



GRADUATE DEGREES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL POLICY AND INTERVENTION





CONTENTS

WELCOME TO THE DEPARTMENT	2
WHAT WE STUDY & TEACH	3
OVERVIEW OF OUR COURSES	4
LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES	5
DETAILED COURSES	
• MSc in Comparative Social Policy	6
• MSc in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation	7
• Oxford 1+1 MBA Programme	8
• MPhil in Comparative Social Policy	9
• MPhil in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation	10
• DPhil in Social Policy	11
• DPhil in Social Intervention	11
FEES AND FUNDING	12
LIFE IN OXFORD	13
LIFE AFTER OXFORD	14
HOW TO APPLY	15
CONTACT	16

WELCOME TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL POLICY & INTERVENTION



CLICK TO PLAY VIDEO

Students from all over the world are attracted to Oxford because of its outstanding reputation and its distinct learning environment. The department provides students with the opportunity to explore social policy and evidence-based social intervention and policy evaluation within this unique intellectual environment.

Each year the department admits a highly selective group of new graduate students from across the world. We are a global institution that celebrates excellence and unites in cultural diversity. It is this diversity that makes the department so vibrant, and we pride ourselves on the stimulating and supportive atmosphere that we have worked hard to create.

Many graduates from our Masters programmes go on to doctoral studies in Oxford or other prestigious universities, while our DPhils go on to academic appointments at global research universities throughout the world or to influential jobs in government, non-governmental and international organisations.

The department has a wide remit, and studying with us enables you to benefit from exploring a variety of social problems, social groups, and policy areas. As you work towards the broad goal of gaining a thorough and practical understanding of policy, intervention, research and how they intertwine, you will have the opportunity to delve into detailed subject areas.



WHAT WE STUDY & TEACH

The department's research and teaching falls into two main areas: social policy and social intervention. We offer a one year MSc, a two year MPhil, and a three year DPhil in both subjects.

Our research is international in outlook, and we contribute both to academic knowledge and debate and to policy and practice. We have had a significant impact on policy, from the way in which government funds are allocated, to the design of policy instruments and the delivery of local programmes.

We have been working in this field for around 100 years. The department has some 30 teaching and research staff, and each year welcomes about 70 new students. Those entering the DPhil programme become part of our community for three years, joining a lively group of around 60 research students.



You will have the opportunity to meet and network with highly acclaimed scholars from around the world through the department's programmes of seminars and one-off lectures. You will also have access to events across the University, giving you a unique opportunity to hear from internationally renowned figures in all fields.

WHAT WE STUDY & TEACH

COMPARATIVE SOCIAL POLICY

COMPARATIVE SOCIAL POLICY

The level of poverty present in a society is not something inevitable – it is largely determined by political choice. Exploring the political, economic, cultural and societal determinants of social policy and poverty as well as evaluating which policies work are key themes in our research.



CLICK TO PLAY VIDEO

The degrees in Comparative Social Policy explore welfare systems and policy developments across a range of countries. We explore questions such as why and how policy develops or changes across different welfare systems; what and whose needs does policy respond to; how and why do policy developments vary in different countries; and what are the outcomes or consequences of different policy approaches.

The comparative element is a key part of our work, as we believe it is critical to building a full picture of the development and operation of welfare systems and policies. It is only through understanding the operation of policy systems in a range of countries, that it is possible to understand and assess the generosity and effectiveness of a particular system.

We explore in depth different policy areas such as education, employment, family policy, healthcare, housing, poverty and social security. Although our main focus is affluent democracies, we also analyse social policy in the developing world. We look at who pays, provides and regulates welfare in these particular areas, and with what consequences.

WHAT WE STUDY & TEACH

EVIDENCE-BASED SOCIAL INTERVENTION
AND POLICY EVALUATION

EVIDENCE-BASED SOCIAL INTERVENTION AND POLICY EVALUATION

“Evidence-based practice” has become an axiom for governments and service providers, but it often seems that the evidence is thin or the research on which it is based is flawed.



