
Graduate Induction Course Oct 2024

Adrian Taylor

Aims of Induction Course

- To introduce you to the Department's:
 - staff
 - buildings
 - facilities
- To give you an overview of the structure of the degree programme you are about to start
- To give you a chance to meet each other, and some of the other graduate students
- To help you get started with the rest of the term...

PGR Support Structure - Academic

- Supervision team & Research Group
- Dept. Advisor
- Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)
- Materials Education Support team
- Materials Graduate Studies Committee (MGSC)
- Joint Consultative Committee for Graduates (JCCG)
- Departmental Administrative & Technical Support Staff
- College Advisor and College Tutor for Graduate Students
- Divisional Skills Training Officer
- MPLSD Graduate School team & Graduate School Committee
- University Education Committee
- The Proctors

PGR Support Structure - Wellbeing

- Supervision Team & Research Group. Department Advisor. DGS.
- Materials Education Support Team
- Materials Disability Coordinators (Philippa Moss & Tom Heath)
- The DGS is also the Materials PGR Disability Lead & Welfare Contact
- Joint Consultative Committee for Graduates and Other Peer Support
- Department Quiet/Private Rooms
- Department Mental Health First-Aiders & Anti-Harassment Advisors
- College Welfare Dean, College Senior Tutor, College Advisor
- University Counselling Service and Disability Advisory Service (DAS)
- Bodleian Libraries Wellbeing and Oxford University Students Union
- External Resources
- <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare>
- www.materials.ox.ac.uk See **Welfare & Wellbeing** on Homepage

University Counselling Service Workshops

- **Workshop 1: Thursday Week 5 MT 2024**

Getting started: beginning your DPhil life in Oxford as you mean to go on – finding a work life balance and looking after your emotions

- **Workshop 2: Thursday Week 7 MT 2024**

Getting on: managing professional relationships (supervisors, lab, peers), preparing emotionally for transfer of status, and dealing with DPhil crises along the way

- **Workshop 3: Thursday Week 9 MT 2024**

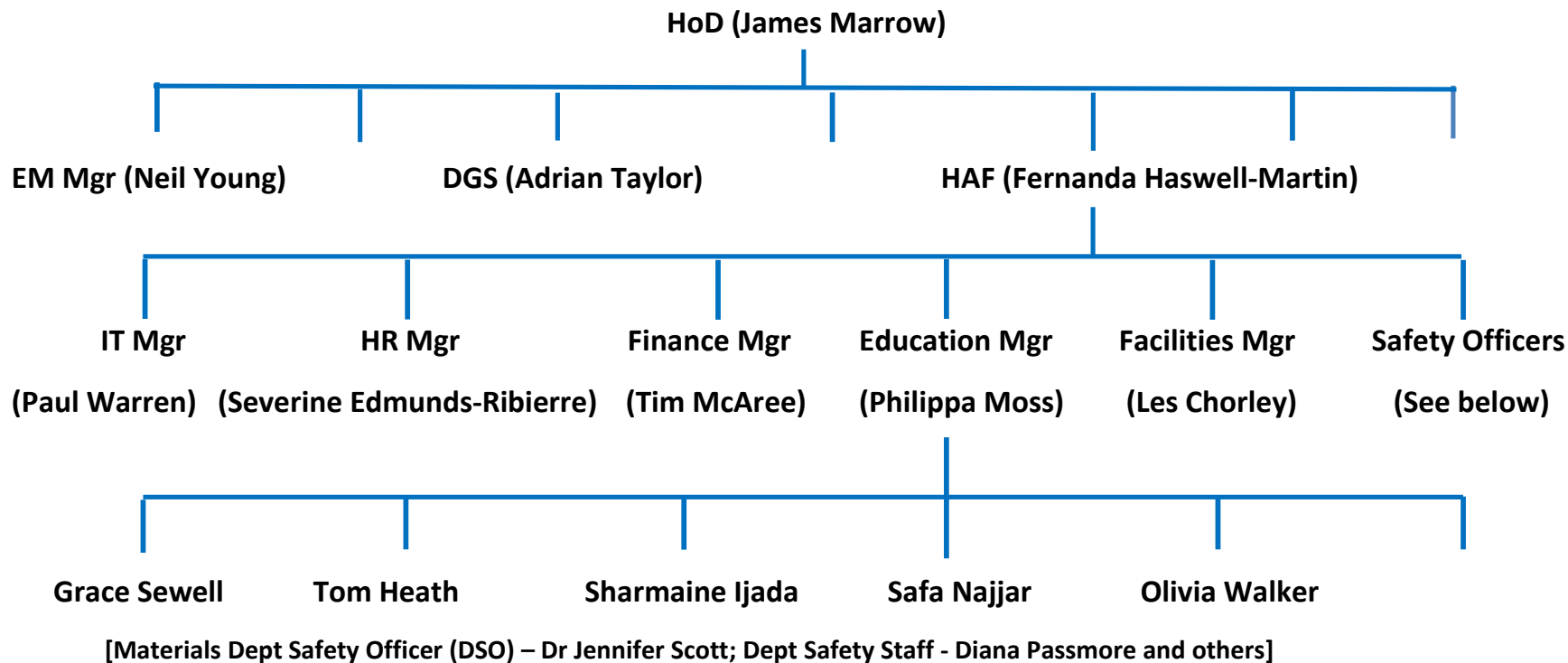
Getting finished – preparing emotionally for submission, your viva, and life after the DPhil

