will be added on Plato at <http://plato.oii.ox.ac.uk/index.cfm/files/courses/general> during Michaelmas Term.

The student representative will serve on the committee for one academic year and elections will take place in Michaelmas Term. The nominated representative shall be entitled to attend the termly meetings and contribute to discussion. The student representative is responsible for sending a brief report to all students after each meeting listing all the issues discussed and request any feedback if required.

The GJCC committees will meet once during term time, normally in week 2. GJCC committee meetings are open to all interested students at the OII, although in matters of voting, the elected representatives will be the only voting members.

The Chair of the GJCC will be a DPhil student representative and will also serve on the Graduate Studies Committee at the OII. It is normally expected that the Chair will be a student who has served on the GJCC for at least one year previously, although the committee can decide to waive this in exceptional circumstances.

Student representatives sit on the Graduate Studies Committee and the Research Committee and they will be nominated by the GJCC. The Research Committee normally meets in week 6 and the Graduate Studies Committee normally meets in week 3. The Research Committee discusses all relevant academic and research issues with a view to promoting and co-ordinating those activities within the Institute. The Graduate Studies Committee is responsible for the oversight and evaluation of all courses and provision for graduates, as well as the admissions process, and the implementation of teaching policy.

Please see appendix A & B for descriptions of the Graduate Joint Consultative Committee, Graduate Studies Committee and Research Committee responsibilities and membership.

At divisional level, there is a PGT Discussion Forum, made up of student representatives from each department/faculty of the division. Issues raised by this body are reported to the division's Graduate Studies Committee. MSc students are asked to elect two representatives to sit on this forum at the start of the first term.

Student representatives sitting on the Divisional Board are selected through a process organised by the Oxford University Student Union (OUSU). Details can be found on the OUSU website at <http://ousu.org/> along with information about student representation at the University level.

### 5.3 Sources of advice, help and counselling

If a student has concerns, academic or administrative, and they are uncertain of the proper way to go about solving them, they have several possible courses of action open to them.

For academic issues:

- Within the OII students can consult their supervisor, the course convener, the Director of Graduate Studies, or the Head of Department, who will if necessary, consult the appropriate authorities on the student's behalf.
- At the student's College they can consult the Senior Tutor, the Tutor for Graduates or their own College Advisor, who will give similar help.
- Students can also consult the OII's Graduate Studies Coordinator, who will advise on the obtaining of necessary forms, submission of applications, dates and deadlines, deposit of theses, etc.

For careers advice:

- The Careers Service of the University at 56 Banbury Road can help students evaluate their career prospects.

On a more personal level:

- Students can consult one of the OII's harassment officers if they believe they are being harassed or have any other personal issues that they would like to discuss. Emily Shipway should be contacted for further details.
- The University Counselling Service at 3 Worcester Street (which acts strictly in confidence) is experienced not only in general psychological problems but also in the special problems and blocks associated with academic work. See <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling> or phone: (2)70300 or email [reception@counserv.ox.ac.uk](mailto:reception@counserv.ox.ac.uk).
- "Nightline" is a confidential listening and information service run for students by students and is open from 8pm until 8am from ought to ninth week each term. Students can phone (2)70270 or visit Nightline at 16 Wellington Square.
- The student's College nurse or the local doctor with whom they are registered may be able to help.

Every college has their own systems of support for students, please refer to your College handbook or website for more information on who to contact and what support is available through your college

Details of the wide range of sources of support available more widely in the University are available from the Oxford Students website ([www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare)), including in relation to mental and physical health and disability.

### 5.3.1 Disability Advisory Service

The University operates a Disability Advisory Service which provides information and advice to students with impairments, health conditions, specific learning disabilities, and any other physical or mental difficulties (see <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability>). The Oxford Internet Institute works closely with this service to support students who require additional support or accommodation in their coursework, examinations, assessments, and interactions with the faculty and their peers at the OII.

Students who require support of this nature are advised to contact the Disability Advisory Service as soon as possible during the academic year, or when a new situation arises, for advice and support. The Service will liaise with the OII to provide you the support you need.

The OII supports the University's *Common Framework for Supporting Disabled Students* (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability/staff>). Victoria McDermott is the OII's disability contact, who is available to discuss any related issues, and to assist with connecting the student with appropriate support.

## 5.4 Complaints and academic appeals

The University, the Social Science Division and the OII faculty/department all hope that provision made for students at all stages of their programme of study will make the need for complaints (about that provision) or appeals (against the outcomes of any form of assessment) infrequent.

Nothing in the University's complaints procedure precludes an informal discussion with the person immediately responsible for the issue that you wish to complain about (and who may not be one of the individuals identified below). This is often the simplest way to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

Many sources of advice are available within colleges, within faculties/departments and from bodies like Student Advice Service provided by OUSU or the Counselling Service, which have extensive experience in advising students. You may wish to take advice from one of these sources before pursuing your complaint.

General areas of concern about provision affecting students as a whole should be raised through the Graduate Joint Consultative Committee or via student representation on the faculty/department's committees.

### 5.4.1 Complaints

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by the faculty/department, then you should raise it with the Director of the MSc Programme (Dr Greg Taylor) or with the Director of Graduate Studies (Professor Eric T. Meyer) as appropriate. Within the faculty/department the officer concerned will attempt to resolve your concern/complaint informally.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, then you may take your concern further by making a formal complaint to the University Proctors. The procedures adopted by the Proctors for the consideration of complaints and appeals are described on the Proctors' webpage ([www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/complaints/proceduresforhandlingcomplaints](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/complaints/proceduresforhandlingcomplaints)), the Student Handbook ([www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam)) and the relevant Council regulations ([www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/247-062.shtml](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/247-062.shtml))

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by your college, you should raise it either with your tutor or with one of the college officers, Senior Tutor, Tutor for Graduates (as appropriate). Your college will also be able to explain how to take your complaint further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of its consideration.

### 5.4.2 Academic appeals

An academic appeal is defined as a formal questioning of a decision on an academic matter made by the responsible academic body.

For taught graduate courses, a concern which might lead to an appeal should be raised with your college authorities and the individual responsible for overseeing your work. It must not be raised directly with examiners or assessors. If it is not possible to clear up your concern in this way, you may put your concern in writing and submit it to the Proctors via the Senior Tutor of your college.

As noted above, the procedures adopted by the Proctors in relation to complaints and appeals are described on the Proctors' webpage ([www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/complaints/proceduresforhandlingcomplaints](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/complaints/proceduresforhandlingcomplaints)), the Student Handbook ([www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam)) and the relevant Council regulations ([www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/247-062.shtml](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/247-062.shtml)).

Please remember in connection with all the academic appeals that:

- The Proctors are not empowered to challenge the academic judgement of examiners or academic bodies.
- The Proctors can consider whether the procedures for reaching an academic decision were properly followed; i.e. whether there was a significant procedural administrative error; whether there is evidence of bias or inadequate assessment; whether the examiners failed to take into account special factors affecting a candidate's performance.
- On no account should you contact your examiners or assessors directly.

## 6 Applying for the DPhil programme

Students wishing to apply for the OII *DPhil in Information Communication and the Social Sciences* programme with no break in study can do so by submitting a re-admission form.

If a student does take any break in study (even if only for a term), then they will not be able to use a re-admission form and will need to submit an application form for graduate study, [http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/postgraduate\\_courses/apply/index.html](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/postgraduate_courses/apply/index.html), and pay the application fee. Re-admission forms are available via OSS Student Self Service, <https://www.studentsystem.ox.ac.uk>, which are pre-populated with details that the University currently has on record for the student, such as personal details and previous qualifications.

The readmission form must be submitted together with the following supporting materials:

- transcript(s) of previous higher education
- three academic references
- curriculum vitae
- research proposal
- one sample of written work

Students may re-use any of the above from their previous Master's application – with the exception of the research proposal which must be new, and at least one reference which must be written by their Masters' supervisor. Students may of course, provide new materials in any of the above categories if they believe that the new material will make a stronger or more representative case.

For guidance on supporting materials please refer to the Notes of Guidance for Applicants to Graduate Study <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/applying-to-oxford/continuing-oxford-graduates>.

Students should ensure that their re-admission form and all supporting materials, including references, are submitted to the Graduate Admissions Office in time to meet the application deadline(s). Please refer to <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/dphil-information-communication-and-social-sciences> for OII application deadlines.

If a student wishes to use materials from their Master's application then they **must specifically request the items** from the Graduate Admissions Office. Late or incomplete-admission applications will not be considered.

Students who have successfully completed the *MSc in Social Science of the Internet* degree who then go straight onto the *DPhil in Information Communication and the Social Sciences* degree may be exempt from the DPhil core courses (Digital Social Research, Social Dynamics of the Internet) subject to the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.



## 7 Regulations and Policies

The main University regulations governing Postgraduate Taught Courses can be found at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgpghtaughtcourses/>.

### 7.1 Examination Regulations

*Examination Regulations* are published in July each year covering the academic year from October to September. It can be obtained from colleges and is also available online at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>. Any amendments made during the academic year are published in the *University Gazette*. This handbook has been compiled using the latest Examination Regulations.