CLICK TO PLAY VIDEO

In all societies, professionals from a range of disciplines and backgrounds intervene to ameliorate social problems, in areas as diverse as mental health, child protection, vulnerable elders, substance misusers, or those affected by HIV and AIDS. The practical imperative of ensuring effective use of finite resources, together with an ethical imperative to demonstrate that intervention is doing more good than harm, require that practice be based on sound evidence.

Worldwide there are many training programmes leading to qualification for professional practice, but few have the time or space to require students to examine thoroughly the effectiveness of the social interventions for which they are being trained.

Across a number of disciplines, interest in evidence-based intervention has been growing, and the UK has been at the forefront

of this development. Oxford University has developed successful centres for Evidence-Based Medicine and for Evidence-Based Mental Health, and has now developed as a leading centre for research and teaching in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation.

OVERVIEW OF OUR COURSES

The department accepts around 70 graduate students each year from all over the world. This international intake creates a unique environment for learning in the department.

We offer one-year taught MSc courses in Comparative Social Policy or Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation. Our two-year MPhil courses are an extended version of the MSc, with a longer thesis written in the second year. The DPhil degrees are full-time, three-year programmes of study in either Social Policy or Social Intervention.

In addition we offer our MSc courses as part of the Oxford 1+1 MBA programme. This is a new initiative allowing high calibre students to spend one year studying for the MSc and one year studying an MBA.

Full details of the courses are available in the [Graduate Prospectus](#).

Our MSc courses are formally recognised by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to provide the required one year research training programme for the doctoral degree (1+3), and a substantial number of students proceed to do doctoral work in Oxford or elsewhere. Many MPhil students also go onto our DPhil programme. MSc students can use their thesis to prepare for DPhil work, and MPhil students are allowed to incorporate their MPhil thesis into their DPhil. The ESRC has also recognised the Department for its doctoral programme and for CASE studentships.



MSc degrees (1 Yr)

MSc Degrees (2 yr)

MPhil degrees

DPhil degrees

- MSc in Comparative Social Policy
- MSc in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation

These one-year courses consist of a core subject paper, a core research methods paper, an option paper and a 10,000 word thesis.

MSc degrees (1 Yr)

MSc Degrees (2 yr)

MPhil degrees

DPhil degrees

- MSc in Comparative Social Policy and Policy Evaluation
- MSc in Evidence-Based Social Intervention

These one-year courses consist of a core subject paper, a core research methods paper, an option paper and a 10,000 word thesis.

MSc degrees (1 Yr)

MSc Degrees (2 yr)

MPhil degrees

DPhil degrees

- MSc in Comparative Social Policy plus MBA
- MSc in Evidence-Based Social Intervention plus and Policy Evaluation MBA

These two-year courses give you the chance to study a full MSc in the Department of Social Policy and Intervention, and an MBA at the Saïd Business School.

MSc degrees (1 Yr)

MSc Degrees (2 yr)

MPhil degrees

DPhil degrees

- MPhil in Comparative Social Policy
- MPhil in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation

The MPhil courses are an extended version of the MSc courses. Students take the two core papers, plus two option papers, and write a 30,000 word thesis.

MSc degrees (1 Yr)

MSc Degrees (2 yr)

MPhil degrees

DPhil degrees

- DPhil in Social Policy
- DPhil in Social Intervention

These are research degrees solely examined by thesis. Students are strongly encouraged to take one of the MSc or MPhil courses before their DPhil.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students in our department have the opportunity to attend a variety of lectures and seminars and are also allocated a personal academic supervisor who guides and supports them in their intellectual development.

