



MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ECONOMICS

COURSE HANDBOOK 2022-2024

Version 1

Contents

1.	Foreword	4
1.1	Welcome.....	5
1.2	Introduction	6
1.3	Useful Contacts.....	7
1.4	Useful Links	8
1.5	Important Dates.....	9
1.6	Funding and Awards.....	10
2.	Course Content and Structure	11
2.1	Course aims.....	11
2.2	Course Structure.....	11
2.2	Core/Advanced papers in Year 1 and Year 2	13
2.3	Suggested pathways through the MPhil	13
3	Teaching, Learning and Supervision	15
3.1	Organisation of teaching and learning	15
3.2	Department Supervisors	15
3.3	Thesis.....	16
3.4	Description of Individual courses.....	17
3.5	Classes	17
3.6	Expectations of study	17
4.	Assessment.....	18
4.1.	Assessment Structure.....	18
4.2	Feedback on learning and assessment.....	18
4.3	Examination conventions and regulations	18
4.4	Good academic practice and avoiding plagiarism	19
4.5	Entering for university examinations.....	19
4.6	Examination dates	19
4.7	Sitting your examination	19
4.8	External examiner and examiners' reports	20
4.9	Prizes	20
5.	Skills, Learning and Development	21
5.1	Academic progress	21

5.2	Learning development and skills	21
5.3	Induction	21
5.4	Opportunities for skills training and development	22
5.5	Opportunities to engage in the department research community	22
5.6	Careers information and advice.....	23
6.	Student Representation, Evaluation and Feedback	24
6.1	Department representation.....	24
6.2	Division and university representation.....	24
6.3	Opportunities to provide evaluation and feedback.....	24
7.	Student Life and Support.....	25
7.1	Who to contact for help	25
7.2	Complaints and appeals	25
7.3	Student Societies	26
7.4	Policies and Regulations	26
7.5	Equality and Diversity at Oxford	26
7.6	Freedom of Speech.....	28
7.7	Academic dress	28
7.8	Policy on the recording of lectures and other formal teaching sessions by students	28
8.	Facilities	31
8.1	Workspace	31
8.2	Photocopying	31
8.3	Libraries.....	31
8.4	Manor Road IT Services	32
9.	After the MPhil.....	33

1. Foreword

Statement of Coverage

This handbook applies to students starting the MPhil in Economics in Michaelmas Term 2022. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

Disclaimer

The Examination Regulations relating to these courses are available [here](#). 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 [Graduate Administrator](#).

The information in this handbook is accurate as at 1 October 2022, however it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges. If such changes are made the department will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.

Policies and 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](#).

Canvas

The main Canvas page for this programme is available here: <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/20125> (SSO required). Most of the documents referred to in the Handbook are available as onward links from there.

1.1 Welcome

Welcome from the Head of Department

I am very happy to welcome you to the Department of Economics and our lively and diverse community of economists, with nearly 50 Professors and Associate Professors, more than 30 early career researchers, and around 300 graduate students. Whatever your areas of interest within economics, you should find others here – fellow students and faculty members – with whom you can share ideas, and from whom you can learn – through informal interactions as well as in lectures, classes and the extensive seminar programme.

The MPhil and DPhil in Economics have been starting points for the careers of many distinguished economists, in academia and beyond. You will be taught and supervised by people at the forefront of research, who will encourage you to aim high. We hope that you will take advantage of the many opportunities available here to develop your own expertise as an economist, and above all that you will enjoy studying and learning with us.

Prof Hamish Low

Welcome from the Director of the MPhil in Economics

Dear students,

I am very pleased to welcome you to the MPhil in Economics at the University of Oxford. My colleagues and I are very excited to meet you and are looking forward to starting this journey with you. The next couple of years will be both challenging and rewarding. During that time, you will develop your critical thinking and sharpen your analytical tools. I hope that you will later use those skills both to your benefit and to that of others.

Prof Andrea Ferrero

1.2 Introduction

This handbook has been prepared by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Department of Economics. It is intended as a source of information in its own right, and as a guide to other sources of information that will help you to organise and plan your studies.

Please note the following points, which may help you to find your bearings in the University:

The following describes the general division of responsibilities:

The Department of Economics is responsible for academic matters: delivering the teaching, providing feedback and setting and marking the Examinations.

The University is responsible for the conduct of the Examinations and oversight.

Your college is responsible for welfare and related non-academic matters.

You should ensure that you have been issued with a University card by your college. This card, among various other functions, gives you access to the Bodleian and Bodleian Social Science libraries.

Make sure that you have a University email address and access to the Internet. There is a large amount of relevant information on the Department of Economics Website and notices from the Department are typically distributed to graduate students through email.

Graduate students in Economics at Oxford come under the jurisdiction of the Social Sciences Divisional Board. In practice most of the responsibilities are delegated by the Social Sciences Divisional Board to its Graduate Studies Committees. The Economics Graduate Studies Committee has seven members, who are chosen annually. For the academic year 2022-23, the Director of Graduate Studies (and thus Chair of the Committee) is Dr Sanjay Jain. The Department also has an MPhil Committee chaired by the Director of the MPhil which handles day-to-day matters relating to the course.

