



Graduate Studies Handbook

2018-19

Notes of Guidance for the Programme *Master of Science by Coursework in Social Science of the Internet* for Students and Supervisors at the Oxford Internet Institute

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Issued by the Graduate Studies Committee

Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford

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1. Introduction

Welcome to Oxford and the Oxford Internet Institute. We hope that you will enjoy your time living and studying in Oxford, and will find it a rewarding experience.

As the Director of Graduate Studies for the Oxford Internet Institute, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the OII community. You join a growing group of current and former OII students who have studied for degrees here on our MSc and DPhil programmes, but also students who have taken part in shorter engagements such as our annual 'Connected Life' student conference, our annual Summer Doctoral Programme, and of course the many public events we hold at the OII. All the faculty and staff here at OII want to make your time here productive and rewarding, and we look forward to the opportunities we will have to get to know you and to learn from you and your diverse experiences as we teach and supervise you in your work. As you will soon discover, the OII is a department with multidisciplinary at its core, which is reflected both in the wide range of academic backgrounds of the faculty but also in the diversity of students who come here to better understand life online. Welcome!

Greg Taylor, Director of Graduate Studies, OII

1.1 Scope and purpose of this handbook

This handbook applies to students starting the MSc in *Social Science of the Internet* programme in 2018-19. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years. It is hoped that you will find the information contained within the handbook to be a useful guide both while you are new to studying your course and throughout the duration of your studies. The handbook is also a source of reference for academic staff appointed as your supervisors and anyone else involved in teaching you, including in classes, seminars and lectures.

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

To be kept up to date, a copy of this handbook is available on Canvas at <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/>. Comments and criticisms of this handbook are welcome and should be sent to the OII's MSc Coordinator at teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk. Students should refer to the Graduate Studies Handbook on Canvas as corrections may be made and this will be the most up to date version.

1.1.1 Disclaimer

The Examination Regulations relating to this course are available at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>. These are the definitive University regulations that govern examination of the degree. 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 MSc Coordinator at teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk.

The information in this handbook is accurate as at 01 October 2018, 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.

1.1.2 Key sources of information

OII Website: <http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/graduatestudy>

College Handbooks: Please refer to individual College websites at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/colleges>

Internal Course Information and Formative Assignment Submission Site (Canvas): <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/>

Summative Assignment Submission Site (WebLearn): <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site/:socsci:internet:assignments>

Oxford Students: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students>

International Students: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa>

Student Health and Welfare: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare>

Examination Regulations: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>

Policy and Guidance on Postgraduate Taught Courses:

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgpgtaughtcourses/>

Dates of Term: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/facts-and-figures/dates-of-term>

1.1.3 Academic progress - who to contact

Students are ultimately responsible for their own academic progress.

The Course Director for the MSc Social Science of the Internet is Professor Ralph Schroeder and has immediate responsibility for students on this course. The MSc Coordinator Miss Laura Gamble is responsible for course administration and is the person you should contact in the first instance with any queries.

For the entire duration of the degree, each student will have an assigned thesis supervisor (see section 4 for further details) who will remain the main point of contact for keeping an eye on academic progress, and will liaise with the student and with other faculty members with whom the student is working on the thesis.

Students who wish to discuss any academic issues that they prefer not to discuss with the Course Director or their supervisor can also speak to the Director of Graduate Studies, Dr Greg Taylor.

It is usually expected that students contact their college for any welfare or health related issues, but if a student wishes to speak to someone who is not directly involved in teaching or supervision please speak to Victoria McDermott who is the Graduate Studies Manager and Disability Lead at the OII. She can be contacted at victoria.mcdermott@oii.ox.ac.uk or on 01865 287304.

1.1.4 Laptop specification for students

All software taught on courses is available on PCs in the student room at 1 St Giles.

These are some suggested minimum specifications for laptops in case students wish to install the software on their own personal laptops.

Most modern laptops should work with the software used on the course, but as a guideline, a minimum suitable specification might be 1.5 GHz or faster CPU, 4 GB or more of memory, a display resolution of 1280 x 768 or higher, and a disk with a minimum of 10GB of free space.

Generally most software taught on the course is available on Windows, Mac or Linux operating systems. Chromebooks, netbooks or tablets are not suitable for the course. Please note that some packages might be Windows only, however Mac users can use software such as Parallels to run the Windows applications although there may be associated costs such as for a Windows license.

1.2 Induction

1.2.1 Induction programme

A general compulsory introductory meeting for all newly admitted graduates at the OII will be held at the beginning of the academic year in the week preceding the start of Michaelmas Term (0th week). During that meeting they will be introduced to the OII's Director, Director of Graduate Studies, MSc Programme Director, and the Graduate Studies Support Team. This general introductory meeting will be followed by induction sessions introducing the new graduate students to OII premises, IT resources and departmental policies. These general meetings will be followed by separate meetings dealing with induction matters for the DPhil and MSc courses. In addition, students will be offered a tour of the OII and will be formally introduced to faculty members and the administration team.

All new students will be e-mailed the induction timetable, reading lists and Graduate Studies Handbook before the induction meetings.

As soon as you arrive in Oxford you should obtain your **University Card** from your college. This is essential for access to the University's email and computing systems and for registration as a reader at the OII's Library, the *Bodleian Library* (see Section 8.4), and the Social Sciences Library in the Manor Road Building. It is also used to access the OII's premises at 1 St Giles and 41 St Giles.

Your college will also provide you with:

- information about *Examination Regulations*;
- a leaflet on Oxford Libraries and how to register with them;

- a statement on data protection regarding personal student data, including a declaration for you to sign indicating your acceptance of that statement. Please contact your college's Data Protection Officer if you have not received it.

1.2.2 Other sources of information

The OII's **website** is found at <http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk>. It includes:

- Lists of staff and their research interests, which can help identify those working in fields similar to your own.
- A regularly-updated events section, with information on OII activities.

The **University's web** pages contain extensive information on numerous key aspects of graduate work. Please check your **Oxford email** regularly as it will be used to send you important information about your course. Students should also regularly check their Canvas inbox.

The **University Gazette** <https://gazette.web.ox.ac.uk/current-issue>, published at least weekly in term time, contains a wide range of other University announcements, including forthcoming seminars and lectures. Of special interest is the 0th week issue each term, which contains a detailed supplement listing lectures for the forthcoming term. All issues can be read online, consulted in most libraries (including the OII Library), and can be bought at the OUP Bookshop, 116 High Street.

The Oxford University Virtual Learning Environment is **Canvas**, <https://login.canvas.ox.ac.uk>. There you will find the most up to date reading lists for courses you are enrolled to take and course deadlines along with threaded discussion forums and general information. Students can access Canvas using their University of Oxford Single Sign-On. If you have any technical issues or queries on content such as reading lists please contact the MSc Coordinator at teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk.

2. MSc Programme

2.1 Aims of the programme

2.1.1 Educational aims of the programme

The MSc programme is designed to contribute to the education of current and future researchers, policy makers, analysts and practitioners from both public and private sectors, providing them with the toolkit (concepts, theories, methods and principles) to carry out innovative, high quality research, analysis and policy formulation. The principal aims of the MSc programme are:

- To provide advanced training in four types of research skill: research methodologies; written and oral communication; critical theoretical and analytical skills; research project planning and completion.
- To provide students with good empirical and theoretical knowledge and understanding of the major topics and concepts in Internet research as well as a general understanding of the technological and social shaping of the Internet.
- To provide students with advanced empirical and theoretical knowledge and understanding of key topics and concepts in areas relating to the student's particular interest.
- To enable students to think strategically about the Internet and its evolving technologies and their implications for policy and practice.
- To assess students' progress through supervision and mechanisms of formal assessment.
- To provide appropriate pastoral support through the allocation of personal supervisors in conjunction with the system in place at College level.

2.1.2 Programme objectives and outcomes

The objectives of the MSc in Social Science of the Internet are that, on completion of the course, students will have:

- Acquired skills in both quantitative and qualitative research methods including leading-edge methods of particular relevance to on-line activity.
- Learnt how to apply approaches from one or more of the social sciences to consideration of the Internet and related technologies and their societal implications.
- Gained empirical and theoretical knowledge and understanding of the major topics and concepts in Internet research as well as a general understanding of the technological and social shaping of the Internet.
- Gained wide-ranging critical knowledge and understanding of the scholarly literature, key topics and concepts in areas relating to the student's particular research interests.
- Learnt to think strategically about the Internet and its evolving technologies and their implications for policy and practice.
- Participated in, and learnt from, the range of intellectual activities ongoing in the OII and the wider University.
- Achieved a high standard of written work through the preparation and presentation of essays and assessed coursework.

In summary, the course equips students with both methodological and theoretical tools, and introduces them to the empirical evidence necessary for an in-depth understanding of the role of the Internet in society, including the changing nature of governance and the theoretical, practical and ethical questions surrounding internet use.