You should note that references in the regulations to the 'board' should be taken to refer to the OII's Graduate Studies Committee and references to the 'Secretary to the Faculties' should be construed as the Graduate Office.

### 7.2 Fees regulations

University fees are paid termly through the student's College. Fees are charged whether or not a student is working in Oxford. Fees are not charged if student status is formally suspended (see section 2.8.1).

College fees are also payable, and students should enquire with their college about these. Current College fees can also be found at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/feesandfunding/fees/information/college/>.

### 7.3 Residence requirements

Students are required by the University's regulations to be in residence in Oxford during term time. That means a commitment to be in Oxford for at least the full eight weeks of all three terms of the academic year. The dates of full term can be found at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/aboutoxford/dates.shtm> and in the front of the *Examination Regulations*.

MSc students at the OII attend an extended Hilary term with teaching through 9<sup>th</sup> week. MSc students are also required to sit written examinations in 9<sup>th</sup> week of Michaelmas term, 0<sup>th</sup> week and 10<sup>th</sup> week in Hilary term and thus must also be resident in Oxford at these times. MSc students will need to submit their thesis by 1<sup>st</sup> August (or the nearest working day if this falls at the weekend) although this may be done remotely, but 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.

#### 7.3.1 Suspension of status as a postgraduate student

Suspension of status as a postgraduate student enables students to suspend their research studies without payment of fees if there is good reason for a student to do so. (Removal of graduate students from the Register is a different matter arising from academic or disciplinary offences; see 6.5.2 below.)

##### Application

You may apply to the Graduate Studies Committee for suspension of status for a specified period. Any such application should be submitted using the **form GSO.17** (available from <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>) with details of the anticipated period required and with supporting comments from both the student's supervisor and college.

##### Fees

If the application is approved, the student will not be liable to pay fees during the period of suspension.

##### Period of suspension

MSc students must suspend for an entire year, and cannot suspend for one term, as research students can. When the student returns from suspension, they are to complete the GSO 17A *Confirmation of Return from Suspension* form.

##### Grounds for suspension

The Graduate Studies Committee is prepared to consider applications for suspension of status on the following grounds:

1. Where a student is effectively prevented from pursuing their course of study in circumstances which are outside their control though there are good grounds for believing that they will be able to resume work within a reasonable period for example, cases of:
  - a. unforeseeable financial difficulty,
  - b. physical or mental incapacity, (including, maternity leave and unexpected domestic crises);
2. Where it is desirable that a student should give up their work for a *limited period*, either:
  - a. in order to concentrate on some other project which cannot reasonably be deferred until their postgraduate work is completed (for example, in order to acquire some ancillary qualification); or
  - b. to take up temporary work which is likely to be relevant to their subsequent career and the opportunity for which is *unlikely to recur*.
3. In the case of study abroad:
  - a. where a student holds a research studentship which is suspended during the period of study abroad because of the nature of the study; or
  - b. where a student's work is unduly delayed by difficulties in making arrangements for study, or in carrying out such study, in another country.

#### **Notifying funders**

If a student is funded by an external body or bodies, they must communicate with them about any planned or granted suspension of status, and must secure the funders approval if required.

## **7.4 Illness**

The University records should show correctly for how many terms a student has been actively working on a thesis. If a student's work is unavoidably interrupted by illness, they will be encouraged to apply for suspension of status. If their illness is not serious enough or of too short duration to justify suspension of status, but the student nevertheless feels that it is likely to have an adverse effect on their performance in the examination, they must ask their Senior Tutor, supervisor and doctor to take up the case with the Proctors, who have the option, at their discretion, of writing to the examiners and asking that the student's illness be taken into account.

Students should not write directly to the examiners, who cannot take account of pleas which do not arrive through the official channels. If a student falls ill and thinks that this might result in a subsequent application for extension of time, it is desirable to obtain a medical certificate at the time. Students should always let their supervisor know when illness has prevented work on the thesis.

## **7.5 Policies**

A summary of University and OII policies and their websites can be found below.

### **7.5.1 Codes of Conduct and University Regulations**

The University has a wide range of policies and regulations that apply to students. These are easily accessible through the A-Z of University regulations, codes of conduct and policies available on the Oxford Students website <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/regulations>.

#### **University Statutes and Regulations**

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/196-052.shtml>

This contains numerous useful documents, for example: Regulations Relating to the Use of Information Technology Facilities

#### **Notes of Guidance issued by the Educational Policy and Standards Committee**

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/>

This contains up-to-date versions of the following:

- Notes of Guidance for Research Degrees
- Learning and Teaching Strategy

- Notes of Guidance on Examinations and Assessment
- Notes of Guidance on Introduction of New Courses and Major Changes to Existing Courses

### Disability Office

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/disab/>

This contains a wide range of rules and useful information for students and staff in respect of many different types of disability. It contains the University statement on:

- Access to Teaching and Learning for Students with Disabilities

### Diversity and Equal Opportunities Unit

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/>

This contains numerous useful documents, including information on racial equality, gender equality, disability services, childcare and harassment. The last of these includes a detailed discussion of all types of harassment and bullying, how to identify it and what to do about it:

- Code of Practice Relating to Harassment <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice/>.
- Equal Opportunities Policy for Students <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/policy/equality-policy/>.

*“The University of Oxford is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected.”* Equality Policy (2013)

Oxford is a diverse community with staff and students from over 140 countries, all with different cultures, beliefs and backgrounds. As a member of the University you contribute towards making it an inclusive environment and we ask that you treat other members of the University community with respect, courtesy and consideration.

The Equality and Diversity Unit works with all parts of the collegiate University to develop and promote an understanding of equality and diversity and ensure that this is reflected in all its processes. The Unit also supports the University in meeting the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people with and without the ‘protected characteristics’ of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and/or belief and sexual orientation. Visit our website for further details or contact us directly for advice: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop) or [equality@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:equality@admin.ox.ac.uk).

The Equality and Diversity Unit also supports a broad network of harassment advisors in departments/faculties and colleges and a central Harassment Advisory Service. For more information on the University’s Harassment and Bullying policy and the support available for students visit: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice)

There is range of faith societies, belief groups, and religious centres within Oxford University that are open to students. For more information visit: [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/religionandbelief/faithsocietiesgroupsorreligiouscentres/](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/religionandbelief/faithsocietiesgroupsorreligiouscentres/)

### Student Welfare and Support Services

The Disability Advisory Service (DAS) can provide information, advice and guidance on the way in which a particular disability may impact on your student experience at the University and assist with organising disability-related study support. For more information visit: [www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/das](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/das)

The Counselling Service is here to help you address personal or emotional problems that get in the way of having a good experience at Oxford and realising your full academic and personal potential. They offer a free and confidential service. For more information visit: [www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/counselling](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/counselling)

A range of services led by students are available to help provide support to other students, including the peer supporter network, the OUSU Student Advice Service and Nightline. For more information visit: [www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/peer](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/peer)

OUSU also runs a series of campaigns to raise awareness and promote causes that matter to students. For full details, visit: [ousu.org/get-involved/campaigns](http://ousu.org/get-involved/campaigns)

There is a wide range of student clubs and societies to get involved in - for more details visit: [www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/clubs](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/clubs)

### Academic Integrity in Research

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/cops/researchintegrity/>

This sets out the University's Code of Practice together with procedures in the case of suspected misconduct, including plagiarism.

#### **Proctors' Office**

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/>

This contains information about complaints procedures and numerous other matters including student welfare and student support as well as student discipline. See especially:

*Essential Information for Students* <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam/index.shtml>

*Council Regulations 6 of 2003* (about complaints procedures: See para 48 onwards for Appeals concerning higher degrees involving research) <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/247-062.shtml>

#### **Research Services**

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/researchsupport/>

This contains several key documents, addressing interesting issues including plagiarism and outside consultancies.

- Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Conduct and Procedure
- Public Interest Disclosure: Code of Practice and Procedure
- Statement of Policy and Procedure on Conflict of Interest

#### **Central University Ethics Committee**

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/curec/>

This is concerned with ethical issues involved in research involving human subjects. It includes a step by step guide to seeking ethical approval for research projects.

## **7.5.2 Fieldwork Safety and Training**

Some students will, as part of their course, be required to undertake fieldwork. Fieldwork is considered as any research activity contributing to your academic studies, and approved by your department, which is carried out away from the University premises. This can be overseas or within the UK. The safety and welfare of its students is paramount to the University. This includes fieldwork and there are a number of procedures that you must follow when preparing for and carrying out fieldwork.

#### **Preparation**

Safe fieldwork is successful fieldwork. Thorough preparation can pre-empt many potential problems. When discussing your research with your supervisor please think about the safety implications of where you are going and what you are doing. Following this discussion and before your travel will be approved, you will be required to complete a travel risk assessment form, which can be found on Plato and should be returned to the Graduate Studies Coordinator for processing. This form requires you to set out the significant safety risks associated with your research, the arrangements in place to mitigate those risks and the contingency plans for if something goes wrong. There is an expectation that you will take out University travel insurance. The travel insurance application form is available on Plato and completed forms should be sent to the Head of Administration and Finance. Please provide at least two weeks notice for travel insurance forms. Your department also needs accurate information on where you are, and when and how to contact you while you are away. The travel assessment process should help to plan your fieldwork by thinking through arrangements and practicalities.