1.3 Useful Contacts



Prof Hamish Low
Head of Department

Email: hamish.low@economics.ox.ac.uk



Prof Ian Crawford
Associate Head (Resources)

Email: ian.crawford@economics.ox.ac.uk



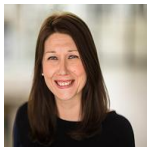
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Graduate Operations Manager

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Mr Jonathan James
Graduate Admissions Officer

Email: econgrad.admissions@economics.ox.ac.uk

1.4 Useful Links

College Handbooks	These are available on College websites.
Economics website	http://www.economics.ox.ac.uk/
MPhil Canvas	https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/20125
Exam Regulations & Conventions	Department: https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/20125 University: https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk/
Manor Road IT Services	itsupport@manor-road.ox.ac.uk https://itsg.socsci.ox.ac.uk
Oxford Students website	https://www.ox.ac.uk/students?wssl=1
Social Sciences Library	ssl@bodleian.ox.ac.uk http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ssl
Student Status (changes)	https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/status
University Student Handbook	https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/student-handbook

1.5 Important Dates

Oxford terms – Michaelmas, Hilary and Trinity – are measured in weeks. Weeks 1–8 are known as Full Term, but some teaching and examining for graduate courses also takes place in Week -1, 0 and Week 9 and 10. Consequently, it is important that graduate students plan to be in Oxford during those weeks of term as well as during the period of Full Term.

Term Dates	Michaelmas 2022	Sunday 9 October – Saturday 3 December
	Hilary 2023	Sunday 15 January – Saturday 11 March
	Trinity 2023	Sunday 23 April – Saturday 17 June

Submission dates 1st year MPhil students	Michaelmas Term (wk 0)	Advanced choice to be submitted to the Academic Office. The default is to take all three compulsory papers in the “Core” version. Students who want to do the Core versions don’t need to do anything. Students who want to take Advanced courses should see Section 2.2 for further details.
	Hilary Term (wk 9)	Choice for Year 1 Trinity Term options to be submitted to the Academic Office.
	Trinity Term (wk 5)	Notification of MPhil thesis supervision submitted to the Academic Office.
	Trinity Term (wk 9)	Choice for Year 2 options to be submitted to the Academic Office.

Examination Timetable		
1st year	Michaelmas Term	Students are automatically entered for first year exams.
	Trinity Term	Examinations will take place in Week -1 or Week 0. Exact dates will be determined by the University and announced in due course.
2nd year	Hilary Term	Submission of entry for final examinations by Friday of week 2.
	Trinity	Submission of MPhil thesis by noon on Wednesday of week 3. Written examinations for Core and Advanced papers in Micro, Macro and Econometrics will take place in weeks -1 and 0; written exams for Field papers will start in week 9.

1.6 Funding and Awards

Student Funding Services is responsible for administering a wide range of Oxford schemes offering financial support to students. The competition for scholarships and grants to study in the UK is extremely strong and there are usually strict requirements. You should check carefully that you are eligible to apply for a particular scholarship before making an application, as most of the schemes are restricted to certain nationalities and/or courses. If you are an international student, you should also contact the Ministry of Education or Education Department in your own country for information on national aid schemes, as well as your nearest British Council Office for advice on opportunities and funding for studying abroad.

The Student Funding Services website – <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding>– contains detailed information on funding sources and support available and how to apply. You can also enter your details into the searchable funding database, to find out which schemes you are eligible for. If you have an enquiry which is not addressed by the information on our website, please email student.funding@admin.ox.ac.uk.

George Webb Medley and OEP Funds:

The purpose of these funds is to support small-scale research-related activities by members of the Economics Department, including graduate students. The funding is intended primarily for those without personal research allowances from other sources (e.g. ESRC).

The George Webb Medley and OEP Funds can award grants towards conference attendance for those presenting a research paper, travel costs to visit other universities for study purposes, as well as research expenses. Grants are given only to proposals with sufficient 'economic' content to be regarded as within the bounds of the 'science of political economy'.

Application should be made in advance of incurring any expenditure and must be justified in terms of its relevance to the student's research plan and of a carefully worked out budget based on the cheapest form of travel. It will need the support of one referee (normally the supervisor) who should be asked by the applicant to write directly to the secretary of the fund. Grants will not be made towards the foreseeable expenses of obtaining a higher degree (such as the cost of typing, binding or photocopying a thesis).

Guidelines and application forms are available [here](#). The completed form should be submitted to the Finance Department (financeadmin@economics.ox.ac.uk), room 262 (phase 1) Manor Road Building.

Applications may be sent in at any time, but it is advisable to apply at least one month in advance of the project for which the grant is required.

2. Course Content and Structure

The MPhil in Economics is a 21-month course, and has a FHEQ rating of 7, and minimum credit value of 180.

2.1 Course aims

The MPhil is a two-year programme designed to provide a comprehensive training in economics at the graduate level. The two-year format provides training in graduate level Economics comparable to the first two years of the PhD programme in the best US universities.

The Intended Learning Outcomes are as follows.

Students will develop a knowledge and understanding of:

Modern Economics and Econometrics at an advanced level: a thorough grounding in all main branches of economics including the underlying necessary quantitative techniques, as well as a deep knowledge of at least two specialisms and some research experience. In particular we aim to teach a depth of knowledge across the board so that a person emerging from the course will be able to operate in more or less any specialism (e.g. macro-modelling, environment, utility regulation etc.) with a rather limited amount of study which can be undertaken informally. This is vital as the demand for expertise in various specialisms fluctuates dramatically through time. This training qualifies the student to work as a professional economist in government, commerce, industry, consultancy or international organisations. Such an economist may be expected to undertake original research, give economic advice, supervise consultancy projects etc.

The technical and research skills necessary to pursue research or professional careers in Economics: we prepare a student who so wishes to undertake doctoral research. Anyone who completes the MPhil is in a position immediately to undertake doctoral research without any further formal training. Indeed, in Oxford, the MPhil thesis is generally incorporated into the DPhil for those students who proceed to the research degree.

