



# Graduate Studies Handbook

**2019-2020**

Notes of Guidance for *DPhil in Information Communication and the Social Sciences* 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 in the coming year 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 multidisciplinary 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!*

- Greg Taylor, Director of Graduate Studies, OII

## 1.1 Scope and purpose of this handbook

This handbook applies to students starting the DPhil programme in *Information Communication and the Social Sciences* in 2019-20. 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 DPhil students in classes, seminars and lectures.

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

To keep it up to date, a copy of this handbook is available on Canvas at <https://login.canvas.ox.ac.uk/>

Comments on this handbook are welcome and should be sent to the OII's DPhil Coordinator at [dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk). Students should refer to the Graduate Studies Handbook on Canvas as changes may be made at the end of each academic year. The Canvas version will contain the most up-to-date information.

### 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 the DPhil Coordinator at [dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk).

The information in this handbook is accurate as at 1 October 2018, 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 on Canvas and students will be notified.

### 1.1.2 Key sources of useful information

There are several key sources of information for OII DPhil Students.

- The OII's **website** is found at <http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk>. There you will find lists of staff and their research interests, which can help identify those working in fields similar to your own and 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. We note particularly useful ones below.
  - **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 on Research Degrees:** <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/policyonresearchdegrees/>
  - **Dates of Term:** <http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/facts-and-figures/dates-of-term>
- The **University Gazette** at <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.
- **Canvas:** The most up to date reading lists and course deadlines are held on Canvas <https://login.canvas.ox.ac.uk/>
- **College Handbooks:** Please refer to individual College websites at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/colleges>
- Additionally, please check your **Oxford email** regularly as it will be used to send you important information about your course.

### 1.1.3 Academic Progress—Who to Contact

Students are ultimately responsible for their own academic progress.

The Course Director for the DPhil in Information Communication and the Social Sciences is Dr Kathryn Eccles, who has immediate responsibility for students on this course. The DPhil Coordinator, Mrs Laura Maynard, is responsible for course administration and is the person you should contact in the first instance with any queries.

Your supervisor will remain the main point of contact for academic progress and will serve as liaison between you and other faculty members.

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 Greg Taylor.

It is usually expected that students contact their college for any welfare or health related issues. If a student wishes to speak to someone at OII who is not directly involved in teaching or supervision please speak to Professor Victoria Nash who is the Deputy Director at the OII. She can be contacted at [victoria.nash@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:victoria.nash@oii.ox.ac.uk) or on 01865287231.

The OII has seven trained harassment officers who have volunteered to be confidential points of contact for concerns or questions. These are Mrs Laura Maynard ([laura.maynard@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:laura.maynard@oii.ox.ac.uk); 01865287222), Mrs Karen Mead ([Karen.mead@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Karen.mead@oii.ox.ac.uk) 01865287215), Mr David Sutcliffe ([david.sutcliffe@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:david.sutcliffe@oii.ox.ac.uk) 01865 287212), Professor Sandra Wachter ([sandra.wachter@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:sandra.wachter@oii.ox.ac.uk) 01865 612326), Dr Grant Blank ([grant.blank@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:grant.blank@oii.ox.ac.uk)

01865612336 , Dr Kathryn Eccles ([Kathryn.eccles@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Kathryn.eccles@oii.ox.ac.uk) 01865612338) and Dr Peaks Krafft ([p.krafft@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:p.krafft@oii.ox.ac.uk) 01865 612334).

The Social Science Division Graduate Studies Assistant who processes forms and keeps a track on students' status can be contacted at [graduate-studies-2@socsci.ox.ac.uk](mailto:graduate-studies-2@socsci.ox.ac.uk).

### 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 and these are sent out by course convenors in the summer.

## 1.2 Induction

### 1.2.1 OII Induction Programme

A general compulsory introductory meeting for all newly admitted graduates (Full and Part-Time) at the OII will be held at the beginning of the academic year in the week preceding the start of Michaelmas Term. During that first meeting they will be introduced to the OII's Director, Director of Graduate Studies, DPhil Programme Director and the DPhil Coordinator. This general introductory meeting will be followed by induction sessions introducing the new graduate students to OII premises, IT resources and departmental policies. These general meetings will then be followed by separate meetings dealing with induction matters for the DPhil and MSc courses. In addition, students will be given a tour of the OII and will be formally introduced to 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 departmental library, the *Bodleian Library* (see Section 1.4), and the Social Sciences Library located in the Manor Road Building. It is also used to access the OII's premises at 1 St Giles, 34 St Giles and 41 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).

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

### 1.2.2 Divisional Induction Event

All doctoral students are strongly encouraged to attend the annual Social Sciences Divisional Induction and Welcome Event. The 2019/20 event will take place on Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> October (Week 0), from 4:15-6:15pm, in the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, Parks Road, Oxford, OX1 3PW.



There will be a one-hour Welcome and Induction talk, after which attendees will be invited to join a drinks reception under the dinosaurs. The event provides a unique opportunity for new graduate students to meet fellow doctoral students from across the social sciences at Oxford and to hear about the support available. This event is part of your formal induction programme.

To RSVP, visit <https://socsci.web.ox.ac.uk/event/induction2019>

## 2 DPhil Programme

### 2.1 Aims of the programme

The DPhil programme is designed to help you:

- Acquire sound research skills.
- Gain knowledge of information, communication and the social sciences, enabling you to place emerging technologies into a variety of historical and comparative contexts.
- Undertake original research which makes a significant and substantial contribution to the subject.
- Present your ongoing and completed work to colleagues and the world at large, and to achieve comfort and facility with the use of the Internet to express your ideas.
- Produce a lucid and scholarly thesis including a satisfactory abstract for examination.

On completion of the DPhil programme, it is expected that you will have developed your knowledge and understanding of

- The application of one or more of the social sciences to a detailed study of the Internet or related information and communication technologies and their societal implications;
- Practices and technologies relevant to the Internet and related information and communication technologies;
- Theories and techniques of social sciences research applicable to the field of information and communication and of emerging technologies in particular;
- Modes of communicating and applying research in the field of information and communication to such issues as the design of new technologies and the formation of public policy;
- The qualities and transferable skills necessary to excel in teaching, research, policymaking or business in your studied field, including abilities to design new technologies and to predict and analyse their impacts; and
- Leading-edge research methods relevant to investigating emerging information and communication technologies in the social sciences.

### 2.2 Programme structure and timetable

The OII's DPhil Programme is a 1+3 or 2+2 programme. This means students are expected to have completed at least a one- or two-year Master's degree before embarking on your doctoral studies. The minimum period in which the programme can be completed is two years. This may occur if you have completed an advanced degree of more than one year's duration. However, the norm (for full-time students) is three years for completion of the DPhil.

There are three terms per academic year. Full-time DPhil student must submit a doctoral thesis within 12 terms from the date of admission as a graduate student. Part-time students are expected to submit their thesis within 24 terms. In special circumstances students may apply for extension of time through the Graduate Studies Committee. The maximum extension permitted is 6 full-time terms or the equivalent. For full-time students the maximum is 18 terms for completion

and for part-time students it is 27 terms. It should be noted that for both full-time and part-time students, extensions are not automatic and require the student to demonstrate a feasible plan for completion and evidence of active progress on their research. Students can extend past the maximum in exceptional circumstances.

During the programme students will move through three different stages, Probationer Research Student, DPhil Student status and Confirmed DPhil Student status. Further details about each stage are given in the sections that follow.

The flow chart overleaf illustrates the *maximum* timescales permitted by the University's regulations and the potential outcomes. However, to achieve the normal three-year programme requires that students follow the tighter programme of study and Transfer from the Probationer Research Student status to DPhil Student status by the end of the third or at most fourth term for full-time students and sixth or eighth term for part-time students.

The following represents a typical programme of study for a full-time doctoral student.

During the first-year, the focus should be on formulating research questions and on research skills training.

Students are required to complete and pass required coursework within OII's core courses, *Digital Social Research: Methods Core*, *Digital Social Research: Statistics Core* and *Social Dynamics of the Internet*. These courses are taught in Michaelmas term and most full-time students take all three in their first year.

In exceptional circumstances waivers may be granted to substitute other training for OII core courses. This usually applies to students who have completed a degree in the subject covered by the course. Students who wish to be considered for alternative arrangements for meeting these requirements must speak to their supervisor. Example of these alternative arrangements include taking an advanced course in another department or submitting a more advanced piece of coursework for assessment to the course convenor. All requests should be e-mailed to the DPhil Director.

We also strongly recommend that students take additional methods classes as appropriate to their topic of study, either at OII or across the University, such as those offered in the ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership and the research training offered by the Division of Social Sciences. Decisions about which courses and training sessions to attend should be made in consultation with supervisors.

The primary goal for the first year should be gathering materials to draft a research proposal for Transfer to DPhil status.

The second year will normally be devoted to data gathering and mapping the outline structure of the thesis. Students should make significant progress in the writing their thesis during the second year, drafting at least two chapters for the Confirmation of Status application. Thesis research may include a period of fieldwork away from Oxford.

The third year will comprise of any final data gathering, writing the final chapters of the thesis, submission of the thesis for final examination, and the final examination of the thesis.

For further information on DPhil milestones see

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/research/status/DPhil>

Students are expected to be fully engaged in the intellectual life of the department throughout their studies, including attendance at DPhil workshops, participation in departmental seminars, OII research projects and the OII's events programme. Students are encouraged to make a significant contribution to a workshop or event, and they should consider ways throughout their studies to communicate about their work to the world at large.

Part-time students will normally be expected to spend a minimum of **one day per week** in Oxford during term time attending seminars, meeting with faculty, and attending relevant talks and events. Part-time students will also be encouraged to spend at least **two to four additional full days per term** (for a total of 30 days minimum annually) working in Oxford in libraries and participating in relevant research seminars and research events, so as to integrate more fully into the department. Each part-time student's supervisor should discuss their supervisees' attendance

at research and training events (some of which may be done online). This will be monitored through student self-reporting on GSR.

The following table sets out a typical pattern of attendance for a part-time student:

Activity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8
Classes	8	8						
DPhil Seminar	10	10	12	12	9	9	9	9
Supervisor meetings	6	6	9	9	9	9	9	9
Additional Oxford days	6	6	9	9	12	12	12	12
Total	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

### 2.2.1 Summary of DPhil Deadlines 2019-20

Course/Name of Assessment	Deadline
Social Dynamics of the Internet Coursework	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2019 (Week 5 of MT)
Social Dynamics of the Internet Coursework	13 <sup>th</sup> December 2019 (Week 9 of MT)
Digital Social Research: Methods	6 <sup>th</sup> December 2019 (Week 8 of MT)
Digital Social Research: Statistics Core	Exam-Week 9 MT (Date to be confirmed one month before)
Transfer of Status (Michaelmas Term 2019)	4 <sup>th</sup> November 2019 (Week 4 of MT)
Transfer of Status (Hilary Term 2020)	10 <sup>th</sup> February 2020 (Week 4 of HT)
Transfer of Status (Trinity Term 2020)	18 <sup>th</sup> May 2020 (Week 4 of TT)
Confirmation of Status (Michaelmas Term 2019)	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2019 (Week 5 of MT)
Confirmation of Status (Hilary Term 2020)	17 <sup>th</sup> February 2020 (Week 5 of HT)
Confirmation of Status (Trinity Term 2020)	26 <sup>th</sup> May 2020 (Week 5 of TT)
Applications for Deferral of transfer or confirmation	No later than the Monday of Week 5 that you are due to submit

## 2.3 Core Courses

These are the four formal taught requirements for the OII DPhil in Information, Communication and the Social Sciences:

- **Digital Social Research: Methods Core** teaches essential research design and methods skills expected to undertake original research.
- **Digital Social Research: Statistics Core** teaches essential statistical interpretation skills.
- **Social Dynamics of the Internet** examines theories and existing research pertaining to the Internet.
- **Doctoral Seminar**: The DPhil Programme Director leads a weekly seminar series during term time. The seminars are an opportunity for students to present and receive feedback on their research, to receive training in various aspects of graduate skills, and to build and maintain a supportive peer-group network. There is no formal assessment for this seminar.

### 2.3.1 Digital Social Research: Methods Core

Further information can be found at <https://login.canvas.ox.ac.uk/>.

DPhil students are assessed through submission of a 5,000 word essay due by noon on Friday week 8 (6<sup>th</sup> December 2019) of Michaelmas term. This should be submitted electronically to the DPhil Coordinator at [dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk).

A penalty for late essays will be enforced, with 5 marks out of the total 100 marks possible deducted every day after the deadline until the essay is handed in. Extensions may be granted in exceptional circumstances only, and must be obtained in writing from the Director of Graduate Studies (Greg Taylor: [greg.taylor@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:greg.taylor@oii.ox.ac.uk)) IN ADVANCE of the essay deadline.

### 2.3.2 Digital Social Research: Statistics Core

Further information can be found at <https://login.canvas.ox.ac.uk/>.

DPhil students are assessed through a written exam in week 9 of Michaelmas term. The date, time and location will be announced after the start of term. Note that while this course is taken in conjunction with the MSc cohort, DPhil students sit the examination in the department, rather than in the Examination Schools with the MSc students.

### 2.3.3 Social Dynamics of the Internet

Further information can be found at <https://login.canvas.ox.ac.uk/>

Note that while the taught portion of the course is combined with the teaching of MSc students, there is a special discussion session just for DPhil students with supplementary readings.

For the purposes of formal assessment all students will be required to produce two 3,000 word essays. There will be no examination for DPhil students.

One of the essays should be related to the topics covered, and students may pick from any of the questions listed under each week's topic. For the other essay, students will choose a question on a topic related to their research interests. This should be agreed with the Course Conveners in advance. The essay should be clearly related to the key themes of the course outlined above. Either essays may be completed first, but one essay must be submitted by 5pm on Friday of Week 5 (15<sup>th</sup> November 2019) and the second by 5pm on Friday of Week 9 (13<sup>th</sup> December 2019).

A penalty for late essays will be enforced, with 5 marks out of the total 100 marks possible deducted every day after the deadline until the essay is handed in. Extensions may be granted in exceptional circumstances only, and must be obtained in writing from the Director of Graduate Studies (Greg Taylor: [greg.taylor@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:greg.taylor@oii.ox.ac.uk)) IN ADVANCE of the essay deadline.

Essays must be submitted to the OII's DPhil Coordinator at [dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk) in pdf format.

### 2.3.4 Part Time DPhil Core Course Schedule

Part-Time students will be required to spend at least 30 days physically in Oxford each year, and will be expected to commit approximately 20 hours per week to their studies. Part-time DPhil students will be expected to take the core classes over two years, which will mean choosing 2 courses in one year, and 1 in the other year. The exact order can vary depending on the exact needs and prior preparation of the student and will be agreed in discussion with their supervisor. The default will be to take *Methods Core* and *Social Dynamics* in year 1. These courses have been designed to allow part-time students to take them on a single day, currently on Mondays. The *Statistics Core* course should then be taken in year 2, which only requires one day in Oxford, currently Thursdays. Students who anticipate wanting to do early work that requires statistics may choose to switch this order upon consultation with their supervisor. Alternative combinations may require attendance of courses on two different days of the week.

### **2.3.5 Resubmission of Coursework**

A student who fails any of the required coursework will be permitted one further attempt to resubmit. All resubmissions should be submitted by Monday of week 1 of Hilary Term by 12 noon for the core courses.

If a student fails after the second attempt then a meeting will be organized with the student, their supervisor, Director of Graduate Studies and the DPhil Programme Director to discuss the next steps.

### **2.3.6 Auditing Courses**

Doctoral students who wish to audit a course at the OII during Hilary Term must contact their supervisor for approval. An Audit Request Form must be completed and signed by both the student and the supervisor and submitted to [dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk) by Friday of week 4 in Michaelmas Term (8th November). The form can be downloaded at <https://login.canvas.ox.ac.uk/>. Unfortunately we may not be able to honour all requests. Priority will be given to students who can demonstrate the relevance of a particular course in their Training Needs Assessment.

Auditors will be expected to attend all the lectures, any additional workshops and to fully participate and engage in the course. Auditors will also be expected to submit all formative assignments. No summative assignment at the end of the term is required of auditors.

## **2.4 DPhil seminars**

All OII DPhil students are expected to attend the weekly DPhil seminars that will be held during term time. DPhil seminars are required of all students until they reach Confirmed status. Organised and chaired by the DPhil Programme Director, these seminars are an opportunity for students to present and receive feedback on their research, to receive training in various aspects of graduate skills, and to build and maintain a supportive peer-group network. Content covered in these seminars will vary each term, but note that all students will need to present their research at least twice. Students preparing for Transfer of Status and Confirmation of Status are expected to undergo mock interviews during the DPhil seminars. Students may wish to schedule a mock final viva.

As per normal operating practice, DPhil students who are out of town, whether they are a part-time student at work or a full-time student doing something like fieldwork may choose to attend via videoconference. Students undertaking fieldwork or study outside Oxford will normally be given permission not to attend DPhil Seminar. However students are still required to present their research to the DPhil Seminar. All students may participate via Google Hangout.

### **2.4.1 Part-time Students in the DPhil Seminar**

All Part-Time DPhil students will be required to attend for the first four years or until successful completion of Confirmation of Status whichever is earlier. After the first four years students will be expected to attend on occasion, for instance to present a mock viva or talk and to give feedback to their colleagues doing likewise.

Recognizing that part-time students may have difficulty arranging attendance of DPhil seminars every week, we will make the following adjustments:

- In the first and fourth terms, when part-time DPhil students have their heaviest class load, part-time students will only be required to attend two weeks, although more regular attendance is encouraged.

- In the remaining terms of the first four years, part-time students will normally be expected to arrange to attend a minimum of four out of the eight sessions per term, but attending all eight sessions is encouraged.

## 2.5 Researcher Development

### 2.5.1 How do I get help to develop as a researcher?

As a doctoral student in the social sciences, you are expected to develop your expertise in relevant research methods and techniques, as well as a range of professional skills. The right combination of training and experience will help your research and make you more employable, within and beyond academia.

You have access to a wide range of training, including

- Research methods training within your department, and other departments as appropriate;
- Researcher development courses and opportunities delivered by the Social Sciences Division and open to all doctoral students;
- Training provided by the University such as the Careers Service, IT Services, the Language Centre, and the Bodleian Library.

### 2.5.2 What is a Training Needs Analysis?

Throughout your degree, students are encouraged to reflect and think strategically about their ongoing development as a researcher. Students are expected to complete the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) at the start of their studies and thereafter on an annual basis. This will help students work with their supervisors to develop bespoke training and development objectives each year. These are not formally assessed by the department, but the TNA is discussed during the Transfer of Status interview to ensure that the examiners are satisfied with the student's training.

For guidance and a walk-through, please visit: <https://socsci.web.ox.ac.uk/tna>

### 2.5.3 How do I find the training I need?

You are likely to want to extend and develop the research training that your department offers or expects you to undertake. To find what you need, start by looking at [the Social Sciences Researcher Development website](#) for a full programme of the courses and opportunities the Division offers to doctoral students, and a curated list of relevant courses and resources from across the University. You can also find external research methods events and resources on the website of the National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM): <http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/training/>.

In addition, a number of courses are available from providers across the University.

- Bodleian Library <http://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/workshops> provides training in information skills and information literacy.
- Careers Service <http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk> runs courses, offers one-to-one sessions with a careers adviser, and information on jobs and internship opportunities.

- IT Learning Programme <http://www.it.ox.ac.uk/do/training-and-facilities> offers a range of courses on computing, software, coding, visualization, and data management.
- Language Centre <http://www.lang.ox.ac.uk/> offers specialist and difficult languages training, as well as a popular English for Academic Writing course for international students.

#### 2.5.4 Research and Skills Training at OII and the Social Science Division

The training programmes available to students are not limited to the single purpose of helping them to produce a better thesis, but also impart skills that will be valuable to throughout their life. The personal and professional skills that are developed in all aspects of the degree course are not only about how to conduct research, but also about project management, personal effectiveness, communication and networking skills and career management.

*Research and Skills in the Social Sciences* is the Social Science Division's programme of research training and skills development for all social science doctoral students. To support your broader development as a researcher, the Social Sciences Division organises a skills training programme covering a range of training to help with completing the DPhil and to prepare you for your future career. The Research and Skills Training website lists all of the skills training sessions that are coordinated by the social sciences division. You can also find out about other training related news and events via the announcements section on this site.

The Researcher Training Tool in WebLearn provides a means of browsing and signing up for training within social sciences departments, the divisional skills training programme and other training providers across the University. For more information, and to sign up to courses, see the [Research and Skills Training](#) website and the [Researcher Training Tool](#).

Students can access specialist and advanced research methods training in other Departments, and across the University. Oxford's participation in the ESRC's Advanced Training Network (<https://esrc.ukri.org/skills-and-careers/doctoral-training/>) gives you access to selected advanced research methods training offered at other UK universities. Further information is available online where you can also browse and search for courses.

At OII, DPhil students are encouraged to attend weekly Brown Bag seminars in which Department research is presented, as well as training seminars organised specifically for each student group. This will help students to develop presentational skills, and to give and receive feedback. Students will also be encouraged where possible to present their work at relevant seminars, conferences etc. outside Oxford.