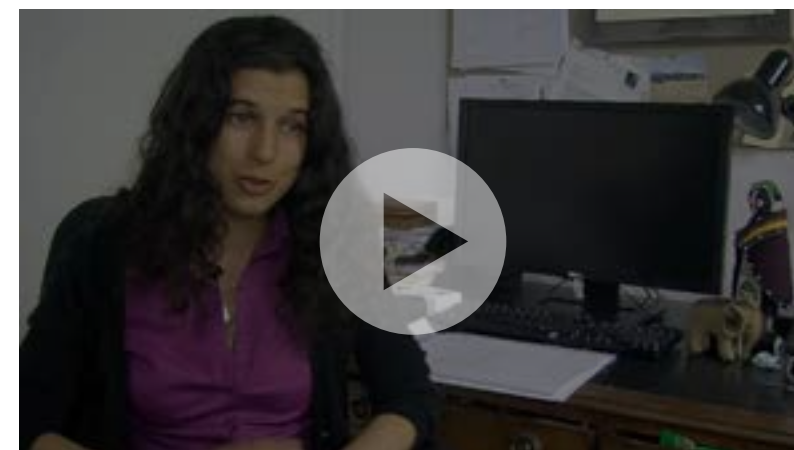


CLICK TO PLAY VIDEO

TEACHING AND SUPERVISION

Students are exposed to staff expertise through lectures and classes. Input from students in classes and smaller teaching groups means that students learn a great deal from each other. In addition, all students have the opportunity to form a closer relationship with, and learn from, the expertise of their academic supervisor. The relationship with your supervisor is one of the most important you will form in Oxford. They will guide you through the course, helping and

advising on all aspects of your intellectual development.



CLICK TO PLAY VIDEO

FIELDWORK

Students on all our courses are expected to write a thesis, for which many undertake a period of fieldwork. This could involve interviewing, obtaining and analysing large datasets, or carrying out surveys. Based on the global scope of research projects, our students carry out fieldwork all over the world.

SPECIALIST SEMINARS

Each year we invite distinguished academics to present their work at the department. These lectures and seminars are open to staff and students in the department and across the University, and offer an unparalleled opportunity to hear from experts in the field and to network with renowned international scholars. Throughout Oxford there are specialist seminars and lectures run on a regular basis. Attending these will provide you with further opportunities to broaden your network.

RESEARCH GROUPS

A number of research groups underpin and support research in the department. All teaching and research staff and DPhil students belong to one of these groups, and they are a critical element of the education and support mechanism offered to research students. Each group is facilitated by an academic member of staff, but students are equal participants in the groups: ideas are shared and discussed among peers. Each term the research group presents to the rest of the department at one of the weekly colloquia,

which offer an unrivalled opportunity to share and challenge ideas across the department.

DOCTORAL TRAINING CENTRE

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) has accredited 21 centres across the UK for research training excellence. The Social Sciences Doctoral Training Centre (DTC) in Oxford is one of these centres. Through the DTC, DPhil students have access to a diverse programme of high quality quantitative and qualitative advanced and specialist research training delivered by leading specialists across the social sciences division.

BERKELEY COLLABORATION

The collaboration is designed to facilitate the exchange of graduate research students between the Department of Social Policy and Intervention and the School of Social Welfare, University of California, Berkeley. This opportunity gives students the opportunity to serve as Visiting Scholars, Researchers, Academic Visitors or Recognised Students.

MSC IN COMPARATIVE SOCIAL POLICY

The central aim of the one year course is to provide high quality graduate level research training in social policy, taking a comparative perspective concentrated primarily on the affluent democracies of Western Europe and North America.

The MSc course explores welfare systems and policy developments across a range of countries. Through lectures and seminars, students are encouraged to learn about and reflect on key theories, concepts and debates within comparative social policy. As well as engaging students through lectures and selected reading, the diversity of our students' backgrounds enrich and broaden the discussions in seminars and classes.

The core comparative social policy paper covers the theories, principles, history and institutions of social policy, while students are also given rigorous training in social research design and methods to help them evaluate existing research evidence and obtain the necessary grounding for independent research.

Students will also study an option paper, giving them the opportunity to explore a specific policy area such as education, family policy, healthcare, the labour market, poverty and social security.



Students at Oxford receive a world-class education. In line with the rest of the university, the department uses a variety of teaching methods, with a strong emphasis on individual contact with an academic supervisor.

	COMPONENT	ASSESSMENT
Year 1	Core paper in Comparative Social Policy	Written paper
	Research design and methods	Written submissions
	Option paper on a specific policy area or issue	Written paper
	Thesis	Design and complete a 10,000 word thesis

MSC IN EVIDENCE-BASED SOCIAL INTERVENTION AND POLICY INTERVENTION

The MSc in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation is designed to provide high quality graduate training. The degree is appropriate for both career entry and career development, and as a basis for progression to doctoral work.