Studying in a large and internationally diverse community of graduate students, faculty, and visitors: students from the MPhil in Economics are highly sought after by employees in both the private and public sectors. Many of our graduates have taken up employment in the City, the Bank of England and HM Treasury and, of course, have gone on to employment in the academic world.

2.2 Course Structure

The MPhil consists of eight papers plus a thesis. Students may study either 4 or 5 papers in their first year and either 3 or 4 in their second. Some papers can be studied in either year.

In the first year, students study Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and Econometrics for two terms (Michaelmas and Hilary Terms). These are then examined immediately before the start of Trinity Term (in Weeks -1 or 0).

In Trinity Term student study either Empirical Research Methods or Further Mathematical Methods or both. These are assessed by coursework - the successful completion of weekly assignments. The assessment is Pass/Fail.

Paper	Terms	Year	Examined
Core Microeconomics	MT, HT	Y1	Weeks -1 or 0 in TT
Core Macroeconomics	MT, HT	Y1	Weeks -1 or 0 in TT
Core Econometrics	MT, HT	Y1	Weeks -1 or 0 in TT
Core Empirical Research Methods	TT	Y1 or Y2	End of TT
Further Mathematical Methods	TT	Y1 or Y2	End of TT
Advanced Microeconomics	MT, HT	Y1 or Y2	Weeks -1 or 0 in TT
Advanced Macroeconomics	MT, HT	Y1 or Y2	Weeks -1 or 0 in TT
Advanced Econometrics	MT, HT	Y1 or Y2	Weeks -1 or 0 in TT
Advanced Empirical Research Methods	MT, HT	Y2	End of TT
Field Papers	MT, HT, TT	Y2	End of TT

In the second year students can choose from a list of options including the Advanced courses in Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Econometrics and Empirical Research Methods or a range of Field Papers, as well as Core Empirical Research Methods and Further Mathematical Methods (if not taken in Year 1). They may choose four papers if they studied four in their first year, or three if they studied five in their first year. The current list (which is only indicative) of Field Papers is

- Development Economics 1
- Development Economics 2
- Economic History 1
- Economic History 2
- Empirical Microeconomics
- Financial Economics 1
- Financial Economics 2
- Foundations of Machine Learning
- Industrial Organisation 1
- Industrial Organisation 2
- International Macroeconomics and Finance
- International Trade 1
- International Trade 2
- Labour Economics
- Public Economics
- Urban & Spatial Economics

Not all courses in the option list are available every year. The provisional list of options available to you will be announced in Hilary Term of your first year. The final list will be confirmed before the start of Michaelmas Term in the second year.

A maximum of two of the papers taken in Year 2 can be chosen from the set {Advanced Empirical Research Methods, Advanced Macroeconomics, Advanced Microeconomics and Advanced Econometrics}. See Section 2.2 for additional information on taking Advanced papers.

Students make choices of the papers they would like to take by the end of week 9 of Trinity Term in their first year.

2.2 Core/Advanced papers in Year 1 and Year 2

Students normally take the “Core” versions of Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and Econometrics in Year 1 and then opt to take one or two of the Advanced versions of these courses in Year 2.

Students who feel that they are sufficiently well-prepared may wish to take one or more of the Advanced versions of Microeconomics, Macroeconomics or Econometrics in Year 1. Again, they will need the permission of the *Graduate Studies Committee*. To help the *Graduate Studies Committee* decide whether or not it is in the student’s interests to do one of these course in Year 1, students will need to take a qualifying test in the subject(s) they want to study at Advanced level.

Tests will be offered during Week -1 of Michaelmas Term. There will be a 2-hour test for each subject. The test will consist of several short-answer or problem-solving type questions relevant to the subject in question. There will be no choice and students will be asked to complete as much of the paper as they can. The test papers are designed to be diagnostic of whether the student has the capacity successfully to study that subject at Advanced level in Year 1. Students do not need to prepare specially for the test. The questions will be on topics, or will utilise ideas/methods which, in the view of the paper-setter, can reasonably be expected to be within the capability of someone with a strong grasp of the relevant undergraduate economics. As part of the test students will be asked to write a *brief* summary of their relevant academic background and preparation for the course in question, explaining why they are qualified to study at the Advanced level. For example, you may have already studied a third-year Advanced Microeconomics module in your undergraduate degree and got a high mark in the final examination. It would suffice to bring this to the attention of *Graduate Studies Committee* and describe the contents of the course you took.

Further information on the Advanced courses will be given to students who are considering this option at the start of Week -1.

It is strongly advised that students do not attempt to take three Advanced papers at the same time and Graduate Studies Committee is highly unlikely to grant permission for this.

2.3 Suggested pathways through the MPhil

The MPhil allows students a considerable amount of choice. To help students with these choices, here are four indicative “pathways” that would be appropriate for certain types of students. All of the below are suggestions only and the best way through the MPhil for each student will depend on their personal preferences, skills and aims.