#### 2.5.5. How can I get teaching experience?

As a second or third year doctoral student, you may wish to attend the *Preparation for Teaching and Learning at Oxford* (PLTO), which provides an introduction to teaching in higher education. The Divisional PLTO runs once a term and is advertised on [the Social Sciences Researcher Development website](#). In addition, teaching and learning is one of the topics covered in DPhil Seminars and materials are available on Canvas from previous seminars.

The OII relies on teaching assistants to support the course conveners to deliver seminars and workshops. Many DPhil students have enjoyed this experience in the past. It gives students the opportunity to collaborate with a faculty member and insight into what work of academia might entail. OII TA positions are paid and have oversight with training and mentoring support. These positions are typically open to second and third year students.

If you have completed a PLTO and are undertaking some teaching, then you may register for the Oxford *Developing Learning and Teaching* (DLT) programme. This one-term seminar series, encourages you to reflect upon and make the most of your first teaching experiences in higher education. If completed in full it leads to an award that is recognised at universities across the UK. It runs every term and is advertised on [the Social Sciences Researcher Development website](#).



## 2.6 Other University Resources for Training

Oxford offers a wide range of training opportunities and resources for graduate students. In addition to research methods training and the skills development programme, there are also University-wide courses and career development opportunities available.

The [Bodleian Library](#) provides training in information skills and information literacy. Some workshops are offered by the Division; others are offered directly by the Library. The [Careers Service](#) has a range of events and resources for doctoral students. Through its [IT Learning Programme](#), [IT Services](#) offers a range of computing courses. Several online courses are available, including the [Research Skills Toolkit](#) and a [Research Integrity](#) course for social science researchers. The Centre for Learning and Teaching has a useful set of resources on [supervision](#)

The Language centre offers specialist and difficult languages training. Please note that you should discuss attending courses run by the [Language Centre](#) with your supervisor and departmental graduate administrator before signing up for or attending any course.

### 2.6.1 Training Resources

Research and Skills Training in the Social Sciences: <https://researchtraining.socsci.ox.ac.uk>

Researcher Training: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/grad/>

ESRC's Advanced Training Network: <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/skills-and-careers/studentships/doctoral-training-centres/advanced-training/>

ESRC Postgraduate Training and Development Guidelines: <https://esrc.ukri.org/files/skills-and-careers/doctoral-training/postgraduate-training-and-development-guidelines-2015/>

Researcher Development Framework: <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/CMS/files/upload/Vitae-Researcher-Development-Framework.pdf>

Bodleian Library: <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bodley>

Careers Service: <http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk>

IT Services: <http://www.it.ox.ac.uk/>

IT Learning Programme: <http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/itlp/>

Research Skills Toolkit: [https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/skills/res\\_skill\\_kit](https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/skills/res_skill_kit)

Research Integrity Online Course: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/skills/ricourses>

Centre for Learning and Teaching: <http://> <https://wwwctl.ox.ac.uk/>

Research Supervision: <https://wwwctl.ox.ac.uk/>

Language Centre: <http://www.lang.ox.ac.uk/>

Teaching Development:  
<https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/socsci/dtcssd/teaching/page/home>

### 2.6.2 Additional Courses and Seminars

You will also have the opportunity to attend other public seminars and talks at the OII where registration is on a first come first served basis. Subject to space and funding, you may be able to take part in other private workshops and seminars within your research area.

In your time at Oxford you should take full advantage of Oxford's rich range of offerings to develop both general and specialist skills that will be of great value to you in your subsequent work and career. Courses offered by other departments can be found in the Lecture Lists (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/pubs/lectures/>) and attendance arranged with the department concerned through the DPhil Coordinator. Open lectures are listed in the *University Gazette* (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/gazette/>).

## 2.7 Ethical Review Procedures for Research in the Social Sciences

ALL University of Oxford research projects involving human participants or personal data, conducted by Oxford students or staff (including academic and research staff) require research ethics scrutiny and approval before the research starts.

### Why is ethics scrutiny and approval important?

- It is part of the responsible conduct of research.
- It demonstrates that your research has been conducted according to the highest ethical standards. It is important to protect the dignity, rights and welfare of all those involved in the research (whether they are participants, researchers or third parties)
- It is a University requirement.
- It is now the expectation - and in some cases formal requirement - of funding bodies and academic journals.
- As a DPhil student, you will have to answer a series of questions regarding ethical scrutiny of your research in your Transfer and Confirmation of Status application forms.

### You need ethics approval if...

- Your research requires human subjects to participate directly by, for example,
  - answering questions about themselves or their opinions - whether as members of the public or in elite interviews.
  - performing tasks, or being observed - such as completing an online survey, participating in an experiment in a computer lab, reading words aloud for linguistic analysis.
- OR your research involves data (collected by you or others) about identified or identifiable people.

### What you need to do

Ethics approval must be obtained before a research project begins. It cannot be provided retrospectively. To do this you will need to:

- Complete a CUREC 1A checklist form. In some cases, alternative pathways are required. If you and your supervisor feel strongly that your research will not require ethical review (for instance if your work does not involve research data about specific individuals), you can pursue the Internal Research Ethics Checklist (IREC) form pathway. In addition, if you or the OII's departmental research committee believe that a more stringent CUREC 2 Checklist form may be required.
- When submitting your application, you will need to provide the relevant checklist (signed by supervisor via email thread), and potentially Supporting documents, such as recruitment

invitation letters/emails/adverts, a participant information sheet, a document setting out interview questions, and written or oral consent form).

- Obtain the signature of your supervisors (or email confirmation) from your department, including your supervisor's signature;
- Send the checklist to [drec@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:drec@oii.ox.ac.uk) for approval and cc [dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk).

Details of the procedure and application forms can be found on the OII's Intranet, here <https://sharepoint.nexus.ox.ac.uk/sites/oii/SitePages/Ethics%20Procedures.aspx>. On this page you will find further advice about the process and how it is managed within the OII, as well as links to the university's pages where the most up-to-date forms are located. Your research ethics application should be sent to [drec@oii.ac.uk](mailto:drec@oii.ac.uk) in the first instance. **Please allow at least 60 working days for a decision from the Committee.** The OII's Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) aims to approve CUREC 1A applications within 30 days. However, should your application be directed towards a CUREC 2 checklist it will be considered by both the OII's DREC and the Social Sciences and Humanities Interdivisional Research Ethics Committee (SSH IDREC). The timeframe for approving CUREC 2 applications in this scenario is within 60 days.

For any CUREC queries, please contact the OII's Research Facilitation Team at [drec@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:drec@oii.ox.ac.uk).

## 2.8 Risks in Fieldwork

If a student is proposing to undertake fieldwork or research overseas they should read the University's policy on:

*Foreign Travel (University Policy Statement S1/03)* - <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/safety/>

*Safety in Fieldwork (Guidance Note S7/95)* - <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/safety/>

The *Safety in Fieldwork* document contains advice on practical work carried out by staff or students of the University for the purpose of teaching and/or research in places which are not under University control, but where the University is responsible for the safety of its staff and/or students and others exposed to their activities.

If the research involves a degree of risk, it is necessary to complete a written risk assessment to be submitted to the Head of Research Facilitation Mrs Katia Padvalkava at [katia.padvalkave@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:katia.padvalkave@oii.ox.ac.uk).

Students are urged to do the following:

- discuss any plans for fieldwork overseas at an early stage with your supervisor;
- raise relevant issues in the various DPhil workshops.
- consult the advice to travellers as issued by the FCO or your own foreign ministry or other national agency, if you are from overseas;
- include a discussion of potential risks in your transfer materials (when transferring from PRS to DPhil status)

All students and staff should have adequate travel insurance. Details of travel insurance available for those travelling for University purposes can be obtained from the OII's Head of Administration and Finance: see intranet at

<https://intranet.oii.ox.ac.uk/SitePages/Personnel/Travel%20on%20OII%20Business.aspx>.

Please provide at least two weeks' notice.

Risks in fieldwork can assume many forms. Students should be aware that some research into sensitive issues or areas may be open to misunderstanding, and might incur suspicion or hostility.

It is important to be clear about the goals of research, articulate potential risks, understand possible reactions, and to minimise possible grounds for misunderstanding.

## 2.8.1 Fieldwork Safety and Training

### Fieldwork

Many 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 of paramount importance 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 Canvas. This 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. 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. The following website contains some fieldwork experiences which might be useful to refer to <https://socsci.web.ox.ac.uk/fieldworker-experiences>

### 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.

#### Departmental course (annually):

- Short basic **fieldwork safety awareness session** covering personal safety and planning tips. Post fieldwork students are invited to attend to share their experiences. All students carrying out fieldwork are expected to attend this. This session will usually run in one of the termly DPhil Seminars.

#### Social Sciences Division Research and Skills Training (termly)

<https://socsci.web.ox.ac.uk/welcome-to-researcher-development>

- **Preparation for Safe Fieldwork.** A half day course for those carrying out social science research in rural and urban contexts
- **Fieldwork in Practice An Insider's Guide to fieldwork.** A student led course on negotiating the practical aspects of fieldwork.
- **Vicarious trauma workshops.** For research on traumatic or distressing topic areas or contexts.
- University Safety Officer Dr Chris Williams [chris.williams@safety.ox.ac.uk](mailto:chris.williams@safety.ox.ac.uk) can be contacted for any advice on Safety in Fieldwork

**Safety Office courses** <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/safety/overseastravelfieldwork/> (termly)

- Emergency First Aid for Fieldworkers.
- Fieldwork Safety Overseas: A full day course geared to expedition based fieldwork.  
<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/safety/overseastravelfieldwork/>

#### **Useful Links**

- More information on fieldwork and a number of useful links can be found on the Social Sciences divisional website:
- <https://socsci.web.ox.ac.uk/fieldwork-0>

## 3 Progress through the DPhil

The DPhil programme involves a series of stages through which doctoral students progress. Details of the expectations for these stages are below. The typical DPhil at OII takes three to four years for students.

If a student transfers to doctoral studies at the OII after satisfactorily completing the OII's *MSc in Social Science of the Internet* degree they will normally be granted full exemption from the requirement to complete the required courses for Transfer of Status.

### 3.1.1 PRS Status

DPhil students start as Probationary Research Students. During this period, students take courses and work with their supervisors to develop their research proposal, which is submitted as part of the Transfer of Status (e.g. transferring to full DPhil student) in your third or fourth term at OII.

If a student attempts Transfer of Status in his/her fourth term of PRS status and a resubmission is recommended, s/he is automatically granted a one term of extension of PRS status to make a second (and final attempt) to Transfer. This extension to PRS status does not affect the overall amount of time permitted for the doctorate, and so the student would have 5 terms of PRS status followed by 7 terms of DPhil status. Part-Time students will be expected to attempt Transfer of Status in their 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> term.

### 3.1.2 DPhil Status and confirmation of Status

After successfully passing their Transfer of Status to full DPhil student, the student then begins work on their doctoral research in preparation for the next stages, Confirmation of Status and final submission of their thesis.

A doctoral student is permitted by Regulation to apply for a maximum of 3 terms of extension after completion of the normal 12 terms permitted for the doctorate. These 3 terms are independent of any extensions granted to PRS status. These extensions of time require the approval of the supervisor(s), College, and DGS/GSC.

In exceptional circumstances, further terms of extension maybe requested beyond the permitted 6 terms. However, these would require the additional approval of the University Education Committee.

Student's normally confirm status after three terms (six for part-time) of DPhil status, and must confirm not later than one term before final submission.

### 3.1.4 Extensions of Time

A doctoral student ordinarily has a maximum of 4 terms of Probationary Research Student (PRS) status followed by 8 terms of DPhil status, to make up a total of 12 terms to complete the doctorate. An extension of time can be granted to either PRS or DPhil status, and allows the student to continue to actively study with full student status and access to all University and College facilities.

In exceptional cases, if a student has not been able to attempt Transfer of Status within the 4 terms of PRS status, an application for extension of PRS status may be submitted, subject to approval by the supervisor(s), College, DGS/GSC, and the University Education Committee as this requires dispensation from the *Examination Regulations*. Again, this extension to PRS status

does not affect the total amount of time permitted to complete the doctorate, and should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

A doctoral student with DPhil status is permitted by Regulation to apply for a maximum of 3 terms of extension after completion of the normal 12 terms permitted for the doctorate. These 3 terms are independent of any extensions granted to PRS status. These extensions of time require the approval of the supervisor(s), College, and GSC.

Students need approval from the University's Educational Committee if they wish to extend beyond 3 additional terms. Terms of total time extended beyond 3 terms may take longer to be approved and may require the addition of a detailed timetable leading up to submission by the end of the term of extension, in order to make the case with the Education Committee. It is strongly advised that all students wishing to extend beyond 3 terms submit a timetable to the Educational Committee to help their case.

### **3.1.5 Suspensions of Time**

A doctoral student may apply for a maximum of 6 terms of suspension of time, and this requires the support of the supervisor(s), College and the DGS/GSC. In exceptional cases, additional terms may be requested, but these need the additional approval of the University Education Committee, as dispensation from the *Examination Regulations* is required. Suspension of status is normally granted where the student is not able to actively study. This can be due to a variety of reasons, but the most common is on health-related/personal grounds (including maternity leave). Other less common reasons include taking paid employment, taking a degree at another institution or other financial-related reasons. Suspensions are not required while a student is undertaking fieldwork away from Oxford or taking part in an internship as part of their studies (even though an application for dispensation from residence requirements may be needed). When a student suspends, the clock stops, and the student returns from suspension at the point when they departed. Normally students do not have access to University/College facilities (including libraries) whilst suspended, as it is assumed they are not studying (though e-mail access is commonly retained to allow the student to keep in touch with his/her supervisor(s) etc). Suspension of status can only be granted while a student still has status available to return to, i.e. a student cannot suspend status after his/her twelfth term of the doctorate unless s/he has also had an extension of time granted.

### **3.1.6 Reinstatement**

If a student has not previously used all of his/her terms of extension but does not apply to extend his/her status and instead allows his/her student status to lapse, then s/he can apply at a later date for reinstatement to the Register, and this requires the approval of the supervisor(s), College, Director of Graduate Studies, and the Graduate Studies Committee. If a student has used all 6 terms of extension and has subsequently had his/her student status lapsed, s/he may apply for reinstatement for one term only in which to submit his/her thesis. This requires the approval of the supervisor(s), College, DGS, GSC and the University Education Committee.

When considering applications for reinstatement, departments/faculties will take into account factors such as the currency and validity of the thesis, the availability of appropriate supervision, and whether the student successfully completed Transfer and Confirmation of Status before his or her status lapsed. In the majority of cases students should be ready to submit their thesis. In cases where the student did not complete Transfer, a fresh application for admission to the DPhil programme will be more appropriate. In cases where Confirmation was not completed, reinstatement should be made dependent on completion of an assessment equivalent to Confirmation, (the requirement for the milestone might subsequently be waived) and sufficient time on the register should remain available to the student to complete their thesis within the normal time limits.

The University Policy on Research Degrees requires submission of a student work plan and timetable; if no member of the faculty is willing or available to supervise the student, reinstatement should normally be declined. Information about reinstatement is included in the lapse letter sent to students.



## 4 Examination and Assessment

There are two main milestones which students must pass before they can submit their thesis. Students must transfer status from Probationary Research Status to DPhil student and then confirm their status as a DPhil student. The purpose is to ensure that a student is working at the appropriate doctoral level and to provide assurance that a student is working on the right track towards completing their thesis. Please see below for further information on the milestones.

### 4.1 Transfer from Probationer Research Student (PRS) status to DPhil status

#### 4.1.1 Probationer Research Student Status

DPhil students will normally be registered, in the first instance, as a Probationer Research Student (PRS) and must apply for 'transfer' to the status of a DPhil student (DPhil status) before the end of your fourth term. Transfer **must** be achieved by the end of the fourth term (sixth term for part-time students), which entails also meeting the submission deadline for that term, normally Monday of Week 4 of the relevant Term. The purpose of the transfer is to ensure that the student has a convincing research proposal and that they are making satisfactory progress in its development, and to satisfy the assessors that the work is potentially of DPhil quality.

Students should consult the following section of the *Examination Regulations 2015*:

- Regulations for Admission as a Probationer Research Student, see: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2015-16/grgoveresedegr/>

Probationer Research students usually focus on the development of, and early work on, a thesis topic; on improving knowledge of research methods; on attendance at relevant lectures, seminars and classes; and in preparing their transfer to DPhil status. You should meet the requirements for residency in Oxford for your particular degree in term time throughout the probationary period, and you should not normally undertake any fieldwork until after you have successfully transferred to full DPhil status.

For further information on Research degree stages please refer to the University website at: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/research/status/DPhil>.

#### 4.1.2 Purpose of Transfer of Status

The Probationer Research Student (PRS) status is intended to be used constructively, permitting a wise choice of the research topic to be made in the context of broader reading as well as preliminary research, helping the student to become accustomed to the rhythm of graduate work, and allowing for the acquisition of any specific skills appropriate to the research.

The Transfer of Status assessment is to ensure that the student is making satisfactory progress in the development of the research, to ensure that the work is of potential DPhil quality, and that the methodology of the research is appropriate and practicable. The transfer process provides the opportunity for the student to discuss their work with two independent members of staff and to receive feedback. Broadly, the assessment should show a plan for the thesis, which locates the research in the context of earlier work in the field, sets out the questions, hypotheses or issues on

which it will focus, and describes and explains the methods by which these will be answered, tested or addressed.

The assessment procedures are intended to remove the risk of failure and to reduce the risk of referral as far as possible, and must therefore be as rigorous as necessary to achieve this.

The formal Regulations for Transfer of Status are set out in the general regulations of the *Examination Regulations*, and in the special regulations for individual subjects, grouped within their particular Division. Further information is also available in the Education Committee "Policy on Research Degrees" <https://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/research-degrees>

#### 4.1.3 Timing of Transfer of Status

The *Examination Regulations* state that PRS status can be held for a maximum of four terms for Full-Time students 6 terms for Part-Time students. **The OII expects Full-Time students to complete the transfer from PRS status to DPhil status by this point and preferably by the end of their first academic year (the third term) or by the end of second year (the sixth term) for Part-Time students.** Some PRS students may indeed be required by their grant-awarding body to complete the transfer to DPhil status at a time around the end of their first year or second year for Part-Time. Students should check whether they are in this position, and if so discuss it with their supervisor and/or the Director of Graduate Studies.

Please note that **completion of transfer** involves both the submission *and the assessment* of the Transfer of Status document. Thus, submissions should be made by the department deadlines for submissions, Monday of Week 4 of Michaelmas and Hilary and Week 4 of Trinity. This allows time for the transfer submission to be read and assessed by the end of the term. If a student submits at the end of their fourth term (or sixth term for Part-Time student) there may not be time for the submission to be read and assessed by the deadline for the completion of transfer, and the student will need to apply for a formal extension.

#### 4.1.4 How to Apply for Transfer of Status Assessment

Applications for transfer of status should be made using the GSO.2 form available from <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>. Students are required to complete the form and to provide supplementary information on development of both research specific and personal and professional skills during their time as a Probationer Research Student. Students are also required to indicate whether their work requires research ethics approval. Both the student's supervisor and College should then sign the form. Please allow time to collect the signatures for this form before the submission deadlines. Supervisors are asked to suggest names of appropriate assessors.

**All DPhil application forms can be downloaded from the University Graduate Office website at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>.**

There are deadlines that the department has set for each term for the transfer application. This is to ensure that there is enough time for assessors to read the submission, schedule an interview, assess the transfer application, and file their report in that term. The complete application must be submitted to the DPhil Coordinator Laura Maynard [laura.maynard@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:laura.maynard@oii.ox.ac.uk) by midday on the following dates.

- Michaelmas Term, Monday of week 4 (4<sup>th</sup> November 2019)
- Hilary Term, Monday of week 4 (10<sup>th</sup> February 2020)
- Trinity Term, Monday of week 4 (18<sup>th</sup> May 2020)

Note that these dates are deadlines, and materials may be submitted earlier. These deadlines are in place to help ensure that your transfer application can be examined and assessed before the beginning of the following term. Typically full-time students will submit their Transfer application by the Trinity deadline of their first year or Michaelmas deadline of their second year. Part-time Students will submit their Transfer applications in Trinity of their second year or Michaelmas of their third year.

Students who know that their chosen assessors may be unavailable for a period of time should take that into account and may wish to submit earlier to ensure that their assessment can take place in time to meet the deadline for Transfer of Status.

#### 4.1.5 Content of Transfer of Status

The transfer of status application must include:

- Application **form GSO.2**, available at:  
<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>
  - Signed by supervisor and an appropriate officer of student's college
  - Indicate clearly the status to which they wish to transfer
  - Confirmation from the supervisor that required courses have been satisfactorily completed;
- an outline of your research (one side of A4 paper), summarising your thesis topic;
- a detailed research proposal of no more than 15,000 words (see Appendix C). This should:
  - Draw upon relevant literature to discuss the background to the research, theoretical perspectives, and possible outcomes to the research;
  - State key research questions
  - Discuss the overall methodological approach and specific strategies to answering these research questions, paying particular attention to practical and ethical issues relevant to the research;
  - A preliminary timetable for the research;
- a list of references;
- An e-mail from either the DPhil Programme Director or the Director of Graduate Studies confirming that you have completed a mock interview in a DPhil Seminar
- Assessors Approval Form (available on Canvas)
- As stated in the GSO.2 form, you should either have received or are awaiting ethics approval for your research project when applying for transfer of status (either a IREC, CUREC 1A, or CUREC 2 checklist). For information about how to submit an application for ethics approval please navigate to section 2.7 of this handbook.
- copies of assignments from Digital Social Research: Methods Core, Digital Social Research: Statistics Core and Social Dynamics of the Internet (unless exempt);
- any other materials, including substantial original research or expression made on the public Internet, that you think will help the assessors evaluate your candidacy;
- OII Training Need Assessment Form (Available in Appendix H or [Canvas](#))

**Before submission, students should discuss drafts of all of these items with their supervisor. Students need to submit electronic copies of all the other materials listed.**

#### 4.1.6 Appointment and role of assessors

In order to minimise delays, supervisors are expected to identify appropriate assessors and seek GSC approval at the beginning of the term in which transfer materials are to be submitted. Two assessors must be appointed, neither of whom will normally be the student's supervisor. Assessors will normally be academic members of staff working in the University of Oxford and only in exceptional circumstances will an external assessor be appointed. It is permissible for the same assessor to be used for both transfer and confirmation of status, and this person may also act as the internal examiner for the DPhil viva voce examination.