2.1.3 Related teaching and learning strategies and methods

Teaching methods are a combination of lectures, classes and one-on-one supervision meetings. Detailed reading lists are available for each paper on the OII Website at <http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/graduatestudy> and on the University of Oxford online reading list platform ORLO at <https://oxford.rl.talis.com>, and students are expected to undertake whatever assignments are set by course providers in addition to work required for formal assessment. Regular essay writing will ensure that students practice and develop skills of analysis, explication and argumentation as well as ensuring that they have an in-depth understanding of the material covered. To ensure that students develop oral as well as written communication skills, they will be asked to give class presentations in addition to, or in place of written work, and reading lists will be provided to support both purposes. Formative written work will be marked and returned to students with comments to support student progress through the course. Summative work will be marked, and feedback provided for written summative work as allowed by the examining conventions.

2.2 Skills and attributes

Students will have the opportunity to develop the following skills over the course of the MSc:

2.2.1 Intellectual skills

1. The capacity to read and evaluate original research articles.
2. Theoretical knowledge and understanding of the major topics, approaches and research methods appropriate for study of the Internet.
3. Ability to think strategically about the Internet and its implications for policy and practice.
4. General critical and analytical skills.
5. The ability to plan, conduct and write up a programme of original research.

Related teaching and learning strategies and methods

1-4 are taught mainly through class teaching and supervision; 5 is taught primarily through the completion of the thesis, during which time the student will have individual tutorials to discuss the research question and research design, monitor progress and review drafts. Research methods teaching will also contribute to the development of 2 and 5.

Assessment

These intellectual skills will be assessed through the completion of coursework, through unseen examinations, and through the thesis.

2.2.2 Practical skills

1. Effective oral and written presentation and communication skills.
2. Research methods skills.
3. Use of ICTs for communication and collaborative working.

Related teaching and learning strategies and methods

1 is taught mainly through class teaching and supervision as all students will write regular essays as well as making presentations to the class. 2 is taught through the 16 weeks of compulsory research methods training. 3 is taught mainly through class teaching and the regular use of the Canvas VLE and other similar tools across the course.

Assessment

These skills will be assessed through satisfactory completion of all class assignments, the completion of coursework, through the unseen examinations, and by means of the thesis. 3 is formatively, not summatively assessed, through students' interaction with supervisors and class teachers.

2.2.3 Transferable skills

1. Critical analysis.
2. Oral and written communication skills.
3. Self-organisation, including time management.
4. Research design and project planning.
5. Use of ICTs for communication and collaborative working.

Related teaching and learning strategies and methods

1-3 are taught mainly through class teaching and supervision and specifically in the work which students prepare for class essays and presentations, and in preparation of coursework and the thesis. 4 is taught through the 16 weeks of compulsory research methods training and through engagement with supervisors in the preparation of the thesis. 5 is taught mainly through class teaching and the regular use of the Canvas VLE and other similar tools across the course.

Assessment

These transferable skills will be assessed through satisfactory completion of all class assignments, the completion of coursework, through the unseen examinations, and by means of the thesis. 3 is formatively, not summatively assessed, through students' interaction with supervisors and class tutors.

2.2.4 Achievement of learning outcomes

In summary, to ensure that all OII MSc students achieve the learning outcomes identified in the previous section, they must:

1. Attend all classes, seminars, lectures or meetings as the OII Graduate Studies Committee deems necessary.
2. Complete all assignments (written or oral) as set by class teachers for the options taken.
3. Submit to the examiners the coursework essays required for formal assessment.
4. Sit and pass the required unseen examinations required for the courses they have taken which use examinations as the assessment method.
5. Submit to the examiners a thesis of up to 15,000 words.

1 and 2 will be assessed by the supervisor, class teacher and course provider. 3, 4 and 5 will be assessed and marked in accordance with Examiners' Guidelines. Supervisors will also provide guidance, informal advice and assessment during meetings with their student supervisees.

2.3 Programme structure and schedule

The MSc degree is a one-year (full-time) or two-year (part-time) taught course running from the beginning of Michaelmas term until August 1st in the year of completion, or the nearest working day if 1st August falls at the weekend.

Oxford University has three terms each of 8 week duration. These terms are called: Michaelmas Term (October to December); Hilary Term (January to March); Trinity Term (April to June). Please note, however, that the MSc in Social Sciences of the Internet has an **extended Hilary term which lasts 9 weeks**.

Full-time students will be expected to be in residence at Oxford for each of the 8 weeks of Michaelmas and Trinity terms and the 9 weeks of Hilary term. You will be free to leave Oxford after the end of each term but are advised to return during the week prior to the start of the next term (referred to as 0th week). In addition full-time students are required to sit core written examinations in week 9 of their first term and 0th week in their second term and thus must be resident in Oxford at these times. For certain optional courses students are also required to sit written examinations in week 5 and week 10 of Hilary term.

Part-time students are not required to be resident in Oxford, but will need to plan to regularly attend scheduled lectures and seminars, and to attend examinations which fall outside the main weeks of term. The details of when examinations are held are noted below.

You will need to submit your thesis via the Assignment Submission WebLearn site by noon on August 1st (or the nearest working day if this falls at the weekend) and you will also need to be available to return to Oxford in late August or September in the event of being called back for viva voce.

This course is comprised of the following eleven components:

Part 1: Digital Social Research Methods: Methods Core

Part 2: Digital Social Research Methods: Statistics Core

The two core *DSR* components of the degree will be examined through assessed written work consisting of one 2,500 word essay due by 12:00pm on Friday of 8th week of Michaelmas term (in the case of the Methods Core) and through one 3 hour unseen written examination to be held in 9th week of Michaelmas term (in the case of the Statistics Core).

Both components will allow students to explore the applicability of different methods and give them a chance to consider methods that they might apply in their thesis. Apart from the assessed examination and coursework, the courses will have a number of formative assessments, including laboratory and practical exercises, to ensure that students are competent with particular methodological techniques and able to use statistical and other software packages.

Parts 3-6: Methods Options

The four *DSR* methods option components of the degree, lasting four weeks each, will be chosen from two groups of option papers – two each from Group A and Group B (see sections 2.3.5 and 2.3.6). Each option paper will be examined through a combination of assessed written work and/or by unseen written examinations, depending on the course. Assessed written work will be due by 12:00pm on Friday in the week following the final teaching session for the module. Unseen written exams will be held at a time scheduled by the Examination Schools during the week following the final teaching session for the module.

Parts 7-8: Compulsory Papers (i) Social Dynamics of the Internet and (ii) Internet Technologies and Regulation

Both these papers are examined by means of a 3 hour examination in 0th week of Hilary term, with students choosing 3 questions from a list of eight in each examination. These two courses provide foundational knowledge in this area of research, and the examination format will allow us to evaluate if this ground has been thoroughly covered and a critical understanding reached. Each course will require at least one formative piece of written coursework in preparation for the exam. This will help students understand what kind of analysis and writing is expected of them, and will benchmark their performance.

Parts 9-10: Two Option Papers

The two option papers, lasting eight weeks each, will be chosen in a specialised subject area from the list of option courses offered by the OII (see section 2.3.4). All option papers will be assessed by coursework, typically one or two long essays and adding up to no more than a total of 5,000 words. All options will have some formative assessed coursework.

In exceptional circumstances an option paper from another Oxford Master's degree may be taken, as long as this is relevant to your studies and formally agreed with your supervisor, the course convenor, and the MSc Programme Director.

Part 11: Thesis

A thesis not to exceed 15,000 words (excluding the bibliography, but including footnotes and tables—see section 3.2.4 Thesis length for detailed guidance) on a topic within the remit of the course, to be specified jointly by supervisor and student, and approved by the Board of Examiners. One digital copy of the thesis must be submitted via the Assignment Submission WebLearn site by noon of the weekday on or nearest to the 1st of August of the year in which the degree is to be completed. Candidates earning a Distinction on the thesis may be invited to deposit a copy of their thesis in the Oxford Internet Institute Library.

Weightings

In calculating the final degree mark, Parts 1 and 3–6 each have weightings of 5%; Parts 2, 7–8, and 9–10 each have weightings of 10%; and part 11 (thesis) has a weighting of 25%.

2.3.1 Programme schedule

The following tables demonstrate the basic structure of the courses each term and is the minimum set of lectures, seminars and classes that an MSc student is expected to attend (see Appendix G: Term Schedules for further details of draft timetables). Students should seek permission from supervisor and course tutor if they plan to miss any of these sessions.

You will also be expected to be fully engaged in the intellectual life of the department throughout your studies, including attendance at MSc workshops, participation in departmental seminars and our events programme. You are encouraged to participate in discussions at workshops or events, and students should consider ways throughout their studies to express their work to the world at large.