- Sign up via the University Counselling Service webpage:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling/group>

- The workshops can be attended either individually or as a series (the idea is that they will be repeated each term).

MATERIALS SUPPORT STRUCTURE FOR PGR STUDENTS



OUTLINE OF OXFORD MATERIALS SUPPORT STRUCTURE FOR RESEARCH STUDENTS

On-line Handbooks and guides

- **Materials Graduate Student Handbook**
 - Our Materials DPhil & MSc(Res) Research Programmes
- MPLSD on-line PG Research Student 'Handbook'
- University Student Handbook 2024/25
- EdC Notes of Guidance for Research Degrees
- **Materials PG Lecture & Training Course Synopses and Research Colloquia Details**
 - Information on training and teaching
- **MPLSD Researcher Training & Development Opportunities Brochure and Webpages**
- **Materials Information Centre** - Where to find what you need (and who to ask!) www.materials.ox.ac.uk/mic

IMPORTANT WEBPAGES & LINKS

- Lecture/Workshop documents and recordings (see CANVAS VLE, Materials: PGR Teaching & Training)
<https://login.canvas.ox.ac.uk>
- 'Materials: PGR Progression' On-line Site
Portal via CANVAS
- Oxford Materials webpages www.materials.ox.ac.uk
- Mathematical, Physical & Life Sciences Division (MPLSD) webpages www.mpls.ox.ac.uk
- MyOxford app www.ox.ac.uk/myoxford
- University IT Services <https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/getting-started>

Forms/tasks that need to be completed

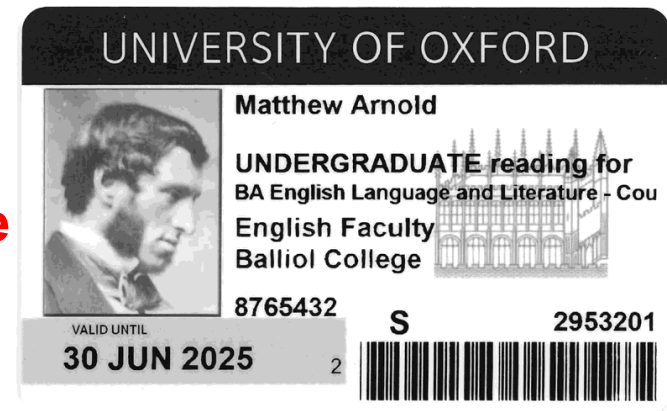
- 'New Graduate Student' on-line questionnaire
 - your personal details + supervision team
- Risk Assessment
 - your safety in the type of work you will be doing
- Radiation protection form
 - arranging training for use of X-rays, lasers and radioactive materials
- Key application form
- Swipe card access (Fob for Begbroke)
 - to allow you access to building and labs/offices

Your University Card

University Card - Sometimes referred to as 'swipe card' or 'Bod Card'

You will need it for admission to The Bodleian Libraries and other University Libraries and to use IT Services and the Language Teaching Centre. In some colleges and university departments, you will need it as a payment card or to enter buildings that have swipe-card/contactless access control. It will also act as an identity card whenever you are on college or university premises.

Misuse of your card, such as allowing another person to use it for access to premises or facilities, is a serious offence and will be reported to the appropriate disciplinary authorities.