- Students who already know that they want to pursue a professional career after the MPhil, will probably want to...
 - Do all three compulsory papers in Year 1 (Micro, Macro, Econometrics) at Core level
 - Do only Core ERM in TT of Year 1
 - During the summer between Year 1 and 2, do an internship in the area they intend to work and/or start preparatory work on the thesis
 - Do Advanced ERM and three Options papers in Year 2 or four Options papers
- Students who already know that they want to pursue an academic career after the MPhil, in Oxford or elsewhere, and who had limited prior training in economics will probably want to...
 - Do all three compulsory papers in Year 1 (Micro, Macro, Econometrics) at Core level

- Try to obtain distinctions in the first year Core papers to be allowed to do additional Advanced papers in Year 2
 - Consider doing both, Core ERM and Advanced Maths, in TT of Year 1
 - During the summer between Year 1 and 2, begin work on the thesis and/or try to work as Research Assistant and/or do an academically oriented internship, e.g., in a central bank
 - Do one or two Advanced papers in Year 2 in addition to the Field Papers in the area in which they can imagine doing research
 - Apply for the M-DPhil programme and for multiple other PhD programmes in the UK and abroad during MT of Year 2
 - MPhil students can also apply for direct entry into the DPhil after they have finished the MPhil (for entry a year later). For details, see <https://www.economics.ox.ac.uk/mphil-dphil-in-economics>.
- Students who already know that they want to pursue an academic career after the MPhil, in Oxford or elsewhere, and who have considerable prior training in economics (this will include most students on the M-DPhil programme) will probably want to...
 - Try to do one of the three compulsory papers in Year 1 (Micro, Macro, Econometrics) at the Advanced level and the two others on Core level
 - Aim to obtain distinctions in the first year Core papers to be allowed to do additional Advanced papers in Year 2
 - Consider doing both, Core ERM and Advanced Maths, in TT of Year 1
 - During the summer between Year 1 and 2, work on the thesis and/or try to work as Research Assistant and/or do an academically oriented internship, e.g., in a central bank or research institute
 - Do one or two additional Advanced papers in Year 2 in addition to the Field Papers in the area in which they can imagine doing research
 - Apply for the M-DPhil programme and for multiple other PhD programmes in the UK and abroad during MT of Year 2
 - MPhil students can also apply for direct entry into the DPhil after they have finished the MPhil (for entry a year later). For details, see <https://www.economics.ox.ac.uk/mphil-dphil-in-economics>.
- Students who don't yet know whether they want to pursue a professional or academic careers after the MPhil, will probably want to...
 - Do all three compulsory papers in Year 1 (Micro, Macro, Econometrics) at Core level
 - Try to obtain distinctions in the first year Core papers to be allowed to do additional Advanced papers in Year 2
 - Do only Core ERM in TT of Year 1
 - Spend time during TT of Year 1 and during the summer on the thesis to see whether they enjoy doing research
 - Decide over the summer whether they want to pursue a professional or academic career. Once they have decided, they should pursue Year 2 as suggested in the points above for the respective career aims.

3 Teaching, Learning and Supervision

3.1 Organisation of teaching and learning

Three core courses (*Macroeconomics*, *Microeconomics* and *Econometrics*) are intended to equip students with the skills, tools, concepts and research resources that will enable them to consume and to undertake research in Economics and related disciplines. They become familiar with the main concepts in economics, and are exposed to cutting-edge practice, in line with their abilities and interests. In addition, the course develops their ability to undertake advanced study in the subject areas relative to their own interests. These are taught in interactive small classes. Students develop the ability to read critically advanced literature in the field, and to carry out their own original research, which involves conceptual innovation and the identification and use of new information. These skills are then consolidated by means of the experience of investigating and writing up a thesis to a high standard of research and of presentation. Training for this is based partly on the core courses and optional papers, partly on the individual supervision provided for the thesis. Over the course of research training, students acquire specialized and general skills of relevance both to the continued professional development of economic understanding and transferability to a wide range of employment contexts and life experiences. This is supplemented by an extensive programme of research workshops and seminars. Further information on lectures and classes is available on Canvas.

3.2 Department Supervisors

In the first year of the MPhil, each student has a Departmental Supervisor. Supervisors take broad responsibility for a student's course of study and reports on their progress termly to the Graduate Studies Committee via Graduate Supervision Reporting system (GSR). Supervisors receive reports on performance from the class teachers. It is important for all students to keep in regular contact with their supervisors during residence and, if working away from Oxford, to keep supervisors fully informed as to the progress of their studies.

In the second year of the MPhil, the person supervising the student's Thesis becomes the student's primary source of academic support and their Departmental supervisor. The norm for Thesis supervision is for students to meet with supervisor every two weeks during Full Term.

Everybody recognises that occasionally there can arise incompatibilities of temperament or approach between supervisor and student, and 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 with their college advisor or departmental supervisor (or, if this person is unavailable or inappropriate, with another member of the Graduate Studies Committee). An alternative method of approach in such cases is through the student's college tutor for graduate students.

If you have any concerns about teaching or supervision, please raise these as soon as possible so that they can be addressed promptly. Details of who to contact are provided in section 8.2 (Complaints and appeals).

3.3 Thesis

Students are also required to write a thesis in the second year, supervised by a member of the Department. Research topics are chosen by students, in consultation with their intended thesis supervisor. Normally a student should expect a meeting with their supervisor about once a fortnight during Full Term.

The examiners look for evidence of ability to tackle a research problem (that is, to define and set up the problem clearly, to choose relevant techniques and show competence in their use, and to summarise results and establish sound conclusions) rather than evidence of a completed and mature research project such as would be necessary for the degree of MLitt or DPhil. (It is possible for a student to pass with a thesis that is primarily a review of a literature but only if it makes a genuinely original contribution to the understanding of that literature. Such a thesis would, however, not normally be awarded a mark higher than 60.) Students should work on their thesis for about the same amount of time of they do on a core course in the first year, i.e., roughly 4 months.

Allocation of Supervisors

Over the Easter Vacation of their first year students will be sent an online survey to fill out. They will be asked to submit

- the research area in which their thesis primarily falls;
- a provisional title;
- a brief provisional description of what they would like to do;
- the names of one or two potential supervisors (if they have them; this is not obligatory).

