



# MPhil COURSE BOOK 2018–19

MPhil in Biodiversity, Conservation and Management

MPhil in Environmental Change and Management

MPhil in Nature, Society and Environmental Governance

MPhil in Water Science, Policy and Management



This handbook applies to students **starting** the MPhil in Biodiversity, Conservation and Management; MPhil in Environmental Change and Management; MPhil in Nature, Society and Environmental Governance; or MPhil in Water Science, Policy and Management during the academic year 2018-19.

The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

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 Dr Lorraine Wild (Academic Administrator)  
[lorraine.wild@ouce.ox.ac.uk](mailto:lorraine.wild@ouce.ox.ac.uk)

**Disclaimer**

The information in this handbook is accurate as at 1st 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 together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.

MPhil in Biodiversity, Conservation and Management  
MPhil in Environmental Change and Management  
MPhil in Nature, Society and Environmental Governance  
MPhil in Water Science, Policy and Management

2018: version 2.0

For the latest version of this handbook please see:

<http://www.geog.ox.ac.uk/graduate/programmes/mphil.html>

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Course Introduction

Students studying for the MPhil in Biodiversity, Conservation and Management, MPhil in Environmental Change and Management, MPhil in Nature, Society and Environmental Governance or the MPhil in Water Science, Policy and Management study for the taught component of the respective MSc course during their first year. Details of these taught components of the MPhil are specified in the relevant MSc course handbook, which you should therefore consult in conjunction with the present document. The purpose of this handbook is to lay out the aims of the MPhil course and how the degree of MPhil differs from an MSc degree. Crucially, this document includes important information about the structure of assessment, submitting coursework, thesis guidelines, attending examinations and entry to our DPhil programme should this be something you wish to consider. You should read through the handbook carefully and ensure that you understand your obligations throughout the course. We will provide you with more detailed material for particular parts of the course as appropriate during the two years you are here.

Most of all we would like to thank you for choosing to come to Oxford to study for an MPhil at the School of Geography and the Environment. We hope that your two years in Oxford will be a formative and memorable time. Your respective MSc/MPhil course teams will guide you through the taught part of the course and help you find an appropriate supervisor for your thesis.

## 1.2 School of Geography and the Environment

The School of Geography and the Environment (SoGE) and its associated research institutes based in the Oxford University Centre for the Environment (OUCE) building are internationally recognised for their excellence in environmental research and scholarship. The School (previously known simply as the School of Geography) was the first geography school to be established in the UK, over 100 years ago, by Halford Mackinder. It was established through a co-operative effort involving the Royal Geographical Society and the University of Oxford. From these deep roots the School has grown and prospered. The ethos of the School of Geography and the Environment is to promote research that is bold, innovative and challenging while remaining committed to the highest standards of scholarship.

Today, the School is one of the leading centres of scholarship for environmental and social change. The SoGE is committed to training a new generation of graduate students in the core research fields of physical geography, the environmental sciences and human geography and in the new and exciting interdisciplinary research frontiers that exist between and across these disciplines.

The SoGE is home to the internationally recognised Environmental Change Institute (ECI), and other vibrant research centres, such as the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment (SSEE), Transport Studies Unit (TSU), Oxford Centre for Tropical Forests (OCTF) and the Oxford Centre for Water Research (OCWR), along with cross-departmental research groups, such as the Climate Systems and Policy, African Environments Programme (AEP) and the Global Environmental Change and Food Systems (GECAFS) international project office. The creative combination of theory and practice within the School provides a relevant and fertile training ground for our postgraduates. Our

research programmes span the globe, with researchers working in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and North America, along with a strong record in European studies and, of course, the UK.

The SoGE currently offers five thesis-based higher research degrees (DPhil and the four MPhil courses) and four MSc courses. These are:

**MSc Biodiversity, Conservation and Management**

**MSc Environmental Change and Management**

**MSc Nature, Society and Environmental Governance**

**MSc Water Science, Policy and Management**

The MPhil is a two-year version of these programmes aimed at students who wish to have a substantial research component to their studies. In the first year, candidates take the coursework and examinations associated with one of the four MSc courses in the School of Geography and the Environment and in the second year, students devote most of their time to researching and writing a thesis of 30,000 words.