#### **Training**

Training is highly recommended as part of your preparation. Even if you are familiar with where you are going there may be risks associated with what you are doing.

Divisional courses (run termly)

**Preparation for Safe and Effective Fieldwork in Social Sciences.** A half day course, for those carrying out medium to high risk research in rural and urban contexts.

**Fieldwork: How do we deal with what we see and hear?** For research on traumatic or distressing topic areas.

<http://researchtraining.socsci.ox.ac.uk/find-training/training-by-year/fieldwork>

Safety Office courses (run termly) <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/safety/overseastravel/fieldwork/>

- Emergency First Aid for Fieldworkers.
- Fieldwork Safety Overseas: A full day course geared to expedition based fieldwork.

Useful Links

- More information on fieldwork and a number of useful links can be found on the Social Sciences divisional website:

<http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/services/research-and-impact/fieldwork/fieldwork>

<http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/services/research-and-impact/fieldwork/fieldwork-more-information>

### 7.5.3 Information on Data Protection

The Data Protection Act 1998 is a key piece of UK legislation regarding data. Please see <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/dataprotection/> for further information.

## 7.6 OII Code of Conduct

The Oxford Internet Institute is committed to promoting and maintaining a positive, supportive and professional work and study environment for students, staff, visitors and all associates of the Department and University (whether employed or otherwise). All members of the Department – staff, students and associates – must abide by the University’s Equal Opportunities policies and Code of Practice relating to harassment and should treat everyone, whether inside or outside the Department, equally, with respect and without distinction, regardless of role or status. Department staff, whether established, non-established or administrative, must act at all times honestly, conscientiously, reasonably and in good faith, having regard to their responsibilities, the interests of the Department and University, their legal obligations and the welfare of colleagues and students.

The Department regards as unacceptable any behaviour that is contrary to these commitments. All complaints of improper conduct or treatment will be treated seriously and in confidence. Anyone who believes they have been treated improperly should, in the first instance, speak informally to their line manager, the Harassment Officers, or, where appropriate, the Head of Department. Complaints that are substantiated, or cannot be resolved informally, may lead to formal grievance or disciplinary action as outlined in both Department and University policies.

## 7.7 Discipline

Infringements of the OII’s and the University’s codes of conduct may lead to disciplinary action. Student discipline is the responsibility of the Proctors’ Office and full details are given at: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/discipline/>. Sanctions include removal from the register of graduate students and fines.

## 7.8 Disability and special needs

The OII has a wide range of facilities for those with disabilities, including (for those using wheelchairs) an entrance ramp, lift to all floors at the rear, a designated toilet for those with disabilities, and a kitchen and common room together with the library and seminar room on the ground floor. It also has induction loops in reception and in the seminar room for those with hearing impairment and a number of audio-visual aids for those with visual impairment.

If you have a disability or special needs you are urged to let your supervisor or the Director of Graduate Studies know at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate support arrangements can be made wherever reasonably possible. Information about your health will be treated in confidence and only divulged on a need to know basis with your consent.

For full information on University policy on matters relating to disabilities, including the document *Access to Teaching and Learning for Students with Disabilities*, see the Disability Office website at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/disab>.

## 7.9 Health and safety

All Oxford Internet Institute employees, academic visitors, students and any other persons entering the OII building are responsible for exercising care in relation to themselves and others who may be affected by their actions. This includes responsibility to:

- Make sure that your work is carried out in the approved way and in accordance with best possible practice (for work with VDUs, please see the checklist at Z:\admin\Health & Safety\VDU Assessment).
- Obey all instructions from a Safety Officer or the Head of Administration and Finance in respect of health and safety.
- Inform the Head of Administration and Finance of any significant new hazards to be introduced, or newly identified risks found in existing procedures.
- Report all fires, incidents and accidents immediately to reception staff or to the Head of Administration and Finance.
- Familiarise yourself with the location of fire fighting equipment, alarm points and escape routes, together with the fire procedures.
- Ensure that you sign in and out of the OII buildings at all times

Further details about health and safety including fire drills are given in the Induction pack.

## 7.10 University Policy on Student Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave

Students who give birth may choose to suspend their status normally up to a year. For further information please see <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/childcare/>.

## 7.11 Policy On The Recording Of Lectures And Other Formal Teaching Sessions By Students

The University recognises that there are a number of reasons why students might wish to record lectures or other formal teaching sessions (such as seminars and classes) in order to support their learning. The University also recognises that in most cases copyright in lectures resides with the University or with the academic responsible for the lecture or formal teaching session, and that academics and students may have concerns about privacy and data protection. This policy sets out the circumstances in which such recordings may take place; the respective roles and responsibilities of those involved in such recordings; and the implications of breaches of this policy.

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'recording' refers to any audio or visual recording of a lecture or other formal teaching session, made with any type of audio or visual recorder.

Students who have been given permission to record lectures or other formal teaching sessions as a reasonable adjustment on disability-related grounds do not need to ask for permission to record from individual academics. Students who believe they have disability-related grounds for recording should contact the University's Disability Advisory Service (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability/study> or [disability@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:disability@admin.ox.ac.uk)) for further information on the process for obtaining such permission.

Students may request permission to record any lectures or other formal teaching sessions. All such requests should be made in writing (including by email) prior to the lecture course or equivalent, to the academic responsible. Subject to paragraph 3 above, the decision on whether to grant permission is at the discretion of the academic. Students may only record lectures where the academic responsible for the session has given their consent prior to the start of the lecture in writing (e.g. by email), and **recordings of lectures may not be made by students unless this consent has been given**. Retrospective requests are not permissible under this policy and covert recording of lectures will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

Students granted permission in writing to record a formal teaching session other than a lecture should ask the session leader to check at the start of the session that there are no objections from others present to a recording being made.

Where recordings are made available routinely by departments and faculties, students may not make personal recordings unless they have been given permission to record as a reasonable adjustment.

### Use of recordings

Recordings of lectures or other formal teaching sessions may only be made for the personal and private use of the student.

Students may not: (a) pass such recordings to any other person (except for the purposes of transcription, in which case they can be passed to one person only); (b) publish such recordings in any form (this includes, but is not limited to, the internet and hard copy publication).

Students may store recordings of lectures for the duration of their programme of study. Once they have completed the programme of study, students should destroy all recordings of lectures or other formal teaching sessions.

Where a student breaches this policy, the University will regard this as a disciplinary offence. All such breaches will be dealt with in accordance with Statute XI (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/352-051a.shtml>).

## 8 The University

The organisation of Oxford University is complex and it may be helpful to outline some of the main institutions and their functions. The University's academic departments are divided among four divisional boards. The Oxford Internet Institute is a department within the Social Sciences Division.

The University is also collegiate and all graduate students belong both to a department and a college. Departments deal with lectures, examinations and administration of graduate work, while colleges deal with undergraduate tutorial teaching and with the provision of various 'domestic' facilities. All graduate students must be admitted first by the University and then by a college.

The University deals with educational standards and the committee with primary responsibility for academic quality assurance, including in relation to graduate studies, is the Educational Policy and Standards Committee (EPSC). It has issued Notes of Guidance on a range of topics relating to graduate studies which can be available from the University Website and which are printed in the *Examination Regulations*.

### 8.1 The OII as a department

#### 8.1.1 Organisation

Details of the organisation of the department are given on the intranet page at <https://intranet.oii.ox.ac.uk/SitePages/Contacts.aspx>. Contact information and photographs of OII personnel are available for both faculty (<https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/people/>) and staff (<http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/people/supportstaff/>).

Some key people related to the MSc Programme include:

- OII Director: Professor Helen Margetts
- Head of Administration and Finance: Emily Shipway
- Graduate Studies Coordinator: Victoria McDermott
- Administrative and Graduate Studies Assistant: Karen Mead
- IT Officer: Arthur Bullard
- Director of Graduate Studies: Professor Eric Meyer
- MSc Programme Director: Dr Greg Taylor

#### 8.1.2 Graduate Studies Committee

This is the main University administrative body so far as the management of graduate studies in your field is concerned.

The Committee is chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies (Professor Meyer) who has broad overall responsibility for the graduate programme. Details of the committee are listed in Appendix B: Standing Committees.

The GSC normally meets once a term in week 3.

#### 8.1.3 Research Committee

The Research Committee is to discuss all relevant academic and research issues with a view to promoting and co-ordinating those activities within the Institute. This includes research funding opportunities, development and fundraising, publication and dissemination of research findings, events programme, teaching, academic resources including OII Library policy and research policy including ethical issues.

The Committee is chaired by the Director of Research (Professor Luciano Floridi). Details of the committee are listed in Appendix B: Standing Committees.

The Research Committee normally meets once a term in week 6.

### 8.2 The Colleges



The student's College is treated as their official address for all University correspondence. If a student is to be away from Oxford, it is important that the college and their supervisor are both informed. **Students should ensure that the OII's Graduate Studies Coordinator has full details of the student's college address, email address and telephone number.** All colleges provide dining and common room facilities where students can meet people from other disciplines. All have a Tutor for Graduates (or some equivalent post) who can give general advice and guidance. In addition each graduate student is assigned to a College Adviser, who takes a general interest in the student's well-being and will normally be working in politics or a cognate discipline.