This information will be given to the Research Groups in the Department. During TT weeks 2-4 the Research Groups will match students to supervisors and students will be informed in TT week 5. At that point students should contact their supervisors and get them to sign the [Thesis Supervisor form](#).

The final title needs to be confirmed by week 5, Hilary Term of the 2nd year. Thesis titles may not be changed without the express permission of the Chairman of Examiners.

The thesis must be accompanied by a Declaration of Authorship form confirming that it is the student's own work except where otherwise indicated, Deposit and Consultation of Thesis (GOS.3b) and Information for Thesis Cataloguing (GSO.26b).

Word limit

Students must submit an MPhil thesis of no more 20000 words on a subject in any field of economics. The word count applies to the entirety of the thesis including references, etc. Students should state the number of words in their thesis, calculated by counting the words on a typical page in the body of the thesis containing only text and multiplying by the total number of pages. The examiners may refuse to accept an overlong thesis.

The word limit is intended as a maximum and not as a target. If a thesis only narrowly satisfies the word limit, then that may well be a signal that the thesis could be improved by shortening. Recent MPhil examiners' reports have commented that candidates often include material (sometimes a whole chapter) that reduced the quality of – and therefore the mark for – their thesis. Many candidates would have been better advised to focus less on quantity, and more on improving quality through clear and careful exposition. Some of the very best theses, including some recent prize-winners, are less than 15,000 words.

Supervision

The general norm for Thesis Supervision is that students and Supervisors have a meeting every two weeks during Full Term. Remember the thesis is your work, and your responsibility and is your chance to begin to work and think as an independent researcher. The role of your Supervisor is to guide and advise you (indeed the term "Advisor" would be more appropriate than "Supervisor" as the latter carries with it a connotation that they will tell you what to do).

Beyond that, exactly how students work with their Supervisor is normally match-specific and therefore highly heterogeneous. You may find that in the early stages you need to see your Supervisor more regularly but that as you become more sure of what you are doing you need less support and the frequency drops off. You may find that some Supervisors want to see their students regularly according to a specific timetable setting goals for each meeting, while others will operate on the basis that you can contact them whenever you need to and they will help you iron out any problems you encounter. The nature of supervisions is also heterogeneous. Some Supervisors will see their students one-to-one, others, who have several students working on cognate topics, may organise supervisions in a group.

3.4 Description of Individual courses

Detailed and up-to-date course information, including timetable information, is available on Canvas.

3.5 Classes

There are weekly classes for Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Econometrics, Empirical Research Methods and Advanced Mathematics. Classes generally run from Weeks 2 to 9 and lag the lecture material by one week. Assignments have to be prepared for each class, and are marked and returned. The lectures are ideal for putting across the basic concepts of the course and providing the necessary tools for the compulsory papers. The classes play a particularly useful role in providing the students with practical experience in dealing with specific problems and tasks. In the setting of a small class environment it is possible for the students to discuss particular areas of the course, which may present particular difficulties. In Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and Econometrics the Classes are not assessed for credit, and so is not a part of the overall final M.Phil. result. Remember the class work for these subjects is not a test. The main benefit is derived from working on the problems and thinking about them, and students are not necessarily expected to get everything right. From time to time the class work will go beyond what was presented in lectures – with the expectation that students who understood the lecture can reasonably be expected to tackle it. In Core Empirical Research Methods and Advanced Mathematics the weekly assignments are assessed. These courses are assessed as Pass/Fail on the basis of Pass/Fail in the weekly assignments.

3.6 Expectations of study

The MPhil in Economics is an intensive full-time course. You should expect lectures, classes and private study together to occupy at least 40 hours per week during term-time. Vacation study may be somewhat less intensive but will certainly be required. Most students find it valuable to set aside several weeks during the summer vacation to do preparatory work for the thesis.

Paid work guidelines: <https://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/policies/paid-work-guidelines-graduate-students>

4. Assessment

4.1. Assessment Structure

The policy of the Department is to admit as students for the MPhil only those who possess the equivalent of an Upper Second or First Class honours degree of the normal standard of a British university. Such a student should be able to pass the written examination. Given that many of the examination papers require students to write essays, those whose first language is not English and who are not experienced in writing essays are strongly advised to practice writing essays in preparation for the examinations.

The rules regarding the determination of the overall classification of the MPhil degree as well as failed papers and resits are set out in the Examination Conventions (see Section 6.3 below).

4.2 Feedback on learning and assessment

Formative assessment and informal assessment does not contribute to the overall outcome of your degree and has a developmental purpose designed to help you learn more effectively.

Students studying for the MPhil in the Department of Economics will receive formative feedback on their weekly assignments in the subjects studied in their first year during Michaelmas, Hilary and Trinity Terms, typically in the form of marks or grades or comments.

In addition to informal feedback provided during classes and other interactions with teaching staff, all students on taught Masters programmes can expect to receive formal written feedback on at least one designated piece of formative assessment during their first term. The purpose of this feedback is to: provide guidance to those for whom extended pieces of writing are unfamiliar forms of assessment; indicate areas of strength and weakness in relation to the assessment task; provide students with an indication of the expectations and standards towards which they are working.

Summative assessment contributes to your degree result and is used to evaluate formally the extent to which you have succeeded in meeting the published assessment criteria for your programme of study.

The purpose of feedback on summative assessment e.g. theses and dissertations, is to provide a critical review of the work and suggestions for improvements and future development of the research topic to enable students to develop their work for doctoral study, if appropriate. Students will receive formal written feedback on their thesis submitted in the final term of their course. The report will be sent electronically to students once the exam process has been completed.