Full-time Programme

Michaelmas Term (MT) 2018	Hilary Term (HT) 2019	Trinity Term (TT) 2019
Social Dynamics of the Internet	DSR: Methods Option Paper 1 Group A (weeks 1-4)	MSc Research Seminars
Internet Technologies and Regulation	DSR: Methods Option Paper 2 Group A (weeks 1-4)	Thesis
Digital Social Research: Methods Core	DSR: Methods Option Paper 3 Group B (weeks 6-9)	
Digital Social Research: Statistics Core	DSR: Methods Option Paper 4 Group B (weeks 6-9)	
	Option Paper 1 (weeks 1-9)	
	Option Paper 2 (weeks 1-9)	

Part-time Programme¹

Michaelmas Term (MT) 2018	Hilary Term (HT) 2019	Trinity Term (TT) 2019
Social Dynamics of the Internet	DSR: Methods Option Paper 1 Group A (weeks 1-4)	MSc Research Seminar (choose 4-8 sessions)
Digital Social Research: Methods Core	DSR: Methods Option Paper 3 Group B (weeks 6-9)	Thesis Proposal
	Option Paper 1 (weeks 1-9)	
Michaelmas Term (MT) 2019	Hilary Term (HT) 2020	Trinity Term (TT) 2020
Internet Technologies and Regulation	DSR: Methods Option Paper 2 Group A (weeks 1-4)	MSc Research Seminars (choose 4-8 sessions)
Digital Social Research: Statistics Core	DSR: Methods Option Paper 4 Group B (weeks 6-9)	Thesis

¹ Requests to follow a different pattern of courses should be made to the MSc Course Director in writing. We will attempt to accommodate all reasonable requests by part-time students who need to adjust this default approach to accommodate their learning needs and other commitments.

	Option Paper 2 (weeks 1-9)	
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There are many other lectures and seminars in Oxford that are of interest to OII students. Please consult the lecture list published by the University at the beginning of each term for details. Lecture lists are available online at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/pubs/lectures/.

Students are responsible for their own academic progress and are expected to spend at least 40 hours (or 20 hours in the cases of part-time students) on coursework and studying each week during term. You will also need to do some study during vacations.

- During Michaelmas and Hilary terms, MSc students are advised to allocate between 10 and 15 hours of preparation each week for each course and/or paper they undertake.
- This includes classroom time for lectures, seminars, labs, and Teaching Assistant sessions. Details of the TA sessions will be circulated during induction week.
- In Trinity term students should devote all their time to their thesis, which includes attending the weekly MSc Research Seminar (weeks 1-8).

Full-time students should note that this leaves very little time during the week for any paid employment.

Please see Appendix G for draft course timetable for 2018-19. Please note that this may be subject to further changes but students will be notified and the most up to date schedule will be uploaded on Canvas (see section **Error! Reference source not found.** for further details on Canvas).

It is a fundamental component of the Oxford educational system that students engage in individual reading and study in order to broaden and deepen their knowledge of their chosen field. All students will be expected to read widely in preparation for weekly classes and lectures, moving beyond the core texts on reading lists to develop both breadth and depth in their understanding of the literature. In addition, students will be expected to meet regularly with their supervisors while completing their dissertation, and may be asked to present their research to their peers. Thesis research is a largely self-directed process.

The OII has a lively research community with weekly internal research seminars at which work in progress is discussed and in which you are expected to participate. It also has a strong programme of conferences, policy forums and seminars with invited external speakers to which students may be invited.

2.3.2 Programme deadlines

These are the main assessment deadlines for the course. For full details on all assessments due including formative please see **Appendix E: Assessment Timetable**. Part-time students should refer to the part-time programme schedule in section 2.3.1 for details on which assessments are normally taken in Year 1 and Year 2 of the course.

Term	Essay Submission Deadline / Date of Exam	Marks Available
Michaelmas Term		
Social Dynamics of the Internet	0 th week, Hilary Term on a day and time to be determined by Exam Schools	End of February
Internet Technologies and Regulation	0 th week, Hilary Term on a day and time to be determined by Exam Schools	End of February
Digital Social Research Methods: Methods Core	12:00pm on Friday, 8 th week, Michaelmas Term	End of February
Digital Social Research Methods: Statistics Core	9 th week, Michaelmas Term on a day and time to be determined by Exam Schools	End of February
Hilary Term		
4-week Methods Options – Group A (2 courses)	12:00pm on Friday, 5 th week, Hilary Term (when assessed by written coursework); or 5 th Week, Hilary Term on a day and time to be determined by Exam Schools (when assessed by unseen written examination)	End of May
4-week Methods Options – Group B (2 courses)	12:00pm on Friday, 10 th week, Hilary Term (when assessed by	End of May

	written coursework); or 10 th Week, Hilary Term on a day and time to be determined by Exam Schools (when assessed by unseen written examination)	
8-week Options (2 courses)	12:00pm on Monday, 1 st week, Trinity Term	End of May
Trinity Term		
Thesis	1 st August (or the closest working day when this falls on a weekend.)	End of September

2.3.3 Course details: core papers

As reading lists are likely to be updated by course tutors throughout the academic year please refer to the lists posted at <http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/graduatestudy> and on the University of Oxford online reading list platform ORLO at <https://oxford.rl.talis.com>, (see section **Error! Reference source not found.**) for the most up to date versions.

Social Dynamics of the Internet

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

Internet Technologies and Regulations

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

Digital Social Research

Study of the Internet and related information and communication technologies (ICTs) provides new opportunities and challenges for social science research methods. Digital Social Research (DSR) introduces students to the knowledge and skills of value to the conduct and critical evaluation of empirical research on the social shaping of the Internet and its societal implications, as well as introducing the Internet and related digital technologies as tools for social research.

There are six components to the Digital Social Research element of the degree. The combined total of these six components accounts for 35% of the final mark for the degree. All students must take Digital Social Research: Methods Core and Digital Social Research: Statistics Core in Michaelmas term. At the beginning of the academic year, full-time students will select four 4-week methods option courses taught in Hilary term, each focusing on advanced methods topics. There are twelve methods option courses divided into two groups of six – Group A and Group B. Students will choose two methods options from each group. Part-time students will select two methods option courses per year, normally one from Group A and one from Group B.

The weighting of each DSR component within the degree is as follows:

Digital Social Research	Weighting	Scheduling.
DSR: Methods Core	5% of the overall mark	Weeks 1-8, Michaelmas Term
DSR: Statistics Core	10% of the overall mark	Weeks 1-8, Michaelmas Term
DSR: Methods Option Course 1 (A)	5% of the overall mark	Weeks 1-4, Hilary Term
DSR: Methods Option Course 2 (A)	5% of the overall mark	Weeks 1-4, Hilary Term
DSR: Methods Option Course 3 (B)	5% of the overall mark	Weeks 6-9, Hilary Term
DSR: Methods Option Course 4 (B)	5% of the overall mark	Weeks 6-9, Hilary Term
Total	35% of the overall mark	

Through this methods sequence, students will learn:

- The significance of alternative methodological approaches that provide the context for theory construction, research design, and the selection of appropriate analytical techniques.
- To conduct and manage all stages of the research process from developing research questions and hypotheses to disseminating findings.
- How to devise appropriate research questions and research designs.
- Analytical and interpretive skills for a range of quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection.
- How to use online tools that support the research process (e.g. from statistical software to computer-assisted qualitative analyses).

Digital Social Research: Methods Core

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

Digital Social Research: Statistics Core

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

2.3.4 Course details: optional papers

Students should agree with their supervisor which 2 option papers they would like to take. Students are then responsible for informing their college and the MSc Coordinator by Friday of Week 4 in Michaelmas Term. Teaching in some options may not be available every year. Depending on the option paper, students may be required to submit a 'Summative Title Approval Form' by Monday of Week 8 in Hilary Term to the individual course convenor. Individual course conveners will communicate if this is required during the first lecture. This form can be obtained from Canvas.

Students are strongly encouraged to carefully review course reading lists before settling on a final decision as these provide detailed information on what to expect from each course. It is also advised that students watch the short videos, where available, for many of the option courses at <https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/study/msc-in-social-science-of-the-internet/>. These videos have been created by the faculty to help you decide which course to take.

It is essential that students ensure they satisfy the stated prerequisites, as specified on the course reading lists, for any option course they wish to take.

Details on the timetables for the courses can be found in Appendix G: Term Schedules, and on Canvas.

Computers in Society

Data Science of Government and Politics

Digital Humanities

Technologies and Economic Organization

Economic Development in the Digital Age

Internet Economics

Law and the Internet

Learning, the Internet and Society

Online Social Networks

Subversive Technologies

The Philosophy and Ethics of Information

2.3.5 Course details: methods options papers – Group A

Students need to agree with their supervisor which 2 Methods option papers they would like to take from Group A. Group A Methods options are taught in weeks 1-4 of Hilary term with the assessment due in week 5.

Students are then responsible for informing their college and the MSc Coordinator by Friday of Week 4 in Michaelmas Term. Teaching in some methods options may not be available every year. Depending on the methods option paper, students may be required to submit a 'Summative Title Approval Form' to the individual course convenor. Individual course conveners will communicate if this is required during the first lecture. This form can be obtained from Canvas.

Students are strongly encouraged to carefully review course reading lists before settling on a final decision as these provide detailed information on what to expect from each course. It is also advised that students watch the short videos, where available, for many of the methods option courses at <https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/study/msc-in-social-science-of-the-internet/>. These videos have been created by the faculty to help you decide which course to take.

It is essential that students ensure they satisfy the stated prerequisites, as specified on the course reading lists, for any option course they wish to take.

Details on the timetables for the courses can be found in Appendix G: Term Schedules, and on Canvas.