Supervisors should submit the names of the assessors to the DPhil Coordinator prior to the GSC meeting of the term the student plans to submit their transfer. Once the Graduate Studies Committee has confirmed and approved the assessors, it is the responsibility of the students' supervisor to contact the assessors to organise a mutual convenient time for the interview. Unless advised otherwise by their supervisor, students should not contact the assessors directly but may of course respond to their communications about dates etc. Students should normally expect to be interviewed within **6-8 weeks of submission of their transfer application**, though this may be longer during the vacation periods due to availability of the assessors. Students who submit an

application in late June or July should be aware that the interview with the assessors may not be held until September because of the long vacation and the assessors' availability.

The Transfer assessment is a formal requirement, but the interview is not an official examination or viva, and *sub fusc* is not worn. The assessors will write a report and submit recommendations to the Director of Graduate Studies. Following the interview, students should normally expect to hear the outcome of their assessment within 2 weeks, though this may be longer during the vacation periods.

Students will be expected during the interview to show evidence of their understanding of general theory and research methods in the social sciences applicable to their proposed study and specific research methods appropriate to the study of social aspects of the Internet and related ICTs.

In their report, the assessors are required to advise whether:

- the student is competent to complete and present a thesis in English
- the required coursework materials have been submitted
- the proposed thesis topic and treatment represent a viable project
- the proposed thesis topic and treatment comply with the Division's ethical standards
- the written work and oral examination show that you have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject
- the research schedule is viable and you should in principle be able to complete the proposed schedule of work for the DPhil within three or at most four years from initial registration as PRS (or two to three years in the case of a student transferring from an Oxford MLitt, MSc or MPhil).

Before submitting their report, assessors may request additional written work or other evidence from the candidate. Assessors then submit their report to the Oii's Graduate Studies Committee which may

- accept the application
- recommend resubmission, within a specified time and/or on specified terms
- reject the application (see below)
- request additional written work or other evidence, or appoint an additional assessor, before reaching a decision

#### **4.1.7 Instructions to assessors**

Assessors are asked to contact students as soon as reasonably possible to arrange a time for the interview, or to explain problems in doing so. Students can find it an anxious wait, and may have good reasons for wanting the assessment completed as soon as possible (please let the DPhil Coordinator know if there is a problem in this respect at the time of application).

Assessors are invited to consider whether the student is capable of carrying out advanced research, and that the subject of the thesis and the manner of its treatment proposed by the student are acceptable for transfer to D.Phil. Assessors should judge the application against the criteria for success defined below. They should aim to provide constructive criticism and advice to the student to identify and address deficiencies and thereby strengthen their proposed research project, rather than to present a judgemental verdict. Dismissive or aggressive remarks are not appropriate. An application to transfer to D.Phil. status must provide evidence that the applicant can construct an argument, can present material in a scholarly manner, has a viable subject to work on, and can be reasonably expected to complete it in 3–4 years for full time or 6 to 7 years for Part Time students. However, the assessors should judge the submissions in the light of the fact that they usually reflect 3–4 terms (6 terms for Part Time) work for full time students and are made at the early stages of the research project. The written work will not read like a final thesis. Omissions, unpersuasive arguments, or missing perspectives are not fatal unless they seem to indicate an inability to reach the necessary standard for the final thesis. The research proposal and thesis structure need not be completely finalised, but the student should have clearly defined ideas of what the research questions are and have possible ways to answer them.

The joint assessors' report should be 1–2 pages in length, providing a permanent record of advice given to the student at this stage and an indication of the student's progress. It should normally include a summary of the points raised in the interview, feedback on the written work submitted prior to the interview, comments on the positive aspects of the student's work, as well as any concerns about the student's progress and suggestions for the research going forward. Finally, for non-native English speakers, the report should indicate the assessors' view of the student's ability to present and defend the work in English.

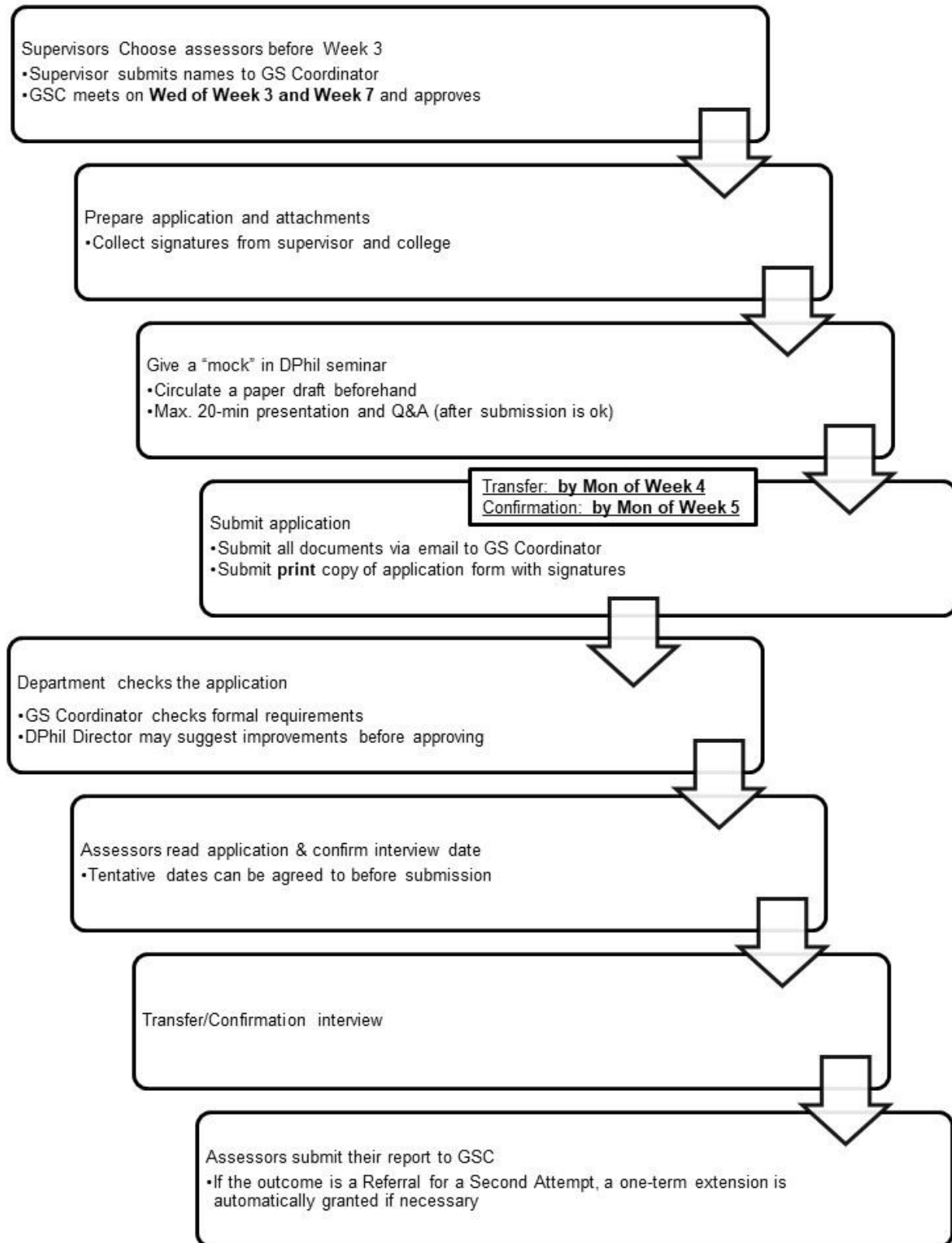
Significant differences of opinion between the assessors will be adjudicated by the Graduate Studies Committee, in consultation with the assessors and supervisors.

#### **4.1.8 Criteria for Success**

For transfer of status to be approved, the student will need to be able to show that their proposed thesis and treatment represents a viable topic and that their written work and interview show that they have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Students must show that they are competent to complete and present their thesis in English. In addition, the assessors will judge the application against the following criteria:

1. All required coursework materials have been submitted
2. Attendance of all required subject specific training courses
3. Competence in both written and spoken English
4. The aims of the research are realistic and focused
5. Evidence of wide reading and critical analysis
6. Appropriate methodology and research techniques are proposed
7. Limitations to the research are addressed
8. It is clear how the research will develop for a DPhil
9. There is a suitable timetable for the research
10. The candidate demonstrates the progression of an argument
11. The candidate shows a scholarly and rigorous approach to research issues
12. The research topic and treatment meet the Division's ethical standards
13. The written work and interview show that the candidate has a good overall knowledge and understanding of the subject
14. The University has adequate facilities (including supervision) to enable the research to progress
15. The student is capable of carrying out advanced research
16. The proposed schedule of work can be completed within three or at most four years for the DPhil.

### OII Transfer/Confirmation Process



#### 4.1.9 Outcomes of Transfer of Status

In determining their recommendation for the outcome of the Transfer of Status, assessors often request additional clarification, written work or other evidence from the candidate after the interview. The assessors then recommend one of four outcomes, which must be considered and approved by the Divisional Graduate Studies Committee.

- (i) Successful transfer – Accompanied by suggestions and advice for future progress
- (ii) Referral for a second attempt at transfer with an interview – This should normally involve the same assessors and take place within one term of the first attempt. If the first attempt is made in the fourth term or later of PRS status, a one-term extension of PRS status is automatically granted to allow the second attempt. This extension of PRS status does not affect the total amount of time permitted for registration on the DPhil. The assessors should provide clear guidance on what needs to be done to improve the application prior to the second attempt at transfer being submitted. This may require additional written work or other evidence, and possibly the appointment of an additional assessor.

Referral may simply represent attempts to ensure that the student's work is enhanced so that it is set on the best possible course and should not necessarily be seen as a failure.

- (iii) Transfer to the *M.Litt.* – Although the work presented was not suitable for transfer to D.Phil. status, nonetheless, the assessors felt it was strong enough for the lower award which is a less demanding and shorter time-scale research degree.

- (iv) Rejection of the application – The assessors cannot recommend transfer to either DPhil status or the lower award.

At the first attempt at transfer only options (i)–(iii) should normally be chosen. At the second attempt, only options (i), (iii) or (iv) should be considered.

If at the first attempt a student is transferred to the lower degree s/he may accept this, or may choose to retain PRS status and make a second transfer application the following term. If a student accepts transfer to the lower degree at the first attempt, or is transferred to the lower degree at the second attempt, s/he may exceptionally be permitted one further opportunity to transfer to DPhil status provided that sufficient time has elapsed (normally at least six months) to allow the possibility of significant improvement, that significant progress has been made, and that the student's supervisor supports the application. In addition the student's college and Director of Graduate Studies would also need to endorse the application.

If a student fails to transfer to DPhil status or to the status of the applicable lower degree after two transfer applications, s/he shall cease to hold the status of a PRS student and his/her name shall be removed from the Register of Graduate Students. In such circumstances, informal counselling, often involving the student's college, should be an integral part of the procedures.

#### 4.1.10 Deferral of Transfer of Status

Any student who has not applied to transfer status by the end of their fourth term will be required to attend a formal academic review meeting involving their supervisor(s) and Director of Graduate Studies (or at least one other member of academic staff who may or may not be a future assessor for Transfer of Status). The purpose of this meeting will be to review progress to date, and to draw up a clear timetable to ensure that Transfer of Status is successfully achieved within four terms (6 terms for Part-time students) as required by the *Examination Regulations*. The student will also be required to apply for a formal deferral of Transfer of Status for one or two further terms by completing an on-line application accessed via Student Self Service <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/selfservice>. The application will then be considered by the student's supervisor and College, with the final decision being made by the OII's Graduate Studies Committee.

In exceptional cases only, an extension of PRS status may be granted beyond six terms. Applications for such extensions require the approval of the University's Education Committee for formal dispensation from the *Examination Regulations*. Students should contact their Graduate Studies Assistant (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/contacts>) for details of the application process. Any extensions to PRS status do not affect the overall time permitted for registration on the D.Phil.

## 4.2 Confirmation of DPhil status

Confirmation of DPhil status is an essential stage on the way to the doctorate. Indeed, it is not possible to submit a thesis for examination until DPhil status has been confirmed. This applies to students who have transferred to the DPhil from an Oxford MLitt, MSc or MPhil as well as to those who enter as a PRS student.

### 4.2.1 The Purpose of Confirmation of Status

The Confirmation of Status process allows the student to have an assessment of his/her thesis progress by two assessors to give an indication of whether it would be reasonable to consider submission of the thesis within the course of a further three terms, given the continuation of satisfactory work. Successful Confirmation of Status should not be seen as explicitly linked to the final outcome of the examination of the thesis.

The confirmation assessment is different to the transfer assessment. The assessors focus on how the research is progressing, the quality of the draft chapters, and on the plan for completion. The assessors look to ensure that the student is making the appropriate amount of progress in the development of the thesis, so that submission could be achieved within 12 terms for full time and 24 terms for part time students. In doing so, assessors are also required to ensure that the student is not attempting to deal with an impossibly or unnecessarily large scope of thesis work or material. The student should benefit from independent assessment of his/her work and should receive authoritative comments and suggestions on problems and how to address them. The assessors may be able provide guidance on how to better present the material and on the use of concepts and methods. Even if the thesis is in good shape, the assessors often stimulate valuable improvements to it. However, the assessors may also identify any weaknesses in theory, research design, data collection and analysis that may compromise the final thesis. The confirmation interview is a good opportunity to prepare for the *vive voce* examination of the thesis.

The confirmation assessment is also a formal test that is possible to fail. It is important to remember, however, that receiving critical comments can be difficult, and it may take students a few weeks to come to terms with them.

The formal Regulations for Confirmation of Status are set out in the general regulations of the *Examination Regulations*, and in the special regulations for individual subjects, grouped within their particular Division. Further information is also available in the Education Committee "Policy on Research Degrees" <https://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/research-degrees>.

### 4.2.2 The Timing of Confirmation of Status

#### i) Students who entered the DPhil as a Probationer Research Student

The general regulations of the *Examination Regulations* state that applications for Confirmation of Status should be made not earlier than the sixth term from admission as a PRS for Full-Time and not earlier than 12 terms for the Part-Time. Any Full-Time student who does not confirm status by the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> term, (18<sup>th</sup> for Part-Time), will be required to apply for deferral of confirmation of status. Deferral applications may result in being allowed extensions of up to three terms in the



case of Full-Time students or six terms for Part-Time students. Further details can be found at <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2015-16/rdtoxfoinsteinst/>. Students should normally achieve confirmation of status three months (6 months Part-Time) before submission of their thesis.

#### ii) Students who progressed to the DPhil from an MPhil

The general regulations of the *Examination Regulations* state that all students should apply for Confirmation of Status within nine terms of their admission as a graduate student. For students who have previously completed an MPhil, (with a thesis in the same broad field as the topic for the DPhil) and have progressed directly to DPhil status, (i.e. transfer of status has been waived) this normally means that Confirmation of Status should be applied for by the end of the third term of the DPhil. Students should also normally achieve confirmation of status three months before submission of their thesis.

### 4.2.3 How to Apply for Confirmation of Status

Applications for confirmation of status should be made using the GSO.14 form available from <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>. Students are required to complete the form, which should then be signed by the student's supervisor and College. Students should include details of any research specific and/or personal and professional skills acquired, or further training needed in, and also information on any other related activities undertaken, e.g. presentation of posters, attendance at conferences etc. Students are also required to state whether their work required research ethics approval (and if appropriate, this was granted). Students should also complete an assessor form (in consultation with their supervisor) which suggests names of appropriate assessors. It is recommended that supervisors contact the proposed assessors before the form is submitted to gauge whether they are able to accept.

Students should aim to submit the following papers as part of their Confirmation of Status documentation:

- Application on **form GSO.14**, available at:  
<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>
  - Signed by supervisor and an appropriate officer of student's college
  - Indicate clearly the status to which they wish to confirm
  - an abstract of the thesis;
- an outline structure of the thesis, consisting of chapter headings, and a brief statement of the intended content;
- an outline timetable detailing what work has already been carried out and what activities are planned for the remaining stages;
- two completed draft chapters intended to form part of the final thesis;
- a self-assessment report on your progress of not more than 300 words, and an indication, where possible, of the anticipated timetable for submission;
- Assessors Approval Form (available on Canvas)
- OLI Training Needs Assessment Form (Available in Appendix H or Canvas)

The complete application must be submitted to the DPhil Coordinator [Laura Maynard](#) by midday on Monday of the 5<sup>th</sup> week of term. Students need to submit **physical copies of all signed forms and an electronic copy of all other materials listed in the application.**

Typically full-time students submit a Confirmation application in Trinity Term of their second year or Michaelmas of their third year. Students cannot Confirm and apply for Viva in the same term. Note that these dates are deadlines, but that materials may be submitted earlier. These deadlines are in place to help ensure that the confirmation application can be assessed before the beginning of the next term.

Students who know that their chosen assessors may be unavailable for a period of time should take that into account and may wish to submit earlier to ensure that their assessment can take place in time to meet the deadline for Confirmation. Students who submit an application in July should be aware that the viva with the assessors may not be held until September because of the long vacation and assessors' availability.

Before submission, students should discuss drafts of all of these items with their supervisor.

#### **4.2.4 Appointment of Assessors and Arranging the Interview**

In order to minimise delays, supervisors are expected to identify appropriate assessors and seek GSC approval at the beginning of the term in which confirmation materials are to be submitted. Two assessors must be appointed, neither of whom will normally be the student's supervisor. Assessors will normally be academic members of staff working in the University of Oxford; only in exceptional circumstances will an external assessor be appointed. It is permissible for the same assessor to be used for both Transfer and Confirmation of Status, and this person may also act as the internal examiner for the DPhil *viva voce* examination.

Supervisors should submit the names of the assessors to the DPhil Coordinator prior to the GSC meeting of the term the student plans to submit their Confirmation. Once the Graduate Studies Committee has confirmed and approved the assessors it is the responsibility of the students' supervisor to contact the assessors to organise a mutually convenient time for the interview. Unless advised otherwise by their supervisor, students should not contact the assessors directly, but may of course respond to their communications about dates etc.

Students should normally expect to be interviewed within four weeks of submitting their application, though this may be longer during the vacation periods due to availability of the assessors. The Confirmation assessment is a formal requirement but the interview is not an official examination or viva, and *sub fusc* is not worn. The assessors will write a report and submit recommendations to the Graduate Studies Committee. Following the interview, students should normally expect to hear the outcome of their assessment within 2 weeks, although this may be longer during the vacation periods.

#### **4.2.5 Instructions to Assessors**

The assessors are asked to contact students as soon as reasonably possible to arrange a time for the interview, or to explain problems in doing so. Students can find it an anxious wait, and may have good reasons for wanting the assessment completed as soon as possible (please let the DPhil Coordinator know if there is a problem in this respect at the time of application).

An applicant for Confirmation of Status should be close to having a complete thesis plan, and the work submitted should be close to reading as a complete thesis chapter. In contrast to the Transfer assessment, omissions and missing perspectives are much more serious at this stage, but if the student can satisfy the assessors at interview that matters will improve, this should not be a reason to decline recommending confirmation of status. The work should be presented in a scholarly fashion and should be essentially of the standard expected of a DPhil thesis in the final examination. While the work is expected to be complete, it is not a requirement for Confirmation of Status that there be no errors or omissions in the documents (footnotes, etc.). The assessors should judge the application against the criteria for success defined below. As with the transfer assessment, the assessors should aim to provide constructive criticism and advice to the student to identify and address deficiencies and thereby strengthen their thesis, rather than presenting a judgemental verdict. Dismissive or aggressive remarks are not appropriate. If it is unclear during the assessment how the research will be completed, or the proposed work is over-large, the assessors may request a revised thesis outline. Assessors may also request further written work or clarifications from the student before submitting their initial report.

The joint assessors' report should be 1–2 pages in length, providing a permanent record of advice given to the student at this stage and indication of the student's progress. It should normally include a summary of the points raised in the interview, feedback on the written work submitted prior to the interview, comments on the positive aspects of the student's work and any concerns about the student's progress and suggestions for the research going forward.

Assessors should consider the clarity of the goals, the chapter structure, the timetable for completion and progress to date, and the significance to the existing literature and field. They should provide an evaluation of the written work submitted and whether the work is presented in a scholarly and lucid manner. Assessors should also consider commenting on whether the student has presented evidence of being able to undertake research that provides new knowledge or

understanding that is capable of advancing their field, will withstand peer review, and may be suitable for publication. Assessors should consider whether the student has developed a systematic acquisition and understanding of the substantial body of knowledge at the forefront of their field and a thorough understanding of the techniques for research needed for advanced academic enquiry. Furthermore, the student should show the capacity to design carry through and defend the thesis within three or at most four years. Finally, for non-native English speakers, the report should indicate the assessors' view of the student's ability to present and defend the work in English.