There is considerable variety among the colleges. Six (Green, Nuffield, St Anthony's, Linacre, Wolfson, and St Cross) take graduates only, while there are around thirty colleges that admit both graduates and undergraduates. All colleges admit men and women.

### 8.3 Social Science Graduate Office

At the Social Sciences Divisional Offices, the main office dealing with the organization of graduate studies is the Graduate Office (GO). Academic records of all students registered for higher degrees and diplomas of the University are maintained centrally on a student database. Each student's record is opened on receipt of the student contract. All information is updated as student's progress on their courses.

The Graduate Office within the Social Sciences Division also keeps individual correspondence files on current students, in which are retained copies of all applications (e.g. for transfer of status) and related correspondence, copies of supervisors' termly reports, and other relevant documentation. Please note however that candidates' initial application forms for admission to Oxford, and all supporting materials including transcripts, are held by their colleges, **not** by the Department or the Graduate Office. They can be contacted at [graduate-studies-2@socsci.ox.ac.uk](mailto:graduate-studies-2@socsci.ox.ac.uk).

## 8.4 Library Facilities

### 8.4.1 Oxford libraries

The library resources of Oxford are rich, but geographically scattered. The Search Oxford Libraries Online (SOLO) catalogue covers print and online holdings for almost all Oxford libraries, including the OII Library, and the Bodleian Libraries. Some important libraries for graduate work are mentioned here, but several others may be useful for specialised purposes; particulars of these will be found in the leaflet on Oxford libraries that is issued to all new students. Most Oxford libraries are part of Bodleian Libraries. Full and up-to-date information on all Oxford libraries including times of opening, borrowing rights etc can be found at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/libraries>.

### 8.4.2 The OII Library

This subject-specific library houses many volumes on the social aspects of information and communication technologies. The library also holds current subscriptions to several journals not found elsewhere in Oxford. Suggestions of titles for the library are welcome and should be sent to the [teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk).

### 8.4.3 The Bodleian Social Science Library

This library in Manor Road has books for loan on Criminology; Economics; Politics and International Relations; International Development; Sociology; Social Policy and Social Work; and Socio-Legal Studies. It has an extensive run of periodicals not for loan. Around 8 million volumes of Bodleian Libraries material is housed offsite, and can be ordered to the Social Science Library. All library material, print and electronic, is listed on SOLO.

### 8.4.4 Bodleian Libraries

This is the main library service of the University. This is one of the UK's Legal Deposit libraries and in this role is entitled to request *inter alia* all works published or distributed in the UK. The Bodleian Libraries comprise 30 locations, including the Old Bodleian Library, Bodleian Social Science Library and Law Library. To obtain access to the Bodleian Libraries it is necessary to have a University Card. It is not possible to borrow books received under Legal Deposit. Photocopying of material in the Bodleian Libraries is permitted, subject to copyright laws; detailed arrangements for photocopying vary.

## 8.5 Computing Facilities

### 8.5.1 University facilities

Students will receive an Oxford University email address as soon as they have registered. The University's IT services have extensive computing facilities available:

- courses in programming, word-processing, communications, and other topics
- a shop at 13 Banbury Road selling hardware and software
- an advice line at [advisory@oucs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:advisory@oucs.ox.ac.uk)
- repairs service for hardware

In addition to its website at <https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/>, IT services produces various publications and leaflets giving full information about its services.

Computer services offer the following inductions for new graduate students in Michaelmas term:

- One 2 hour session for highlighting electronic resources for research
- One shorter session during general departmental inductions for pointing out IT services

### 8.5.2 OII facilities

The OII is currently located across three separate sites (1 St Giles, 41 St Giles and 34 St Giles). There are hot desks and seating areas allocated for MSc students in GF1 at 1 St Giles (located just behind reception).

Masters students will have card access to 1 St Giles and 41 St Giles in office hours, 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. For meetings at 34 St Giles, students will need to liaise with faculty to get access.

The following are also available to students if required:

- specialist software (e.g. statistics packages) if already licensed to the OII or the University and agreed with the IT Manager
- space for a personal blog
- use of a wiki
- calendaring via Outlook exchange
- external access to the OII server
- loan of laptop or other ICT equipment (e.g. audio equipment for recording interviews) for work on OII research projects for a maximum of two weeks unless exceptional circumstances deem a longer period as agreed with the IT Manager

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).

For full details of the OII's computing facilities and support please see the OII intranet at <https://intranet.oii.ox.ac.uk/SitePages/IT/Information%20Technology.aspx>.

### 8.5.3 Plato

The most up to date reading lists, course deadlines are being held at an internal OII site called Plato which can be accessed at <http://plato.ox.ac.uk>. To set up an account, select the 'Sign Up' tab on the homepage. You will receive a confirmation email to your Oxford email account along with additional login details. If you have any technical issues or queries on content such as reading lists please contact the Graduate Studies Coordinator at [teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk).

The Plato website also provides the ability to submit formative coursework and receive feedback, threaded discussion forums and other features.

### 8.5.4 OII Intranet

The intranet is a single central point of access to all relevant information and services to all members of staff and students. The intranet consists of a set of informational pages including: Who's Who, Emergency numbers, Building information, Committees, Research, Events, Finance,

Personnel, IT and Web. The Intranet also provides a set of services such as OII General Calendar, Telephone list, In/Out Board. You can login using your OII username and password via the following URL: <http://intranet.oii.ox.ac.uk>.

### 8.5.5 College facilities

In addition, the student's college is likely to offer computing facilities, especially for word-processing.

## 8.6 Training facilities (The Oxford Learning Institute)

The Learning Institute exists to support excellence in learning, teaching and research at the University of Oxford by promoting professional, vocational and management development and contributing to policy development. The Institute is also host to Oxford's [Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning](#) which offers:

- Discipline-specific teaching programmes for PRS who want to gain teaching experience and improve their teaching skills.
- Skills development courses for PRS
- Aspire, the University's online Professional Development Planning system, which can be used to record and build your portfolio of academic skills.

Further details can be found at <http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/>.

The Learning Institute also has a research supervision website at <http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/supervision/> which is intended as a convenient resource for supervisors and other audiences. The pages include explanations of Oxford's policies and practice with links to University policy documents, downloadable tools and ideas for supervisors and students, links to further national and international websites, examples of good practice, listings and links to some of the research literature on doctoral study, including links to journal articles which the University has on subscription.

## 8.7 The Language Centre

The Language Centre provides a wide range of services at 12 Woodstock Road which are available free of charge to students.

- Courses in English as a foreign language
- Specialist courses in Academic Writing
- Library, with adjacent audio and video study laboratory, containing self-instruction material in more than eighty languages.
- Regular courses in French, German, Modern Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Welsh

Details of language courses for the current year (which start on the Monday of first week of Michaelmas Term), and of the Centre's opening hours, library facilities, registration procedures etc., are available at the Language Centre and at <http://www.lang.ox.ac.uk>.

Applications to register must be done by handing in a registration form on Monday – Wednesday of Week 1 of Michaelmas Term. **If students think they need any such courses, they should not hesitate to apply for them.**

## 8.8 Careers guidance

The Careers Service of the University, <http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/>, with offices at 56 Banbury Road, can help students evaluate their prospects of finding appropriate employment. They also provide course in CV writing.

## 8.9 Skills Toolkit

The Skills Toolkit (<http://www.skillstoolkit.ox.ac.uk/>) brings together information about workshops, seminars, conferences and on-line resources which will give students the opportunity to extend their research skills and further develop transferable skills. These have been designed with the intention of helping students achieve their research goals as well as enhancing their employability.

## 8.10 Other useful contacts

Oxford Students - <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students>

International Students - <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa>

Student Health and Welfare - <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare>

Contains a large array of information and advice, including information about the Counselling Service.

## 9 Financial matters

### 9.1 Grants, prizes and other funds

Financial help towards research expenses, when not available through the ESRC or other bodies financing your work, may be obtainable through various University funds. Details of University scholarships, prizes and trust funds are published each term in a supplement to the *University Gazette*. The main list is published annually around the start of Michaelmas Term.

There is also information on these matters in the University's *Graduate Studies Prospectus*. This can be found on the university website at: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/feesandfunding/>. There may also be various college funds and awards available and students should speak with the college adviser about such opportunities.

### 9.2 Paid Work

For full-time student's their first commitment must be their Oxford degree work, which is demanding and intensive. If they need, or wish, to undertake paid employment of any kind (whether inside or outside the University), they must first obtain the approval of their college, their OII supervisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. Full-time MSc students should note that the demands of the degree leave very little time during the week for any paid employment.

MSc students are not considered to be on vacation during any period when you are expected to study or be working on your dissertation / thesis, even if this is outside term time. This includes Trinity term up until the thesis submission deadline of 1st August.

Overseas students should also check with the Student Information and Advisory Service if they are eligible to work at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/during/work>.

Your college is also likely to have a number of small jobs available, some of which – such as library jobs and occasional portering duties – can be comfortably be combined with study. Such employment would still need to be approved as detailed above.