### **1.3. Oxford Learning Environment**

#### **1.3.1. Learning Approach**

During your time at Oxford you will experience a wide range of different formats and styles of teaching; from small group discussions to field visits, and from traditional lectures to public talks by some of the world's leading academics. In keeping with Oxford's tradition of academic freedom, the exact nature of the learning experience within any particular seminar or lecture is left to the discretion of the lecturer which, we hope, produces a useful variety of learning experiences. The typical teaching approach is a seminar supplemented with discussion and exercises.

In the International Graduate School, we place strong emphasis on both peer group and individual learning. Your peer group consists of exceptionally talented scholars from around the world, many of whom have practical experience or extensive knowledge of issues and topics that are covered during the MSc course. We strongly recommend that you form strong academic bonds with your peers and we encourage this with small group projects, reading groups and discussions.

There is an obligation on you as an individual to schedule time to engage with assigned readings, to work hard at identifying gaps in your knowledge and training, and to develop your own spheres of interest within the subject area. Oxford's exceptional learning facilities provide unrivalled opportunities for individual learning, not to mention the array of international researchers and scholars who present their work at external lectures around the university. We urge you to take full advantage of all of these opportunities in order to get the most out of your time at Oxford.

Staff members are available to advise students on reading, literature, and topics. The Course Director of the MSc/MPhil on which you are enrolled will have regular office hours when you can

seek guidance or sound out ideas. Your Colleges will provide a personal adviser who can give additional support.

### **1.3.2. Academic Conduct**

You are expected to attend the classes, workshops, seminars and field trips as specified in the course handbooks. It is also important that you attend sessions involving external professionals, whose contributions to the course are voluntary and based on good will. Arriving late for a class or workshop or leaving before it has ended without the agreement of the lecturer is considered disrespectful and unprofessional.

### **1.3.3. Expectations of Study**

Students should note the University guidelines on graduate students undertaking paid work: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/policyonpaidwork/>

### **1.3.4. Residency Requirements**

MPhil students are required to keep statutory residence and pursue their course of study at Oxford for not less than six terms after admission. To meet the University's residence requirements, students must be in Oxford for at least 42 nights each term. They may be granted leave of absence for not more than two terms and be dispensed from residence for the same period if it is desirable in the interests of their work that they should be allowed to pursue their studies at some other place (this refers to fieldwork and study at another institution).

To be granted leave of absence you need to complete the Application for dispensation from statutory residence form (GSO.8) available from this link:

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

Once completed this should be signed by the Director of Graduate Studies.

## **2. COURSE INFORMATION**

MPhil in Biodiversity, Conservation and Management  
MPhil in Environmental Change and Management  
MPhil in Nature, Society and Environmental Governance  
MPhil in Water Science, Policy and Management

FHEQ level 7

Duration of course: 24 months

## 2.1. Aims/Objectives

Students registered for one of the MPhil courses first undertake a course of teaching associated with the respective one-year taught MSc programme in the School, i.e. the Biodiversity, Conservation and Management (BCM), Environmental Change and Management (ECM), Nature, Society and Environmental Governance (NSEG) or Water Science, Policy and Management (WSPM) programmes. The MPhil course description presented here relates only to the second year of study, which is dedicated for the most part to the development of a research thesis. For information concerning the aims, objectives, learning outcomes etc. for the first year of study please see the programme specifications for the relevant MSc programme.

For the second year of study the educational aims of the MPhil are to:

- Critically engage in an extended piece of independent research;
- Allow full engagement in the intellectual life of the School;
- Build proficiency in key themes, theory, and research skills;
- Link learnt proficiencies to established and emerging issues in the relevant MSc programme; and,
- Prepare students for further DPhil research as appropriate.

## 2.2. Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will develop a knowledge and understanding of:

- Key research skills and practical methods;
- Techniques for critical assessment of a wide range of research-level literature;
- Constructing and designing a significant piece of research, which may include field-based data collection;
- Critical analysis and presentation of original data; and,
- Construction and development of a research-level thesis.