*Significant differences of opinion between the assessors will be adjudicated by the Graduate Studies Committee, in consultation with the assessors and supervisors*

#### **4.2.6 Criteria for Success**

For Confirmation of Status to be approved, the student will need to be able to show that the research already accomplished shows promise of the ability to produce a satisfactory thesis on the intended topic, the work submitted for assessment is of the standard expected of a DPhil thesis in the final exam, the bulk of any fieldwork has been completed and the analysis is well developed, and the research schedule is viable so that the thesis can be completed within three or at most four years from admission. (four to eight years for part-time students)

Students must also show that they are able to present and defend their work in English. In addition, the assessors will judge the application against the following criteria:

1. Evidence of wide reading and critical review of the literature
2. A clear indication of how the research is being developed into a thesis
3. A clear indication that the thesis will make an original contribution to the field of study
4. Evidence of a progression of argument and logic throughout the thesis
5. Evidence of a scholarly and lucid approach to the research issues
6. A clear timetable for the completion of the research within three or at most four years from admission (four to eight years for part-time students).
7. The ability to write in clear and coherent manner, with due attention to presentation
8. Competence in both written and spoken English
9. The ability to articulate and defend the argument in the interview
10. The draft chapters are of the quality expected for a final DPhil thesis

#### **4.2.7 Outcomes of Confirmation of Status**

The assessors may recommend one of four outcomes, which must be considered and approved by the Graduate Studies Committee.

(i) Successful confirmation – Accompanied by suggestions and advice for future progress.

(ii) Referral for a second attempt at confirmation – This should normally involve the same assessors and take place within one term of the first attempt. If the first attempt is made in the final term permitted, a one-term extension is automatically granted to allow the second attempt. This extension does not affect the total amount of time permitted for registration on the DPhil, however if the student has already been registered on the DPhil for twelve terms, the extension is counted as one of the potential nine terms of extension of time permitted under the general regulations. The assessors should provide clear guidance on what needs to be done to improve the application before the second attempt at confirmation is submitted. This may require additional written work or other evidence, and possibly the appointment of an additional assessor.

Referral may simply represent attempts to ensure that the student's work is enhanced and set on the best possible course, and should not necessarily be seen as a failure. However, a referral

may be disappointing to a student and may take some time to come to terms with, especially if the assessors' comments are highly critical. Most students who do then go on to successfully complete the DPhil see the comments in retrospect as helpful, having given them the opportunity and incentive to make substantial improvements to the thesis and to avoid the risk of a far more costly and time-consuming referral of the final thesis.

(iii) Transfer to *MLitt* – Although the work presented was not suitable for confirmation of DPhil status, nonetheless, the assessor(s) felt it was still strong enough for the lower award which is a less demanding and shorter-timescale research degree. In cases where transfer to lower award is approved, if the student is already in their ninth term or beyond, a formal extension of time will also be needed to allow the student to stay on the graduate register for the lower degree, otherwise their status will lapse, and they will have to subsequently apply for reinstatement to the graduate register.

(iv) Reject the application – The assessors cannot recommend confirmation of status, or transfer to the lower award. This exceptional outcome should only be used if the quality of the student's work has regressed to below the standard previously achieved for transfer of status.

At the first attempt at confirmation only options (i) or (ii) should normally be chosen. At the second attempt, options (i), (iii) or exceptionally (iv) should be considered. The Graduate Studies Committee may also request additional work or other evidence, or appoint an additional assessor to help in making a final decision.

If a student fails to confirm DPhil status or to transfer to the status of the applicable lower degree after two attempts, then his/her student status will lapse and his/her name will be removed from the Register of Graduate Students. In such circumstances, informal counselling, often involving the student's college, should be an integral part of the procedures.

The department should refer to the *Examination Regulations* governing the removal of a graduate student from the Register of Graduate Students for more information.

#### **4.2.8 Deferral of Confirmation of Status**

If a student is unable to apply for Confirmation of Status within nine terms (18<sup>th</sup> terms for part-time students) of admission as a graduate student (or by the deadline defined in the subject specific regulations if later), they must apply for a deferral of confirmation of status, otherwise their student status will lapse and their name will be removed from graduate register. It is possible to apply for a deferral of confirmation of status for up to three terms, as long as the total number of terms from admission as a graduate student does not exceed twelve (18 for part-time students).

Any student who is considering applying for a deferral of confirmation of status will be required to attend a formal academic review meeting involving their supervisor(s) and Director of Graduate Studies (or at least one other member of academic staff who may or may not be a future assessor for confirmation of status). The purpose of this meeting will be to review progress to date, and to draw up a clear timetable to ensure that confirmation of status is successfully achieved within the proposed period of deferral.

To apply for a deferral of confirmation of status, a student will need to complete an online application accessed via Student Self Service <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/selfservice>. The application will then be considered by the student's supervisor and College.

The Director of Graduate Studies and DPhil Programme Director will then assess the application for deferral, taking into account any recommendations from the academic review meeting. If Confirmation of Status is not achieved within nine terms of admission as a graduate student, or approval given for a deferral of confirmation of status, his/her status will lapse. In exceptional cases only, deferral may be granted beyond twelve terms; however, this requires approval by the Director of Graduate Studies, DPhil Programme Director and the University's Education Committee as it requires formal dispensation from the *Examination Regulations*.

Students must submit deferral applications by Monday of week 5 of the term during which they are scheduled to submit their confirmation materials. Applications for deferral must be submitted electronically, including an outline of thesis progress and timeline until submission of confirmation application. Once the Director of Graduate Studies has approved the electronic documents then the student must get the required signatures on a hard copy and submit to Laura Maynard at [laura.maynard@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:laura.maynard@oii.ox.ac.uk).

## 4.3 Entering for Examination for the DPhil

The final stage of the DPhil is submitting a complete thesis, which is then examined at a formal *viva voce*.

### 4.3.1 Examination criteria

The examiners of a DPhil thesis are asked to certify whether:

- the candidate possesses a good general knowledge of the particular field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;
- the candidate has made a significant and substantial contribution in the particular field of learning within which the thesis falls;
- the thesis is presented in a lucid and scholarly manner;
- it merits the degree of Doctor of Philosophy;
- the candidate has presented a satisfactory abstract of the thesis.

DPhil examiners are asked to bear in mind that their judgement of the substantial significance of the work should take into account what may reasonably be expected of a capable and diligent graduate student after three or at most four years of full-time study (or two to three years if you have come from an Oxford MLitt, MSc or MPhil), or the equivalent durations for part-time students).

### 4.3.2 Application process

A few months before a thesis is to be submitted for examination, a student should download the GSO.3 'Application for Appointment of Examiners' form (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>) and the accompanying guides to the examination. (If your thesis title has changed, it is the student's responsibility to request approval of their new title on the GSO.3 application).

The GSO.3 form should be completed by the student, the supervisor and the college and submitted to the DPhil Coordinator at least 14 days before the next Graduate Studies Committee meeting. Students are strongly advised to hand the form in prior (by four to six weeks) to the submission of the thesis to the Examination School. The examiners have to be approved by the Graduate Studies Committee and the examiners' formal acceptance received before a thesis can be sent out.

When submitting the thesis students should deliver **two copies of the following** to the Examination Schools:

- The thesis (bound and meeting the requirements described in section 5)
- An abstract of not more than 300 words (see section 5.3)
- A note of your contact details and availability for the oral examination
- If you have included footnotes at the bottom of each page, a complete set of references separately bound

Once the Examination Schools has received the two copies of the thesis and abstract, and the examiners' formal acceptances, the thesis will be dispatched. The Internal Examiner will arrange the date of the oral examination, the *viva voce* (or *viva* for short). On no account should the

candidate submit their thesis directly to the examiners or contact the examiners directly, although students may of course respond to their communications about dates, etc.

### 4.3.3 Timing

The date by which the student submits their thesis and abstract to the Examination Schools will be influenced by residence and other regulations (see section 8.3 residence requirements) but the submission date that the student states on the form GSO.3 should be no later than the last day of the next vacation.

If students wish to submit during Trinity Term and have to leave the UK during the summer vacation they should remember that potential examiners often have heavy examining commitments in June and July. Students should, therefore, make their application for the appointment of examiners prior to the Graduate Studies Committee meeting in Hilary Term. Any such application must be made at least 14 days before the meeting, and must give a firm date for the planned thesis submission. There remains a risk that the *viva* will not be held until the following Michaelmas Term.

Students may apply to the Oll's Graduate Studies Committee for the oral examination to be held not later than a certain date, provided that this date is not less than one calendar month after the date on which the thesis has been received at the Examination Schools **or** after the date on which the examiners have agreed to act, whichever is the later. Applications should be made to the DPhil Coordinator using the **GSO.16** form. This application **must** be submitted at the same time as the **GSO.3** 'Appointment of Examiners' application form. If the committee is satisfied that there are special circumstances justifying this application, it will ask the examiners to make arrangements to enable the oral examination to be held within the period specified.

If a student has been prevented by exceptional circumstances from completing their thesis within 12 terms of becoming a graduate student (24 terms for Part-Time), then they can apply for an extension of time. Application on the **GSO.15** form must be made to the DPhil Coordinator no later than the term in which they were due to submit. The application will require the support of the students' supervisor and their college. It will be considered by the Graduate Studies Committee at their next available meeting and the committee has the power to grant an extension of up to six terms in all for Full-Time and upto 3 terms for Part-Time students. The Department will normally only approve one term of extension at a time.

### 4.3.4 Selection of examiners

Supervisors are asked to suggest on the **GSO.3** form the names of at least two examiners (one internal from the University, one external), and to consult with the student to check if they have any reasonable objection to any of the names proposed.

Neither examiner will be the student's supervisor, or have given significant help or advice to the student in the preparation of the thesis, or have a connection to the candidate that would impair their ability to act as an impartial examiner. In principle, examiners should be based in the UK or Europe, or planning to visit the UK in any case, as there is only limited funding available to pay the travel costs of external examiners.

It is helpful if the supervisor can check informally with the proposed examiners whether they would in principle be willing to act, and can then indicate this on the form.

### 4.3.5 Oral examination arrangements

The oral examination will normally be held in Oxford, except in exceptional circumstances approved in advance by the University's Senior Proctor. It is advisable therefore to include, inside the front cover of each examiner's copy of your thesis, a note indicating how, when and where you can be contacted about the fixing of the date of the *viva*, and stating which dates would not be possible for you.



# 5 Thesis Preparation & Submission

This section reflects and 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 profundity or originality of interpretation, and by clarity of presentation.

Students should also consult the following guidance notes issued by the Graduate Office downloadable from <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression> :

GSO.20 Notes of guidance for research examinations and the following sections of the *Examination Regulations*:

- Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2015-16/grftdodoctofphil/>.

## 5.1 Preparation

### 5.1.1 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 too much)
- can be supervised and researched in Oxford (in terms of the resources available, such as supervisors and libraries)
- hasn't 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)
- doesn't 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 practical, data and results will be published online, 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.



### 5.1.2 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.

### 5.1.3 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 a DPhil student wishes to revise their thesis title they must make an application to do so by completing a **GSO.6 form** available at: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>. DPhil students should also note that if the research area changes dramatically that they may also need to resubmit another CUREC form to seek ethical approval.

### 5.1.4 Notifying funders of changes of title or topic

If you have funding from external bodies such as the ESRC, you must check the terms of their funding to determine whether you need the funding body's approval for a change of title. Normally such approval is needed for a change of research topic, but not for a minor change of title. If approval is required it is likely to be the responsibility of your supervisor to ensure that the relevant body is contacted and its approval sought.

### 5.1.5 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.

### 5.1.6 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 ensure that your computer is automatically saving work.

## English

A thesis must be in the English language and should, as far as 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.

## 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. Chapters, sections, sub-sections, etc. should be numbered in a systematic and consistent way. For

example, Section 3.5.2 might be the second subsection of Section 5, which is itself inside Chapter 3.

### 5.1.7 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/>.

Particularly for theses in some domains of research, it may be appropriate to give references in footnotes. 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 footnote referencing 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.

Modern software packages exist that will automate the procedure of compiling lists of references and inserting properly formatted citations and references into your thesis. Examples of such software packages include Endnote, Mendeley, and BibTeX. The use of such software minimises the chance of improper or inconsistent citation practice and is recommended.

### 5.1.8 Thesis length

The maximum length of a DPhil thesis is 100,000 words, excluding the bibliography. 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 Graduate Studies Committee for your DPhil to exceed the limits. Such permission is granted only very exceptionally.

In calculating the DPhil thesis length, please note the following points:

- The only item excluded from calculations of the number of words is the bibliography.
- Tables in the text are counted in terms of their word equivalents.
- Footnotes and appendices are included in calculations of word length.

### 5.1.9 Integrated Thesis

An Oxford DPhil thesis has traditionally been submitted in monograph format, as a series of chapters presented in the style of a book. The majority of DPhil theses continue to be submitted in this format.

However, it is increasingly common in some fields for theses to include published papers, or papers intended for future publication, within the main body of the text; this type of work is known

as an 'integrated thesis'. Whether a thesis is integrated or conventional in format, the content of the thesis should reflect the amount, originality and level of work expected for a DPhil thesis.

To ensure the thesis constitutes a thematically coherent whole, an integrated thesis must include an introduction, a literature survey and a conclusion. Any included papers should relate directly to the candidate's approved field of study, and should have been written whilst holding the status of PRS or a student for an Oxford MSc, MPhil, MLitt, or DPhil. Students are expected to clarify in the introduction and/or conclusion how the chapters are integrated as a complete text or how the papers relate to one another. In some cases, students may wish to rewrite portions of the published material to make it fit the structure of their thesis. If they have done so, this should be clearly indicated, normally with a footnote or endnote. The original sources of published papers should always be clearly cited.

There is no minimum or maximum number of papers written for publication that can be submitted as part of the DPhil thesis, but the thesis must address an overarching research question, represent a coherent and focused body of research, and be of the standard to pass a doctoral examination. Requests to submit an integrated thesis should be made with the support of the student's supervisor(s) to the Doctoral Director prior to applying for either Transfer of Status or Confirmation of Status. If the Doctoral Director approves the request, the final decision will be made by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Oxford Internet Institute based on the recommendation of the assessors for these milestones. Applications to submit an integrated thesis will normally not be considered for students who have already passed Confirmation of Status. Students who wish to change back to a conventional thesis format are required to make this request in writing to the Graduate Studies Committee prior to applying for their next assessment milestone or final thesis submission. Ideally students must clarify when they submit their transfer application if they plan to submit an integrated thesis.

As when submitting a conventional thesis, students are required to confirm that the thesis is wholly their own work, or to acknowledge any parts of the thesis which are not their own work. Papers written in collaboration should not be included unless the greater part of the work is directly attributed to the candidate themselves, and the supervisor so certifies. It is important that the extent of the student's contribution to the collaborative work is clear and all co-authors should certify in writing to the Graduate Studies Committee what part of the work represents that of the candidate. Additionally, the student must be able to defend all papers written in collaboration in their entirety. If the Graduate Studies Committee is not satisfied that the greater part of the work included in the thesis is the student's own, the committee will not proceed to appoint examiners.

Where papers form part of an integrated thesis, they should be incorporated in accordance with the general regulations for the "Preparation and submission of theses for the Degrees of M.Litt., M.Sc. by Research, and D.Phil." available at: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2015-16/rgoveresedegr/>

Students should note that an integrated thesis is not an easier option than a conventional thesis. Students should be aware that the inclusion of one or more papers which have been accepted for publication or have been published does not of itself constitute proof that the work is of sufficient quality or significance to merit the award of the degree concerned. This remains a judgement of the Graduate Studies Committee on the recommendation of its examiners.

## **5.2 Intellectual Property Rights and Plagiarism**

### **5.2.1 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/>.

### 5.2.2 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation by a student 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. Additionally, you must not submit work for assessment that you have already submitted (partially or in full), either for your current course or for another qualification of this, or any other, university (this is known as auto-plagiarism).

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. The OII reserves the right to check samples of submitted essays for plagiarism. All students are required to keep electronic copies of their written work, and may be required to produce these in order to facilitate this process. These checks may take place on randomly selected essays or theses as well as on material identified as suspect by Tutors, Assessors, or Examiners.

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.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/>.

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 and plagiarism.

## 5.3 Thesis submission

### 5.3.1 Overall

The thesis must:

- be of no more than the maximum word count (100,000 words for DPhil), not counting bibliography
- include a title page (see below)
- include an abstract (see below)
- be submitted in English

### 5.3.2 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).
- Author, college and words to the effect of 'Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DPhil in Information, Communication and the Social Sciences in 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 but exclude the bibliography.

### 5.3.3 Abstract

DPhil theses must have an abstract of up to 300 words, which should be on one side of a single sheet of A4 paper. It should be bound into all bound copies of the thesis, and be placed immediately after the title page.

With the final library copy of the thesis you should 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'.

### 5.3.4 Preparation of theses and abstracts-style and format

- Your thesis must be submitted online via the Research Thesis Digital Submission (RTDS) application. The typewritten part of the thesis must be saved as a pdf. Additional files (images, recordings, annexes etc should be saved to a single zip file and uploaded under "Additional Documents".
- Your thesis must be submitted in English, apart from quotations and recognised technical formulae, or where the Divisional or Faculty Board has determined otherwise.
- Your thesis may be scanned with text-matching software (either iThenticate or TurnItIn) should the examiners question the authenticity of the work, but such theses will NOT be saved to the software databases.
- Pages of the thesis must be numbered.
- Include an abstract with each copy of your thesis (generally after the title page in the thesis).
- Include a title page with each copy of your thesis, giving your full name, college, thesis title and your degree.

- The main body of your thesis should be in double spacing with quotations and footnotes in single spacing.
- Portrait would usually be expected, landscape may be permitted by agreement with the relevant board.
- Select an easily readable font, such as Times New Roman.
- Font size 12pt is preferred, but a minimum font size 11pt is recommended for text and 10pt for footnotes.
- You should allow a margin of 3 to 3.5cms on the left-hand edge of each page. Footnotes should normally be placed at the bottom of each page. Where they are given at the end of the thesis, two separate unbound copies of footnotes should also be presented, for the convenience of the examiners.

### **5.3.5 Submission of examiner's copies of your thesis**

- You must submit your digital examiners' copy of your thesis online, via RTDS (Research Thesis Digital Submission), no later than the last day of the vacation immediately following the term in which your application for the appointment of examiners was made. Login to the Research Digital Submission website via <https://student.rtds.ox.ac.uk/>.
- You may submit the digital examiner's copy of your thesis at the same time as applying for the appointment of examiners, but note that your examiners will not be sent a link to download the thesis, until [form GSO.3](#) has been approved and your examiners have formally confirmed their appointment to the Research Degree Team at the Examination Schools.
- If your thesis title has changed, it is your responsibility to request approval of the new title on your GSO.3 form. The GSO.3 form should be completed by yourself, your supervisor and your college and submitted to your [Graduate Studies Assistant](#). Hand the form in prior (by four to six weeks) to the submission of the thesis where possible. The examiners have to be approved by the relevant board and the examiners' formal acceptance received before a link to download the thesis can be sent out.
- Hard copies of your thesis may only be requested by your examiners from the Research Degrees Team. The minimum time between both examiners receiving the official digital copy of the thesis and a viva date remains at four weeks (as referred to under 'the oral examination or viva' section below).
- You can access RTDS via the [Research Theses Digital Submission website](#). Full guidance on the functionality and instructions on how to submit your thesis using RTDS can be found in the [Quick Reference Guide for Students](#).
- Examiners are required to return the examiners' joint report within one month of the date of the candidate's viva or the receipt of the completed minor corrections.

Candidates with a maximum submission date of Friday 0Wk MT2019 (ie last day of TT2019) will not be permitted to submit under the new regulations. Any candidate who has a later maximum submission date and wishes to submit under these new regulations may do so from Monday 1Wk MT2019 but this will count as an MT2019 submission and cannot be backdated to TT2019.

## 5.4 Dispensations from viva regulations

In particular, the Education Committee would remind candidates, supervisors, and examiners of the following:

- The normal expectation is that the oral examination will take place in Oxford with the candidate and both examiners present. If the external examiner is unable to come to Oxford because of exceptional circumstances, or if there is other good reason, permission may be given by the relevant board for a *viva* to be held by videoconference with the external examiner. Such permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances.
- Requests for early *vivas* should be reasonable: it should be noted that the regulations do not permit a candidate to request an examination date that is earlier than one month after receipt of their thesis at the Examination Schools. External examiners should be advised not to make their travel arrangements in advance of early *viva* requests being agreed. Requests from examiners to hold the *viva* sooner than one month after receipt of the thesis, which will involve an application to the Proctors for dispensation from the regulations, will be considered only in exceptional circumstances.
- Electronic copies of theses should not be sent direct to examiners by supervisors or candidates. When permission has been granted for an examiner to receive an electronic copy of a thesis, it must be sent from the Examination Schools.
- All requests for dispensations from regulations should be well planned and made in good time.