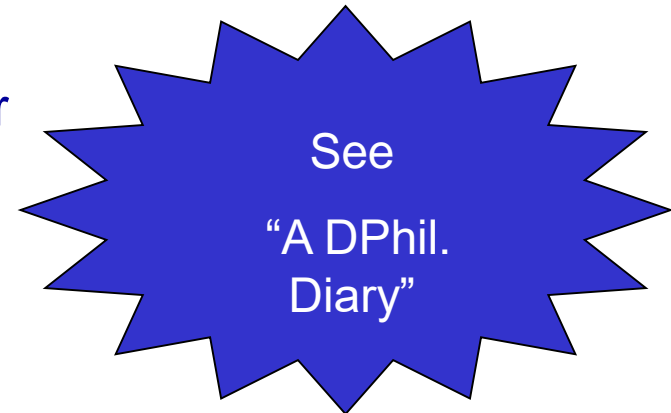


DPhil Exam Criteria – 777 days to achieve!

- To possess a good general knowledge of your research discipline
- To have completed a **significant and substantial piece of research** of a kind which might reasonably be expected of a capable and diligent student after 3 or at most 4 years of full-time study
- To submit a thesis that is presented in a lucid and scholarly manner

Overview of the D.Phil. programme

- First Year: Probationer Status
 - begin research
 - transferable 'career skills', research skills training, academic courses & broadening elements
 - informal meeting with Lead Assessor
 - literature review
- Second Year
 - transfer of status exam
 - main research year
 - skills training, including research talk to Department
- Third Year (plus a further 6 or 12 months if funded for 3½ or 4 years)
 - completion of research and thesis submission
 - skills training, including poster competition



Overview of the M.Sc. programme

- First Year: Probationer Status
 - begin research
 - transferable ‘career skills’, research skills training, academic courses & broadening elements
 - informal meeting with Lead Assessor
 - literature review
- Second Year
 - transfer of status exam
 - main research year
 - skills training, including research talk to Department
 - completion of research and thesis submission



Supervision Team

- Supervisor(s) – one of whom will be your **‘Primary’ / ‘Responsible’ Supervisor**, the others being co-supervisors. Together these supervisors will:
 - be the main source of advice and guidance for your project
 - keep a watch on your progress and report to Dept, University and College (**GSR: quarterly on-line reports**)
- Associate Supervisor – in addition, a postdoctoral researcher of less than three full years at that level may be appointed as an associate supervisor but this role does not carry the responsibilities of the ‘full’ supervisors

Supervision Team

- Department Advisor:
 - should be familiar with your research area
 - there for help and advice if things go wrong
 - informal meeting in week 7 MT
- Deputy-supervisor (appointed for laboratory safety):
 - will be **either** one of your co-supervisors (not the responsible/primary) **or** your Dept Advisor
 - to give safety advice if supervisor(s) absent
 - if appropriate may temporarily take the role of Responsible Supervisor (RS) in the event of an extended absence of your normal RS

Your supervisor(s):

- **What you should expect from them:**
 - help with planning your research programme
 - skills audit (what training and teaching you need)
 - regular discussions of your work and academic advice
 - feedback (formal & informal) on progress and written work
- **What they should expect from you:**
 - conscientious working, according to their advice
 - follow Departmental rules at all times (e.g. safety)
 - keep them informed of problems in good time

It is important for you to arrange regular meetings

Project Management Arrangements

3.5y project \equiv 777 working days to completion

- Aim of the scheme:
 - to allow you as the student to take responsibility for the successful outcome of your research project by assessing expectations and progress throughout duration of your course and flagging up any problems
- Structure of scheme:
 - 6-monthly forms assessing progress and future aims
 - student-led
- Workshop explaining the scheme:
 - Friday wk4 12 noon to 4pm; **In advance you should draft PMF1 – please consult with your supervisor for this**

Research & Transferable 'Career Skills' Training

- Safety, Daniel DeBrincat & Diana Passmore, wk 1 MT)
- Project management skills (wk 4 MT)
- Career-related skills (wk 5 MT)
- Research Integrity – mandatory on-line course (by 31st July 2025)
- Training for role of TA in the UG Practical Classes (wk 6 MT)
- Presentation skills/PowerPoint/PPT for posters/Adv a/v skills, (HT)
- Writing skills, Lab notebooks, IPR & Patents (HT)
- Information skills - inc literature searching & reference management (wk 2 MT)
- LabVIEW (MT)
- Workshop skills (throughout year)
- Microscopy skills (modular)
- Institute of Materials - Benefits of Membership (wk 3 MT)
- Teaching skills (a series of workshops, some early in MT)