Students are advised to read the internal and external examiners' reports for recent past cohorts which can provide valuable insights and contribute to students' preparations for examinations and other forms of assessment. See the following Canvas site for details:

https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/14410/pages/examiners-reports?module_item_id=107552.

4.3 Examination conventions and regulations

The Examination Conventions (together with the Examination Regulations) are the formal record of the specific assessment standards for the course or courses to which they apply. They set out how examined

work will be marked and how the resulting marks will be used to arrive at a final result and classification of an award. They also describe the progression rules used by the Graduate Studies Committee and marking criteria for all of the different styles of assessment used (exam essays, answers to problem-type questions and the thesis).

The Exam Conventions are available on the Course Canvas page <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/167313>

Exam Convention change from time-to-time so it is essential that you ensure that you are consulting the most up-to-date version.

The formal Regulations for the Degree (known as the “Grey Book”) are available on the University’s webpages. A link is also provided on the Course Canvas page.

4.4 Good academic practice and avoiding plagiarism

Plagiarism is the copying or paraphrasing of other people’s work or ideas into your own work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition. Collusion is another form of plagiarism involving the unauthorised collaboration of students (or others) in a piece of work. Cases of suspected plagiarism in assessed work are investigated under the disciplinary regulations concerning conduct in examinations. Intentional or reckless plagiarism may incur severe penalties, including failure of your degree or expulsion from the university.

Useful Links:

www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism

www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills

4.5 Entering for university examinations

Please see the www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams for further information on examination entry and alternative examination arrangements.

4.6 Examination dates

The exact timetable will be confirmed approximately 5 weeks before the start of the examinations. Please see the Oxford Students website for further information.

See www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/timetables

4.7 Sitting your examination

Information on (a) the standards of conduct expected in examinations and (b) what to do if you would like examiners to be aware of any factors that may have affected your performance before or during an examination (such as illness, accident or bereavement) is available on the Oxford Students website:

www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance

A list of permitted calculators is available here:

https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/14410/pages/calculators?module_item_id=227314

4.8 External examiner and examiners' reports

Examiners' reports are available on the following Canvas site: [Link](#).

4.9 Prizes

The examiners will normally award prizes for what they judge to be the best performance in the thesis and written papers.

5. Skills, Learning and Development

5.1 Academic progress

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

Access to GSR for students will be via Student Self Service <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/selfservice>. Students will be sent a GSR automated email notification with details of how to log in at the start of each reporting window, and who to contact with queries.

5.2 Learning development and skills

The Department of Economics is based in the Manor Road Building. The building, designed by Sir Norman Foster, provides research facilities – including graduate workspace areas, teaching rooms, a PC training room/experimental laboratory, and a large common room for faculty and graduate students. It also houses the Social Science Library, which is a first-class research library open to all members of the University. It possesses over 200,000 books and 1,800 periodicals, all on open shelving, and places for 350 readers. Also housed in the Department is the Oxford Centre for the Analysis of Resource Rich Economics (OxCarre) and the Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE).

5.3 Induction

Students are sent a package in the Summer preceding their entry with details of the programme, preliminary reading, maths crash course, and access to Advanced courses in Year 1.

There is an introductory meeting on Monday of week -1.

The Maths crash course takes place in week -1 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and continues in week 0 on Monday and Tuesday.

5.4 Opportunities for skills training and development

Students will receive training in research skills and transferable skills during their courses. The Department offers a “How to write a thesis” workshop where members of academic staff give presentations on techniques and ideas on how to do research and write a thesis.

A wide range of information and training materials are available to help you develop your academic skills – including time management, research and library skills, referencing, revision skills and academic writing - through the [Oxford Students website](#).

All students are expected to have working knowledge in one programming language of their choice by the time they arrive in Oxford. During the MPhil, students will have to code for several courses, e.g., "Core Empirical Research Methods" in Trinity Term of Year 1.

Lectures and assignments will mainly use R. If students don't know how to code yet, or if they want to spend time brushing up their coding knowledge, the department thus suggests to work on learning R before arriving in Oxford. R is a free coding language focusing on data analysis that is used widely in economics and across the social and natural sciences.

It is suggested that students work through this online book before coming to Oxford:

<https://rstudio-education.github.io/hopr/>

The book is built around three projects, culminating with the construction of a simple "slot machine" simulation in Chapter 9. Working on a concrete project will make learning R much easier.

A good level of knowledge to aim for is to complete chapters 1-9 and 11 and the respective projects.

Other resources to learn R are:

<https://swirlstats.com/>

<https://cran.r-project.org/doc/manuals/r-release/R-intro.pdf>

In order to take part in the Core Empirical Research Methods course in TT, student will need a laptop with a web-browser and an up-to-date operating system of their choice.

5.5 Opportunities to engage in the department research community

The timetable for Departmental Seminars given by members of academic staff, research students and visitors to the Department, is available on the departmental website. Students are encouraged to attend these talks and also to attend talks organised by some of the research groups that may be of particular interest.

5.6 Careers information and advice

The Oxford University Careers Service is based at 56 Banbury Road. They provide information and advice on career opportunities and organize recruitment meetings, many of which occur in the first term. Many major corporations and institutions (such as investment banks, management consultancy firms, the IMF and World Bank) host recruitment events each year in Oxford.