## 5.5 Notification of results of DPhil viva

The report and recommendation of the examiners is submitted to the OII's Graduate Studies Committee. The examiners have a number of options which they can recommend to the Committee:

- a. that the Committee should grant you leave to 'supplicate for' the degree of DPhil (a pass with or without minor corrections)
- b. that your thesis should be referred back to you for re-examination for the degree of DPhil after substantial changes (referral for DPhil)
- c. that you should be given leave to supplicate for the degree of MLitt (award of MLitt)
- d. that you should be given leave to supplicate for the degree of MRes (award of MRes)
- e. that your thesis should be referred back to you for re-examination for the degree of MLitt only (referral for MLitt)



- f. that you should be given a choice between referral for DPhil or award of MLitt
- g. that you should be given a choice between referral for DPhil or referral for MLitt
- h. that your application for leave to supplicate should be refused (an outright fail)

The Graduate Studies Committee will usually accept the examiners' recommendations but have the power to appoint one or more fresh examiners if they do not accept the examiners' recommendation or the examiners are unable to agree on a recommendation.

Formal confirmation of the Committee's decision will be sent in writing to you by the Examination Schools as soon as possible.

### **5.5.1 Minor DPhil corrections**

If, at the time of the *viva*, the students' examiners require any minor corrections or amendments, they must supply these to the examiners within 1 month from the point at which the student receives the detailed list of minor corrections. If a student cannot complete minor corrections within this time period, students can apply, using the GSO.18 form, to extend this for another 1 month maximum. Please note that an extension is only granted in exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the Graduate Studies Committee. The form of such minor corrections is normally that they are incorporated in the finalised and hard-bound copy of the thesis. Then the examiners, having approved them, pass the finalised thesis on to the Examination Schools, and send their report and recommendation to the Graduate Office.

### **5.5.2 Major Corrections**

If the student's examiners require major corrections, they must supply these to the examiners within 6 months from receiving the list of corrections.

### **5.5.3 Reference Back**

If the student's examiners' decision is for reference back for revision and re-submission then a student must supply these within 2 years from which the student received the statement of required revisions.

## **5.6 Library copies**

Once the DPhil student is given leave to supplicate they must then have two hardbound copies made and must submit one to the Bodleian Library and one to the OII library in order to graduate. The Department is happy to pay the students printing costs for the one copy provided to the Library. Please speak to Karen Mead on Reception further about this.

Once the examiners have recommended to the OII Graduate Studies Committee that you should be granted 'leave to supplicate' (an Oxford term dating back to 1691) the finalised copy of your thesis must be received by the Examination Schools for subsequent deposit in the Bodleian Library. If there are no minor corrections to be made, you can send the finalised thesis direct to the Examination Schools.

This library copy must be in a permanently fixed binding, drilled and sewn, in a stiff board case in library buckram, in a dark colour, and lettered on the spine with your surname and initials, the degree, and the year of submission.

It should also be accompanied by the following materials:

- one form GSO.3B (Deposit and Consultation of Theses);
- one form GSO.26 (Information for Thesis Cataloguing).

### **5.6.1 Digital Copy**

A digital copy of the student's thesis will also need to be deposited in the Oxford University Research Archive (ORA) at <http://ora.ox.ac.uk>. ORA provides high visibility and digital preservation for Oxford digital theses. Students will need to go to the ORA help and Information website at <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ora>. Students should contact [ORA@bodleian.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ORA@bodleian.ox.ac.uk) if they require further information or have any queries regarding deposit of their digital thesis. Please notify the DPhil Coordinator at [dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk) when you have successfully submitted your thesis onto ORA so that this can be linked onto the OII website.

Please see appendix I for further information on submitting onto ORA.

## **5.7 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>.

DPhil students will not be able to take their degree until the Bodleian Library copy has been received.

## **5.8 DPhil students research data and records management**

All DPhil students who collect data that they utilise in their thesis are required by University of Oxford to submit that data to the Ora (Research Data Archive). Please see the Ora website for further information at <http://researchdata.ox.ac.uk/preserving-your-data/ora-data/>.

# 6 Supervision and Teaching

## 6.1 Supervision

All graduate students have a University supervisor. The University 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.

### 6.1.1 Appointment of supervisor(s)

DPhil students will be allocated a supervisor based on their original submitted research proposal. This choice will normally be confirmed at the end of the first term. The supervisor will have the overall responsibility for the direction of the student's research. This primary supervisor is assigned by the OII's Graduate Studies Committee and may be in a different college from the student.

Students are also encouraged to consider asking a second member of the faculty to serve as a co-supervisor. This is a requirement for ESRC-funded students, but many students find that the inclusion of a second supervisor to be very useful in terms of support and guidance. The second supervisor may be identified and involved from the start of a DPhil student's time at the OII, or as is frequently done, the second supervisor may be added after the Transfer of Status.

Co-supervisors will be normally appointed if the student's area of research requires expertise in areas outside the primary supervisor's research interests or to cover during his or her leave of absence. What is said below about primary supervisor applies also to joint supervisors. The second supervisor may be in a different department or might be an external supervisor (for example if your research project involves collaboration with another university).

Part-Time Students are required to have two supervisors.

### 6.1.2 Role of supervisors

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

The 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)

There should be at least three points at you review your skills training needs with your supervisor: in your initial supervision, in preparation for Transfer of Status (where the transfer of status form has been amended accordingly) and at Confirmation of Status.

The University's Educational Policy and Standards Committee issued a *Memorandum of Guidance for Supervisors and Research Students* which you should read. It is reproduced in the *Examination Regulations* on pp 892-895.

Please note that supervisors' availability in Oxford during the summer vacation months may be limited and therefore it is important students send drafts in a timely manner. Good practice would be to ask students to submit more than 4 weeks 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. However it is helpful if supervisors could warn students of any extended period of unavailability during the month before the thesis submission date.

### 6.1.3 Contact with supervisors

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

DPhil students who are residents at Oxford should normally have the opportunity of individual supervision **at least four times a term**. The intensity of supervision will vary depending on what stage you have reached in writing your thesis but for DPhil students at an absolute minimum should be **at least once a term** for formal reporting purposes with your primary supervisor.

It is essential for you to keep in regular contact with your supervisor, irrespective of whether you are resident in Oxford or researching elsewhere. It would be a great help to your supervisors if you would contact them at or before the beginning of each term. 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 DPhil Coordinator.

Part-time students will also be expected to set up regular meetings with their supervisor(s). Depending on the supervisor and student, meetings may be as frequent as weekly but also may be less frequent: **the departmental minimum standard for PT DPhil supervisory meetings is for at least once per term**. These meetings may be face to face, but they can also be held via phone, Skype and email.

### 6.1.4 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 Reporting (GSR) 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 progressing at the

expected rate. 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 Reporting (GSR) please refer to appendix G.

### 6.1.5 Change of supervisor

#### Incompatibility

The department and all University supervisors recognise that occasionally there can arise incompatibilities of temperament or approach between supervisor and student, and that in such circumstances a change of supervisor may be desirable, not least because of the central importance Oxford attaches to the relationship between supervisor and student. Students are urged to discuss any problem of this kind freely and in full confidence with any of the following:

- The Director of Graduate Studies
- The DPhil Programme Director
- Any other member of the OII's Graduate Studies Committee
- Their College Adviser or the College's Tutor for Graduates

In all cases it is important that any definite proposal for change of supervisor be made in writing on **form GSO.25** for DPhil students.

### 6.1.6 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. **Form GSO.25** should be used. If you find problems regarding any such arrangements you should take the matter up directly and promptly with those listed above.

### 6.1.7 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.

## 6.2 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:

- *Memorandum of Guidance for Supervisors and Research Students (see Examination Regulations pp. 892-895).*
- *Notes of Guidance for Research Degrees*, Section 5 on 'the Role of the Student'; issued by the Educational Policy and Standards Committee of the University, found at <<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/research>>

## 6.3 Teaching by graduate students

The OII welcomes the development of teaching skills and experience that tutorial teaching can bring to graduate students provided the number of hours does not exceed 6 per week in term time, including time spent on preparation and marking.

The OII offers all DPhil students the opportunity for paid Teaching Assistants to help on the MSc courses. DPhil students must apply for the position as the positions can be competitive. Please contact the Personnel and/or DPhil Coordinator for further information.

The Teaching Assistant experience can be used towards an award, Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (HEA), which is recognised at universities across the UK. Please see appendix G for more information on the award. Students should contact the Director of Graduate Studies in the first instance to discuss the possibility of working towards the HEA award.

Depending on a student's disciplinary background, opportunities to teach undergraduates may also exist through departments other than the OII. In order to provide teaching, you must first:

- attend a half-day course in Tutorial Teaching or in Small-Group teaching provided by the Centre for Teaching and Learning.
- obtain the written agreement of your supervisor and your college.

Arrangements may differ from department to department but in Sociology and Politics, you would then be able to ask to have your name included in the Tutorial Register managed by the Department of Politics and International Relations. The Register is circulated to College tutors who may approach you with an offer of tutorial teaching. Before accepting an offer you should make sure that you have a simple written statement setting out the expectations on both sides (hours of work, conditions, length of contract and rates of pay). All paid work should be approved by your supervisor and the DPhil Programme Director.

# 7 Feedback, concerns and queries

## 7.1 Feedback

Students will receive regular feedback from their supervisor through the Graduate Supervision Reporting (GSR) termly reports. It is expected that you will complete a self-assessment report every reporting period. If you have any difficulty completing this you must speak to your supervisor or Director of Graduate Studies. Your self-assessment report will be used by your supervisor(s) as a basis to complete a report on your performance this reporting period, for identifying areas where further work may be required, and for reviewing your progress against agreed timetables and plans for the term ahead. GSR will alert you by email when your supervisor or DGS has completed your report and it is available for you to view.

Please see Appendix G: The GSR Graduate Supervision for further information on the GSR System. Students are also expected to make a self-assessment of their progress over each academic year including any problems that they might be experiencing in their academic work or with supervision. Students will need to complete a Training Needs Assessment form and return to the DPhil Coordinator towards the end of the academic year. The form will be seen by the students' supervisor who will discuss issues or concerns with the student and will take follow-up action as required, thus ensuring that the student receives appropriate help and support and will be used to alert the Graduate Studies Committee and the student's college to any issues that need to be addressed.

DPhil students will also have an annual meeting with the DPhil Programme Director to review their progress and are encouraged to consult the DPhil Programme Director, at any time during the year, to address particular needs or problems.

## 7.2 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 evaluation forms at the end of each lecture or seminar series. Further information about this will be given by course providers and the DPhil 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.

Further to this we also offer termly feedback sessions which gives DPhil students to provide constructive feedback on the programme in general. These are usually scheduled after the DPhil Seminar in week 8.

## 7.3 Student Representation

Course Reps are a key link between the students within your cohort or year group to the academic staff within the OII. They seek out students' views and represent you at meetings, working in partnership with staff to improve your course, campaign for change, and resolve any course-related issues which may arise. Course Reps work closely with the Divisional Board Reps, Oxford SU, and its elected officers (both full and part-time) to improve students' experience across the university. Throughout Michaelmas term the Oxford Student Union put on specific training for course reps for each division.

Please see the Oxford Student Union website at <https://www.oxfordsu.org/education/representation/> for information on training sessions that they provide which all new course reps are strongly advised to attend. These sessions are usually held in Michaelmas Term. The Oxford Student Union also has a basic guide <https://www.oxfordsu.org/resourcehub/courserepguide/> on expectations of a course rep.

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 three representatives from among the DPhil students to sit on this committee.

The student representative will serve on the committee for one academic year at a time 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 weeks 3 & 7. 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.

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.

Course representatives should:

- regularly seek out the views and opinions of the students they represent on all matters concerning their student experience;
- bring course-level issues and concerns raised by the students they represent to meetings of the GJCC;
- attend and contribute, as far as possible, to any other meetings with staff to which they are invited;



- ensure that they are prepared for meetings by reading papers and consulting with the students they represent on the issues to be discussed;
- provide feedback to the students they represent on the outcomes of meetings;
- liaise with other course representatives to form a picture of the views of the department student body;
- attend training for course representatives provided by Oxford SU.

Oxford Student Union also has Divisional reps who represent students at Divisional level. They sit on the Divisional Board and relay the views of students to the academics. These students also are members of Student Council. These elected reps are key links for you as a Course Rep and you get in contact with them via [pg-socsci@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:pg-socsci@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk)

The Policy and Guidance on student engagement and representation document can be downloaded at [https://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/academic/documents/media/policy\\_guidance\\_on\\_student\\_engagement\\_representation.pdf](https://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/academic/documents/media/policy_guidance_on_student_engagement_representation.pdf).

If you wish to contact any of the student reps they can be contacted at [dphil.reps@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dphil.reps@oii.ox.ac.uk).

## 7.4 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 programme director, 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 DPhil Coordinator or the Graduate Office at the Social Science Division, 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 prepare for their careers after graduate school.

On a more personal level:

- Students can consult one of the OII's harassment advisors if they believe they are being harassed or have any other personal issues that they would like to discuss. The OII has seven harassment advisors in place, Mrs Laura Maynard, Mrs Karen Mead, Mr David Sutcliffe, Dr Kathryn Eccles, Professor Sandra Wachter, Dr Grant Blank and Dr Peaks Krafft.
- The Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service support is an all-in-one provision and they provide support and advice to students who have been affected by sexual harassment or violence. This also includes stalking someone or following them in person and/or online. See <http://www.ox.ac.uk/againstsexualviolence> or e-mail [service@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:service@admin.ox.ac.uk)
- 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 October to November 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 are 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.

#### **7.4.1 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. She can be contacted at [victoria.mcdermott@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:victoria.mcdermott@oii.ox.ac.uk).

## **7.5 Complaints and academic appeals within the faculty/department of Oxford Internet Institute**

The University, the Social Science Division and the OII 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.

Where such a need arises, 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) is often the simplest way to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

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

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

### 7.5.1 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 DPhil Programme (Dr Kathryn Eccles) or with the Director of Graduate Studies (Prof Greg Taylor) 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.

### 7.5.2 Academic appeals

An academic appeal is an appeal against the decision of an academic body (e.g. boards of examiners, transfer and confirmation decisions etc.), on grounds such as procedural error or evidence of bias. There is no right of appeal against academic judgement.

If you have any concerns about your assessment process or outcome it is advisable to discuss these first with your subject or college tutor, Senior Tutor, course director, director of studies, supervisor or college or departmental administrator as appropriate. They will be able to explain the assessment process that was undertaken and may be able to address your concerns. Queries must not be raised directly with the examiners.

If you still have concerns you can make a formal appeal to the Proctors who will consider appeals under the [University Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

# 8 Regulations and Policies

## 8.1 Examination Regulations

*Examination Regulations* are published in July each year covering the academic year from October to September. They are 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 version of the *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.

The University's framework document for graduate students undertaking research degrees which has been developed by the University's Educational Policy and Standards Committee can be found at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/research>.

## 8.2 Fees regulations

University fees are paid termly through the Students College. The following maximum fee liability applies:

Nine (9) or Eighteen (18) for Part-Time, if you have an Oxford MSc

Six (6) or Twelve (12) for Part-Time, if you have an Oxford MPhil

Nine (9) or Eighteen (18) for Part-Time, if you have not studied at Oxford University for the degrees above

Fees are charged whether or not a student is working in Oxford. Fees are not charged if student status is formally suspended by the Graduate Studies Committee.

College fees are also payable, and students should enquire with their college about these. Current College fees can also be found at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/tuition-and-college-fees/college-fees?wssl=1>.

## 8.3 Residence requirements (Full-Time Students only)

Full Time 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 each academic year. The dates of full term can be found at

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/about/facts-and-figures/dates-of-term?wssl=1> and in the front of the *Examination Regulations*.

Students will also need to be available in Oxford for several events outside full term, from the induction programme to *viva voce* examinations. Research away from Oxford should be discussed with your supervisor.

The minimum residence requirement for the degree of DPhil is 6 terms (including any period in PRS student status), unless a student already holds an MLitt, MRes, MPhil or MSc degree from Oxford University, when a minimum of 3 terms residence is required. From this period of residence a DPhil student may apply for dispensation of up to 3 terms. After transfer to DPhil status, students are not required to reside continuously, and may indeed need to be away from Oxford to conduct their fieldwork. Although no formal permission is then required from the department for absences of this kind, students are reminded that they should keep their supervisor(s) and college aware of their plans, and that they should maintain regular contact with their supervisor(s) at all times while a student is away.

### **8.3.1 Dispensation from residence requirement**

Formal dispensations from residence requirements have to be approved by the Graduate Studies Committee and the student's college.

### **8.3.2 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.)

### **8.3.3 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.

### **8.3.4 Fees**

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

### **8.3.5 Period of suspension**

Research students may be allowed to suspend for one or more terms. When the student returns from suspension, they are to complete the GSO 17A *Confirmation of Return from Suspension* form.

### **8.3.6 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.

### 8.3.7 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.

## 8.4 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 that do not arrive through the official channels. If a student falls ill and thinks that this might result in a subsequent application for an extension of time, they should obtain a medical certificate at the time. Students should always let their supervisor know when illness has prevented work on the thesis.

## 8.5 Policies

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

### 8.5.1 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?wssl=1>

## 8.5.2 University Statutes and Regulations

<https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/>

This contains numerous useful documents; see e.g.: Regulations Relating to the Use of Information Technology Facilities

## 8.5.3 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

## 8.5.4 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

## 8.5.5 Diversity and Equal Opportunities Unit

***“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.”*** University of Oxford

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:

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

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: [edu.web.ox.ac.uk](mailto:edu.web.ox.ac.uk) 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: [edu.web.ox.ac.uk/harassment-advice](http://edu.web.ox.ac.uk/harassment-advice). There are a range of faith societies, belief groups, and religious centres within Oxford University that are open to students. For more information visit: [edu.web.ox.ac.uk/religion-and-belief](http://edu.web.ox.ac.uk/religion-and-belief)

### **8.5.6 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)

Oxford SU also runs a series of campaigns to raise awareness and promote causes that matter to students. For full details, visit [www.oxfordsu.org/communities/campaigns/](http://www.oxfordsu.org/communities/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)

### **8.5.7 Complaints of Harassment**

The University 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 students are respected. Harassment or victimisation is regarded as unacceptable behaviour and is not tolerated in any form. All members of the University are expected to treat each other fairly and with respect, courtesy and consideration. This Procedure is designed to deal with student reports of harassment by other students that arise in a University context. This covers behaviour on University or college premises, or in the course of University activity within or outside Oxford whether academic, sporting, social, cultural, or other. Harassing behaviours can take a variety of forms as defined in the University Harassment Policy. Reports of harassment against students which arise purely within the college environment may be dealt with under appropriate college procedures, while reflecting the principles of the University Harassment Policy. Reports of harassment brought by students against University staff will be dealt with under the staff Procedure.

If a member of staff wishes to make a report of harassment against a student, this will normally be dealt with through the University Student Disciplinary Procedure: Non-Academic Misconduct. In the first instance, the member of staff should seek support and guidance from their head of department or line manager.

Student Welfare and Support Services can provide support to students, and to staff requiring advice on student cases. Where the harassment is of a sexual nature, students can contact the Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service. All reports made to support services will be recorded in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy.



In serious cases, it is likely to be appropriate to proceed directly to stages 2 and 3 of this Procedure.

### **Harassment Complaint Stage 1 – Information Action**

In some cases, a student who feels harassed by another student may feel able to approach the person in question to explain what conduct the first student finds upsetting, offensive or unacceptable, and to ask that person to refrain from that behaviour. At no time should a student feel obliged to approach an alleged harasser, and the University does not wish to suggest that students who feel that they have been harassed are responsible for rectifying the situation. It may often be appropriate to proceed directly to stages 2 and 3 of the procedure.

Before taking informal action, the student could discuss the situation with a Harassment Advisor, or in the case of sexual behaviour, with a Specialist Advisor at the [Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service](#).

The OII has 4 trained Harassment Advisors who are part of the University's confidential harassment advisors network.

### **What can the harassment advisor do?**

Listen to staff and students who believe they are being harassed, to clarify the options open to them and to assist them in resolving the matter informally where possible and provide similar support to those accused of harassment.

Where requested, support individuals throughout the resolution of their concerns. This may include discussing with the individual what they may wish to say or write to the person whom they feel has harassed or bullied them, or how they might approach a senior member of staff for assistance in resolving the issue. This list is not exhaustive, but includes empowering and supporting the individual.

Deal with all cases with the utmost confidentiality except in cases where there is an unacceptable risk to a member of staff, student or to the institution.

The harassment advisor cannot:

- approach the alleged harasser in an attempt to mediate or resolve the matter for you;
- act as your representative or advocate; or
- be involved in any formal stage of the process, be it in writing the formal complaint, the investigation, disciplinary or grievance procedures, except by way of giving you the support you need during this time.

Further details on the role of the harassment advisor can be found on the [Harassment Advisor Network webpage](#).