Advanced Statistics for Internet Research, part 1

Wrangling Data

Digital Ethnography

Digital Interviewing

Experimental Approaches

Accessing Research Data from the Social Web

2.3.6 Course details: methods options papers – Group B

Students need to agree with their Faculty Advisor which 2 Methods option papers they would like to take from Group B. Group B Methods options are taught in weeks 6-9 of Hilary term with the assessment in week 10.

Students are then responsible for informing their college and the MSc Coordinator by Friday of Week 4 in Michaelmas Term. Teaching in some methods options may not be available every year. Depending on the methods option paper, students may be required to submit a 'Summative Title Approval Form' to the individual course convenor. Individual course conveners will communicate if this is required during the first lecture. This form can be obtained from Canvas.

Students are strongly encouraged to carefully review course reading lists before settling on a final decision as these provide detailed information on what to expect from each course. It is also advised that students watch the short videos, where available, for many of the methods option courses at <https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/study/msc-in-social-science-of-the-internet/>. These videos have been created by the faculty to help you decide which course to take.

It is essential that students ensure they satisfy the stated prerequisites, as specified on the course reading lists, for any option course they wish to take.

Details on the timetables for the courses can be found in Appendix G: Term Schedules, and on Canvas.

Advanced Statistics for Internet Research, part 2

Big Data Analytics

Foundations of Visualization*

Qualitative Data Analysis

Simulating Society

* Foundations of Visualization runs in Weeks 1-4 in Trinity Term and is part of the MSc in Social Data Science, but is offered to Social Science of the Internet students.

2.3.7 Auditing courses

Auditing means attending a course without taking that course as credit. It may be possible, in exceptional circumstances and subject to capacity and the pedagogical needs of the course, for a student to audit an option paper or method option paper in addition to those on which they are formally registered. Auditors must fully commit to attending all of the classes for the course, and must fully engage in class discussions. Auditors may also be required to complete the formative assessments for the course.

Students are advised that Hilary Term is extremely demanding and the extra work entailed in auditing a course should only be undertaken where a clear plan is in place to minimise the impact on other learning activities.

Students must complete an OII Audit Request Form, available at <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/>, with their supervisor, and give a reason for why they think the course would be beneficial to their research. Students should submit the form to the Graduate Studies Assistant at teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk by Friday of Week 4 of Michaelmas Term. Students will be notified by the end of Week 9 if they have successfully secured a place on the course as an auditor.

2.4 Option selection

Students will be invited by email to enter for their examinations (sit-down examinations and submitted assessments) when the examination entry window opens. The email invitation will ask students to log in to Student Self Service to complete their core and optional examination entry assessment selections by a given date. The deadline is usually around week 4 in Michaelmas Term. For further information on examination entry please refer to <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams>.

If a student wishes to change their options outside of the examination entry window they must apply for permission in writing through their senior tutor or other college officer using the change of options form available from their college office. Applications for alterations of options will not be processed until a late entry fee payment has been received.

2.5 Examination entry

2.5.1 Examination timetable

The Examination Schools publish the timetables as early as possible and no later than five weeks before the start of the examination. Please see further details on where to access the timetables at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/timetables>.

2.5.2 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) are available on the Oxford Students website: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance>.

2.5.3 Exam resits

If a student fails an exam they will be permitted to retake it on one further occasion only, as specified in the degree's Examining Conventions. The exams must be resat in the following academic year (see section 2.7 for more details). Students will need to complete another examination form which will be sent by the college to complete and must be completed by the stated entry date. The Examinations Schools will confirm examination details nearer the time and date. For further information please refer to the Examination Schools at: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/entry>.

2.6 Submission of coursework

All written assignments, including the thesis, must be submitted electronically via the Assignment Submission WebLearn site by the stated deadline and should include an official OII assignment cover sheet. A copy of the assignment should also be emailed to teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk by 17.00 on the date of the deadline.

Students should go to the [Assignment Submission](https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site:/socsci:internet:assignments) site at <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site:/socsci:internet:assignments>, click on Assignments on the left hand menu, select the assignment that they would like to submit, and follow the instructions.

Please note that assignments should only ever be identified by candidate number. Students should not put their name or college anywhere on the submitted work.

Students will be asked to tick a box to certify that they are the sole author of the work and the assignment will automatically be put through plagiarism detection software.

Work submitted after the deadline will be processed in the standard manner and, in addition, the late submission will be reported to the Proctors' Office. If a student is concerned that they will not meet the deadline they must contact their college office or the MSc Coordinator for advice.

If anything goes wrong with a student's submission then they should email a copy of their assignment to teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk immediately. In cases where a technical fault that is later determined to be a fault of the WebLearn system (and not a fault of your computer) prevents a student from submitting the assessment on time, having a time stamped email message will help the Proctors determine if the assessment will be accepted. Students should note that waiting until the last minute to submit materials is not advisable since WebLearn can run slowly at peak submission times and this is not considered a technical fault.

Further instructions on using the Assignment Submission WebLearn site, and the official OII assignment cover sheet, can be found on Canvas.

2.6.1 Resubmission of coursework

If a student fails any coursework they must resubmit. Students will need to complete another examination form which will be sent by the college to complete and must be completed by the stated entry date. Please refer to the Examiners Conventions on Canvas regarding resubmission deadlines. For further information please refer to the Examination Schools at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/entry>.

2.6.2 Potential overlap between examinations

Students should note that any two examinations (including the thesis) are distinct pieces of scholarship, and will be marked as separate units of assessed work, independent of each other. This has two implications: first, if a student feels that one should draw on the other, a citation or reference to that earlier piece of work should be provided in accordance with usual best practice for academic citation. Second, students are reminded that they may not copy whole sections between two pieces of examined work. The thesis, for example, may build on work undertaken in assessed coursework for the Methods paper, but the material must be rewritten explicitly for the thesis. Please also refer to section 3.3.2 for information on plagiarism.

2.7 Examination and assessment

The degree will be examined by a combination of coursework and unseen examinations (see Appendix E: Assessment Timetable for an overall list).

The research methods components of the degree ("Digital Social Research" or DSR) will be examined partly through assessed written work for the core methods course (DSR: Methods Core), partly by means specified in each of the taught modules offered in Hilary term, and partly through one three-hour unseen written examination to be held in 9th week of Michaelmas term for DSR: Statistics Core. In Hilary Term students must choose 4 methods modules from a list of available options, each of which is taught over a period of 4 weeks. The assessment methods for these modules vary by module, but may include written work or unseen examination.

The two compulsory core papers (Social Dynamics of the Internet and Internet Technologies and Regulation) will be examined by unseen written examinations to be held in 0th week of Hilary term. Students will be informed of the date, time and place of their examinations approximately 6 weeks beforehand.

The two options papers will each be examined by formally assessed coursework due at the beginning of 1st Week in Trinity term.

In addition, a dissertation of up to 15,000 words on a topic to be chosen by the student will be due on August 1st (or in the case August 1st falls when the University is closed, the nearest working day, e.g. Friday July 31st when August 1st falls on a Saturday, or Monday August 2nd when August 1st falls on a Sunday).

All students will be required to tick a box asserting that the work submitted for assessment is their own.

2.7.1 Examination guidelines

All examination scripts and theses will be identified by candidate number only and will be assessed by two markers internally and referred to the external examiner in cases where the markers are unable to agree a mark.

Following standard university practice, all material will be marked on a marking scale with 50 as the minimum pass mark, marks of 65–69 corresponding to a merit, and marks of 70 and above denoting distinction.

Students with an average of 70 or higher (calculated with the weighting scheme above) across all elements of the course, a mark of 70 or above on their thesis, and who pass every course on the first attempt will be awarded a distinction as set out in the MSc's Examining Conventions.

Students with an average of 65 or higher (calculated with the weighting scheme above) across all elements of the course, a mark of 65 or above on their thesis, and who pass every course on the first attempt will be awarded a distinction as set out in the MSc's Examining Conventions.

Students must achieve a mark of 50 for each of the components of the course and for each course within the components (core courses, methods courses, option papers, and the thesis) in order to be awarded the degree of MSc. Students whose work is considered to be on the borderline of a pass, of a merit, or of a distinction may be called to a viva voce if it is felt that they may present further evidence that would enable them to be upgraded.

Please see Appendix C: Marking Scales for more information on marking scales.

A candidate who fails the degree on the basis of only one summative essay, examination or thesis will be permitted to resubmit the failed assessment. Examinations may be resat, and summative essays resubmitted, in the following academic year at the usual examination times and submission deadlines. The thesis may also only be resubmitted in August of the following academic year at the usual thesis submission deadline.

Please see the OII Examining Conventions (Appendix H: Examining Conventions) for further information on resubmission and resits.

Coursework progress will be monitored by the Graduate Studies Committee and efforts will be made to identify students who require particular assistance.

No candidate shall be permitted to take an examination unless he or she has been admitted as a candidate for the examination in question by the body responsible for the course and has satisfied any other conditions prescribed in the regulations for that course.

2.7.2 Board of examiners

There will be three internal examiners on the Board of Examiners, one of whom will be Chair of Examiners. There will be one External Examiner appointed by the board members, the appointment being ratified by the Graduate Studies Committee.