Transferable 'Career Skills' Training

- Other skills training courses at University level
 - IT Services, MPLSD, OUCaS, Bodleian
 - Language Centre (**Register for a course by noon on Wednesday of Week 1 MT**)
 - MPLS Entrepreneurship workshops & activities
 - Scientific Computing for DPhil students (MATLAB based)
- Further information & links from MPLSD web site
 - MPLSD Grad School workshop 'Your Successful DPhil' (MT, book one of several dates offered)
- **Keep a portfolio as a record of your skills training**

MPLSD GRAD SCHOOL TRAINING FRAMEWORK

Phase Category	Foundations Phase (0-12 months)	Intensive Research Phase (12-30 months)	Completion Phase (24+ months)
Transferable Career Skills	Project Management Career Planning TA for UG Practicals - Training	Research Talk	
Research Skills	Safety Induction Talk Colloquia Brief presentation during 'Transfer of Status' interview Research Integrity Training		Poster Presentation
Academic Skills	Two assessed lecture courses Literature Review		

Broadening elements

- **DPhil & MSc Examiners' Rubric:**
 - to satisfy themselves that candidates possess a good general knowledge of the particular field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls

Hence

Requirement to attend 7 colloquia

Requirement to pass 2 assessed courses:

- one of which must be 'broadening' not 'deepening'
- assessment by written work and sometimes classes/tutorials
- **Look at 'Postgraduate Lecture Synopses' handbook**
 - PG level teaching in Department (includes Y3 UG M.Eng Options)
some lecture courses start in week 1 MT
 - UG-level teaching in Department (for graduates of other subjects)
 - interdisciplinary assessed courses (see MPLS Dept Websites)
check choices with supervisor/DGS in advance

Transfer of Status Examination

- Normally conducted in mid-September to early-October 2025 by two assessors [not your Supervisor(s), Dept Advisor or College Advisor]
- Details provided in 2024/25 Materials Graduate Student Handbook

Transfer from PRS to D.Phil./M.Sc. Status

- Four threshold requirements for transfer
 - Passes in two assessed courses
 - Attend at least seven MT & HT colloquia
 - Submission of Literature Review
 - Completion of on-line Research Integrity course
- Informal meeting with Lead Assessor (early TT)
- Apply for Transfer of Status (form GSO.2.MPLS)
 - Normally by 31st July 2025
 - Form includes comments by your supervisor on your progress
 - Form includes a summary of skills training attended

Literature review

- 5,000 - 6,000 word survey of your research field
- Aim: to familiarise yourself with the topic area
- Feedback from a member of staff:
 - overall standard and breadth of coverage
 - style & presentation
 - critical judgement shown
- Submit to the 'Materials: PGR Progression' site by Fri Week 8 TT 2025 (via CANVAS)
- Taken into account for Transfer of Status Exam
- IoM³ prize offered for best Materials Literature Review from graduate students studying in UK

Transfer of Status Examination

- Written Submission
 - 2,500 words on progress during first year
 - project timetable for completion (2, 3, 3½ or 4 years)
 - When prompted, upload to your on-line GSO.2 application
 - **Warning:** see section 21 of handbook, on plagiarism
- Interview
 - 5 minute presentation (using visualiser)
 - 10-25 minutes questions & discussion (and advice)
 - **Mid-September to Early October 2025**
 - Feedback

Second-year talks

- **9am-6pm, Mon to Fri of Week 7 HT**
 - 15 minute presentations (often PowerPoint)
 - 5 minute questions
- **Collective feedback from Convenor after a set of talks.**
 - quality of visual aids
 - pace, diction, structure and timing
 - ability to get points across to peer-group
- **Individual feedback from Supervisor and Peers**
- **Hetherington Prize awarded by Department for best talk in terms of communication of science.**

Third Year (for D.Phil students)

- Already you should have:
 - written a Literature Review (one chapter of your thesis)
 - completed a significant amount of original work that will form a substantial part of your thesis
- **This year you will:**
 - apply for confirmation of status
 - define a timetable for the completion of your thesis within 12 months (3y funding) or 18 months (3½y funding)
- **You should aim to be completing your main research work SIX months before your funding expires** and hence start writing your thesis in April 2027(3y funding), October 2027 (3½y funding) or April 2028 (4y funding)
- HT Poster Competition (RR & Ironmongers prizes)
- Continuation Bursaries