### **OII harassment advisors:**

Laura Maynard	<u><a href="mailto:laura.maynard@oii.ox.ac.uk">laura.maynard@oii.ox.ac.uk</a></u>
Karen Mead	<u><a href="mailto:karen.mead@oii.ox.ac.uk">karen.mead@oii.ox.ac.uk</a></u>
David Sutcliffe	<u><a href="mailto:david.sutcliffe@oii.ox.ac.uk">david.sutcliffe@oii.ox.ac.uk</a></u>
Kathryn Eccles	<u><a href="mailto:Kathryn.eccles@oii.ox.ac.uk">Kathryn.eccles@oii.ox.ac.uk</a></u>
Sandra Wachter	<u><a href="mailto:Sandra.wachter@oii.ox.ac.uk">Sandra.wachter@oii.ox.ac.uk</a></u>
Grant Black	<u><a href="mailto:Grant.blank@oii.ox.ac.uk">Grant.blank@oii.ox.ac.uk</a></u>

If the student does not feel comfortable contacting a local advisor in their college or department, they can contact the Harassment Line for details of another advisor (Tel. 01865 270760 or email [harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk)). A Harassment Advisor can:

- listen to students who believe they are being harassed, to clarify the options open to them and to assist them in resolving the matter informally where possible
- discuss with a student what they may wish to say or write to the person who they feel has harassed or bullied them or to a senior member of staff who can take action

### **Harassment Complaint Stage 2 – Student Welfare and Support Services**

If informal action does not succeed in resolving the situation, or would not be appropriate given the nature of the behaviour, it is very important to get advice and support to understand the options available. Students can contact a local Harassment Advisor or the Harassment Line (Tel. 01865 270760 or e-mail [harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk)), or the [Oxford SU Student Advice Service](#).

Other sources of advice include college Deans or Welfare staff, a Director of Graduate Studies, [Peer Supporters](#), [Peers of Colour](#) or [Rainbow Peers](#).

The University offers a voluntary mediation service for students who find themselves in conflict with another student ([the Student Resolution Service](#)). Any student or staff member can make a confidential enquiry via e-mail to: [mediation@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:mediation@admin.ox.ac.uk). This service is not appropriate for cases of serious harassing behaviour or criminal conduct.

These sources of support and advice are also available to students who have been accused of harassment. Students can contact a local Harassment Advisor or (for reports of a sexual nature) a Specialist Advisor: [supportservice@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:supportservice@admin.ox.ac.uk).

If the harassment is sexual in nature, one of the specialist advisors in the Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service can:

- give advice on options available to the student
- put in place practical support and manage any impact on academic work
- refer the student to appropriate support services
- arrange mediation between the student and alleged harasser, if both parties agree, with a trained mediator
- ensure that relevant members of staff within the collegiate university are informed of the case if appropriate, with consent
- support students through a formal disciplinary process

### **Harassment Complaint Stage 3 – Formal Written Complaint**

If informal action does not succeed in resolving the situation, or would not be appropriate given the nature of the behaviour, the student should make a formal written Report to the Proctors. In some cases, it will be appropriate to proceed directly to this stage. The Proctors' role is to determine whether the student who is the subject of the Report has breached the [University Code of Discipline](#). Students should refer to the [Disciplinary Procedures](#) for details, including Appendix C: Special Arrangements in Reports involving Sexual Misconduct and/or violence.

If the student making the formal Report has not accessed advice and support, the relevant caseworker will normally direct the student to Student Welfare and Support Services.

The formal Report should set out as clearly and succinctly as possible

- i. the nature of the behaviour that the reporting student is concerned about;
- ii. the effect of this behaviour on the reporting student; and
- iii. where possible, the resolution that the reporting student is seeking.

The Report should include dates and details of any witnesses, together with any documentary evidence. The reporting student should also state, where appropriate, any action taken at Stages 1 or 2.

The Oxford SU Student Advice Service, or if appropriate, the Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service can discuss a draft of the formal Report with the reporting student in order to check that items (i)-(iii) above are covered and that relevant supporting documentary evidence is included. These Services cannot offer legal advice, or speculate on possible outcomes.

If the reporting student is dissatisfied with the way this procedure has been followed, they can make a complaint under the Student Complaints Procedure, in which case the complaint will be considered by members of staff who have not previously been involved in the case.

### **Referrals**

On occasion, reports of harassment which should be considered under this Procedure may be made to staff other than those named in this procedure. In this situation, staff should explain the Procedure, and refer the student to Student Welfare and Support Services ([supportservice@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:supportservice@admin.ox.ac.uk)).

If a student does not wish to seek support and advice, or to make a formal Report or if there are queries about the procedure to be followed, staff can contact the Director of Student Welfare and Support Services' office for advice on a confidential basis ([director.swss@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:director.swss@admin.ox.ac.uk)).

There may be occasions when it is appropriate for the Director of Student Welfare and Support Services to make recommendations to appropriate bodies, including the Proctors, regarding arrangements that would have the purpose of limiting contact between students for so long as may be considered reasonably necessary. Issues including but not limited to those around teaching, examinations and accommodation/social activity may need to be considered.

### **Potentially Criminal Misconduct**

This Procedure, or parts of this Procedure, may not be applicable where the reports are of behaviours that may attract criminal sanction. This would include, but would not be limited to, cases of hate crime, serious assault or threat of serious assault. The Director of Student Welfare and Support Services (or the Proctors for Stage 3) will decide whether this Procedure is applicable, having regard to all relevant circumstances including any police involvement.

### **Confidentiality**

Information concerning reports of harassment must so far as reasonably possible be held in confidence by those to whom it is divulged. Unnecessary disclosure of such reports may attract disciplinary sanction. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis. Once a formal Report is pursued, it is likely to be appropriate and/or necessary for certain information to be provided to others within the University, within certain colleges, or to external bodies.

Those to whom disclosure may be made outside the University include the police, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator ("OIA") and the civil and criminal courts. The University will not normally report a matter to the police without the reporting student's agreement, except in those rare circumstances where there is sufficient evidence to suggest that an individual poses an extreme risk.

**8.5.8 Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service**  
The Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service is an all-in-one provision for any students regardless of age or gender who have been affected by sexual harassment or violence. They provide free support and advice, along with a safe place to be heard independent of your college or department.

They support students in all situations, whether the experiences of sexual harassment or violence happened in Oxford or elsewhere, and whether it was recent or in the past. Sexual harassment and violence also includes stalking someone or following them in person and/or online.

The support service is run by a team of three highly trained specialist advisors and an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA). For more information visit:  
<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/supportservice?wssl=1>

### 8.5.8 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.

### 8.5.9 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>

### 8.5.10 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

### 8.5.11 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.

### 8.5.12 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.

### 8.5.13 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.

Please see <https://www.rdm.ox.ac.uk/files/intranet/harrassment-procedure-flowchart-for-students.pdf> which is the Harassment Procedure flowchart for Students.

## 8.6 Discipline

The OII also has a Professional Code for staff and students which can be downloaded on the DPhil Programmes page on Canvas. 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.

## 8.7 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>.

## 8.8 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.

## **8.9 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/>.

## **8.10 Policy On The Recording Of Lectures And Other Formal Teaching Sessions By Student**

### **Introduction**

1. 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.
2. 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.

### **Permission to record a lecture or other formal teaching session**

3. 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.

4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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**

7. Recordings of lectures or other formal teaching sessions may only be made for the personal and private use of the student.
8. 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).
9. 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.

### **Implementation**

10. 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>).

# 9 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*.

## 9.1 The OII as a department

### 9.1.1 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 () and staff (<http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/people/supportstaff/>).

Some key people related to the DPhil Programme include:

- OII Director: Professor Philip Howard
- Head of Administration and Finance: Douglas Thornton
- DPhil Coordinator: Laura Maynard
- MSc Coordinator: TBC
- Graduate Studies Assistant: Chrissy Bunyan
- IT Officer: Patrick Wenham
- Director of Graduate Studies: Professor Greg Taylor
- DPhil Programme Director: Dr Kathryn Eccles

### 9.1.2 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 (Dr Taylor) who has broad overall responsibility for the graduate programme. Details of the committee are listed in Appendix B: Standing Committees.

The GSC normally meets in Weeks 3 and 7 of each term.



### 9.1.3 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 Philip Howard). Details of the committee are listed in Appendix B: Standing Committees.

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

## 9.2 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 DPhil 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. Many colleges admit both graduates and undergraduates. All colleges admit men and women.

## 9.3 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).

## 9.4 Library Facilities

### 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>.

#### 9.4.1 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 [dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dphil@oii.ox.ac.uk).

#### 9.4.2 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. It also includes selected research collections from the Bodleian Library. All library material is catalogued on OLIS.

#### 9.4.3 The Bodleian 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.

#### 9.4.4 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.

## 9.5 Computing Facilities

### 9.5.1 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

### 9.5.2 OII facilities

The OII is currently located across three separate sites (1 St Giles, 41 St Giles and 34 St Giles). There is dedicated DPhil study space at 41 St Giles.

DPhil students will have 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>.

### 9.5.3 Canvas

The most up to date reading lists, course deadlines are being held on a site called Canvas which can be accessed at <https://login.canvas.ox.ac.uk/>.  
[You](#) can login in by using your single sign on.

### 9.5.4 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>.

### 9.5.5 College facilities

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

## 9.6 Training facilities

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) will support all those who teach at the University of Oxford. It will promote inclusive teaching practices that are relevant to Oxford's unique learning environment. It will offer a range of courses, support and services, including:

- Accredited programmes in teaching and learning in Higher Education
- Digital tools, training and technical support
- Online courses and resources
- Consultancy for course and programme design (including blended and online)
- Networks and events for sharing teaching practices

Further details can be found at <https://wwwctl.ox.ac.uk/>.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning also has a research supervision website, <https://wwwctl.ox.ac.uk/teaching-resourcesf> that 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.

## 9.7 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.**

## 9.8 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, coaching on career development and one-on-one training for career exploration, interview preparation and job search strategies. They also provide course in CV writing.

## 9.9 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.

## 9.10 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.

# 10 Financial matters

## 10.1 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.

## 10.2 Financial Assistance

The OII has a policy of seeking to support each graduate student to attend a conference approved by their supervisor, during the course of their studies. Students are expected to seek support from other sources as well as approaching the OII.

Funds are made available by the OII with the aim of providing DPhil students with help towards expenses connected with their research. Such expenses might include travel essential to the research, the costs associated with presenting a paper at a conference, and so on.

Research students wishing to apply for a grant should complete an application form and submit it with a description of the research or study to be undertaken and a brief letter (or email) of support from their supervisor to the Finance Officer, Duncan Passey ([duncan.passey@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:duncan.passey@oii.ox.ac.uk)). In normal circumstances students will be awarded a maximum of £750 for the duration of their degree.

Any requests for further information should also be directed to Duncan Passey at the email address above.

### 10.2.1 DPhil Training Budget

The OII offer £500 per term towards the DPhil Training budget. It is the responsibility of the student representatives to manage this budget and use it towards anything training related for the DPhil cohort. For any further questions please contact your DPhil representatives at [dphil.reps@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dphil.reps@oii.ox.ac.uk)

### 10.2.2 Hardship Funds

A limited hardship fund exists for DPhil students with severe and unexpected financial difficulties. Please contact [Victoria McDermott](#) for more information.

## 10.3 Paid Work

A student's 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.

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>.

The OII from time to time may advertise research or teaching assistantships for DPhil students close to an area of study for which they may apply, subject to the approval of their college and supervisor.

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.

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 DPhil Coordinator, or the OII Personnel Officer, [Ornella Sciuto](#).

# 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 (SSI)
  - (c) MSc Programme Director (SDS)
  - (d) DPhil Programme Director
  - (e) Head of Administration and Finance
  - (f) Graduate Studies Manager
  - (g) MSc Coordinator
  - (h) DPhil Coordinator
  - (i) Graduate Studies Assistant
  - (j) two representatives of full-time postgraduate research (DPhil in Information, Communication and the Social Sciences) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
  - (k) two representatives of full-time postgraduate research (DPhil Social Data Science) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
  - (l) one representatives of part-time postgraduate research (DPhil) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
  - (m) two representatives of full-time postgraduate taught (MSc Social Science of the Internet) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
  - (n) two representatives of part-time postgraduate taught (MSc Social Science of the Internet) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
  - (o) two representatives of full-time postgraduate taught (MSc Social Data Science) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below



- (p) 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 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 (GSC)

### *Function:*

The Graduate Studies Committee shall manage all business of the Board relating to postgraduate studies within the department.

### *Terms of reference:*

The terms of reference of the Graduate Studies Committee of the department are:

- a) to implement all aspects of teaching policy for the OII as agreed by the Steering 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
  - 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 programmes,
  - 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.

### *Membership*

The membership of the Graduate Studies Committee shall be as follows:

- Director of Graduate Studies (*Chair*) (*ex officio*)
- Members of the department's staff who are engaged in teaching for the department
- Head of Administration and Finance (*ex officio*)
- IT Manager (*ex officio*)
- four representatives of postgraduate students of the department (one from each programme)
- such other co-opted members as the committee shall determine

The Board will also endeavour to use its power of co-optation to ensure that there is gender representation on the Board proportionate to the profile of the permanent academic staff, if this has not been achieved through the elections.

Postgraduate students of the Department shall elect four 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.

#### *Meetings*

The Graduate Studies Committee will normally meet at least six times a year. The committee shall have leave to allow the Chair to take action as appropriate between meetings.

### **Research Committee**

#### *Terms of reference*

The terms of reference of the Research Committee are:

- a) to develop the department's research strategy and to discuss all relevant research issues with a view to promoting and co-ordinating those activities within the Institute, including:
  - i. research funding in the context of the Institute's overall finances
  - ii. publication and dissemination of research findings
  - iii. research related events, including the Bellwether series and OII colloquia
  - iv. academic resources
  - v. research policy including ethical issues
- b) to consider and approve research funding proposals
- c) to consider and approve proposals for Postdoctoral Fellowships, Associate status and Visitor status (other than Visiting Student status)

#### *Membership*

The membership of the Research Committee shall be as follows:

- Director of Research (*Chair*) (*ex officio*)
- research and academic staff on departmentally funded contracts
- Head of Administration and Finance (*ex officio*)
- IT Manager (*ex officio*)
- three representatives from the department's contract research staff
- two representatives of the postgraduate students of the department

The Board will also endeavour to use its power of co-optation to ensure that there is gender representation on the Board proportionate to the profile of the permanent academic staff, if this has not been achieved through the elections.

Postgraduate students of the Department may elect two of their number to attend meetings of the committee. The student representatives shall be entitled to contribute to discussion of any unreserved business described at paragraph (a) above but may not take part in any other business except by leave of the chair.

Apart from *ex officio* members, members shall serve for three years and be eligible for reappointment.

#### *Meetings*

The Research 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.

# Appendix C: Guidance on Research Proposal Preparation

PRS students are expected to submit a Research Proposal in support of their application for change of status.

1. A '**Research Proposal**' consists of a plan for research and for writing a thesis, including the specification of a research topic or research question, relevant discussion of existing scholarship and theoretical approaches, an outline of plans for data gathering, data handling, and data analysis, and an account of how the data analysis will bear on or address the research question posed, or how it will make a contribution to the topic.

The paper should include a bibliography of works consulted in its preparation. It should also include a projected schedule of work.

2. The paper will be no more than 15,000 words. Therefore the **account of existing scholarship and research**, or the literature survey, will necessarily be brief. It should, however, be very focused and show the assessors which literature will be **most important in guiding your research**.
3. The following is a **suggested structure** for a Research Proposal. However, it is not an invariable pattern. In particular, research projects vary in their emphasis (theory, the literature, the methods of data gathering, the methods of analysis, the results of the analysis, etc) so the relative lengths and the order of these sections can vary:
  - a. State your **research topic**, research question or hypothesis to be tested as succinctly and clearly as you can.
  - b. The research topic, question or hypothesis must be put into the context of the **existing literature**. It may be that the existing literature has a gap, or that the accepted findings are controversial or open to doubt, or that you think that the dominant theoretical framework(s) should be questioned, or that there is a continuing conflict between two or more 'camps', or that the methods used in existing literature should be improved, or that you think of the question in a different way from that of most published authors. In a brief section you need to outline your interpretation of the existing literature and explain how your research project 'fits' or will make a contribution.
  - c. **Data gathering**. 'Data' includes a wide range of material. Your 'data gathering' section must outline your sampling strategy (how many of what chosen how from what population?), your data gathering and data handling methods, and your plans for data analysis. This applies to empirical projects of all sorts: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods.
  - d. **Data analysis**: statistical analysis (what kinds of modeling, descriptive or hypothesis-testing techniques?), discourse analysis (what kind?), or formal model building? Constructing historical chronologies? Analytic narratives? Applying game theory? At this point, you are aiming not to anticipate what the results of your analysis will be, but to be clear about what questions you will be asking of your data and to think about these questions in such a way that you are clear about the relevance of your **method** to your **theory** and hypothesis.
  - e. **Ethical issues**: These should be identified and addressed (and a CUREC questionnaire completed and enclosed if the research involves human subjects)
  - f. Finally, you need to wrap the thing up by discussing briefly how the data analysis you propose should bear on the question you start out with in such a way as to make a meaningful contribution to the field you have described in your literature review. (Again, this can seem so obvious as to be not worth stating, but assessors often criticize work because the research proposed is not relevant to the question asked).

- g. It is imperative that you include a preliminary timetable so that the assessors and your supervisor can be satisfied that you have a reasonable prospect of completing the work in three years.

# Appendix D: Guidance on MLitt

## **(a) Terms and conditions**

Candidates for the MLitt normally proceed through Probationer Research Student status to MLitt status. In each case, students should use the Transfer of Status form (GSO.2) and follow the procedure outlined in this Handbook.

A thesis for the degree of MLitt can normally be submitted by a student of full MLitt status after 6 terms of residence (12 terms for Part-Time) (including probationary or previous MLitt, MSc or MPhil status) and after not more than 9 terms (18 for Part-Time) from his or her first registration. MLitt students whose work is likely to exceed 9 terms (18 for Part-Time) should apply for an extension of time through the Graduate Studies Committee. The maximum permitted time for study is 15 terms (24 for Part-Time), but the Committee will normally only recommend an extension of three terms initially. Further terms will require increasingly good reasons.

The normal maximum length of an MLitt thesis is 50,000 words. This maximum is taken seriously and permission to exceed it is rarely given. On thesis preparation generally, see section 5 of the Handbook.

Any candidate who is admitted to MLitt status may subsequently apply for transfer to DPhil status before the end of the sixth term after admission to Probationer Research Status.

A candidate who has been awarded an MLitt cannot use the same topic for a DPhil.

MLitt students should also consult the following sections of the *Examination Regulations 2015* Regulations for the Degree of Master of Letters, pp. 815-821

## **(b) Requirements for award of MLitt**

The examiners of an MLitt thesis are asked to certify that:

- i. the candidate possesses a good general knowledge of the field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;
- ii. the candidate has shown competence in investigating the chosen topic;
- iii. the candidate has made a worthwhile contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;
- iv. it is presented in a lucid and scholarly manner;
- v. it merits the award of the degree of Master of Letters.

MLitt examiners are asked to bear in mind that their judgement of the extent of the candidate's contribution to knowledge or understanding of the relevant field of learning should take into account what may reasonably be expected of a capable and diligent student after two years of full-time study.

# Appendix E: Guidance on MRes

## MRes in Information, Communication and the Social Sciences

The MRes in Information, Communication and the Social Sciences is typically only offered for graduates of either the MSc Degree in Social Science of the Internet or MSc in Social Data Science who apply to extend their work at OII with an independent, research-focused year-long project.

The thesis for completion of the OII MSc by Research degree will have a maximum word limit of 25,000 words (excluding the bibliography and any appendices, but including footnotes and tables). The normal maximum length of an MRes thesis is 25,000 words. This maximum is taken seriously and permission to exceed it is rarely given. On thesis preparation generally, see section 5 of the Handbook.

A thesis for the degree of MRes can normally be submitted by a student of full MRes status after 3 terms from his or her first registration onto the programme. MRes students whose work is likely to exceed 3 terms should apply for an extension of time through the Graduate Studies Committee. The maximum permitted time for study is 3 terms but the Committee will normally only recommend an extension of one term initially. Further terms will require increasingly good reasons.

A candidate who has been awarded an MRes cannot use the same topic for a DPhil.

### ***Transfer of Status***

MRes students will normally be registered as a Probationer Research Student (PRS) and must apply for 'transfer' to the status of a MRes student (MRes status) by the end of their first term. Transfer **must** be achieved by the end of the second term, which entails also meeting the submission deadline for that term, normally Monday of Week 4 of HilaryTerm. The purpose of the transfer is to ensure that the student has a convincing research proposal and that they are making satisfactory progress in its development, and to satisfy the assessors that the work is potentially of MRes quality.

Students should consult the following section of the *Examination Regulations 2015*:

- Regulations for Admission as a Probationer Research Student, see: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2015-16/grgoveresedegr/>

### Purpose of Transfer of Status

The Probationer Research Student (PRS) status is intended to be used constructively, permitting a wise choice of the research topic to be made in the context of broader reading as well as preliminary research, helping the student to become accustomed to the rhythm of graduate work, and allowing for the acquisition of any specific skills appropriate to the research.

The Transfer of Status assessment is to ensure that the student is making satisfactory progress in the development of the research, to ensure that the work is of potential quality suitable for an MRes degree, and that the methodology of the research is appropriate and practicable. The Transfer process provides the opportunity for the student to discuss their work with two independent members of staff and to receive feedback. Broadly, the assessment should show a plan for the thesis, which locates the research in the context of earlier work in the field, sets out the questions, hypotheses or issues on which it will focus, and describes and explains the methods by which these will be answered, tested or addressed.



The assessment procedures are intended to remove the risk of failure and to reduce the risk of referral as far as possible, and must therefore be as rigorous as necessary to achieve this.