The MSc teaches the development and evaluation of interventions and policies to address social and public health problems. Using – and critiquing – evidence-based practice, it tackles the difficult issues involved in transforming research findings into interventions and into programmes which will make a difference in the real world. It builds skills in knowledge transfer and dissemination, and helps practitioners to access high-quality evidence for decision-making.

The course is organised around two distinct pathways building on a shared core that enable students to focus on the evaluation of micro level social interventions or macro level social policies, while the Research Methods course prepares students to be critical consumers of research, and to design and implement their own research projects.

Students also take one specialist course from a list of options focusing on the application of evidence-based intervention and policy evaluation. These can include options such as children and families, community-based interventions and HIV and AIDS.

You will have the opportunity to meet and network with highly acclaimed scholars from around the world through the department's programmes of seminars and one-off lectures. You will also have access to events across the University, giving you a unique opportunity to hear from internationally renowned figures in all fields.



	COMPONENT	ASSESSMENT
Year 1	Core paper in Evidence-Based Intervention and Policy Evaluation	Written paper
	Research design and methods	Written submissions
	Option paper focusing on the application of evidence-based intervention and/or policy evaluation	Written paper
	Thesis	Design and complete a 10,000 word thesis

OXFORD 1+1 MBA PROGRAMME

The Oxford 1+1 MBA programme is a new initiative allowing students to pair Oxford University's one year full-time MBA programme with one of a selection of one year MSc programmes offered by other University departments.

High calibre applicants are offered the opportunity to apply to both the MBA and MSc programmes at the same time, and to undertake a two year Oxford postgraduate experience that combines the depth of study of an MSc, with the managerial and leadership breadth of an MBA. The department is part of this scheme, offering both the MSc in Comparative Social Policy and the MSc in Evidence-Based Intervention and Policy Evaluation in combination with the MBA at the Saïd Business School.

The programme offers significant benefits to students. You will be cross trained, will develop two complementary networks of peers

and alumni, and will be identified by employers as having detailed knowledge combined with highly developed delivery skills.

There are five Oxford Pershing Square Graduate Scholarships available for the MBA part of the program.

To apply, you will need to complete two application forms, one for the chosen MSc and one for the Oxford MBA. To qualify for the Oxford 1+1 programme, you will need to meet both programmes' entry requirements. For more information visit:

<http://www.sbs.oxford.edu/1plus1>



Students become members of both the department and a college. Your college offers you the opportunity to belong to a smaller, closely knit community in which students and academics from different disciplines have the opportunity to share their intellectual – and social – life.



MPhil IN COMPARATIVE SOCIAL POLICY

The MPhil in Comparative Social Policy is designed to provide a thorough exploration of the current issues in comparative social policy, a range of conceptual and theoretical approaches, and a detailed understanding of policy-making, implementation, evaluation and outcomes in particular fields of social policy.

Through the course, students will develop knowledge and understanding of major concepts in social policy, such as citizenship, social exclusion, dependence, and regulation. Students explore different theoretical approaches relevant to policy making and implementation, and will be introduced to major debates in the field.

Students explore different policy areas through the two option papers, such as healthcare, social security, housing policies, and policy approaches for supporting families, while also being introduced to a wide range of quantitative and qualitative methods.

In their first year, MPhil students will begin to design a research project and will write a 30,000 word thesis due at the end of their second year. Due to time constraints, the MSc thesis often has to make use of secondary analysis of existing literature or data, but MPhil students have more time and scope to conduct primary research.



CLICK TO PLAY VIDEO

Students in the department are high achieving individuals. You will benefit from interacting with and learning from your peers, and will have the opportunity to develop your own critical appreciation of a wide range of ideas and cultures.

	COMPONENT	ASSESSMENT
Year 1	Core paper in Comparative Social Policy	Written paper
	Research design and methods	Written submissions
	Option paper on a specific policy area or issue	Written paper
Year 2	Option paper on a specific policy area or issue	Written paper
	Thesis	Design and complete a 30,000 word thesis

MPhil IN EVIDENCE-BASED SOCIAL INTERVENTION AND POLICY EVALUATION

The debate on evidence-based practice is often polarised – for or against. In addition to teaching rigorous research and appraisal skills, the MPhil course in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation invites a thorough examination of what is meant by the term, and what are the strengths and limitations of this approach.