One Examiners' Meeting will be held in each term in order to agree and certify marks. The final Examiners Board meeting will be held in September to confirm final degree marks. Students whose work is considered to be on the borderline of a pass, merit, or distinction may be called to a viva voce if it is felt that they may present further evidence that would enable them to be upgraded.

2.7.3 Internal examiners

The internal examiners for 2018-19 are Dr Joss Wright (Chair), Dr Victoria Nash, and a Dr Kathryn Eccles.

2.7.4 External examiner

The external examiner for 2018-19 is Dr Nick Anstead. He is the Programme Director for the MSc in Politics and Communication at the London School of Economics.

2.7.5 Complaints and appeals

Students are strictly prohibited from contacting the assessors or examiners directly about any aspect of marking and examination.

If you are unhappy with an aspect of your assessment you may make a complaint or appeal (see section 5.4 for more details).

2.7.6 Regulation of assessment

The assessed coursework, examinations and thesis will be under the supervision of the Social Sciences Divisional Board. The subjects of each examination will be determined by regulation by the OII, which shall have the power to arrange courses of instruction for the examination. The OII Graduate Studies Committee will appoint the Board of Examiners consisting of three internal examiners, one of whom will be chair each year. One external examiner will be nominated by the Board and confirmed by the Graduate Studies Committee, and invited to serve by the Vice Chancellor. Internal marking of coursework and exams will be assessed by the relevant course providers and by another qualified assessor. One examiners' meeting will be held after each term's marking has been completed. Internal and external examiners will be required to produce reports after the examinations for consideration by the Graduate Studies Committee, and the Social Sciences Board.

Examinations will be governed by the Regulations of the Proctors.

External examiners will verify that standards appropriate to the award, in part by comparison with standards of comparable institutions, are applied. They ensure that the assessment procedures and the regulations governing them are fair and appropriate, that the conduct of the examination and the determination of the awards have been fairly made and that

individual student performance has been judged in accordance with the regulations and conventions of the examining board. The external examiners recommended by the Committee will have some experience in teaching and examining at a post-graduate level, and will be research active.

Examiners are expected to report to the Vice-Chancellor in each year in which they act, upon the above issues. This includes:

- the standards demonstrated by the students;
- the extent to which the standards are appropriate to the award;
- the design of assignments and internal marking;
- access by externals to all of the necessary material for assessment;
- students' performance in relation to their peers in this and comparable courses, and the basis for comparisons;
- the policies and procedures relating to external examiners;
- the strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort;
- the quality of teaching and learning as indicated by student performance.

Please see Appendix C: Marking Scales for more information on marking scales.

Examination conventions (see Appendix H: Examining Conventions) 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 the 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.

2.7.7 Indicators of quality and standards

Standards are monitored by Internal and External Examiners' Reports, and by the comments submitted to examiners by coursework markers, supervisors and tutors. The OII, in turn, monitors standards through the discussions of the Graduate Studies Committee on the basis of the Examiners' reports, evaluation forms and general feedback received. The Examiners reports can be found on Canvas at <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/>.

The course has been designed to meet the stringent criteria set out in the ESRC's Postgraduate Training Guidelines, and is a recognised pathway to the OII's ESRC-recognised doctoral programme.

Some further indication of quality and standards may be gauged by following the success of OII MSc students in winning places for further study at prestigious universities or in presenting research in leading academic conferences.

2.8 MSc extensions

Under exceptional circumstances, for example due to personal or family illness, students can apply for a deadline extension for any coursework that counts towards their final mark. Students will need to apply to the Senior Tutor in their college who will then write to the Proctors. Deadline extensions need to be applied for in advance and have to be accompanied by a medical note. The Proctors then decide if the reason is valid and inform the examiners. The department and individual course convenors or lecturers **cannot** grant extensions.

2.8.1 Suspension of status

Suspension of status is the formal process by which a student can temporarily halt their studies with a view to returning to study later. Since students are expected to complete a graduate taught course within the time-scale of the course in question, suspensions of status are rare. If a student cannot work for a particular reason, e.g. illness, family circumstances, and so forth, then application for suspension of status can be sought. MSc students must suspend for an entire year, and cannot suspend for one term, as research students can. Please see section 7.3.1 for further information.

2.8.2 Illness

Students whose work is unavoidably interrupted for any significant period due to illness should consider applying for a suspension of status until the following academic year. A student whose illness is not serious enough, or of too short duration to justify suspension of status, may, nevertheless, feel that it is likely to have an adverse effect on their performance in the examination. In this case they must ask their College Senior Tutor (not academic supervisor) to inform the University Proctors who, with sufficient evidence (including a doctor's report) have the option, at their discretion, of writing to the examiners and asking that the candidate's illness be taken into account. Candidates should not write directly to the Proctors or seek advice on this process from the Director of Graduate Studies. The Students College Secretary should be able to further advise you on this matter.

3. Thesis Preparation and Submission

This section expands upon the provisions of the *Examination Regulations*, which should always be consulted. The following suggestions, in so far as they go beyond the printed regulations, are not obligatory, but they are what the department recommends as clear and acceptable.

Bear in mind that success in writing a thesis is achieved in a number of ways: by an imaginative search for sources, by a thorough investigation of evidence, by rigour of analysis, by originality of interpretation, and by clarity of presentation.

Students should also consult the *Examination Regulations* for the Degree of Master of Science by Coursework:

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2018-19/mosbcissoftheinte/studentview/>

3.1 Overall thesis guidance

Students are required to submit a thesis, which must not exceed 15,000 words, on a topic of the student's choice, subject to the agreement of their supervisor and the Board of Examiners. Students are expected to write up their thesis in Trinity Term and over the summer. The thesis is to be submitted via the Assignment Submission WebLearn site by the deadline of noon on August 1st (or the nearest working day when this falls at the weekend). Part-time students will write their thesis in the second year of the MSc.

Students will be expected to present their initial ideas for their thesis at an MSc Research Seminar in Trinity term. Student presentations will be discussed and feedback provided. Workshops are attended by fellow students, supervisors and the MSc Programme Director.

MSc students must submit an electronic copy of their thesis via the Assignment Submissions WebLearn site by noon on 1st August (or the nearest working day when this falls at the weekend). The thesis should include the official OII Summative Assignment Coversheet, which is available to download from Canvas. A copy of the thesis should also be emailed to teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk by 17.00 on the date of the deadline. The thesis should bear the student's candidate number (to ensure anonymity), word count, degree and college on the title page.

Students who are awarded a Distinction mark for their thesis may be invited to submit a hard bound copy for the OII Library. In the hardbound copy of the thesis the student's candidate number must be replaced by their name but everything else should remain the same (although students may correct minor typos).

For further information about the format and presentation of the thesis, see below.

3.1.1 Ethics approval for research projects

The University of Oxford regards research integrity as a core value and has a longstanding commitment to ensuring that it is embedded in its research culture and activity. The University's [Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Practice and Procedure](#) states that all its researchers, be they staff, students or visitors, are expected to maintain the highest standards of rigour and integrity in all aspects of their research. To facilitate this, the University is guided by the [Central University Research Ethics Committee \(CUREC\)](#).

All MSc students must submit a CUREC form prior to commencing any research. CUREC forms should be completed in consultation with your thesis supervisor. The form should carefully consider the ethical issues raised by your research. Most students will need to complete a CUREC1A form, but cases that raise complex ethical questions may require the completion of a CUREC2 form. If you feel strongly that your research will not require ethical review, you should complete the internal Research Ethics Checklist available on the Research Support section on Canvas. This form will be reviewed and assessed by the committee. If the committee feel the project will require ethical clearance, you will then be asked to complete a CUREC1A form. It would be advisable to complete this checklist form as soon as possible in Hilary term in the event that your research project does actually require a CUREC1A form.

It is very important that no research is undertaken until ethical clearance has been granted. Retrospective clearance cannot be granted, and the lack of ethical clearance will reduce the integrity of your work, pose reputational damage to the department and University and will likely hinder your ability to publish.

While students are encouraged to submit their CUREC form (approved and signed by their supervisor) as **early as possible** in Hilary term, the deadline for submission is **noon on Friday Week 8 of Hilary Term**. CUREC application forms and supporting documents should be sent to the following email addresses:

To: drec@oii.ox.ac.uk

Cc: teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk; supervisor (please put your supervisor into cc in the submission email).

Students that fail to meet this deadline will need to ask their supervisor to send an email to drec@oii.ox.ac.uk explaining when the committee can expect their form.

Please note that **CUREC1A** applications generally **take 30 days** to process; **CUREC 2** applications can take up to **60 days** due to the fact that they are externally reviewed.

The CUREC1A form and guidance for its completion can be found at <https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/governance/ethics/apply/sshidrec>. [Further guidance](#), including an annotated CUREC 1A form can be found on the Research Support section on Canvas. Students are encouraged to review all of the guidance documents prior to submitting their applications in order to help expedite their application.

We would also strongly recommend that students complete the [research integrity online training course for the social and behavioral sciences](#), offered by Research Support Services. The course takes about three hours to complete, and upon completion, you will receive an email acknowledgement that you have passed the course.