## 2.3. Course Components

The MPhil programme comprises:

- core MSc modules, which are assessed by written examination;
- three elective modules (two in year one, one in year two), which are each assessed by a summative essay;
- a piece of original research, which is assessed through a thesis; and,
- workshops, study tours and field trips throughout the first year.

## 2.4. Course Structure

Below is an outline time-table for the course. Core modules are taught in the first two terms, the examinations take place in the third term, electives are held in terms one, two, four and five, and thesis preparation starts from the third term. For full details, please visit your MSc Course Handbook.

<b>MPhil in Biodiversity, Conservation and Management</b> <b>MPhil in Environmental Change and Management</b> <b>MPhil in Nature, Society and Environmental Governance</b> <b>MPhil in Water Science, Policy and Management</b>			
<b>1st Term</b>	<b>Core Modules</b>	<b>Electives</b>	
<b>2nd Term</b>			
<b>3rd Term</b>	<b>Exams</b>		<b>Research Thesis</b>
<b>4th Term</b>		<b>Electives</b>	
<b>5th Term</b>			
<b>6th Term</b>			

## 2.5. Course Workload

The Oxford educational approach combines class-based teaching with individual reading and study. Much of the value of an Oxford University degree lies in the student’s own initiative and effort in exploring literature and ideas. Students hoping to excel at Oxford will need to demonstrate significant reading and understanding beyond the taught material.

Our course design is guided by a work-load model that estimates 3 hours reading associated with each class and 20% of any week available for extended reading, individual project study, workshops and attending seminars elsewhere. This results in 12–14 hours of class time (formal contact hours) per week, for the first year.

## 2.6. Core Modules and Elective Modules

Please see your separate MSc Course Handbook for details on the classes offered by each course and the Electives Handbook for electives available in 2018-19. Please note that the list of electives is specific to each year and there may be some changes in the electives available to you in the second year of your MPhil course.

## **2.7. Thesis**

In addition to the core and elective modules, you will undertake an independent and original research thesis. The thesis is an integral and formal part of the course and for many students it is an end in itself, permitting graduation with the MPhil degree after two years of study. For some, completing a good dissertation is also essential for progression onto the DPhil programme at the School.

The thesis gives you the opportunity to design and execute your own research. The choice of research topic is up to you, but it normally relates to one or more of the core or elective modules, or to the research interests of one of the SoGE staff.

A supervisor will be appointed to guide you during this work, the bulk of which will be carried out after the exams are over in the first year, and the final work must then be handed in on the first weekday of September at the end of the second year.

It is expected that the best theses will be of publication quality, and all submissions should show originality and/or competent and creative scholarship. Indeed, it is possible to submit the work in the form of a literature review and a minimum of one journal paper ready for submission. This should be discussed with your thesis supervisor.

All theses will be judged on the degree to which they fulfil the criteria of a comprehensive and coherent treatment of a suitable research question in an analytical and critical manner. On successful completion of all of the necessary components of the MPhil Programme — assessed essays, examinations, and dissertation — you can be considered for entry onto the DPhil programme at the School of Geography and the Environment.

## **2.8. Entering the Workplace**

The department offers two programmes that support transition into careers.

### **2.8.1. Internship Opportunities**

The Environmental Change Institute runs a sustainability internship programme that is open for application from students on all of our MSc and MPhil courses. The programme runs a 3-day Training Better Leaders course during the Easter vacation and places students in 8 to 12 week paid internships after the course. These internships are sourced and managed through a coordinator who ensures that each placement satisfies specific criteria to make these experiences engaging, interesting and a useful next step in professional progression. They are advertised on a rolling basis through Hilary and Trinity terms for placements starting at the end of September. For more details and to sign up to the mailing list visit <http://www.eci.ox.ac.uk/internship/>.

## **2.8.2. Innovative Food System Teaching and Learning (IFSTAL)**

In 2015/16 a group of Universities, including the University of Oxford, launched an interactive training programme to address the urgent need for a workforce more skilled in food system thinking. It aims to generate a cohort of MSc, MPhil and doctoral graduates equipped to address food system challenges by framing their specialist understandings (e.g. of Biodiversity) with the broader social, economic and environmental context. Participation is on a voluntary basis and will involve evening lectures and an engagement with a purpose- built virtual learning environment.