Through the course, students develop skills in advanced critical analysis, problem solving and research. They also contribute to a better understanding of the ways in which research findings can be transferred into practice and of the limits of such transferability.

Students examine major theories underlying evidence-based interventions and are introduced to a comparative and international perspective. The course includes a critical examination of the ethics of intervening and of researching with vulnerable clients. The course also emphasises research methods for evaluating interventions, as well as providing

the opportunity for advanced study of evidence-based practice with particular client groups through the two option papers.

Students also have the opportunity to write a substantial thesis. This provides experience in conducting a major piece of investigation in the field of evidence-based social intervention that builds on the skills learned throughout the course. It allows students to contribute to the growing body of knowledge in relation to the study of evidence-based practice and to make evidentiary, ethical and application contributions to practice itself.



CLICK TO PLAY VIDEO

Oxford is consistently ranked in the top tier for social sciences subjects internationally.

	COMPONENT	ASSESSMENT
Year 1	Core paper in Evidence-Based Intervention and Policy Evaluation	Written paper
	Research design and methods	Written submissions
	Option paper focusing on the application of evidence-based intervention and/or policy evaluation	Written paper
Year 2	Option paper focusing on the application of evidence-based intervention and/or policy evaluation	Written paper
	Thesis	Design and complete a 30,000 word thesis

DPHIL IN SOCIAL POLICY DPHIL IN SOCIAL INTERVENTION

DPhil students in the department will spend three years undertaking a significant piece of original research. The DPhil is examined solely by thesis, prepared with support from an academic supervisor.

	COMPONENT	ASSESSMENT
Start of year 1	Admission with Probationer Research Student Status	–
Within four terms	Transfer to full DPhil Status	Oral examination (viva) with two assessors
Within nine terms	Confirmation of DPhil Status	Oral examination (viva) with two assessors
	Final submission	Oral examination (viva) with two examiners

Research students are an important part of the community at the department. As with the masters courses, we take students from all over the world who explore issues related to social policy or carry out research into social interventions with a similarly international flavour.

As a research student, you will have the opportunity to be fully involved in the research environment at the department. You will be exposed to the cutting edge research being undertaken by your supervisor and will benefit from their knowledge and experience in the field, as well as having the opportunity to join a research group. Students are accepted for the DPhil if appropriate supervision is available in the department. Our [website](#) provides further information about the research interests of

our staff. More information about the way you will progress through your studies is available at www.ox.ac.uk



CLICK TO PLAY VIDEO



CLICK TO PLAY VIDEO

FEES AND FUNDING

The University website provides information about fees and funding for prospective students.

Students need to pay University tuition fees and college fees, and to make ample provision for their living expenses. The University [website](#) includes a calculator to help you work out the finances of your proposed course of study.

There are many opportunities available for funding and the University [website](#) includes detailed information about different scholarships and their criteria.

As a student at the department, you will be fully immersed in Oxford life with all that it means to be an Oxford student, from access to the internationally famous Bodleian Library and historic museums to modern teaching and IT facilities.

DEPARTMENT FUNDING

The department has four scholarships available:

- The Barnett Scholarship and the Centenary Scholarship – open to all students and awarded on the basis of excellence. Students receive £20k each year for three years.
- Two scholarships funded by the ESRC for UK students (fees and maintenance) or EU students (maintenance only).

Further information about these scholarships is available on the department's website.



CLICK TO PLAY VIDEO

The Department also operates a Student Support Fund to which DPhil students can make applications for support for specific activities. From time to time there may be opportunities within the department for paid work.



LIFE IN OXFORD

Oxford is a city of history and romance, but also a modern city full of up to date facilities. Living in Oxford is an unforgettable experience.



Students have access to the Bodleian Libraries, which includes a Social Sciences Library. These libraries offers excellent study space in wonderful locations.

As well as becoming a member of an academic department, students also become a member of a college. College life is a central part of the 'Oxford experience' and provides students with a supportive base to meet with and learn from scholars and other students. Colleges also provide a focus for sporting and cultural activity. Each college has its own distinctive identity, and your college life will be an important part of your life in Oxford.