For any CUREC queries, please speak to the Secretary of the Committee (and Research Support Officer), Jess Antonio (jessica.antonio@oii.ox.ac.uk; 01865 87236).

3.1.2 Ethics process

Once your application is submitted to the Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC), it will be assessed, and any feedback for amendments will be emailed to you by the Ethics Secretary, with supervisors in copy. You should respond to feedback within one week, working carefully with your supervisor to ensure all of the feedback is addressed. It is very common for the first draft of the application to receive feedback, as the committee will help to highlight points that you might not have considered, so please do not feel discouraged if your project requires amendments.

If you have any questions about the feedback you receive, please contact the Ethics Secretary in the first instance.

3.1.3 Travel for research purposes

Many students will be required to travel in order to conduct their research. If your research will involve travel, you will need to submit the following documents as part of your ethics application:

- [Travel insurance](#)
- [Safety in fieldwork](#)

N.B. Even if you plan to travel to your home country to undertake research, you will still be required to complete the Travel Insurance and Safety in Fieldwork applications. This is due to the fact that by undertaking research, you will be conducting University business and not there just in a personal capacity.

Travel Insurance and Safety in Fieldwork applications are required for any research-related activity, including conference attendance. If you have any questions regarding this, please contact the Ethics Secretary (drec@oii.ox.ac.uk).

You will need to complete these forms, in consultation with your supervisor. The Ethics Secretary also administers travel management for the department, so if there are any amendments required to these forms, the Ethics Secretary will email feedback to you.

3.1.4 Thesis proposal (part-time MSc only)

Part-time MSc students spend Trinity Term and the summer of their first year thinking about and planning for their thesis. Part of this process is a formative assignment to write a *thesis proposal*, to be submitted in their second year, alongside their CUREC form by **noon on Monday of Week 1 in Michaelmas Term**. The thesis proposal and CUREC forms should be sent to the following email addresses:

To: drec@oii.ox.ac.uk

Cc: teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk; supervisor (please put your supervisor into cc in the submission email).

Students that fail to meet this deadline will need to ask their supervisor to send an email to drec@oii.ox.ac.uk explaining when the committee can expect their form.

Please see the additional guidance above for more information about CUREC.

The proposal is intended to serve several purposes:

- It provides a structured way for students and their supervisors to begin formally planning the thesis project: what will the questions be, what is the relevant literature, what methodological approaches are you likely to use, etc?
- It provides an opportunity to do important preparatory work for the thesis: conducting a thorough literature review and outlining a methodological structure at this stage will reduce the amount of work to be done in the second year and make the entire project more manageable. Students should note that the thesis proposal is not a summatively assessed piece of work and it is permitted to reuse material from their thesis proposal in the final thesis.
- Thirdly, the proposal will offer a chance to gather feedback and suggestions from faculty other than your supervisor, which should help with developing and implementing your plans in the second year.

A good starting point for a thesis proposal outline would include a brief outline of the basic problem, identification of a research question (and, where appropriate, hypotheses), a review of the relevant literature, and thoughts about what methods and data sources are likely to be used. A rough guide for the length of the proposal is 2000–3000 words.

3.1.5 Choice of thesis topic

The exact topic and title of your thesis require careful thought. At the risk of stating the obvious, it should be a topic which:

- is of interest to you;
- addresses an interesting and well-specified research question;
- is feasibly researchable (in the sense that the necessary skills and resources are available to the student);
- is appropriately scoped (i.e., is neither too broad or too narrow);
- can be supervised and researched in Oxford (in terms of the resources available, such as supervisors and libraries);
- does not depend too heavily on confidential information (see below)

The University works upon the assumption that the results of research contained in a thesis belong in the public domain and that subsequent readers should be able to verify any documentary references. You should not therefore embark on research that is heavily dependent on confidential information without first checking with your supervisor that this is likely to be acceptable, and then applying to the Graduate Studies Committee. For the reasons given above, the Graduate Studies Committee is very reluctant to accede to requests to exempt a thesis from consultation, particularly if this request is made only when the thesis is submitted. Under no circumstances should you give undertakings to providers of sources that access to the completed work will be restricted, unless you have first sought the agreement of the Committee. As a centre devoted to the understanding of the Internet, it is also expected that to the extent practicable, data and results will be published on the web, at least through the OII site.

It is important to be clear not only about the overall topic of the thesis, but also about the particular questions regarding your topic that you seek to answer and the means by which you do so.

3.1.6 Thesis title

Thesis titles should be concise, clear and specific. Titles should be comprehensible to a non-specialist audience. A sub-title, if used, should be separated from the first part of the title by a colon, and it should begin with a capital letter. Titles should contain indications of the precise scope or focus of the work. Many students find that including a researchable **question** in their title helps to focus the thesis by then answering that question, rather than just describing a phenomenon.

As per above (section 3.1.1) you will need to email your Thesis Approval form and your CUREC form to drec@oii.ox.ac.uk, cc'ing teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk and your supervisor by **noon on Friday Week 8 of Hilary Term**. The forms must be signed electronically your supervisor. You should ensure you submit your forms to your supervisor at least **one week** ahead of the deadline to allow sufficient time for review and approval. The Thesis Approval form is available to download from Canvas.

The Board of Examiners will then approve thesis titles by Week 1 in Trinity Term for each student. The supervisor will provide academic guidance and oversee the thesis progress. For further information on supervisors responsibilities, please refer to section 4 below.

Students and supervisors are reminded that the thesis must have an integrated argument, and must stand alone as a finished and informative piece of work. The thesis title must be formally registered on the MSc examination entry form which students will receive from their college to complete and submit to the Examinations Schools.

3.1.7 Change of thesis title

Should the focus of the students' research change during their work on their thesis, it is important that they consider whether their current title is still appropriate or whether it should be revised.

If subsequently a student needs to change their thesis title, they will need to write by letter or e-mail to the MSc Coordinator, who will ask the Chair of the Board of Examiners for permission to change the title. Any such request must indicate both the former title and the proposed new title. In cases where the topic has remained the same but the title has changed, only the

new and previous titles are required in this request. If the topic of the research has changed significantly, the request should also include an updated short abstract. The final deadline for receipt of requests is **Thursday 4th July 2019 by 5:00pm** (or three weeks in advance of the thesis deadline for students who have been given an approved extension by the Proctors).

Please note that MSc Students should submit thesis proposal title changes to their supervisor at least **one week** ahead of the July deadline. Late submission of thesis proposal changes will not be tolerated unless prior warning has been communicated or for exceptional circumstances such as when a supervisor is unavailable or there is a major shift in emphasis of the thesis.

3.2 Thesis preparation

3.2.1 Introduction

An introduction to a thesis is crucial to clarifying the thesis's purpose and character. The following are among the items which you might wish to consider including in an introduction:

- A short explanation of the thesis topic and the reasons for choosing it.
- A listing of the principal questions that the thesis seeks to answer.
- A summary of the main existing views or conventional wisdom about your subject.
- An indication of how the thesis confirms or challenges these views; what is its contribution?
- An account of the types of primary and secondary sources used, and a discussion of the problems associated with these sources.
- An explanation of the main methods of analysis/intellectual approaches used in the thesis.
- An indication of what the thesis has not done: what parts of the subject were neglected, what sources were ignored or unavailable, what questions were not asked, what methodologies were not used.

3.2.2 Writing

Habits and timetable

It is essential to keep in the habit of writing, and not to procrastinate on the grounds that further sources are sought or more reading is necessary. Often the process of writing itself helps to clarify the precise areas on which more information is still needed, and to refine the questions that should be asked in respect of the topic. In consultation with the supervisor, it is important to set a business-like timetable for completion of each chapter of the thesis, and stick to it.

Because the thesis is a major piece of work, part-time students are advised to think about ways to shift as much of the work (such as reading, question setting, and project planning) to the first year as possible. This will allow more time for the substantive execution of the research project during the second year.

Back-up copies

Please keep ample back-up copies of all parts of your work, and keep them where they cannot be corrupted or lost. You are strongly advised to set your computer to save work automatically at regular intervals. Data loss due to hardware faults, software crashes, loss or theft, or similar causes is not sufficient grounds for an extension and students must take full responsibility for ensuring a back-up of their work is always available.

English

A thesis must be in the English language and should, as far as humanly possible, be written in plain and comprehensible English. Good syntax and punctuation is vital.

You should not think that because you are writing an academic thesis you must use long and complicated sentences. Rather, the principal goal of a scientific writer is to communicate clearly, which is often achieved through the use of simple but well-crafted use of language.

For practical (and sometimes entertaining) guides to good (and bad) English, see:

- Sir Ernest Gowers, *The Complete Plain Words*, rev. edn., Penguin Books, London, 1987.
- William Strunk and E.B. White, *The Elements of Style*, 4th edn., Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1999.
- Lynne Truss, *Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*, Profile Books, London, 2003.

See also Fowler's *Modern English Usage*, published by Oxford University Press.

Correcting English is not the responsibility of your supervisor. If you are not a native speaker of English, it is your responsibility to ensure that your thesis is written in correct and lucid English. Courses in English as a second language and in academic writing are available at the University's language centre.

Style

A thesis should have a clear and consistent style so far as matters of spelling, capitalisation, abbreviation, dates, foreign words, references, bibliography etc. are concerned.