## **2.9. Security and care of personal belongings and data**

People outside the School have access to the building. It is important therefore that you are vigilant of your own and others' valuables at all times. This applies particularly to laptops and phones. In an effort to combat crime the University runs registration schemes for bikes and personal possessions and you are encouraged to use these. Please contact your college for details. You are strongly advised to back-up your data, lecture notes and drafts of written work at regular intervals. In addition, we request that you are particularly vigilant of 'tail gating' i.e. people coming in through the security barriers behind you and who lack swipe card access to the Department.

## **2.10. Course Induction**

All new postgraduates are expected to attend a full-time orientation and induction programme in the week before Michaelmas Term commences. The purpose of this orientation is to provide an opportunity to lay out the structure and expectations of the programme in an informal setting. The first half of the induction programme is organised by the department and comprises, among other things, an introduction to the School of Geography and the Environment, its component centres, and its facilities. It also introduces and explains the training and research programme, institutional and organisational procedures, the aims, objectives, structure, outline, and assessment methods of the course, the key expectations and responsibilities of the students. Information about supervision arrangements is provided. In addition, specialist induction to library and database resources, electronic databases and Internet facilities, and the use of available equipment and facilities is provided. The second half of the induction is organised by the student's respective colleges and includes information concerning college facilities and arrangements, college computing and internet access, university affairs, and the like.

# **3. ASSESSMENT**

## **3.1. University Examinations**

The procedure for entering for University examinations is explained on the University website: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/entry>. If you have any questions about your entry

for the examinations or requesting alternative examination arrangements, you should contact the academic office at your college.

The examination timetable will be confirmed no less than five weeks before the examination. The provisional dates for the examinations are in 4<sup>th</sup> week of Trinity Term of your first year. Once they are confirmed, the examination timetables may be found at:

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/timetables>

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

Examiners' reports for the previous year may be found at:

<https://intranet.ouce.ox.ac.uk/msc/index.html>

### **3.2. Good Academic Practice and Avoiding Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition. Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence. Please see the University guidelines: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism>.

All submitted work will be run through Turnitin (an electronic text matching system).

### **3.3. Examination Conventions**

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

The Examination Conventions for this course may be found at:

<https://intranet.ouce.ox.ac.uk/msc/examination-conventions/>

These conventions are the definitive version to apply to students starting the MPhil in 2018.

## 4. ELECTIVE MODULES AND THESIS

### 4.1. Elective Modules

Students are required to submit written essays (of no more than 4,000 words plus 150-word abstract) on a total of three elective courses by 12 noon on the first Monday of the following term after which the elective module was taken (i.e. a Michaelmas elective module requires submission on the first Monday of Hilary Term). One elective course, chosen from those available to all MSc/Mphil students, must be taken in Michaelmas Term of Year 1 and the second in Hilary Term of Year 1. The third elective may be taken in either Michaelmas or Hilary Term of Year 2 but the timing should be discussed with and approved by your thesis supervisor. The essay topic and scope will be decided in consultation with the elective module leader.

Full details on the required format and how to submit the elective essays can be found at: <https://intranet.ouce.ox.ac.uk/msc/submission/electives.html>

### 4.2. Thesis

You must submit for the approval of your MSc/MPhil Course Director by the end of the first week in Hilary Term in your first year, the title and details of your thesis as set out in the proposal template, together with the name of a person who has agreed to act as your supervisor during preparation of the thesis. Candidates registered for the MSc programmes may petition for transfer to the MPhil degree by submitting a thesis title and proposal by the deadline stipulated above.

The dissertation supervisor for your thesis should be confirmed in Trinity Term of Year 1.

It is also permissible to write the dissertation in journal paper format prepared as if for submission to a specified international journal. Further guidance on this approach to formatting your thesis may be found at <https://intranet.ouce.ox.ac.uk/mphil/submission/>, but the following guidelines apply in view of the greater depth and size of the MPhil thesis. All 'paper format' MPhil theses should contain the following:

- a) a 7,000 - 10,000 word literature review on the subject area addressed by the paper, and
- b) a minimum of ONE academic paper in the appropriate format for submission to an international journal; where students should follow the published 'Instructions for Authors' for the journal in question, and should prepare the paper according to the exact requirements of submission to that journal, including a copy of those instructions bound in as an appendix to the dissertation.