Please see the University guidance on Paid Work for Oxford graduate students at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/policyonpaidwork/>.

For any queries about working during your studies, please speak to the Graduate Studies Coordinator, or the OII Personnel Officer, Ornella Sciuto.

### 9.3 University Awards

The University has a number of prizes and awards available for academic achievement. For more information please see <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding/prizes-and-awards>.

## Appendix A: Graduate Joint Consultative Committee

1. The terms of reference of the Graduate Joint Consultative Committee of the Oxford Internet Institute are:
  - 1.1 To act as a two-way channel of communication between the department and its students on all aspects of their educational experience in the department.
  - 1.2 To refer matters raised through the representation system to the relevant department committee.
  - 1.3 To receive and comment on any changes planned by the department with respect to admissions, induction, teaching, and assessment as referred to them by any department committee.
  - 1.4 To comment on physical resources within or related to the department, for example but not limited to, computer facilities, laboratory provision, library provision, and online resources.
  - 1.5 To comment upon safety within the department.
  - 1.6 To receive and consider analyses of and department responses to: the outcomes of course evaluation mechanisms; national statistics such as the Student Barometer; student performance through summary statistics; and annual reports of the Chairs of boards of examiners and external examiners reports.
  - 1.7 To receive and consider reports from department reviews, course reviews and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies as is allowed by the terms of the relevant committees/bodies.
  - 1.8 To review on an annual basis the effectiveness of the student representation system in the department including identifying any changes to the system.
  - 1.9 To discuss follow-up action resulting from previous GJCC meetings, in particular any matter which was referred to other department committees
  - 1.10 To report to the OII's Graduate Studies Committee by submission of notes/summary of each meeting of the GJCC.
2. The membership of the Graduate Joint Consultative Committee shall be as follows:
  - (a) Director of Graduate Studies
  - (b) MSc Programme Director
  - (c) DPhil Programme Director
  - (d) Head of Administration & Finance
  - (e) Graduate Studies Coordinator
  - (f) three representatives of postgraduate research (DPhil) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
  - (g) two representatives of full-time postgraduate taught (MSc) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
  - (h) two representatives of part-time postgraduate taught (MSc) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
  - (i) such other co-opted members as the committee shall determine
3. Students of the Institute shall elect representatives of their number to serve on the committee prior to the first committee meeting of each year.
4. The committee shall be chaired by one of the student members, to be elected by the committee at the first meeting of the year. If the student chair becomes unavailable (for instance, if they have completed or left the programme and a new chair has not yet been elected), the DGS will serve as interim chair only until such a time as a new chair can be elected.
5. The secretary to the committee will be the OII Administrative and Graduate Studies Assistant. The secretary will take the notes from the meetings, and liaise with the chair to create the minutes of the meeting.
6. The committee will normally meet at least three times a year, with meetings usually held once each term. The committee shall have leave to allow the chair to take action as appropriate between meetings.

## Appendix B: Standing Committees

### Graduate Studies Committee

1. The terms of reference of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Institute are:
  - (a) to implement all aspects of teaching policy for the OII as agreed by the Management Committee
  - (b) to decide on:
    - i. applications for admission as a Probationer Research Student and transfer to the OII DPhil programme, and applications for admission to the OII's MSc programme,
    - ii. suspension or removal of OII students from the register of graduate students,
    - iii. applications for transfer and confirmation of status,
    - iv. the examiners' recommendation regarding the award of the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Science, and
    - v. the award of scholarships
  - (c) to approve:
    - i. nominations of assessors for transfer and confirmation of status of research students, and
    - ii. nominations for the board of examiners for the OII's MSc programme
  - (d) to review and make recommendations for changes and updates to the following in the light of university guidance and feedback from teachers, examiners and students:
    - i. induction materials,
    - ii. OII graduate studies handbook,
    - iii. student feedback questionnaires,
    - iv. MSc courses and DPhil programme,
    - v. teaching methods and examination and marking schemes
  - (e) to receive:
    - i. supervisors' termly and annual progress reports on all research and MSc students at the OII,
    - ii. reports of examiners and external examiners,
    - iii. results of student feedback questionnaires,
    - iv. statistics of success rates and details of complaints and academic appeals lodged, and ensure that appropriate action is taken in the light of them.
  - (f) to consider and approve applications for Visiting Student status.
2. The membership of the Graduate Studies Committee shall be as follows:
  - (a) the Director Graduate Studies, who shall chair the committee,
  - (b) members of the Institute's staff (as defined in paragraph 10 of Standing Orders) who are engaged in teaching for the department,
  - (c) representative of postgraduate students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
  - (d) such other co-opted members as the committee shall determine.
3. Postgraduate students of the Institute shall elect two of their number to serve on the committee. The student representatives shall not be entitled to take part in any reserved business except by leave of the Chair.
4. The committee will normally meet at least three times a year. The committee shall have leave to allow the chair to take action as appropriate between meetings.

### Research Committee

1. The terms of reference for the Research Committee are:
  - (a) to discuss all relevant academic and research issues with a view to promoting and co-ordinating those activities within the Institute, including:
    - i. research funding opportunities
    - ii. development and fundraising
      - iii. publication and dissemination of research findings
      - iv. events programme
      - v. teaching
      - vi. academic resources including OII Library policy
      - vii. research policy including ethical issues

- viii. to consider and approve proposals for Postdoctoral Fellowships, Associate status and Visitor status (other than Visiting Student status)
  - ix. to elect one member of staff (as defined in paragraph 10 of standing orders) to serve on the Management Committee
2. The membership of the committee shall comprise the staff of the Institute as defined in paragraph 10 of standing orders.
  3. The chairman of the committee will be appointed by the Management Committee.
  4. Postgraduate students of the Institute may elect two of their number to attend meetings of the committee.
  5. Associates, Visitors (other than Visiting Students) and the representative of Postgraduate students shall be entitled to attend meetings and contribute to discussion of business described at paragraph 1 (a) above. They may not take part in any other business except by leave of the chair.
  6. The committee will normally meet twice each term. The committee shall have leave to allow the chair to take action as appropriate between meetings.

## Appendix C: Marking Scales

### OII Marking Scale

Marking Scale		
70-100	Distinction	For exams: a very good answer that has a well-structured argument, is lucidly written, shows strong familiarity with relevant literature or theory, and includes necessary command of empirical material. Theses should also display strong analytical power, and originality either in a fresh approach to texts and literature or in generating new evidence.
60-69	Strong Pass	Work of high standard that covers the major points and shows familiarity with relevant literature or theory. It will include some elements of distinction quality, but is either not sufficiently original, or less well-written, or has a less well-structured argument, or includes inaccuracies. The marks of 68 and 69 should indicate an examiner's preparedness to move up to a distinction if a co-assessor or panel of examiners so recommend.
50-59	Pass	Work of solid scholarly standard that shows some analytical capacity and a reasonable coverage of relevant empirical material. It may include a well-structured argument, but be marred by omissions and/or some inaccuracies.
49 and below	Fail	An examination answer or dissertation that fails to display the criteria necessary for a pass. It may have some or all of the following weaknesses: the standard of writing is too poor; it is without sufficiently clear structure and argument; it does not cover the literature and empirical material adequately; it does not focus on the topic; it contains serious omissions and inaccuracies. The marks of 48 and 49 should indicate an examiner's preparedness to move up to a pass if a co-assessor or panel of examiners so recommend.



## Appendix D: Assessment Timetable

The following is the overall assessment timetable for 2016-2017. This is provided as guidance only: in case of changes, the course reading list on Plato and any updates provided by the course tutors should be followed. Part-time students should refer to the part-time programme schedule in section 2.3.1 for details on which assessments are taken in Year 1 and Year 2 of the course.

Course	Term	Type of Assessment	Essay Submission Deadline / Date of Exam	Marks Available
Internet Technology and Regulation	Michaelmas	Formative	Friday of Week 6	End of February
Internet Technology and Regulation	Michaelmas	Written Exam	0 <sup>th</sup> week of Hilary Term (early January)	End of February
Social Dynamics of the Internet	Michaelmas	Formative	Friday of Week 5	By Week 8
Social Dynamics of the Internet	Michaelmas	Written Exam	0 <sup>th</sup> week of Hilary Term (early January)	End of February
Digital Social Research: Statistics Core	Michaelmas	Formative	Every Thursday weeks 1-8	Ongoing feedback
Digital Social Research: Statistics Core	Michaelmas	Written Exam	9 <sup>th</sup> week, Michaelmas Term (December)	End of February
Digital Social Research: Methods Core	Michaelmas	Formative	Friday Week 5 by noon	End of Week 6
Digital Social Research: Methods Core	Michaelmas	Summative	Friday Week 8 by noon	End of February
Accessing Research Data from the Social Web	Hilary	Formative	Nothing official, only suggested assignments each week with answers provided in class	N/A
Accessing Research Data from the Social Web	Hilary	Summative	Friday of Week 5 of Hilary Term by 12:00 noon	End of May
Experimental Approaches	Hilary	Formative	End of Week 2	End of Week 3
Experimental Approaches	Hilary	Summative	5 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term	End of May
Wrangling Data	Hilary	Formative	Assignments provided in class	N/A
Wrangling Data	Hilary	Summative	5 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term	End of May
Digital Ethnography	Hilary	Formative	Friday of Week 1 & on Friday of week 3 by 12:00pm	By end of week 4
Digital Ethnography	Hilary	Summative	5 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term	End of May
Digital Interviewing	Hilary	Formative	Students will be required to do something practical before the session every week	N/A
Digital Interviewing	Hilary	Summative	5 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term	End of May
Advanced statistics for Internet research, part 1	Hilary	Formative	Every Tuesday weeks 1, 2 & 4	By end of week 4
Advanced statistics for Internet research, part 1	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of Week 3	End of May
Advanced statistics for Internet research, part 1	Hilary	Written Exam	Week 5 (middle of February)	End of May
Advanced statistics for Internet research, part 2	Hilary	Formative	Every Tuesday weeks 6, 7 & 9	By End of Week 9
Advanced statistics for Internet research, part 2	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of Week 8	End of May