The formal Regulations for Transfer of Status are set out in the general regulations of the *Examination Regulations*, and in the special regulations for individual subjects, grouped within their particular Division. Further information is also available in the Education Committee "Policy on Research Degrees": <https://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/research-degrees>

#### Timing of Transfer of Status

The OII expects students to complete the transfer from PRS status to MRes status by the end of Michaelmas Term but not later than Hilary Term.

Please note that **completion of transfer** involves both the submission *and the assessment* of the Transfer of Status document. Thus, submissions should be made by the department deadlines for submissions which is Monday of Week 5 of Michaelmas & Hilary Term. This allows time for the transfer submission to be read and assessed by the end of the term.

#### How to Apply for Transfer of Status Assessment

Applications for transfer of status should be made using the GSO.2 form available from <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>. Students are required to complete the form and to provide supplementary information on development of both research specific and personal and professional skills during their time as a Probationer Research Student. Students are also required to indicate whether their work requires research ethics approval. Both the student's supervisor and College should then sign the form. Please allow time to collect the signatures for this form before the submission deadlines. Supervisors are asked to suggest names of appropriate assessors.

**Application forms can be downloaded from the University Graduate Office website at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>.**

There are deadlines that the department has set for each term for the transfer application. This is to ensure that there is enough time for assessors to read the submission, schedule an interview, assess the transfer application, and file their report in that term. The complete application must be submitted to the DPhil Coordinator [Laura](#) Maynard at [laura.maynard@oii.ox.ac.uk](mailto:laura.maynard@oii.ox.ac.uk) by midday on the following dates. Students need to submit **physical copies** of all forms requiring a signature and an **electronic copy of ALL the materials listed below**.

- Hilary Term, Monday of Week 4

Note that these dates are deadlines, but that materials may be submitted earlier. These deadlines are in place to help ensure that your transfer application has been examined before the beginning of the next term. Students who know that their chosen assessors may be unavailable for a period of time should take that into account and may wish to submit earlier to ensure that their assessment can take place in time to meet the deadline for Transfer of Status.

#### Content of Transfer of Status

The transfer of status application must include:

- Application on **form GSO.2**, available at: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>
  - Signed by supervisor and an appropriate officer of student's college
  - Indicate clearly the status to which they wish to transfer
  - Confirmation from the supervisor that required courses have been satisfactorily completed;
- an outline of your research (one side of A4 paper), summarising your thesis topic;
- a detailed research proposal of no more than 5,000 words. This should:
  - draw upon relevant literature to discuss the background to the research, theoretical perspectives, and possible outcomes to the research;
  - state key research questions
  - discuss the overall methodological approach and specific strategies to answering these research questions, paying particular attention to practical and ethical issues relevant to the research;
  - a preliminary timetable for the research;

- a list of references;
- a completed copy of the Research Ethics Checklist
  - <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/curec/oxonly/ethicalapp/checklistJan06.pdf>;
- any other materials, including substantial original research or expression made on the public Internet, that you think will help the assessors evaluate your candidacy;

Before submission, students should discuss drafts of all of these items with their supervisor.

Students need to submit physical copies signed forms and an electronic copy of all other the materials for the application.

### **Appointment and role of assessors**

In order to minimise delays, supervisors are expected to identify appropriate assessors and seek GSC approval at the beginning of the term in which transfer materials are to be submitted. Two assessors must be appointed, neither of whom will normally be the student's supervisor. Assessors will normally be academic members of staff working in the University of Oxford and only in exceptional circumstances will an external assessor be appointed.

Supervisors should submit the names of the assessors to the DPhil Coordinator prior to GSC meeting of the term (meetings take place in Week 3 and 7 each term) the student plans to submit their transfer. Once the Graduate Studies Committee has confirmed and approved the assessors, it is the responsibility of the students' supervisor to contact the assessors to organise a mutual convenient time for the interview. Unless advised otherwise by their supervisor, students should not contact the assessors directly but may of course respond to their communications about dates etc. Students should normally expect to be interviewed within **6-8 weeks of submission of their transfer application**.

The Transfer assessment is a formal requirement, but the interview is not an official examination or viva, and *sub fusc* is not worn. The assessors will write a report and submit recommendations to the Director of Graduate Studies. Following the interview, students should normally expect to hear the outcome of their assessment within 2 weeks, though this may be longer during the vacation periods.

Students will be expected during the interview to show evidence of their understanding of general theory and research methods in the social sciences applicable to their proposed study and specific research methods appropriate to the study of social aspects of the Internet and related ICTs.

In their report, the assessors are required to advise whether:

- the student is competent to complete and present a thesis in English
- the required coursework materials have been submitted
- the proposed thesis topic and treatment represent a viable project
- the proposed thesis topic and treatment comply with the Division's ethical standards
- the written work and oral examination show that you have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject
- the research schedule is viable and you should in principle be able to complete the proposed schedule of work for the MRes within one year from initial registration as PRS

Before submitting their report, assessors may request additional written work or other evidence from the candidate. Assessors then submit their report to the Graduate Studies Committee which may

- accept the application
- recommend resubmission, within a specified time and/or on specified terms
- reject the application
- request additional written work or other evidence, or appoint an additional assessor, before reaching a decision

### **Instructions to assessors**

Assessors are asked to contact students as soon as reasonably possible to arrange a time for the interview, or to explain problems in doing so. Students can find it an anxious wait, and may have

good reasons for wanting the assessment completed as soon as possible (please let the DPhil Coordinator know if there is a problem in this respect at the time of application).

Assessors are invited to consider whether the student is capable of carrying out advanced research, and that the subject of the thesis and the manner of its treatment proposed by the student are acceptable for transfer to MRes. Assessors should judge the application against the criteria for success defined below. They should aim to provide constructive criticism and advice to the student to identify and address deficiencies and thereby strengthen their proposed research project, rather than to present a judgemental verdict. Dismissive or aggressive remarks are not appropriate. An application to transfer to MRes status must provide evidence that the applicant can construct an argument, can present material in a scholarly manner, has a viable subject to work on, and can be reasonably expected to complete in one year. The written work will not read like a final thesis. Omissions, unpersuasive arguments, or missing perspectives are not fatal unless they seem to indicate an inability to reach the necessary standard for the final thesis. The research proposal and thesis structure need not be completely finalised, but the student should have clearly defined ideas of what the research questions are and have possible ways to answer them.

The joint assessors' report should be about 1 page in length, providing a permanent record of advice given to the student at this stage and an indication of the student's progress. It should normally include a summary of the points raised in the interview, feedback on the written work submitted prior to the interview, comments on the positive aspects of the student's work, as well as any concerns about the student's progress and suggestions for the research going forward. Finally, for non-native English speakers, the report should indicate the assessors' view of the student's ability to present and defend the work in English.

Significant differences of opinion between the assessors will be adjudicated by the Graduate Studies Committee, in consultation with the assessors and supervisors.

### **Criteria for Success**

For transfer of status to be approved, the student will need to be able to show that their proposed thesis and treatment represents a viable topic and that their written work and interview show that they have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Students must show that they are competent to complete and present their thesis in English. In addition, the assessors will judge the application against the following criteria:

1. Competence in both written and spoken English
2. The aims of the research are realistic and focused
3. Evidence of wide reading and critical analysis
4. Appropriate methodology and research techniques are proposed
5. Limitations to the research are addressed
6. It is clear how the research will develop for a MRes thesis
7. There is a suitable timetable for the research
8. The candidate demonstrates the progression of an argument
9. The candidate shows a scholarly and rigorous approach to research issues
10. The research topic and treatment meet the Division's ethical standards.
11. The written work and interview show that the candidate has a good overall knowledge and understanding of the subject.
12. The University has adequate facilities (including supervision) to enable the research to progress.
13. The student is capable of carrying out advanced research
14. The proposed schedule of work can be completed within one year

### **Viva**

Having passed Transfer of Status, MRes students should be examined in the same manner as DPhil students, with two examiners, at least one of whom shall be an external, including the viva examination. The process will also be the same as for a DPhil viva, the student will need to submit the GSO.3 Appointment of Examiners form and submit their thesis to the Exam Schools etc.

***(b) Requirements for award of MRes***

The examiners of an MRes thesis are asked to certify that:

- i. the candidate possesses a good general knowledge of the field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;
- ii. the candidate has shown competence in investigating the chosen topic;
- iii. the candidate has made a worthwhile contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls;
- iv. it is presented in a lucid and scholarly manner;
- v. it merits the award of the degree of Master of Research.

MRes examiners are asked to bear in mind that their judgement of the extent of the candidate's contribution to knowledge or understanding of the relevant field of learning should take into account what may reasonably be expected of a capable and diligent student after one year of full-time study.

# Appendix F: 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.
65-69	Merit	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.
50-65	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 G: The GSR Graduate Supervision Reporting

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 Reporting (GSR). 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 DPhil 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 7 and 8 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).

It is mandatory to complete a self-assessment report every reporting period. If you have any difficulty completing this you must speak to your supervisor or Director of Graduate Studies. Your self-assessment report will be used by your supervisor(s) as a basis to complete a report on your performance this reporting period, for identifying areas where further work may be required, and for reviewing your progress against agreed timetables and plans for the term ahead. GSR will alert you by email when your supervisor or DGS has completed your report and it is available for you to view.

Use this opportunity to:

- Review and comment on your academic progress during the current reporting period
- Measure your progress against the requirements and agreed timetable for your programme of study
- Identify skills developed and training undertaken or required (taught programmes only)
- List your engagement with the academic community
- Raise concerns or issues regarding your academic progress to your supervisor
- Outline your plans for the next term (where applicable)

Students and supervisors are reminded that having a positive student-supervisor relationship is an important factor in student success. Research suggests that one of the strongest predictors of postgraduate completion is having expectations met within the student-supervisor relationship

To access GSS, please visit <http://www.gsr.ox.ac.uk/> ([check](#)). 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 H: Research Supervision

## Research supervision: a brief guide

The role of the supervisor is to:

- Establish a timetable of regular meetings for detailed discussion of your progress (these meetings should take place at least once per term)
- Agree a research plan and programme of work, and to establish clear academic expectations and milestones
- Agree with you a timetable for the submission of written work and to return your work within a reasonable time
- Support you in considering your subject-specific and personal and professional skills training needs through the Training Needs Analysis on a regular basis and ensure that these needs are met
- Co-operate with you to produce a detailed joint report on your progress at the end of each term
- Ensure you are aware of the formal requirements in relation to transfer and confirmation of status and final submission, and help you to incorporate these into your plan of work
- Discuss any health and safety aspects of your research proposal and approve any risk assessments required

The role of the student is to:

- Maintain regular contact with your supervisor, and respond to him/her in good time
- Meet with your supervisor regularly, keep a written record of your discussions, and give due weight to any guidance or corrective action proposed
- Draw up a research plan and timetable of work in consultation with your supervisor, and to keep relevant records of all aspects of your work
- Co-operate with your supervisor to make a detailed joint report on your progress at the end of each term
- Take responsibility for your research programme, including the development of subject-specific, research, and personal and professional skills
- Take responsibility for (i) the preparation and content of your thesis, giving due regard to any advice from your supervisor, and (ii) its timely submission in accordance with the timetable set
- Be aware of the University's guidance on plagiarism and of any ethical or legal issues, health and safety requirements, or intellectual property issues arising from your research
- Pursue opportunities to engage with the wider academic community at University, national and international level



# **OII Code of Practice on Supervision of PGR Students**

## **Appointment of supervisors for Graduate Research Students**

Patterns of supervision differ in the Social Sciences Division according to the nature of the subject or research project. In some subjects there is typically a sole supervisor; others may have two or more supervisors (particularly those with an interdisciplinary element), with one designated as the “primary supervisor”.

Departments and faculties should ensure that expectations with regard to the supervisor role, including regular meetings with students, are spelled out clearly and are understood by all supervisors. In the case of joint supervision, the respective roles and responsibilities of the supervisors concerned should be clearly established from the outset, (for example, managing responsibility for fieldwork).

The department or faculty shall ensure that each graduate student has access to one or more named persons to whom he/she can turn for support, such as a Department Adviser, the head of the relevant research group, or the Director of Graduate Studies. Where there is a sole supervisor, these other sources of support, and the arrangements for providing cover during the absence of the supervisor referred to at 3 below, are especially important.

Students should also expect to be able to approach a college adviser, appointed by the student's college (the college advisor must not be the same person as the department supervisor). The college may also have procedures in place to monitor the overall well-being of graduate research student, including a discussion of academic reports. If the college identifies any concerns which might impact on the academic progress of the student concerned, and which may not already have been recognised in departmental/faculty reports, it may refer these in confidence to the Director of Graduate Studies in the department/faculty concerned, who will take appropriate action.

### **Who can supervise?**

1. Someone of sufficient standing to be able to operate with credibility on behalf of the department/faculty.
2. Someone who has sufficient experience to be able to provide appropriate guidance to the student about the necessary procedures and, in particular, the academic expectations associated with an Oxford doctorate in their subject area.
3. Someone who is able to undertake the tasks assigned to the supervisor in the Education Committee [Policy on Research Degrees](#), including integrating students into the national and international network in their subject.
4. Someone who has sufficient security of tenure to make it likely that they will see the student's research through to successful conclusion. Particular care should be taken when appointing supervisors for part-time research degrees.

### **The primary supervisor**

A student may have one or more supervisors, but there must be one who is responsible for overall academic progress and pastoral needs, and who is responsible for signing progression forms.

The primary supervisor shall normally be:

- A member of staff based in the student's home department (including college fellows) on a permanent contract and who is an associate professor, reader, or professor, OR
- A researcher based in the student's home department with an independent fellowship that lasts for the duration of the student's degree.

The primary supervisor will be currently engaged in research in the relevant discipline(s) so as to ensure the direction and monitoring of the student's progress is informed by up to date subject knowledge, methods, and research developments.

Nobody should be appointed as the primary supervisor if it is known at the time of appointment that s/he will not be in post for the normal duration of the student's programme.

A person appointed to supervise alongside the primary supervisor shall normally be:

- An associate professor, reader or professor.
- A member of research staff who is grade 8 or above.
- An independent research fellow (those with fellowships secured from an external learned society, research council or equivalent). The fellow should have at least three years' experience as a post-doctoral researcher before becoming a supervisor.
- A postdoctoral researcher with at least three years of experience of research.
- A Department Lecturer at grade 8 or above who is research-active and has at least three years of experience of research.
- An employee of an external organisation who has both a relevant doctorate (or equivalent research expertise) in the subject of the student's DPhil, and who has at least three years of experience of working in research and development.
- A postdoctoral researcher who has done less than three years' postdoctoral research should not normally be appointed as a supervisor, however, this should not preclude informal support as part of a supervisory team.

For a student following an interdisciplinary DPhil who has two equally senior supervisors in two different departments, there should still be a single primary supervisor, who will be based in the department where the student is registered for administrative purposes. For the purposes for signing off Transfer, Confirmation and submission forms, the primary supervisor should liaise with his/her counterpart in the other department, and where this is any disagreement between the two, the DGS in the department where the student is registered will make the final decision.

**A candidate should not be admitted if there is no suitable specialist supervision available.**

## **New supervisors**

Appropriate support and training will be given to new supervisors and all appointees new to supervision are required to undertake the online supervision course developed by the Division in association with the CTL: ([https:// https://www.ctl.ox.ac.uk/](https://www.ctl.ox.ac.uk/))

For members of academic staff in their initial period of office, departments will appoint a Mentor who will, amongst his/her other duties, provide advice, support, and guidance on teaching, and supervision of research students. New academic staff will also have access to general support and advice from the Director(s) of Graduate Studies in their department/faculty. The supervision record of a new member of academic staff is included in the review prior to appointment to retiring age, and a high standard of supervision is expected.

## **Quality assurance for supervision**

Departments should put in place mechanisms to ensure that the quality of supervision is not put at risk as a result of the excessive volume and range of other duties assigned to individual supervisors.

Normally Associate Professors will supervise **four students**, and Associate Professors with Tutorial Fellowships and joint (cross-departmental) post-holders will supervise **three students** (the notional maxima being eight and six respectively).

These norms and notional maxima are based on sole supervision and, where staff are engaged in joint supervision, would be adjusted to reflect the level of commitment involved. Adjustments may also be required where staff hold significant research or administrative posts.

The Division emphasizes the importance of adhering to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education indicators of sound practice in the provision of supervision, which state that higher education providers will:

- appoint supervisors with the appropriate skills and subject knowledge to support and encourage research students, and to monitor their progress effectively;
- ensure each research student has a supervisory team containing a main supervisor who is the clearly identified point of contact;
- ensure that the responsibilities of research student supervisors are readily available and clearly communicated to supervisors and students;
- ensure that individual supervisors have sufficient time to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

## **Frequency of meetings**

The Division normally expects a full-time research student to have a minimum of nine one-hour meetings (or equivalent) per year (part-time students pro rata).

In addition, students with more than one supervisor may request at least one meeting with all of their supervisors together per year.

The frequency of meetings may vary according to the stage of the research programme. It follows that, alongside their other duties, a supervisor should be able to provide this typical level of support for each of their research students.

Departments are responsible for making appropriate arrangements to cover for a supervisor's absence on leave or for other reasons, and should ensure that students are not disadvantaged by appointing a supervisor who is about to go on leave.

## **Change of supervisor**

Where a student's research changes focus such that their current supervisor may no longer be the most appropriate person to provide guidance on the revised topic, the department/faculty, in consultation with the supervisor concerned, should consider whether or not an additional or alternative supervisor should be appointed. It should be noted that such a change of research focus is unusual, and requires prior permission from the department or faculty concerned.

Where a student feels that there are good grounds for contemplating a change of supervisor, this should first be discussed with the supervisor concerned, or if this seems difficult, with the appropriate head of department, Director of Graduate Studies or their deputies, or the college adviser.

If this involves concerns over the quality of supervision, students should be encouraged to seek to resolve the matter by informal means where possible, but should be made aware of the University's formal complaint procedures.

At the OII we encourage students to speak to either the Director of Graduate Studies (Dr Greg Taylor) , DPhil Programme Director (Dr Kathryn Eccles) or Graduate Studies Manager (Mrs Victoria McDermott) if they have any concerns with their Supervisor.

## **Supervisor checklist**

This document provides a checklist of the main areas of responsibility of supervisors:

### *General responsibilities*

- provide academic leadership to the student, and clarification of expectations;
- advise the student about all aspects of the research programme: standards, planning, literature, sources, attendance at classes/ lectures, techniques and skills;

- undertake a regular Training Needs Analysis/Skills Review with the student;
- (where acting as a co-supervisor or part of a supervisory team) co-ordinate advice and guidance, and ensure that respective responsibilities (such as managing fieldwork etc) are clear both to academic colleagues and to the student;
- avoid absence on leave without appropriate temporary supervision having been arranged for the student. [Leave will not normally be approved without such arrangements being in place.]
- have reasonable familiarity with institutional, national and international expectations relating to research environments, research supervision and research training (see the section B11 of the UK Quality Code <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/chapter-b11-research-degrees.pdf>).

#### *Meetings and feedback*

- arrange an initial meeting with the student as soon as possible at the beginning of the degree, and agree with the student expected frequency and duration of future meetings, and arrangements for contact when either the supervisor or student is away from Oxford,
- meet with the student regularly (normally a minimum of nine one-hour meetings (or equivalent) per year)) and agree the expected speed for the return submitted work with feedback and constructive criticism;

where students have more than one supervisor, they may request at least one meeting with all of their supervisors together per year;

- contact the student ahead of return from suspension and arrange to formally meet as soon as possible upon the student's return to study;
- always arrange a meeting with the student as soon as possible upon his/her return from fieldwork;
- keep written records of the meetings to ensure both student and supervisor are clear on action to be taken and to help in monitoring progress;

#### **Student Research**

- assist the student in defining the topic of research which can be completed and written up within the prescribed period;
- advise at an early stage on research design and the effective collection and storage of data;
- provide an overview and guidance on the structure of the completed thesis and guide the student through to completion;
- give guidance on:
  - (i) the nature of research and the standard expected (including advice on presentation and writing style);
  - (ii) the planning of the research, literature and sources;

- (iii) attendance on appropriate research training and professional skills training courses, including fieldwork safety courses;
  - (iv) techniques that may be needed;
  - (v) other sources of advice and expertise;
  - (vi) ethical issues, and the procedures for seeking ethical approval through the Social Sciences and Humanities Inter-Divisional Research Ethics Committee (IDREC), where appropriate;
- ensure that the student is aware of, and has taken appropriate action with respect to:
    - (i) any ethical and legal issues connected with the research and data storage;
    - (ii) any health and safety issues connected with the research, including lab-based research and/or fieldwork (see Annexe C – Supervisors’ responsibilities for students undertaking fieldwork). This includes identifying and ensuring appropriate risk assessment and training;
    - (iii) issues concerning intellectual property;
    - (iv) issues related to third party copyright for the hard copy and digital thesis
    - (v) issues concerning conflicts of interest  
(<https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/conflictsofinterest>)
    - (vi)
    - (vii) the need to avoid plagiarism and to be aware of University guidance on plagiarism  
See also <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism?wssl=1> )

## **Student progress, monitoring and performance**

- assist the student to work within a planned framework and timetable;
- monitor the student’s ability to write a coherent account of his or her work in good English;
- review student feedback and make termly reports on the student’s work using Graduate Supervision Reporting (GSR), including reviewing and updating training requirements. The supervisor should discuss the contents of the report with the student;
- provide the student with regular information as to the student’s progress, and, where problems arise, provide guidance and assistance in relation to necessary, corrective action;
- provide relevant information on students’ attendance, academic progression, and performance to the department;
- assist the student with the preparation, time-table and submission of material relating to applications for transfer of status, and for confirmation of status, and to provide appropriate feed-back, especially where the student has failed to meet the required standards;
- ensure the student is familiar with all examination procedures and requirements;
- advise the student on the timing of submission of the thesis and consult with the student in order to make recommendations for the appointment of examiners

## **Resources**

- ensure that the student is familiar with the research facilities and activities of a department or faculty;
- advise as appropriate on financial support available, for example, funding for conferences, field trips, or other research travel;
- encourage the student to obtain knowledge and information about career opportunities
- alert the student, where necessary to other services provided within the University, for example, health, disabilities, and counselling

## **Development and training**

- assist the student during the course of the first term, and at least annually thereafter, with the identification and subsequent development of skills for subject specific research training and for personal and professional purposes, including advice on teaching opportunities and appropriate training and ensure that the Training Needs Analysis/Skills Review is uploaded onto GSR;
- encourage the student to attend the Divisional student induction event provided through the Grand Union Doctoral Training Partnership and the appropriate courses offered through Divisional Skills Training Programme;
- pursue opportunities for the student to take part in the intellectual life of the department and to discuss his or her work with peers and others in the wider academic community (including the presentation, and possible publication, of research outcomes where relevant) at divisional, university, national and international level.