Dates should be rendered consistently both in text and footnotes, preferably as follows: 30 June 1999.

Students should be similarly consistent about their use of quotation marks. They should use *either* single or double as the default, not a mixture. The use of single quotation marks is generally preferred, with double quotes only being used for a quote within a quote. The precise choice of style in such matters partly depends on what is most appropriate to the particular subject matter of the thesis, and in some cases on the form of publication ultimately sought.

Useful guides to style containing much material of particular relevance to academic theses include:

- P.J. Dunleavy, *Authoring a PhD: How to plan, draft, write and finish a doctoral dissertation or thesis*. Palgrave, 2003
- R. E. Allen, *The Oxford Writers' Dictionary* (or else its immediate predecessor, *The Oxford Dictionary for Writers and Editors*), Oxford University Press.
- Robert Ritter, *The Oxford Guide to Style*, Oxford University Press.
- Margaret Mahan, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, University of Chicago Press.
- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Heinemann, London, 1982; and University of Chicago Press, sixth edition 1996.

Most academic journals also provide at least brief guidance on style and footnoting.

Figures and tables

Figures and tables should, if at all possible, be near the text that refers to them. All included figures and tables should be consecutively numbered and referred to somewhere in the text. Captions usually appear below figures but above tables.

Headings and subheadings

In most theses it is important not only that each section has a clear and informative title, but also that there is a consistent system of headings and sub-headings to assist the reader (and possibly the writer too) in following the narrative argument of the thesis. Very often a hierarchy of headings is needed. One quite common way of establishing a hierarchy is to have major section breaks centred and in larger type, and lesser ones set left and in the same size type as the main body of the text (albeit distinguished from it by being in bold, italics or similar). Many variations in between are possible, the number of levels being dependent on the nature of the material. Work out a clear and consistent hierarchy of headings appropriate to your subject, and then stick to it.

Sections should be consecutively numbered in a fashion that reflects their place in the overall hierarchy of the theses. For example, the second sub-sub section of the third sub-section of the first section might be numbered 1.3.2.

3.2.3 References

References are an important part of a thesis. They enable you to provide an indication of your skill and judiciousness in use of sources, and they assist the reader in understanding and evaluating what you are saying. They can also be one line of protection against accusations of plagiarism – the presentation of another person's work as your own. The American Psychological Association's style, otherwise known as **APA style**, is the OII recommended referencing style. The OII library has copies of the APA style guide and related reference works; additional information is available online at <http://www.apastyle.org/>.

Apart from indicating a clear preference that footnotes should be at the bottom of each page, the *Examination Regulations* give no guidance on a preferred style for reference notes. The Graduate Studies Committee has therefore issued the following guidelines for footnotes:

- Any system of footnoting is acceptable, provided it is **rational, unambiguous** and **consistent**. Guidance may be sought from works mentioned above.
- Footnotes should, if at all possible, be at the foot of the page to which they refer. Alternatively, they may be grouped at the end of the thesis. They should not be grouped at the ends of chapters. When they are grouped at the end of a thesis, two separate copies of footnotes, separately bound or stapled, should be enclosed with the thesis for the examiners' use.
- In almost all footnoting systems, book and journal titles should be either underlined or italicised. Italics are preferred. Article and chapter titles should be in quotation marks.

Be consistent about these matters.

3.2.4 Thesis length

The maximum length for an MSc thesis is not to exceed 15,000 words. Please note the top of this word limit should be used for theses that need to make use of much qualitative material, while students undertaking quantitative analysis or formal

modelling are likely to be shorter. All theses should take a parsimonious approach to word length. This limit must be observed. It is a maximum, not a norm: many successful theses have been significantly shorter. Over-length theses are liable to be rejected unless you have, with the support of your supervisor, secured in advance permission through the Board of Examiners to exceed the limits. Such permission is granted only very exceptionally.

In calculating the MSc thesis length this should include the following:

- Main body
- Footnotes
- Figures—counts in terms of word equivalents in the figure
- Tables

The following are not counted in the word length:

- Title Page
- Abstract
- Table of contents
- Table of figures
- Appendices: Any appendix does not count toward the word count, but students should be advised that examiners are not required to read appendices as part of the marking process, although they may choose to do so. As such, it should contain only supporting material
- Bibliography

3.3 Intellectual Property Rights and Plagiarism

3.3.1 Intellectual property rights

As someone undertaking research and writing, students need to be aware of the importance of copyright and other intellectual property rights issues in relation to your own and other people's work. Students need to learn about the possibilities and problems of academic and commercial exploitation of their research and writing. This includes the terms of contracts with publishers, universities and other bodies. It also includes the avoidance of plagiarism, addressed below.

Much help and advice is available on these matters, including from the students supervisor and other members of the OII's staff with experience of different types of research, publication and employment contract. For information about Oxford University's facilities for help in this area, and its intellectual property policy generally, see <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/researchsupport/ip/>.

3.3.2 Plagiarism

The official University guidance on plagiarism is available to view at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism>. We have summarised some of the key elements that students have questions about below, but students should consider the university guidelines as taking precedence in case of conflicting information.

Plagiarism is the presentation of any part, or the substance of any part, of another person's work (including the work of other students) as if it were your own. It can take the form of unacknowledged quotation and of substantial unattributed paraphrase. It is not acceptable for any of your academic work to incorporate plagiarised material. This includes essays and presentations as well as material submitted as coursework or as part of a formal examination.

Auto-plagiarism is the presentation of any part, or the substance of any part, of your own pre-existing work as if it were novel. It can take the form of unacknowledged quotation and of substantial unattributed paraphrase. It is not acceptable for any of your academic work to incorporate auto-plagiarised material. Any summatively assessed work submitted during the MSc or another degree is considered pre-existing work. It is therefore not permitted to reuse substantive elements of a summative essay in a later summative submission (including the thesis). Formatively assessed work is not considered pre-existing work for the purpose of auto-plagiarism.

If you employ good scholarly practice in your written work – for example, by attributing quotations and using only legitimate and acknowledged paraphrase – there is little danger that you will be accused of plagiarism unjustifiably. Written work should involve the use and discussion of material written by others with due acknowledgement and with complete references given. This is standard practice among scholars and can be clearly distinguished from appropriating without acknowledgement and presenting material produced by others as your own.

The University employs a series of sophisticated software applications and other methods to detect plagiarism in submitted work. They regularly monitor on-line essay banks, essay-writing services, and other potential sources of material. When submitting an assignment through the Summative Assignment Submission WebLearn page students must certify that they

agree to their work being checked for plagiarism using Turnitin software. 'Turnitin' is an electronic plagiarism detection software. It helps detect potential plagiarism by comparing submitted assignments to databases of electronic written work. Each assignment that is submitted through Turnitin is given a report with information about which parts of the work might have been improperly cited or plagiarised.

Plagiarism is a disciplinary offence for which offenders can expect to receive severe penalties. For example, the University has the statutory power to deprive somebody of a degree or other qualification after it has been awarded, if it is proved that it was obtained unfairly (for example, if a thesis or submitted coursework is found to contain plagiarised material). The relevant disciplinary regulations are:

4. No candidate shall present for an examination as his or her own work any part or the substance of any part of another person's work.
5. In any written work (whether thesis, dissertation, essay, coursework, or written examinations) passages quoted or closely paraphrased from another person's work must be identified as quotations or paraphrases, and the source of the quoted or paraphrased material must be clearly acknowledged.

Please also see the Oxford Students skills webpage at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills> for further information on advice on academic good practice.

3.4 Thesis submission

3.4.1 Overall

The thesis must:

- be of no more than the maximum word count (no more than 15,000 words for MSc students), not counting bibliography (see above for details)
- include a title page (see below)
- include an abstract (see below)
- be submitted in English

3.4.2 Title page

The title page (i.e. the first printed page after the front cover) should contain the following information:

- Title (and subtitle, if any).
- Master's thesis submissions should **not** include the author's name on the title page, but must include the student's candidate number and the name of their college.
- Words to the effect of "Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of MSc in Social Science of the Internet at the Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford".
- Month and year, or else the Oxford term and year, in which the thesis was submitted.
- The exact word count of the whole thesis. This word count must include footnotes and figure-counts but exclude the bibliography (see above for details).

3.4.3 Abstract

Theses must have an abstract of up to 300 words, which should fit on one side of a single sheet of A4 paper and should be placed immediately after the title page.

The abstract should be a very clear summary of the subject matter of the thesis, its aims, scope, principal sources, central argument and conclusions. The abstract should be self-standing, and contain all the information on the title page of the thesis. It should be comprehensible to non-specialists, and be suitable for use in general surveys such as *Aslib*, *Index to Theses*, 'Choice of thesis topic', etc.

3.4.4 Word processing

The thesis should be:

- word processed;
- with a margin of 3.0 to 3.5 cms on the left-hand side of pages;
- the main text should be in double spacing (taken to mean a distance of about 0.33 inch or 8 mm between successive lines of text), but indented quotations and footnotes may be in single spacing;
- the text must be of an adequate size, definition and standard of legibility;

- the pages of the thesis must be numbered consecutively from beginning to end and should include any appendices, such as the bibliography.