Advanced statistics for Internet research, part 2	Hilary	Written Exam	Week 10 (end of March)	End of May
Simulating Society	Hilary	Formative	Nothing official, only suggested assignments each week	N/A
Simulating Society	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of 11 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term (Date has changed due to Easter holidays)	End of May
Qualitative Data Analysis	Hilary	Formative	Friday of Week 6 & Friday of Week 7 by 12:00	End of Week 8
Qualitative Data Analysis	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of 11 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term (Date has changed due to Easter holidays)	End of May
Metrics, Measurement and Online Visibility	Hilary	Formative	Wednesday of week 7 , Wednesday of week 8 & Wednesday of week 9 all by 12:00pm	End of week 9
Metrics, Measurement and Online Visibility	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of 11 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term (Date has changed due to Easter holidays)	End of May
Information Visualisation	Hilary	Formative	3 assignments due Monday of 7, 8 & 9	By the end of Week 10 in Hilary Term
Information Visualisation	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of 11 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term (Date has changed due to Easter holidays)	End of May
Big Data Analytics	Hilary	Formative	Thursdays of weeks 7, 8 & 9	
Big Data Analytics	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of 11 <sup>th</sup> week, Hilary Term (Date has changed due to Easter holidays)	End of May
Internet Economics	Hilary	Formative	Middle of Week 7	End of May
Internet Economics	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> week, Trinity Term	End of May
Online Social Networks	Hilary	Formative		
Online Social Networks	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> week, Trinity Term	End of May
Digital Era Government and Politics	Hilary	Formative	Collected in class in week 8	By week 9
Digital Era Government and Politics	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> week, Trinity Term	End of May
ICT & Decevelopment	Hilary	Formative	Friday of Week 5	By Week 8
ICT & Decevelopment	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> week, Trinity Term	End of May
Learning, the Internet and Society	Hilary	Formative	Friday week 5	By Week 8
Learning, the Internet and Society	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> week, Trinity Term	End of May
Digital Technology and Economic Organization	Hilary	Formative	Weekly one page essay due the night before the next class	By the end each week
Digital Technology and Economic Organization	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> week, Trinity Term	End of May
Big Data in Society	Hilary	Formative	Friday of week 6	By Week 8
Big Data in Society	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> week, Trinity Term	End of May

Subversive Technologies	Hilary	Formative	Friday of week 6	End of Week 8
Subversive Technologies	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> week, Trinity Term	End of May
The Philosophy and Ethics of Information	Hilary	Formative	Friday of week 6	By Week 8
The Philosophy and Ethics of Information	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> week, Trinity Term	End of May

Please note that the Examination Schools control the scheduling of exams and these are usually only confirmed 5-6 weeks before the date.

## Appendix E: The GSS Graduate Supervision System

At the end of each term, the student's supervisor(s) will submit a report on their academic progress. To facilitate this reporting, the University operates an online Graduate Supervision System (GSS). Within this system, students have the opportunity to contribute to their termly supervision reports by reviewing and commenting on their own progress.

Students are **strongly encouraged** to take the opportunity to review and comment on their academic progress, any skills training they have undertaken or may need to the future, and on their engagement with the academic community (e.g. seminar/conference attendance or any teaching they have undertaken).

The student's supervisor(s) will review and comment on their academic progress and performance during the current term and assess skills and training needs to be addressed during the next term. The supervisor should discuss the report with the student, as it will form the basis for feedback on their progress, for identifying areas where further work is required, for reviewing progress against an agreed timetable, and for agreeing plans for the term ahead.

When reporting on academic progress, students on taught courses should review progress during the current term, and measure this progress against the timetable and requirements for their programme of study. Students on doctoral programmes should reflect on the progress made with their research project during the current term, including written work (e.g. drafts of chapters) and they should assess this against the plan of research that has been agreed with their supervisor(s).

All students should briefly describe which subject-specific research skills and more general personal/professional skills they have acquired or developed during the current term. Students should include attendance at relevant classes that form part of their programme of study and also include courses, seminars or workshops offered or arranged by the OII or the University. Students should also reflect on the skills required to undertake the work they intend to carry out. Students should mention any skills they do not already have or may wish to strengthen through undertaking training.

The MSc Programme Director and the Director of Graduate Studies have access to these reports, and will review them, watching in particular for any issues flagged as a concern. If the student has any complaints about the supervision they are receiving, they should raise this directly with the Director of Graduate Studies at the OII. Students should not use the supervision reporting system as a mechanism for complaints.

Students are asked to report in weeks 6 and 7 of term. Once the student has completed their sections of the online form, it will be released to their supervisor(s) for completion and will also be visible to the Director of Graduate Studies and to their College Advisor. When the supervisor's sections are completed, students will be able to view the report, as will the relevant Director of Graduate Studies and their College Advisor. Directors of Graduate Studies are responsible for ensuring that appropriate supervision takes place, and this is one of the mechanisms they use to obtain information about supervision. College Advisors are a source of support and advice to students, and it is therefore important that they are informed of the students' progress, including concerns (expressed by the student and/or their supervisor).

To access GSS, please visit <http://www.gss.ox.ac.uk/>. Students will be able to log on to the site using their single sign-on details. Full details of how to use the site are provided at the on-line help centre, however, should a student need additional support, they should contact the OII's Divisional Graduate Studies Assistant at [graduate-studies-2@socsci.ox.ac.uk](mailto:graduate-studies-2@socsci.ox.ac.uk), in the first instance.

## Appendix F: Term Schedules

The following tentative term schedules are provided for your guidance. Any changes in time or location will be available on Plato and updated course reading lists, which should be understood as the definitive sources of this information.

### Michaelmas Term Schedule - All Years

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:00-09:30	Social Dynamics of the Internet			DSR: Statistics Weeks 1-7, Maths L5 Week 8, Maths L4	
09:30-10:00			SD Workshop		
10:00-10:30		SD DPhil Seminar	SD Workshop		
10:30-11:00	Python Workshop (Weeks 1,3,5 & 7)		SD Workshop		
11:00-11:30		SD Seminar	SD Workshop		
11:30-12:00					
12:00-12:30					
12:30-13:00					
13:00-13:30	DSR Methods	SD Seminar		DSR Stats Surgery <i>Starting for 2017-18</i>	DSR Stats Surgery
13:30-14:00					
14:00-14:30		SD Seminar	Weeks 1, 3, 5 & 7 DSR Workshop		DSR Stats Surgery
14:30-15:00	SD Seminar	SD Seminar	Weeks 1, 3, 5 & 7 DSR Workshop	Internet Technologies & Regulation	DSR Stats Surgery
15:00-15:30					
15:30-16:00	Weeks 1, 3, 5 & 7 DSR Workshop	Weeks 2, 4, 6 & 8 SD Workshop			
16:00-16:30					
16:30-17:00					

Colour	Location
Yellow	Maths Institute, L5
Green	Balliol College, LR23
Blue	Seminar Room 1 St Giles
Orange	41 St Giles
Purple	St Luke's Chapel
Red	Meeting Room 1 St Giles

## Hilary Term Schedule 2016-17 (FT and PT students)

### Option Papers (Weeks 1-9)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
09:15-11:15	Digital Era Government and Politics	Big Data & Society	Learning, Internet & Society (10-12:30)	Qualitative Data Analysis (wks 6-9)	Online Social Networks	Subversive Technologies
11:30-13:30	Methods Modules (see below)					
14:00-16:00	Digital Technologies and Economic Organization	ICT and Development		Internet Economics (14-17:00)	Philosophy & Ethics (15-17:00)	

### Group A Methods Modules (Weeks 1-4)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
11:30-13:30	Digital Interviewing	Accessing Research Data from the Social Web	Digital Ethnography	Wrangling Data	Experimental Approaches
14:00-16:00					Advanced Stats I

### Group B Methods Modules (Weeks 6-9)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
11:30-13:30	Metrics	Big Data Analytics	Qualitative Data Analysis & Metrics Surgeries 11:15 – 12:15	Information Visualization	Simulating Society
14:00-16:00	Metrics Surgery 13:30 – 14:30				Advanced Stats II

### Locations:

Colour	Location
Yellow	Isis Room OUCS
Blue	1 St Giles, OII Seminar Room (FF)
Red	1 St Giles, OII Meeting Room (SF)
Orange	41 St Giles, OII Meeting Room
Green	Balliol College, LR23
Purple	15 Norham Gardens, Seminar Room G, Dept of Education

## Hilary Term Schedule 2017-18 (Year 2\* for Part-time students)

\* Note that the second year schedule is provided for part-time students to be able to plan. However, this schedule should be regarded as tentative, and is subject to minor changes and updates because of staff, space, and enrolment changes.