Confirmation of D.Phil. Status

- Threshold requirement for confirmation of status
 - satisfactory Y2 presentation on research progress to all members of the Department (Mon to Fri week 7 HT, 9am-6pm)
- Apply for Confirmation of Status (form GSO.14.MPLS)
 - including timetable for completion of thesis
 - requires satisfactory written report from student
 - requires support of supervisor
 - form includes summary of skills training attended
 - normally submit on-line GSO.14.MPLS form in HT 2027
- Confirmation of Status Interview (Y3, Trinity Full-Term)

M.Sc. and D.Phil. examinations

- **From the Exam Regulations for the D.Phil:**
 - To have made, and presented in a lucid and scholarly manner, a significant and substantial contribution in the particular field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls of a kind which might reasonably be expected of a capable and diligent student after 3 or at most 4 years of full-time study.
- **Which External Examiners will in part interpret as:**
 - The D.Phil. thesis exhibits substantial evidence of original scholarship and contains material worthy of publication [in peer- reviewed journals].
- **From the Exam Regulations for the M.Sc by Research:**
 - To have made, and presented in a lucid and scholarly manner, a worthwhile contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls of a kind which might reasonably be expected of a capable and diligent student after 2 years of full-time study.

Thesis write up and Viva

- Useful information on writing a thesis:
 - writing skills lecture (HT)
 - Postgraduates section of the Vitae website
 - MPLSD's Graduate Student Handbook / Website (procedures)
- After **on-line** thesis submission, examiner will arrange viva
 - usually 2-3 months after submission
 - usually lasts 2-3 hours, where work is discussed in detail
 - examiners make a report to the University
 - corrections are often required before report submitted
- Need to deposit a final hardbound copy with the Materials Library (for which Department offers a £35 contribution to costs) and the final e-thesis with Oxf Res Archive

Facilities

- Libraries
- Mechanical workshop
- Heat treatment workshop
- Photographic/Imaging
- Specimen preparation
- 3D printing
- Electron microscopes
- Optical microscopes
- X-ray diffraction facilities
- Stores
- Computing

See Materials Information Centre <https://www.materials.ox.ac.uk/mic> for details of facilities and how to gain access and training...

See <https://www-omcs.materials.ox.ac.uk> for details of the extensive materials characterisation facilities

Conference/Study Travel & Fees

- The Department expects that every student should have the opportunity to attend at least one conference
- Students are not expected to cover the cost of this (or other work-related travel themselves)
- Make funding arrangements **in plenty of time**
 - consult your supervisor
 - try College, conference, University and other sources
 - Department has some funding available (see Grad Handbook)
- Routine travel (e.g. to sponsor) should be funded from grants
- Transferable Skills training
 - EPSRC-funded students may apply to the DGS for funding

What to do next...?

- Meet Supervisor(s). Settle in and get to know people.
- Fill in forms with supervisor(s)
 - ‘New Graduate Student’ questionnaire (inc. selection of Advisor and proposal of Assessors)
 - Risk assessment form and, if needed, Radiation Protection form
 - Key request form and swipe card access
- Compulsory lectures/workshops/training:
 - Safety (Daniel DeBrincat & Diana Passmore, wk1)
 - Project Management Skills (Adrian Taylor & others, wk 4)
 - Career Planning & Skills (Adrian Taylor & others, wk 5)
 - Training for role of TA in the UG Practical Classes (wk 6)
 - On-line Research Integrity course (by 31st July 2025)
- Plan project and carry out skills audit
 - decide which teaching/training courses to attend
- Contact DGS/Graduate Support Team if problems arise

First Colloquia of the 2024/25 Year

Michaelmas Term 2024

- Week 3 (31 October 2024) **Dr Zihao Wang (Oxford Materials)**
- Week 4 (7 November 2024) **Dr K. G. Pradeep (Indian Institute of Technology Madras)**
- Week 6 (21 November 2024) **Dr Francesco D'Acierno (Imperial College, London)**
- Week 8 (5 December 2024) **Dr Greg Mazur (Oxford Materials)**
- See <https://www.materials.ox.ac.uk/news/colloquia.html>