The total text of the entire thesis (as defined above) should not exceed 30,000 words and be accompanied by an abstract not exceeding 300 words.

Full details on the required format and how to submit the thesis can be found at: <https://intranet.ouce.ox.ac.uk/mphil/submission/dissertations.html>

The MPhil theses are assessed by two assessors appointed by the MSc/MPhil examiners.

Once a student has been granted leave to supplicate, they will be requested to submit a finalised hardbound copy of the thesis, as approved by the examiners, to the Examination Schools for deposit in the Bodleian Library. The candidate must also submit an electronic copy to the Oxford Research Archive. Please refer to the Department webpage on details of how to submit to the Oxford Research Archive (<https://intranet.ouce.ox.ac.uk/graduate/ora.html>). Successful candidates will be required to sign a form stating whether they will permit their thesis to be consulted.

#### **4.2.1. Thesis planning and time-line**

Our expectations and advice regarding the execution of thesis research is as follows:

- 16 weeks fieldwork from mid-June Trinity Term to 0th Week Michaelmas Term (Year 2);
- Michaelmas Term (Year 2) analysing data, attending third assessed elective;
- Christmas vacation (Year 2) write essay for third assessed elective;
- HT and TT writing thesis, submitting to supervisor for comments before the end of Trinity Term; and,
- Finalise thesis during August for submission on the first weekday of September in the second year.

or

- Extended field research into Michaelmas Term;
- Hilary Term (Year 2) analysing data and attending third assessed elective;
- Easter vacation (Year 2) write essay for third assessed elective;
- HT and TT writing thesis, submitting to supervisor for comments before the end of Trinity Term; and,
- Finalise thesis during August for submission by 12 noon on the first weekday of September in the second year.

The timing and structure of field work may deviate from this outline with the authorisation of your supervisor; however, attendance at the third elective in either Michaelmas or Hilary Term of Year 2 is mandatory.

In the second year of your MPhil, you may request hot-desk facilities in the DPhil/MPhil study room.

## **5. COURSE GOVERNANCE AND STUDENT REPRESENTATION**

### **5.1. MSc Committee**

The Graduate Teaching and Examinations Committee (GTEC), chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies (Taught Programmes), defines the strategic direction of MSc and MPhil provision in line with SoGE's evolving academic strategy. It is responsible for coordinating academic programmes, staffing and timetabling across all four MSc and MPhil courses. It receives and considers the minutes of course team meetings, examiners' reports and student assessments in preparation for Divisional scrutiny. It discusses and proposes amendments to assessment regulations for approval by higher committees as appropriate.

### **5.2. Student Representation: Joint Consultative Committee**

At the start of the course the MSc/MPhil student group elects two of their members to serve as representatives on the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC), which meets each term. If you have any comments or concerns you should pass these on to your representatives who will raise them with the Course Team at the JCC meeting. Students in the second year of the MPhil elect a representative who attends the JCC (PGR), the JCC meeting for post graduate research students. The minutes of this meeting are considered by the International Graduate School Committee.

### **5.3. Feedback and concerns**

Our courses are constantly being adjusted in response to changes in the discipline and student feedback. We welcome your constructive feedback and have a number of avenues through which you can contribute feedback. You can also use these avenues to raise any concerns that you might have; we will seek to resolve these as quickly as possible.

You can:

- Provide feedback and ask questions during weekly class meetings;
- Speak with your MSc/MPhil Course Director or Academic Director during his/her weekly office hours;
- Provide feedback or raise concerns via your class representatives; and,
- Ensure that at the end of each term you complete the feedback on each module, field-trip, or workshop.

The DGS (Taught programmes) may be approached to raise such MPhil-specific concerns as cannot be dealt with by the above means.

Feedback received, inclusive of any concerns raised, will be discussed at the termly Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) for your course. The minutes of the JCC and the module feedback are then considered by the relevant Course Team and by GTEC (on which there is student representation).

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/feedback](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/feedback).