### Option Papers (Weeks 1-9)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:15-11:15	Digital Era Government & Politics	Digital Technologies and Economic Organization	Learning, Internet & Society (10-12:30)	Big Data & Society	Law and the Internet
11:30-13:30	Methods Modules (see below)				
14:00-16:00	Online Social Networks	ICT and Development		Subversive Technologies	Philosophy & Ethics (15-17:00) Internet Economics (14-17:00)

### Group A Methods Modules (Weeks 1-4)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:15-11:15					Accessing Research Data from the Social Web
11:30-13:30	Digital Ethnography	Experimental Approaches	Digital Interviewing	Advanced Stats I	Wrangling Data

### Group B Methods Modules (Weeks 6-9)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:15-11:15					Big Data Analytics
11:30-13:30	Qualitative Data Analysis	Information Visualization	Simulating Society	Advanced Stats II	Metrics

### Locations:

Colour	Location
Yellow	Isis Room OUCS
Blue	1 St Giles, OII Seminar Room (FF)
Red	1 St Giles, OII Meeting Room (SF)
Orange	41 St Giles, OII Meeting Room
Green	Balliol College, LR23
Purple	15 Norham Gardens, Seminar Room G, Dept of Education
Gray	To be announced

## Trinity Term Schedule 2016-18

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:00-10:00					
10:00-11:00					
11:00-12:00					
12:00-13:00					
13:00-14:00					
14:00-15:00	MSc Seminar (Weeks 2-8)*				
15:00-16:00					
16:00-17:00					

\* Note: Week 1 is all day on Thursday

### Locations:

Colour	Location
Yellow	St Luke's Chapel



# Appendix G: Examining Conventions

## MSc in Social Science of the Internet, Examining Conventions

Academic Year 2016-17

### INTRODUCTION

Examination conventions are the formal record of the specific assessment standards for the course or courses to which they apply. They set out how examined work will be marked and how the resulting marks will be used to arrive at a final result and classification of an award.

The supervisory body responsible for approving the examination conventions is the Social Sciences Board's Teaching Audit Committee.

All students should refer to the Essential Information for Students at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam/index.shtml> for further information on examination matters and plagiarism.

### RUBRICS FOR INDIVIDUAL PAPERS

This is a one-year (full-time) or two-year (part-time) taught course which is comprised of the following eleven parts. Full-time students will take all eleven parts in a single year. Part-time students will normally take parts 1, 3, 4, 7, and 9 in their first year, and parts 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, and 11 in their second year; permission for exceptions to this schedule should be requested in writing to the Course Director.

#### Part 1: Digital Social Research Methods: Methods Core

Examined through assessed written work consisting of one 5,000 word essay (excluding the bibliography, but including footnotes and tables, following the same guidelines as provided for thesis word counts in the MSc Handbook). The course convenor will provide three essay topics from which students must choose one to answer; these topics will be distributed in class and released to students via the Assignment Submission WebLearn Site at 12.00 noon on the Monday of 4<sup>th</sup> week of Michaelmas Term. The essay is due to be submitted electronically via WebLearn by 12.00 noon on Friday of 8<sup>th</sup> week of Michaelmas Term. In addition to submitting to submitting via WebLearn, students also need to submit an identical electronic copy of the essay by 5:00pm on Friday of 8<sup>th</sup> week of Michaelmas Term to [teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk).

#### Part 2: Digital Social Research Methods: Statistics Core

Examined through one three-hour unseen written examination to be held in 9<sup>th</sup> week of Michaelmas Term. The examination will consist of a series of questions, all of which must be answered. The questions are weighted according to their relative difficulty, and the details of the weights assigned to each question are provided in the examination paper. Failure to answer any individual question will result in the loss of points for that question only.

#### Parts 3-6: Methods Options

The methods options component of the degree (four 4-week modules chosen from a list available in the MSc Graduate Studies Handbook and on the OII website) will be examined through a combination of assessed written work and/or by unseen written examinations, depending on the course. Assessment details for each module are provided in the reading lists available on the OII website and in the Plato learning environment not later than the end of week one of Michaelmas Term. In the case of written work, summative assessments are due to be submitted via WebLearn by 12.00 noon on Friday of the week following the final teaching session for the module. Unseen written examinations will be held during the week following the final teaching session for the module, as scheduled by the Examination Schools.

#### Parts 7-8: Compulsory Papers (i) Social Dynamics of the Internet and (ii) Internet Technologies and Regulation

The two compulsory papers will each be examined by a 3-hour unseen written exam to be held in 0<sup>th</sup> week of Hilary term. Students must choose 3 questions from a list of 8 in each examination. The total marks for the examination are determined by averaging the marks of each of the 3 questions answered using standard rounding settings in Excel.

### Parts 9-10: Two Option Papers

The options component of the degree (two 8-week options chosen from a list available in the MSc Graduate Studies Handbook and on the OII website from the start of the academic year) will be assessed by coursework, normally by one or two long essays and adding up to a total of 5,000 words (excluding the bibliography, but including footnotes and tables, following the same guidelines as provided for thesis word counts in the MSc Handbook). Specific details for each option paper are provided in the reading lists available on the OII website and in the Plato learning environment. Students must submit their essays for the option papers via WebLearn by noon on Monday of 1<sup>st</sup> Week in Trinity term.

### Part 11: Thesis

A thesis, not to exceed 15,000 words (excluding the bibliography, but including footnotes and tables, see the Handbook for detailed guidance) must be submitted via WebLearn by noon of the weekday on or nearest to the 1st of August of the year in which the degree is to be taken. The topic of the thesis will be chosen by the student, subject to approval by the student's advisor, the director of the course and the Board of Examiners. The deadline for submitting the title and topic is by 12:00pm on Friday of Week 9 in Hilary Term. Any changes to the title or topic after this date require approval by the Chair of Examiners. All requests for changes must be submitted at least 3 weeks prior to the final submission deadline for the thesis, and requests after this will not normally be approved. Students who have been given approval by the Proctors for a different submission date have until 3 weeks prior to their approved submission date to request changes to their title and topic.

All students will be required to sign a statement asserting that any coursework submitted for summative assessment is their own.

## MARKING CONVENTIONS

Marking conventions are in accordance with the guidelines published in the *Graduate Studies Handbook for the MSc*, which can be found on Plato.

### 3.1 Agreed final marks for individual papers will be expressed using the following scale:

70-100	Distinction
50-69	Pass
0-49	Fail

### 3.2 Qualitative descriptors for assessment types

The marking scales below are used for all elements of the Masters Programme and are laid down by the Oxford Internet Institute. All marks from 0 to 100 can be given, with lower thresholds of 50 for a pass and 70 for a distinction – see 'Marking Scale' table below. This scale applies to the examination of scripts, theses and other formally assessed material.

Marking Scale		
70-100	Distinction	For exams: a very good answer that has a well-structured argument, is well written, shows strong familiarity with relevant literature or theory, and includes necessary command of empirical material. Theses should also display strong analytical power and originality either in a fresh approach to texts and literature or in generating new evidence.
60-69	Strong Pass	Work of high standard that covers the major points and shows familiarity with relevant literature or theory. It will include some elements of distinction quality, but is either not sufficiently original, or less well-written, or has a less well-structured argument, or includes inaccuracies. The marks of 68 and 69 should indicate an examiner's preparedness to move up to a distinction if a co-assessor or panel of examiners so recommend.
50-59	Pass	Work of solid scholarly standard that shows some analytical capacity and a reasonable coverage of relevant empirical material. It may include a well-structured argument, but be marred by omissions and/or some inaccuracies.
49 and below	Fail	An examination answer or thesis that fails to display the criteria necessary for a pass. It may have some or all of the following weaknesses: the standard of writing is too poor; it is without sufficiently clear structure and argument; it does not cover the literature and empirical material adequately; it does not focus on the topic; it contains serious omissions and inaccuracies. The marks of 48 and 49 should indicate an examiner's preparedness to move up to a pass if a co-assessor or panel of examiners so recommend.

### 3.3 Verification and reconciliation of marks

Each MSc examination script, summative essay, and thesis (henceforth submission) will be marked independently by two examiners or assessors; normally one marker will be a course convener.

After independently marking each submission, the two markers will meet to reconcile their marks. Marks where the discrepancy is less than six points should be reconciled between the two assessors via discussion, and not simply a mechanical averaging of the two marks. When assessor's marks for a script or thesis differ by 6 points or more, the submission will be re-marked by the original assessors. If after reconsidering the submission and conferring the original assessors are unable to reach consensus on the appropriate mark, the script will be sent to a third marker who usually will be an external examiner. In the case of a fail mark or a dispute in the mark, the external examiner will be sent the work to mark. All marks will be reported to the Chair of Examiners.