## **Discussion prompts for first meetings with students**

To help clarify mutual expectations and establish good communication between supervisors and students, it may be useful to consider the following questions:

### Research Direction

- How much direction do you expect to provide as a supervisor?
- How much direction does your student expect you to provide?

### Knowledge and skills

- What skills do you expect your student to have or to acquire? (Use the Training Needs Analysis/Skills Review document to support this discussion.)

### Time management and meetings

- How often do you expect to meet with your students?
- How much time do they expect from you?

### Feedback and constructive criticism

- How often do you expect to receive work from students?
- What sort of feedback will you provide?
- What are your student's expectations?

### Turnaround times

- How quickly do you expect to provide feedback on work that students have submitted for review?
- How quickly does your student anticipate you being able to provide feedback?

### Communication between meetings

- What medium do you prefer to communicate with students: by phone, e-mail, in writing?
- How quickly do you expect to respond to messages from students?
- What do they prefer and expect?

### Expectations for written work

- Do you expect to receive students' work all at once, or in smaller chunks?
- Do you expect their drafts to be 'works in progress' or more polished pieces?
- At what intervals do you expect students to submit work?
- Would you prefer to receive documents in hard copy or electronically?



## **Research student checklist**

This document provides a checklist of the main areas of responsibility of research students:

### *General responsibilities*

- an obligation to act as a responsible member of the University's academic community;
- responsibility for his or her own research activity, for satisfying the requirements of the D.Phil. programme, and for giving the necessary time and effort to the programme;
- responsibility for the direction of and innovation in the research project as it develops, with the support of the supervisor(s);
- responsibility for reviewing skills and training needs on a regular basis with the support of the supervisor(s), undertaking any training agreed with the supervisor and department(s) concerned, and uploading completed Training Needs Analysis/Skills Review documents on GSR;
- responsibility for working with his or her supervisor(s), other staff and colleagues to maximise progress in his/her research degree.

### *Meetings and feedback*

- Attend an initial meeting with the supervisor as soon as possible at the beginning of the degree, and agree with the supervisor the expected frequency and duration for future meetings, and arrangements for contact when either the supervisor or student is away from Oxford
- where more than one supervisor is appointed, request to meet with all supervisors together at least once per year;
- arrange to meet with the supervisor as soon as possible upon return from fieldwork or suspension;
- discuss and agree with the supervisor the most appropriate model of supervision, the type of guidance/comment which is most helpful, and the expected speed for feedback on written work;
- recognize the demands made on a supervisor's time and the need to prepare adequately for meetings and to observe deadlines;
- accept the importance of constructive criticism within the supervisory relationship, and seek a full assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of any work;
- keep a written record of discussions with the supervisor, and give full weight to any suggested guidance and corrective action proposed;

### *Research*

- define the area of research, complete the literature review, acquaint him/herself with the background knowledge needed, and produce a timetable for the completion of the research project;
- write a clear and detailed research proposal prior to embarking on the research for the thesis;
- abide by the University's requirements with regard to plagiarism, and the legal, ethical, and health and safety guidelines related to her/his research;
- prior to embarking on empirical work or fieldwork (data collection):
  - (i) seek approval from the supervisor;
  - (ii) where research involves human subjects, seek ethical approval via her/his department/faculty and complete the University ethical approval form(s) for submission to the Social Sciences and Humanities Inter-divisional Research Ethics Committee (IDREC) prior to undertaking data collection;
  - (iii) Undertake any necessary risk assessments and obtain travel insurance well in advance of the proposed trip, and agree a plan to remain in contact with the supervisor;
  - (iv) where necessary, apply in good time for a disclosure through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if the research involves working with children and/or vulnerable adults.

*Progress, monitoring and performance*

- in consultation with the supervisor, establish a clear timetable and programme work which is kept under regular review, and keep relevant records of all aspects of the work;
- submit written material in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussion;
- engage actively in the review process and play an active role in planning and reviewing progress;
- seek out and follow the regulations applying to the research programme, and seek clarification, where necessary;
- provide regular reports on progress where these are required (and at least once a year for the supervisor), and to inform the supervisor immediately of any circumstance which might lead to interruption of study;
- with the support of the supervisor, complete the assessed written assignments required as part of the research training programme and submit them by the dates specified;
- ensure that the standard of his or her written and spoken English is of the necessary standard for the submission of a thesis;
- allow sufficient time for writing up and pay particular attention to final proof reading;

- decide when he or she wishes to submit the thesis for examination, having provided the supervisor with sufficient time to comment on the final draft and having taken account of the supervisor's opinion;
- (where the student feels that there are good grounds for contemplating a change of supervision arrangements) discuss this with the existing supervisor, or, if this presents difficulty, with another appropriate officer in the department, faculty or with a college adviser.

#### *Resources*

- make positive use of University, departmental/faculty, and college teaching and learning facilities;
- make appropriate use of any guidance available relating to the student's career after successful completion of a research degree.

#### *Development and training*

- attend the required courses/training, and other appropriate courses and research training as agreed with the supervisor;
- make full use of opportunities to engage in the intellectual life of the department/faculty and the wider academic community;
- make appropriate use of opportunities for personal and professional development.



## **Supervisors' responsibilities for students undertaking fieldwork**

### **Overview**

#### **Fieldwork**

The University has a legal duty of care to its students undertaking fieldwork. University Policies and Procedures are in place to set out how this duty of care is to be discharged. These procedures require that risks are assessed and proportionate measures and arrangements put in place to mitigate those risks to an acceptable level.

#### **Responsibility**

Supervisors play a key role in this process in terms of a) ensuring risk assessments are carried out b) ensuring their students are properly prepared for their fieldwork, as well as c) bringing their own experience and knowledge to guide, advise, assess and check arrangements. All University employees have a legal duty to take reasonable care for the safety of those affected by their [the employees] acts or omissions. Employees, and students, are therefore expected to comply with the University's health and safety policies. A key requirement for field trips is careful planning to reduce the likelihood or impact of something going wrong. Supervisors must therefore be able to demonstrate this planning by ensuring assessments are in place, appropriately prepared, documented where necessary, reviewed and authorised.

#### **Specific duties of Supervisors are to:**

- **Be aware of relevant University Safety Policies and Departmental procedures.**
- **Consider the health and safety implications of any research proposal.**
- **Ensure their students have received training appropriate to their needs.**
- **Ensure that risk assessments have been made and the safety provisions relating to the work exist and have been discussed with those doing it.**
- **Ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for regular contact to provide support and checks on the student's welfare while they are away.**
- **Review arrangements with the student after the fieldwork to identify any problems and learn any lessons**

**Relevant university policies, training courses and further information /resources can be found at:**

[https://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/files/services/fieldwork-check-sheet-and-practical-guide-for-supervisors-final-template-17\\_02\\_17.pdf/@@download](https://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/files/services/fieldwork-check-sheet-and-practical-guide-for-supervisors-final-template-17_02_17.pdf/@@download)

<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>

<http://researchtraining.socsci.ox.ac.uk/site-search?keys=fieldwork>

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/safety/policy-statements/s1-09/>

# Appendix I: Developing Learning and Teaching

Developing Learning and Teaching (DLT) is a programme of structured support for your first teaching experiences. If completed in full it leads to an award, Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (HEA), which is recognised at universities across the UK.

The programme consists of five elements:

- An experience of teaching
- Observation of teaching (your own and you observing others)
- Mentoring by an academic in your faculty
- Reading seminars and/or reading a small amount of educational literature
- A portfolio (2000-5000 words)

Most participants complete the programme in the course of one year or less, though some do it in two for practical reasons (spending time abroad for their DPhil, etc).

You are welcome to complete as much or as little of the programme you chose, although accreditation with the HEA is dependent upon successful completion of the portfolio.

## Why might I complete the programme?

- 1) The programme is a way of making your first experiences of teaching (however limited) a structured, engaging and thoughtful process. In short, it is a way of ensuring that you get the most out of these experiences so that any future teaching commitments can be efficiently managed and as beneficial as possible for you and the students you teach.
- 2) Many DPhils will go on to short term research posts at other universities in the UK, or will secure teaching only/temporary contracts after their DPhil and while they are seeking longer term positions. Being able to show that you have teaching experience and have engaged in structured activity about this is a good way of demonstrating that you are likely to be a competent teacher.
- 3) If you go on to a permanent lecturing post in a UK university, you may be expected to complete a postgraduate diploma in teaching and learning as part of your probation process. The majority of universities now require this (Oxford and Cambridge are key exceptions), and these diplomas lead to an award, Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. If you already have Associate Fellowship status, you will be able to gain exemptions from part of the diploma course, which will make your life easier and may allow you to devote more time to research.
- 4) If you go on to work in other sectors, teaching experience and qualifications can be an aspect of your DPhil experience which employers value highly.

## Example items for a DLT portfolio

This page gives examples of items typically included in a DLT portfolio. A portfolio might be made up of **two or three** of these items, plus a short introduction, but participants are not limited to the items suggested below and can propose their own portfolio structure.

**An account of teaching observation (500-1000 words)**

This activity could be undertaken with a peer or with a mentor. Your own department may have observation forms and the Centre for Teaching and Learning can also provide a template which can be used in addition to your departmental forms. A small amount of reading about the process of observation can help you to consider how to get the most out of the experience.

**A statement of your teaching philosophy (500-750 words)**

Such statements are sometimes required in the US as part of academic job applications, and would typically answer questions such as: what do I expect to be the outcomes of my teaching? How do I know when I've taught successfully? Examples can be seen at the following URL: <http://www.crlt.umich.edu/tstrategies/tstpum.php>

**A teaching journal (500-1000 words)**

A teaching journal is a way to record your reactions to your teaching immediately after class when issues and successes are fresh in your mind. For a portfolio you also write a reflective overview which draws together how you have responded to issues and challenges.

**A review of some educational literature, with a view to developing your practice. (750-1500 words)**

For example, you might dip into two or three books/articles on giving lectures or teaching in small groups, and use the findings to inform your own teaching. In a portfolio, you might present this in the form of a plan for a teaching session or course with rationale; or via a discussion of the literature and an evaluation of your practice so far with plans for the future.

**Student evaluation of your teaching/a course you contribute to (500-1500 words)**

Student evaluation can be undertaken by analysing course feedback questionnaires, interviewing a small number of students on the course individually or in a focus group, or incorporating feedback activities into class time. A portfolio item would review this feedback and implement or recommend changes for the future.

**Observe teaching in a setting which is unfamiliar to you (500-1500 words)**

For example, you could contact a colleague at another university in the UK and request the opportunity to observe some teaching in the institution and discuss with the colleague how teaching at that institution operates. For a portfolio item you could review what you learnt from the experience, and consider how you might develop your practice and knowledge to be able to work in a similar setting.

Students that are interested in DLT programme should contact the Director of Graduate Studies to discuss further.

# Appendix J: Training Needs Analysis Framework

## Training Needs Analysis (TNA)

### **INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDANCE**

#### ***For Students:***

- TNA provides an opportunity to reflect on your existing expertise and skills, and to work with your supervisor to identify your training and development needs. Be honest with your self-assessment of your current skills, and make some realistic objectives for the year ahead.
- If this is the first time you've carried out a TNA, think about it as a baseline and reflect on all previous relevant experiences. If this is a follow-up TNA (students in years 2 and beyond) then please provide responses to questions 1-10 relating only to the previous academic year.
- In developing your training plan and objectives, have a look at the training, courses and resources offered by your department, the Social Sciences Division, the University's Language Centre, the Careers Service, the Bodleian libraries, IT services, as well as any national and international opportunities. Information about all these can be found at ([www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/training](http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/training))
- Arrange a meeting to share and discuss this analysis with your supervisor.
- Upload the completed TNA to the Graduate Supervision System (GSS) once discussed and agreed with your supervisor.

#### ***For Supervisors:***

Review the TNA form prior to the scheduled meeting.

- Help identify areas where the researcher could take action over the coming year to acquire and develop the skills and competencies needed to progress their research.
- Assist with selecting and prioritising concrete actions to accomplish, and suggest targets and deadlines.
- Consider training and resources available through the department, the Social Sciences Division ([www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/training](http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/training)), the Language Centre, the Careers Service, the Bodleian libraries and ITLP.
- Write down your comments to summarise any advice, guidance, and suggested next steps.
- Ensure the student uploads the completed TNA form to GSS following your meeting.



Name:		Supervisor(s):	
Department:			
Funder, if applicable:			
Pathway, if applicable (e.g. Area Studies, Migration, Politics):		Current programme of study:	

Please confirm that you have discussed your TNA with your supervisor. ☐

## PREVIOUS TRAINING AND WORK EXPERIENCE

Describe any previous professional and work experience that may be relevant to your current research plans and topic of study.

### 1. WRITING AND PUBLICATIONS:

What writing experience/skills have you developed? List any report writing, policy briefs, academic publishing, blogging, book reviewing, funding proposals, peer reviewing and journal editing experience.	Alongside your dissertation, what other publication and writing projects do you plan to pursue? What training or support would help you do so?

### 2. COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

To date, what opportunities have you had to develop your communication skills? How much experience do you have of oral presentations, conferences, outreach and public engagement activities? Have you participated in any language, presentation or media training	What specific opportunities should you seek in order to develop your confidence and communication skills? Are there further opportunities you should seek to improve your language skills? What training might you need to do so?
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or in other communication activities relevant to your research?	

### **3. NON-ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE:**

What experience have you had of working with business, public-sector, or civil-society organisations? Have you been involved in 'knowledge exchange' activities (e.g. advisory work, collaborative research with non-academic partners, placements, briefings etc?) How have these strengthened your skills and/or your networks?	Think about ways your research could contribute to society or influence work being done outside of academia. Are there any connections you need help in brokering? What skills or training might you need?

### **4. TEACHING:**

What teaching experience, if any, have you gained (e.g. tutorials, one-off courses)? Do you have a teaching accreditation or relevant experience from training or the workplace?	What teaching and supervisory experience would be beneficial?

### **5. BIBLIOGRAPHIC AND COMPUTING SKILLS:**

What research and technical skills have you acquired to date? Please include details, such as bibliographic tools, statistical software, as well as research and data management.	What specific opportunities should you seek to improve your skills in this area over the year(s) ahead?

## 6. TRAINING IN RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY:

What research methods skills have you acquired, either as part of a formal research training degree or in other forms? List content from your previous or current degree programme as relevant.	What research and methods training are you planning (or required to complete) over the coming year? Are there specific skills you think you will need help with, or that you would like to develop further?

## 7. ETHICS AND RESEARCH INTEGRITY

What, if any, training have you received on research ethics, research integrity and/or fieldwork risk assessments?	What ethical and safety issues will your research raise? What skills or training might you need?

## 8. FIELDWORK

To date, have you carried out any fieldwork? Have you received training on safety in fieldwork and risk assessments?	What ethical and safety issues will your fieldwork raise? What skills or training might you need?

## 9. FUNDING, RESEARCH LEADERSHIP & PROJECT PLANNING

Have you applied for small grants, fellowships or other funding? (e.g. equipment grants, conference travel, early career fellowships)? Have you organised seminars/conferences or edited journals? Have you designed or managed projects outside of your DPhil?	What opportunities do you plan to gain in these areas during this year and throughout your DPhil? Do you have ideas for new research initiatives or collaborations? What skills or training might you need?
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## 10. PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

What do you see as your particular professional and personal strengths? (e.g. team working, managing projects/people, leadership, bridging between academia and policy/practice, communication).	Are there areas of personal effectiveness you would like to develop? What are these and how best can you pursue this?

## AND FINALLY, YOUR CURRENT CAREER ASPIRATIONS (IF YOU KNOW!)

Where do you see yourself working in 3 to 5 years? What do you hope to achieve in your career in the long-term? What would help you to gain more clarity in your career plans? This will help your supervisor understand and support your current plans.

## RESEARCH AND TRAINING OBJECTIVES FOR THE COMING YEAR

(TO BE COMPLETED WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR)

**SUBJECT AND RESEARCH METHODS TRAINING AND OBJECTIVES FOR THIS YEAR**

**OTHER TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES FOR THIS YEAR**

**OTHER COMMENTS, THOUGHTS, CONCERNS?**

# Appendix K: Digital Publication of Theses

## Oxford University Research Archive (ORA) and Digital Publication of Theses

The University of Oxford is committed to the widest dissemination of research theses produced by its graduate students. The Oxford University Research Archive (ORA) is an online archive of research output including theses created in fulfilment of Oxford awards, produced by graduate students at the University of Oxford.

### DPhil, MLitt, MRes and MSc (by Research) Degrees

All students following the DPhil, MLitt, MRes or MSc (by Research) will be required to submit the official copy of your thesis for examination digitally via RTDS (**Research Thesis Digital Submission**) for their examination instead of 2 hard-bound copies as done before October 2019. Login to the RTDS website via <https://student.rtds.ox.ac.uk/> The typewritten part(s) of any thesis must be saved in pdf format.

Examiners may still request a hard copy of the thesis from the Examination Schools but this is not the responsibility of the student to provide.

. The digital copy should also be deposited into ORA at <http://ora.ox.ac.uk> after [Leave to Supplicate \(LTS\) has been granted](#).

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<http://ox.libguides.com/aecontent.php?pid=435474&sid=3564761>

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<http://ox.libguides.com/aecontent.php?pid=435474&sid=3564761> Further information or queries about depositing digital theses should be addressed to [ORA@bodleian.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ORA@bodleian.ox.ac.uk).

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Whilst the Social Sciences Division strongly supports open access to, and wide dissemination of, theses produced by its students, access to the full text of digital theses can be restricted unless requirements of funding bodies require open access to be provided earlier (see below). When completing the ORA online deposit form authors should therefore indicate whether they would like an embargo (currently a choice of one year or three years) or to make their thesis available immediately. For example, if the author's funding specifies an earlier release date. There is no need to complete a separate GSO3.C Dispensation from Consultation form at the time of deposit.

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- (ii) Abstract **and**
- (iii) Full text search for single words or short passages of text.

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If you are in receipt of **research funding** the following may apply:

The Terms and Conditions of Research Council Training Grants

((<https://www.ukri.org/files/legacy/news/training-grants-january-2018-pdf/>) /) require that metadata describing the thesis should be lodged in ORA as soon as possible after leave to supplicate has been granted, and for the full text version to be available within a **maximum of twelve months**. The

Division has therefore agreed that the full-text of RCUK-funded students' theses should be made available within one year of leave to supplicate being granted.

Students funded by any other external body should be aware of, and also abide by, the terms and conditions for open access defined by their funder. Where there are discrepancies, the funding body's requirements should supersede any embargo preferred by the student at the point of deposit.

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(i) Authors may apply for dispensation from consultation beyond the end of an embargo period (or other period specified by their funding body) of the copy of the thesis deposited in the Bodleian or other University Library **and/or** of the electronic copy of the thesis deposited in ORA if there is good reason for such a request. Reasons for requesting dispensation might include Intellectual Property considerations: that consultation or reproduction would put at risk confidential material or invalidate an application for a patent on a product or process described in a thesis. Students are advised to be particularly mindful of the terms of any agreements with an outside body or sponsor governing supply of confidential material or the disclosure of research results described in the thesis.

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<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>

Dispensation from consultation is granted by the department/faculty not the Bodleian Libraries or ORA staff. If you need any help with progression forms, please contact your Graduate Studies Assistant:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/contacts?wssl=1>

### **Journal articles included within the thesis**

Authors sometimes include published journal articles within their theses. Authors needing to include such articles as part of the e-thesis can make the article freely available only in compliance with copyright and any sponsor permissions. See [www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php) for guidance or ask ORA staff ([ORA@bodleian.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ORA@bodleian.ox.ac.uk)).

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Making the thesis open access increases its visibility, gains recognition for the author and certifies them as author of the work. It can also give rise to concerns about increased risk of plagiarism. However, when work is available open access, plagiarism is easier to detect (by using a web search engine).

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October 2019