University Careers Service: www.careers.ox.ac.uk

See also www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/experience

6. Student Representation, Evaluation and Feedback

6.1 Department representation

The Graduate Joint Consultative Committee (GJCC) provides the formal link between Economics graduates and the Department of Economics. Any matter of concern to graduates may be raised here and discussed with the Director of Graduate Studies and the Director of the MPhil with whom the GJCC normally meets once per term. It will then go forward to the MPhil Committee, Graduate Studies Committee or the Department as appropriate. Equally, proposals made by Senior Members may be brought to the committee for discussion. Information on the GJCC membership and minutes from GJCC meetings are available on the GJCC link on the [Economics Canvas site](#). Student representatives are also invited to the termly MPhil Committee meeting.

6.2 Division and university representation

Student representatives sitting on the Divisional Board are selected through a process organised by the Oxford SU. Details can be found on the Oxford SU website along with information about student representation at the University level.

6.3 Opportunities to provide evaluation and feedback

The Department issues termly surveys on all of its courses. This provides students with the opportunity to give constructive anonymous feedback on the teaching they have received during the term on every course. The results are given to the relevant course Convenors who then discusses any matters arising with the lecturers and class teachers on that course and provide a summary to the MPhil Committee.

Students on full-time and part-time matriculated courses are surveyed once per year on all aspects of their course (learning, living, pastoral support, college) through the Student Barometer. Previous results can be viewed by students, staff and the general public at: www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/student-engagement?wssl=1

Student representatives of the Graduate Joint Consultative Committee (GJCC) conduct their own survey every year to find out what students think of the economics courses, and present the results to the MPhil Committee.

If you have any comments, concerns or complaint about your course, you may contact the Director of the MPhil, the Convenor of the course concerned, the relevant lecturers or class teachers or the Student Representatives. However, please remember that the Student Representatives are themselves students with their own workloads and academic progress to manage; therefore you are encouraged to raise your concerns directly with the Academic member of staff concerned or with the Director of the MPhil.

7. Student Life and Support

7.1 Who to contact for help

If you have a problem or need advice or information you can consult:

- Your supervisor(s)
- Your college advisor
- The MPhil director, Prof Andrea Ferrero (andrea.ferrero@economics.ox.ac.uk)
- Graduate Operations Manager, Ms Lesley Darcy (Academic Office) (econgrad@economics.ox.ac.uk)
- Departmental Disability contact, Jenny Hayward (jenny.hayward@economics.ox.ac.uk)

If you are ill or otherwise unable to attend departmental classes or lectures, please inform the Academic Office on econgrad@economics.ox.ac.uk.

The primary place to look for help with pastoral, welfare and health matter is your College. 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 support available more widely in the University are available from the Oxford Students website <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare?wssl=1>, including in relation to mental and physical health and disability.

7.2 Complaints and appeals

Complaints and academic appeals within the Department of Economics

The University, the Social Sciences Division and the Economics department all hope that provision made for students at all stages of their course 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 these sources before pursuing your complaint.

General areas of concern about provision affecting students as a whole should be raised through GJCC or via student representation on the department's committees.

Complaints

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by the department, then you should raise it with the Director of Graduate Studies (Sanjay Jain) as appropriate. Complaints about departmental facilities should be made to the Departmental Administrator (Jenny Hayward). If you feel unable to approach one of those individuals, you may contact the Head of Department. The officer concerned will attempt to resolve your concern/complaint informally.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may take your concern further by making a formal complaint to the Proctors under the University Student Complaints Procedure (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>).

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.

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 Graduate 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 (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>).

7.3 Student Societies

There are over 200 clubs and societies covering a wide variety of interests available for you to join or attend. See the following website: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/clubs>.

7.4 Policies and 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>.

7.5 Equality and Diversity at Oxford

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. We recognise that the broad range of experiences that a diverse staff and student body brings strengthens our research and enhances our teaching, and that in order

for Oxford to remain a world-leading institution we must continue to provide a diverse, inclusive, fair and open environment that allows everyone to grow and flourish.” *University of Oxford Equality Policy*.

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, reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and/or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Visit our website for further details or contact us directly for advice: <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/home> or 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

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.admin.ox.ac.uk/religion-and-belief-0.

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

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 The Disability Advisory Service and the Counselling Service are both offering virtual consultations.

A range of services led by students are available to help provide support to other students, including the peer supporter network, the Oxford SU’s Student Advice Service and Nightline. For more information visit: 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: 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

Departmental Harassment contacts:

Alex Teytelboym (alexander.teytelboym@economics.ox.ac.uk)

Katherine Cumming (Katherine.cumming@economics.ox.ac.uk)

Departmental Disability contact:

Jenny Hayward (jenny.hayward@economics.ox.ac.uk)

7.6 Freedom of Speech

Free speech is the lifeblood of a university.

It enables the pursuit of knowledge. It helps us approach truth. It allows students, teachers and researchers to become better acquainted with the variety of beliefs, theories and opinions in the world. Recognising the vital importance of free expression for the life of the mind, a university may make rules concerning the conduct of debate but should never prevent speech that is lawful.

Inevitably, this will mean that members of the University are confronted with views that some find unsettling, extreme or offensive. The University must therefore foster freedom of expression within a framework of robust civility. Not all theories deserve equal respect. A university values expertise and intellectual achievement as well as openness. But, within the bounds set by law, all voices or views which any member of our community considers relevant should be given the chance of a hearing. Wherever possible, they should also be exposed to evidence, questioning and argument. As an integral part of this commitment to freedom of expression, we will take steps to ensure that all such exchanges happen peacefully. With appropriate regulation of the time, place and manner of events, neither speakers nor listeners should have any reasonable grounds to feel intimidated or censored.

It is this understanding of the central importance and specific roles of free speech in a university that underlies the detailed procedures of the University of Oxford.