## **5.4. Complaints and Appeals**

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

Many sources of advice are available within colleges, within faculties/departments and from bodies such as the Student Advice Service provided by OUSU or the Counselling Service, which have extensive experience in advising students. You may wish to take advice from one of these sources before pursuing your complaint. General areas of concern about provision affecting students as a whole should be raised through Joint Consultative Committees or via student representation on the faculty/department's committees.

### **5.4.1. Complaints**

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by the department, then you should raise it in the first instance with the MSc/MPhil Course Director. Within the department the officer concerned will attempt to resolve your concern/complaint informally.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, then you may take your concern further by making a formal complaint to the University Proctors. The procedures adopted by the Proctors for the consideration of complaints and appeals are described on the Proctors' webpage

[www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/complaints/proceduresforhandlingcomplaints](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/complaints/proceduresforhandlingcomplaints)), the Student Handbook ([www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam)) and the relevant Council regulations ([www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/247-062.shtml](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/247-062.shtml)).

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

### **5.4.2. Academic Appeals**

An academic appeal is defined as a formal questioning of a decision on an academic matter made by the responsible academic body. For undergraduate or taught graduate courses, a concern which

might lead to an appeal should be raised with your College authorities and the individual responsible for overseeing your work. It must not be raised directly with Examiners or Assessors. If it is not possible to clear up your concern in this way, you may put your concern in writing and submit it to the Proctors via the Senior Tutor of your College.

As noted above, the procedures adopted by the Proctors in relation to complaints and appeals are described on the Proctors' webpage:

[www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/complaints/proceduresforhandlingcomplaints](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/complaints/proceduresforhandlingcomplaints)), the Student Handbook [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam)) and the relevant Council regulations [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/247-062.shtml](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/247-062.shtml)).

Please remember in connection with all the academic appeals that:

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

## 6. KEY DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES

### 6.1. If you need help

If you find yourself facing a problem during your course of study you can seek advice and support from various sources in the University. Generally, the department is best qualified to help you navigate problems relating to the academic content of the course and your college is best qualified to provide support and advice relating to health or personal problems.

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

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

## 6.2. Library and Learning Facilities

The Oxford University library system is extensive, with state-of-the-art online facilities and dozens of individual libraries around the city. A tutorial on using the library facilities will be provided during induction week.

More information may be found at: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/research/libraries/> and in the library subject guide for Geography and the Environment: <http://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/geography>.

## 6.3. Canvas

The School for Geography and the Environment is an early adopter of Oxford University's new Virtual Learning Environment, Canvas. You will be able to download a Canvas app in order to receive updates and notifications about core modules. Each course has its own space where we post general course information along with lecture notes, reading lists and other materials specific to each module, workshop or field trip. It will be important for you to familiarize yourself with Canvas and consult with your course director about how they expect you to engage with learning materials on the VLE. Each module leader has a different teaching style and will use Canvas in different ways.

Canvas has a number of resources in its 'help' section which can help you get acquainted with the system.

## 6.4. Departmental Intranet

The department's intranet pages contain much information on members of staff, Health & Safety, House Rules and so on. To view this information, follow the link via the SoGE [homepage](http://www.geog.ox.ac.uk).

## 6.5. Past Exam Papers

Available from OXAM: <http://missun29.offices.ox.ac.uk/pls/oxam/main>.

## 6.6. The Central University Research Ethics Committee

Their website (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/curec/>) provides essential information on the University's policy concerning the ethical review of research projects involving human participants or personal data, undertaken by staff and students, or on University premises. The form you must complete and have approved before conducting such research is available at: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/curec/oxonly/checklistsandapplicationform/>.

## 6.7. Fieldwork Behaviour and Safety

As a student, you are obliged to comply with all relevant University requirements relating to health, safety and risk assessment. **You must not begin your research without being notified that your research risk assessment has been approved.** The relevant forms to complete are available on the School's intranet at: <https://intranet.ouce.ox.ac.uk/safety/fieldwork.html>.

## 6.8. IT Services

IT Services (<http://www.it.ox.ac.uk/>) offer a wide range of Information Technology support including excellent training courses and a shop selling leading software at educational discount prices.

## 6.9. Alumni Networks

The School of Geography and the Environment now runs active alumni networks. With over 1,000 Masters' graduates as well as more than 5,000 thousand former geography undergraduates, this network is a growing source of professional contacts, knowledge, and advice. You will be invited to become part of the alumni networks upon graduating.