You can find more information about the colleges and which ones accept our students [here](#)

Almost every leisure activity is catered for in Oxford, from sports facilities to punting, museums to theatres. Food lovers will find a wide range of international cuisines represented, and there is no shortage of nightlife in college bars or music venues which featured early gigs by Radiohead and Supergrass. There are cinemas and theatres, including the New Theatre, the Sheldonian, and The Playhouse, along with many excellent museums such as the Pitt Rivers, Natural History and Ashmolean (Britain's oldest



museum) – and all within walking distance of the centre. Societies exist for almost every subject imaginable, and the most famous is the Oxford Union, a prestigious debating society which attracts internationally famous speakers.

Oxford has distinctive areas each with their own special character. For example:

Jericho is an historic suburb of Oxford bounded by the Oxford Canal, Worcester College and Walton Well Road. Located outside the old city wall, it was originally a place for travellers to rest if they had reached the city after the gates had closed, and the name Jericho may have been adopted to signify

this 'remote place' outside the wall. You will find many cafes, pubs and bars here, and a variety of restaurants. The famous Phoenix Cinema is also situated here in Walton Street.

Cowley Road is the main shopping street of East Oxford, and is a popular leisure spot in the evenings. The area is home to an ethnically and economically diverse population: alongside ethnic communities, East Oxford plays host to many members of the city's academic population, both students and academic staff. Included in the area are a cinema (The Ultimate Picture Palace), the O2 concert venue, and many cafes, restaurants and bars.



LIFE AFTER OXFORD

Oxford has been educating leaders for over 900 years. We prepare students to undertake academic careers in the field of social policy and social intervention, but our graduates also go onto a wide variety of international roles in governments and the not-for-profit sector as well as senior positions in the private sector.



Studying in the Department of Social Policy and Intervention gives you access to leading scholars in the field. Each student has an academic supervisor, and you will benefit from their extensive knowledge and experience, and from the newest developments in their research.

Recent graduates from the MSc and MPhil programmes have gone onto study for doctorates in a range of high quality universities including Oxford, Cambridge, London, Glasgow, and further afield in the USA, New Zealand and Finland. Some have continued their study in law school or medical school.

Many of our graduates go on to hold academic appointments at prestigious research universities throughout the world, while others hold influential positions in government, non-governmental and international organisations, making practical use of the knowledge and skills they gain

through their study in the department. Our [website](#) features some of our alumni.

The Careers Service in Oxford is available to offer you advice during your time in Oxford and continues to offer support after you have graduated. The Oxford Alumni [website](#) also contains details of opportunities to keep involved.

The Department produces an annual newsletter to keep in touch with alumni and graduates are always welcome to come and visit us. Informal networks of graduates exist and from time to time the department organises larger events.

HOW TO APPLY

The key measure is academic ability. Applications should include a number of different items which are used to evaluate academic ability.

Full details of application deadlines and details of how to apply can be found [here](#). Applications are via the Graduate Admissions Office not directly to the department. Deadlines are strictly applied.

Applications should include a number of items to demonstrate academic ability, including transcripts, references, a CV and personal statement.

The ability to speak and understand English is a pre-requisite for our courses. If you are not a native speaker you will be asked to submit a satisfactory IELTS or TOEFL test certificate at the higher level.

Prospective DPhil students are strongly encouraged to proceed via the Masters courses. MSc students can use their thesis to prepare for DPhil work, and there is provision for MPhil students to incorporate their thesis into a subsequent DPhil. Students who wish to proceed towards a DPhil without going via a Masters course may be required to do the two compulsory Masters papers during their first year of study (Methods of Social Research and either the Comparative Social Policy paper or the Evidence-Based Intervention paper). If the student can demonstrate that the necessary competence has already been acquired, the Director of Graduate Studies may grant exemption from one or other of these course requirements.

Our courses give you a strong base from which to pursue a variety of careers. Our graduates have highly successful careers in research, local and national government, international organisations, the not for profit sector, high level journalism, medicine, management and law.



CONTACT DETAILS

Department of Social Policy and Intervention
Barnett House
32 Wellington Square
Oxford
OX1 2ER
United Kingdom

T +44 (0)1865 270325

F +44 (0)1865 270324

E admissions@spi.ox.ac.uk

W www.spi.ox.ac.uk