<https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/prevent/freedom-of-speech>

7.7 Academic dress

Full academic dress should be worn at all formal University ceremonies including matriculation and degree ceremonies. Sub fusc (from the Latin *sub fuscus* meaning dark brown) should be worn beneath your academic gown and is also required when sitting examinations. See university website for details:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/dress>

7.8 Policy on the recording of lectures and other formal teaching sessions by students

Many, but not all, of your lectures will be recorded and will be available to watch until after the relevant examination has taken place. The primary purpose of these recordings is to provide students with a revision resource. The Department does not consider them as substitutes for lecture attendance. The decision whether or not to make a recording of a lecture rests with the lecturer concerned.

You must not copy, issue, lend or communicate to another person, or make an adaptation of any lecture or class materials provided (this includes slides, handouts or recordings), unless specifically authorised in writing or permitted under applicable intellectual property laws. Students are not permitted to distribute the material in any way such as placing it online or on social networking sites. Should students distribute or publish recording of lectures or classes or class materials in any way without authorisation, the relevant disciplinary procedures will apply.

The Department's policy on recording of lectures either through the Lecture Capture/Replay service or by individual students with permission, generally follows that of the University which is set out below.

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 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.

8. Facilities

8.1 Workspace

There are study rooms available for the use of Economics MPhil students in the Social Sciences Library.

8.2 Photocopying

Printing facilities are available in the graduate study room in the Library. The Department does not, as a general rule, provide printed handouts for lectures.

8.3 Libraries

Bodleian Libraries is the main library service for the University of Oxford, offering over 12 million printed items, 30 site libraries, 3,800 study places, over 80,000 e-journals, document supply services, information skills training programmes and world-class staff expertise: www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk.

To search the collections, locate items, access online resources, reserve or renew books, and use the library's instant chat service, please use SOLO (Search Oxford Libraries Online): solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/. For off-site access to online resources log in to SOLO with your Single-Sign-On. Once you have received your University Card you can also log in to library PCs or connect your laptop to the Bodleian Libraries network:

<https://register.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>. An extensive range of guides to resources and services is available online, including details of forthcoming training, <http://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk>

The Bodleian Social Science Library (SSL) is the main library for the University's Social Sciences Division and particularly supports the Departments of: Economics, International Development, Politics & International Relations, Sociology, and Social Policy & Intervention, and the Centres for: Criminology, Refugee Studies, Russian & East European Studies, and Socio-Legal Studies. The SSL is housed on the ground floor of the Manor Road Building, www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ssl, and is open 7 days a week during term-time (9am to 10pm Mon – Fri, 10am – 6pm Sat, 11am - 7pm Sun). The Library offers a variety of study spaces including individual study carrels, and two group discussion rooms which are available for booking. For answers to FAQs (Which password do I use? How do I print, copy and scan? How do holds work? etc.), please see the SSL Getting Started webpage:

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ssl/gettingstarted>. The SSL website also provides links to the Library's Facebook page, RSS feed, Twitter account and the 'ask an SSL Librarian' enquiry form.

To arrange a one-to-one research support appointment please contact John Southall, Data Librarian and Subject Consultant for Economics: john.southall@bodleian.ox.ac.uk. John also manages the Bodleian Data Library website www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/data and specialises in supporting graduates needing to store or use quantitative and qualitative data.

For information about library services for readers with disabilities please contact the SSL Reader Services Librarian, Craig Finlay: craig.finlay@bodleian.ox.ac.uk. To request new library materials for purchase, email ssl-orders@bodleian.ox.ac.uk or talk to library staff at the desk.

In addition to the SSL, there are separate social science libraries for Anthropology, Business, Education and Law. Area studies are well-served by the Vere Harmsworth Library, the Oriental Institute Library, the Latin American Centre Library, the Bodleian Japanese Library, and the China Centre Library.

Oxford College Libraries offer collections and services to their own members. Nuffield College also offers reference access to its library to all postgraduate members of the University.

8.4 Manor Road IT Services

IT literacy is an integral part of everyday life and university students are expected to be able to use their own device and supporting facilities provided for their coursework. Students will be registered with the Oxford University Central IT Services automatically. You will be required to activate the account and register for further services. Registration entitles the student to a username and an email mailbox with a college or department address – Students can set their preferences via the IT Services ‘Manage Accounts’ link. Account details for your department via Manor Road IT – the “socsci” account – will be emailed to the student at the end of Week 0. This account enables AnywherePrint (from your own device) to the Canon printers in the building. If a course of study requires Stata registration information will be sent to the student’s University email address during Week 0.

To get started with Central IT Services:

<https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/want/get-started>.

To get started with your department via Manor Road IT:

<https://itg.socsci.ox.ac.uk/getting-started-1>

For help contact:

itsupport@manor-road.ox.ac.uk.

9. After the MPhil

Historically, about half of our MPhil students have pursued a professional career after the MPhil and the other half have continued with further graduate studies, often the DPhil in Economics in Oxford. The MPhil provides great preparation for both careers.

Students who are interested in further graduate studies in Economics should discuss their plans with their thesis supervisors and apply to many different programmes, including the DPhil in Economics in Oxford, to increase the chance of obtaining a place.

Admission to do a DPhil after the MPhil is not automatic. It requires a strong application, a good performance in the examinations (especially the thesis), and the availability and support of a suitable supervisor. Experience as research assistant, either before the MPhil or during the MPhil is also very valuable. The standard required is well above simply passing the examination. The committee will assess students' potential for research on the basis of performance in written examinations, the thesis, the research proposal and a reference letter from the student's MPhil supervisor.