In addition, each MSc/MPhil course runs an active LinkedIn group which you can join on arrival. This provides an opportunity to network with alumni to discuss career opportunities, dissertation ideas and current issues in science and policy.

For more information, please visit [www.geog.ox.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.geog.ox.ac.uk/alumni) or email the Alumni Relations Officer, at [alumni@ouce.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ouce.ox.ac.uk).

Alumni are always keen to hear what current students are up to – so do let the Alumni Relations Officer know about projects, field trips and events you think might be of interest to them.

## 7. KEY DEPARTMENTAL CONTACTS

- DGS (Taught Programmes): Dr Jamie Lorimer
- MPhil Course Coordinators:
  - ECM & WSPM: Faith Opio
  - BCM & NSEG Caroline Anderson
- Academic Administrator: Dr Lorraine Wild
- Head of Administration and Finance: Mr Richard Holden
- Disabilities Officer: Dr Claire Hann

## 8. KEY DATES

### 8.1. Term dates

Term	1 <sup>st</sup> day of term	Last day of term
Michaelmas 2018	Sunday, 7 October	Saturday, 1 December
Hilary 2019	Sunday, 13 January	Saturday, 9 March
Trinity 2019	Sunday, 28 April	Saturday, 22 June
Michaelmas 2019	Sunday, 13 October	Saturday, 7 December
Hilary 2020	Sunday, 19 January	Saturday, 14 March
Trinity 2020	Sunday, 26 April	Saturday, 20 June

### 8.2. Assessment Dates

- 1<sup>st</sup> elective submission: first Monday of Hilary Term, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019
- 2<sup>nd</sup> elective submission: first Monday of Trinity Term, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019
- 3<sup>rd</sup> elective submission: first Monday of Hilary/Trinity Term, 20<sup>th</sup> January/27<sup>th</sup> April 2020
- Thesis submission: first weekday in September 2020
- Provisional dates for examinations: Week 4 in Trinity Term of first year

## 9. ADMISSION TO THE DPHIL PROGRAMME

Students wishing to continue onto the DPhil programme should complete the MPhil and submit their MPhil thesis for the award of the MPhil degree, and apply during the second year of the MPhil for admission to the DPhil programme.

Applications to the DPhil programme will be assessed against our normal admissions criteria and any offer would normally be conditional on obtaining either a distinction overall or on the MPhil thesis. The readmission application form should be used when applying for the DPhil.

The DPhil thesis will be expected to be submitted within three and, at the most, four years after entry to the DPhil programme. The fee liability for the DPhil is 9 terms, however, students already awarded an MPhil from the University of Oxford may have their DPhil fee liability reduced by 3 terms. A continuation fee will be charged once the standard period of fee liability has been reached up to and including the term in which the thesis is submitted.

Students are normally admitted in the first instance as Probationer Research Students (PRS) and will be required to undergo the Transfer of Status in their first three terms. They will also be required to undergo the Confirmation of Status by the end of their 9<sup>th</sup> term. No student will be allowed to go beyond these milestones without a successful application for deferral, otherwise their status will be lapsed.

In some cases, if a candidate's proposed DPhil research is an extension of their MPhil work, they may be admitted directly as a DPhil candidate and will not be required to undergo the transfer of status procedures. They will, however, be required to undergo the confirmation of status at the end of their 3<sup>rd</sup> term and will only be allowed to go beyond this with a successful application for deferral, otherwise their status will be lapsed. In the case of a direct transfer to the DPhil it is expected that the thesis will be submitted within 6 terms of admission as a DPhil student.



MPHIL COURSES | SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY & THE ENVIRONMENT

DGS (Taught Programmes): Dr Jamie Lorimer

MPhil Course Coordinators:

ECM & WSPM: [msc-coordinator-bcm-nsep@ouce.ox.ac.uk](mailto:msc-coordinator-bcm-nsep@ouce.ox.ac.uk)

BCM & NSEG: [msc-coordinator-ecm-wspm@ouce.ox.ac.uk](mailto:msc-coordinator-ecm-wspm@ouce.ox.ac.uk)