For papers made up of a number of elements, the overall marks awarded are determined by the method indicated in section 2 above. In those cases where each element is equally weighted, the markers will agree each individual element first, and those agreed marks will be averaged for an overall mark. Averaging to the nearest whole number is done with Excel, using standard rounding rules.

Where marks by the first two assessors straddle a class border, and where this is the pass/fail borderline, or where it is the pass/distinction borderline and resolution of the disagreement could affect the candidate's chance of being awarded a distinction, the script will be read by a third marker who usually will be the external examiner.

Assessors' marks are advisory to the Board of Examiners and will be provisional until the final Board meeting in September.

### 3.4 Short-weight convention and departure from rubric

Where a candidate has failed to answer a compulsory question, or failed to answer the required number of questions in different sections, the complete script will be marked and the issue flagged. Details for individual papers are given above in section 2. The Board of Examiners will consider all such cases on a per paper basis so that consistent penalties are applied.

### 3.5 Penalties for late or non-submission

Where a candidate fails to submit a piece of work on time without prior permission, and *where the Proctors give subsequent permission for that work to be submitted late*, the mark for the work will normally be reduced by 8 points, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners. A candidate who fails to submit a piece of work on time, and *who does not obtain permission from the Proctors to submit the work late*, will be awarded a mark of 0 for that piece of work and will be deemed to have failed that first submission. The same rules apply for submissions that are made through departmental mechanisms, but the permission in these cases must be obtained from the Director of Graduate Studies. See point 5 for further information on failure of assessed components.

### 3.6 Penalties for over-length work

Where a candidate submits a thesis (or other piece of written coursework) which exceeds the word limit prescribed by the relevant regulation, the assessors may suggest to the Board of Examiner to reduce the mark by up to 8 marks or include a tariff to be deducted according to % exceeding of word count. The final decision on penalties to be applied rests with the Board of Examiners.

## PROGRESSION RULES AND CLASSIFICATION CONVENTIONS

### 4.1 Final outcome rules

For a candidate to pass the degree of MSc the candidate must pass all eleven parts of the course.

Parts 1 and 2 each have weightings of 6.25%, each of parts 3-6 has a weighting of 3.125%, each of parts 7, 8, 9 and 10 has a weighting of 12.5% and part 11 (thesis) has a weighting of 25%.

Except in the event of a candidate failing one or more assessment component (see 5 below), students who are awarded a 70 or higher in their thesis and have an average of 70 or higher across the eleven parts calculated with the weightings set out above will automatically be awarded a distinction.

The Board of Examiners will review all marks and may award a distinction if the overall performance of a candidate is determined to merit a distinction; this will normally only be considered in cases where the overall mark is borderline to a distinction and the thesis has gained a distinction. The external examiner will normally see all work to be awarded either a distinction or fail mark. The external examiner will also normally see a selection of work from the middle range.

The Board of Examiners will consider borderline outcomes on individual assessments and on the overall performance at their regular meetings. Awarding the higher mark for a borderline case requires an affirmative vote from 3 of the 4 members of the Board.

### 4.2 Use of vivas

Students whose work is considered to be on the borderline of a pass, or of a distinction, may be called to a viva-voce by the Board of Examiners if it is felt that they may present further evidence that would enable them to be upgraded.

## RESITS

A candidate who fails one or more summative essays, examinations or thesis will be permitted one further attempt to resit the failed assessment(s). Examinations may normally only be resat, and summative essays resubmitted, in the following academic year at the usual examination times and submission deadlines. The thesis may also only be resubmitted in August of the following academic year at the usual thesis submission deadline. The only exceptions to work being submitted at the usual times in the following year will be when special permission has been granted by the University Proctors and the department Board of Examiners.

Candidates who fail any summative essay, examination or thesis of the degree at the first attempt cannot normally be awarded more than a pass (ie. cannot be awarded a distinction and the maximum mark will normally be 69) for examinations that are resat, for resubmitted coursework, or for the degree as a whole. Candidates will be allowed only one opportunity to retake failed degree components, and must do so within six terms of initial registration. Please see the *Graduate Studies Handbook* for further information on resubmission and resits.

## FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE

Where a candidate or candidates have made a submission, under Part 13 of the Regulations for Conduct of University Examinations, that unforeseen factors may have had an impact on their performance in an examination, a quorum of the board will meet to discuss the individual applications and band the seriousness of each application on a scale of 1-3 with 1 indicating minor impact, 2 indicating moderate impact, and 3 indicating very serious impact. When reaching this decision, examiners will take into consideration the severity and relevance of the circumstances, and the strength of the evidence. Examiners will also note whether all or a subset of papers were affected, being aware that it is possible for circumstances to have different levels of impact on different papers. The banding information will be used at the final Board of Examiners meeting to adjudicate on the merits of candidates. Further information on the procedure is provided in the *Policy and Guidance for examiners, Annex B* and information for students is provided at [www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance).

Subject to the provisions of the Proctors' rules concerning arrangements relating to illness, disability, etc., a candidate who fails to appear at the time and place appointed for any part of his or her examination shall be deemed to have withdrawn from the examination.

### **DETAILS OF EXAMINERS AND RULES ON COMMUNICATING WITH EXAMINERS**

The External Examiner for the MSc Social Science of the Internet for the 2016-17 academic year is Dr Nick Anstead (Department of Media and Communications, London School of Economics). The internal examiners are Professor Eric Meyer (Chair), Professor Rebecca Eynon, and a third faculty member to be appointed.

Candidates should not under any circumstances seek to make contact with individual internal or external examiners.

## Appendix H: Examining Timetable

2016-17 Timetable for OII MSc Examining

Please note that these conventions may be revised prior to Examination and students will be notified by e-mail of any changes.

### Michaelmas Term 2016

Week 2	<i>Final approved copy of Digital Social Research: Methods Core Assessment submitted to Graduate Studies Coordinator for uploading to WebLearn</i>
Week 4	<i>Camera-ready copy of Digital Social Research: Statistics Core to Examination Schools</i>
Week 4	Monday 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2016: DSR: Methods Core Summative Assignment questions released to students via WebLearn
Week 8	<i>Camera-ready copy of Social Dynamics of the Internet and Internet Technologies and Regulation to Examination School</i>
Week 8	Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2016 by 12:00pm: Deadline for submission of DSR: Methods Core Summative Essay. To be uploaded via WebLearn
Week 9	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> December: Deadline for course convenors to provide the Graduate Coordinator with their assessment question for their Hilary term papers
Week 9	Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> December: Exam Scrutiny Committee meeting: Confirm assessment questions for Hilary term papers
Week 9	Exam for DSR: Statistics Core

### Hilary Term 2017

Week 0	Exams for Social Dynamics of the Internet and Internet Technologies and Regulation
Week 0	<i>Camera-ready copy of Advanced Statistics for Internet Research, part 1 &amp; 2 to Examination School</i>
Week 1	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> January 2017: Questions released to students via WebLearn for Option papers and Methods Options papers Group A
Week 2	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2017 by 12:00pm: Deadline for assessors to confirm marks for Social Dynamics of the Internet, Internet Technologies & Regulation, DSR: Statistics Core and DSR: Methods Core
Week 4	Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2017 at 2:00pm: <b>Exam Board meeting:</b> Confirm marks for Social Dynamics of the Internet, Internet Technologies and Regulation, DSR: Statistics Core, and DSR: Methods Core
Week 5	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> February 2017: Questions released to students via WebLearn for Methods Options papers Group B
Week 5	Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> February 2017 at 12:00pm: Deadline for submission of DSR: Methods Options papers Group A. To be uploaded via WebLearn
Week 5	Exam for Advanced Statistics for Internet Research, part 1
Week 7	Marks released for Social Dynamics of the Internet, Internet Technologies and Regulation, DSR: Statistics Core, and DSR: Methods Core

Week 10 Friday 24th March 2017 at 12:00pm: Deadline for submission of DSR: Methods Options papers Group B. To be uploaded via WebLearn

Week 10 Exam for Advanced Statistics for Internet Research, part 2

### Trinity Term 2017

Week 1 Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2016 by 12:00pm: Deadline for submission of all Option papers. To be uploaded via WebLearn

Week 1 Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2016: Deadline for assessors to confirm marks for Methods Options papers Group A and B

Week 3 Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017 by 12:00pm: Deadline for assessors to confirm marks for Option papers

Week 5 Wednesday 24th May 2017 at 2:00pm: **Exam Board meeting**. Confirm marks for all DSR: Methods Option papers, (including Advanced Statistics for Internet Research parts 1 & 2 exams) and all Option papers

Week 7 Marks released for all DSR: Methods Option papers, (including Advanced Statistics for Internet Research parts 1 & 2 exams) and all Option papers

### Summer 2017

August Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016 by 12:00pm: Deadline for submission of thesis. To be uploaded via WebLearn

September Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017: Deadline for assessors to confirm thesis marks

September Students will be notified by 11<sup>th</sup> September if they are to be called for a viva voce examination.

September Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017: Vivas will run in the morning before the Exam Board meeting.

September Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at 2:00pm: **Exam Board meeting**. Confirm thesis marks and MSc degree final results

Marks released for thesis and MSc degree final results by the end of September