3.4.5 Binding

Students who are requested to supply a final copy of their thesis for submission to the Bodleian Library should note carefully what is said in *Examination Regulations* regarding the method to be used for binding.

3.4.6 Submitting

Master's students must submit an electronic copy of their thesis via the Assignment Submission WebLearn site on the 1st day of August (or the nearest working day). Students should also email a copy of their thesis to teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk by 17.00 on the date of the deadline.

3.4.7 Viva voce

MSc students are not expected to undergo a viva unless their results are borderline. An MSc student may need to be available to return to Oxford in late August or September in the event of being called back for viva voce.

3.4.8 Resubmitting your thesis

If a student fails their thesis they must resubmit. Students will need to complete another examination form which will be sent by the college to complete and must be completed by the stated entry date. The resubmission deadlines will be the following August (i.e. 1 year after submitting original thesis) and the Examination Schools will confirm the exact date nearer the time. For further information please refer to the Examination Schools website at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/entry>.

3.5 Notification of results of MSc

The *MSc in Social Science of the Internet* is formally examined by the Board of Examiners in the OII. Students are examined on the basis of written examination, coursework and thesis. The Examiners for the MSc will normally complete their examination and release their marks by the end of September.

3.6 MSc thesis prize

There is one thesis prize each year which is awarded to the student with the highest thesis mark. The winner will receive a sum currently set at £150. The prize will be decided at the final Board of Examiners meeting in September based on nominations from thesis assessors. At its discretion, the Board may also recognise other thesis/theses which did not win the prize, but nevertheless were notable for exceeding the usual standard with an award of "Highly Commended Thesis".

Students awarded the thesis prize or recognised for producing a highly commended thesis will be publicised on the OII website and encouraged to note this achievement on their curriculum vitae.

3.7 Library and digital copies for MSc thesis

Students who are awarded a Distinction mark for their thesis may be invited to submit a hard bound copy for the OII Library, where their work will be preserved and made available for future generations of scholars. The MSc Coordinator will contact those students directly if their thesis is being added.

3.8 Conferral of degree

The arrangements for the conferral of the students' degree are made through their college. Degrees are conferred at the Sheldonian Theatre and a list of dates is available at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/graduation/ceremonies>.

4. Supervision and Teaching

4.1 Supervision

All MSc students have a thesis supervisor throughout their time in Oxford. The thesis supervisor guides the student through his or her course of study. The supervisor reports on the student's progress to the Graduate Studies Committee at the end of each term and will also provide feedback to the student.

The advice of the supervisor will always be sought by GSC before recommending any change in status, transfer between courses, and so on.

Graduate students will also all have a College Adviser. The role of the College Adviser is to provide pastoral and general academic advice. They can be particularly helpful if the student has any academic or other difficulties that he or she does not feel able to discuss with the Faculty Supervisor.

If you have any issues with 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 5.4 on complaints and appeals.

4.1.1 Appointment of supervisor(s)

All MSc students are assigned a supervisor at the beginning of Michaelmas Term in their first year at the OII. Before arriving in Oxford for induction week, new MSc students will be asked to submit a brief summary of their academic interests to the MSc Coordinator. The Graduate Studies Committee will use this to help decide who to appoint as a supervisor.

Except in exceptional circumstances, the supervisor assigned at the beginning of the programme will remain the student's supervisor throughout their time at the OII. If an assigned supervisor becomes unavailable, the MSc Director will assign a new supervisor taking into account any expressed preferences from the student and potential supervisor(s).

4.1.2 Change of supervisor

Incompatibility

The Department and all University supervisors recognise that occasionally a student may feel there are good grounds for contemplating a change in supervisor. In these cases, this should first be discussed with the supervisor concerned, or if this seems difficult, with the MSc Course Director, the Director of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Studies Manager, or the MSc Coordinator. If this involves concerns over the quality of supervision, students are encouraged to seek to resolve the matter by informal means where possible, but should also be aware of the University's formal complaint procedures. The procedures adopted by the Proctors for the formal consideration of complaints and appeals are described in the University Student Handbook (Proctors and Assessor's Memorandum) <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/student-handbook> and the relevant Council regulations <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/>.

Periods of absence

If a supervisor is to be on leave and away from Oxford, or is leaving Oxford permanently, he or she is expected to make clear arrangements through the Graduate Studies Committee to cover the period of absence. This may involve continuing to supervise some students and transferring the supervision of others.

Appointment of a second supervisor

It is recognised that students may develop new interests or change focus over their time at the OII. Where a student finds that a faculty member other than their supervisor would help their dissertation research progress, there are two possibilities open to the student.

Student, with agreement of the potential additional supervisor and their existing supervisor, can request the addition of a second Thesis Supervisor. This should be done by filling out form GSO.25 (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>) and submitting it to the OII MSc Coordinator (teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk). Normally all such requests will need to be made before the beginning of Trinity Term in which the student's dissertation is due so there is time for the co-supervision to be effective. If approved, the student and the two supervisors will be responsible for discussing the best co-supervision arrangements.

Additionally, students can always request meetings with any member of the OII faculty. The OII faculty are very open to informally supporting students for whom they are not the official supervisor, and students are encouraged to take advantage of this by approaching faculty members who can help advance their research. This can take place at any time, and requires no formal permission or arrangements.

4.1.3 Role of supervisors

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

The thesis supervisor(s) will be the main source of information and advice throughout the course of the student's research. Their responsibilities include:

- planning the framework of your research programme;
- advising you about lecture courses, both specialist and broadening;
- advising you about skills-training courses including research techniques;
- advising you about literature sources;
- meeting regularly with you to discuss your work (see below);
- keeping you informed of your progress (both informally and through the formal termly report).

MSc students will primarily meet with their supervisor at least once a term in Michaelmas and Hilary Term and then at least three to four times throughout Trinity Term and the summer vacation.

MSc supervisors are expected to:

- Hold meetings with the student to discuss progress of thesis.
- Discuss progress, feed-back comments to course providers, course directors and DGS, and report on progress to termly teaching meeting.
- Assist in choice of option papers, and ensure that students are aware of deadlines and procedures for registration for courses, examinations etc.
- Help in the development of the thesis topic.
- Write termly reports on the student.
- Comment in a timely manner to materials submitted.
- In particular, comment on final drafts in good time for students to respond before final submission.

This last obviously depends on supervisors' availability in Oxford during the summer vacation months, and on students' timely submission of drafts. Best practice is for students to submit a complete draft one month before final deadline, allowing a response to students at least ten days before the deadline for submission. Supervisors should provide a reasonable level of availability during the summer; it is the student's responsibility to arrange dates for submission of work to supervisors – but it would be helpful if supervisors could warn students of any extended period of unavailability during the month before the thesis submission date.

4.1.4 Contact with supervisors

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

It is essential for you to keep in regular contact with your supervisors, irrespective of whether you are resident in Oxford or researching elsewhere. You should ensure that your supervisors have your full contact address and email address. These and any updates and changes of contact details should be provided via the OII's MSc Coordinator.

It would be a great help to your supervisors if you would contact them at or before the beginning of each term.

4.1.5 Supervision reports

A number of students and supervisors have found that a practical and convenient method of maintaining an agreed record of meetings is for the student, as a matter of course, to send the supervisor a short e-mail summarising the content of the meeting and the agreed outcomes.

At the end of each term your supervisor writes a formal report on Graduate Supervision Reporting (GSR) on your progress and is required by the University's regulations to communicate the contents of the report to you. In these reports, supervisors should give a full account of your work during the term and indicate the nature and extent of their contact with you. Supervisors are asked to give priority to prompt completion and return of the report forms. Copies of the report are sent to your college and to the Graduate Studies Committee where any problems are discussed and followed up. Completed report forms are subject to the Data Protection Act 1998, which stipulates that you as the 'data subject' may be given access to information held on you.

Continuation on the course depends on your satisfactory progress, so you should take very seriously any warnings expressed by your supervisor(s) that you are not working as well as you ought to. You should also bring to their attention, in good time, any problems that are seriously affecting your progress, before the situation becomes too serious.

For more information on the Graduate Supervision Reporting (GSR) please refer to Appendix F: The GSR Graduate Supervision Reporting.

4.1.6 Role of College Adviser

In addition to the supervisor, your college will have assigned you to a College Adviser, who takes a general interest in your well-being, and from whom you can seek academic and other advice.

4.2 Responsibilities of graduate students

Graduate students have a wide range of responsibilities. Since for the most part these responsibilities are not specific to students at the Oxford Internet Institute, but apply equally to all graduate students, they are not outlined in detail here. They are, however, of critical importance.

They include:

- taking responsibility for your programme of work and research;
- accepting the importance of constructive criticism within the supervisory relationship;
- making positive use of the University's teaching and learning facilities;
- providing regular reports on progress as required;
- following the University's procedures (including those outlined in these Notes of Guidance) promptly and conscientiously;
- doing everything to ensure a high standard of written and spoken work.

You should consult the much fuller information on the role and responsibilities of graduate students obtainable in *Code of Practice on Supervision* available at <http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/students/for-postgraduates>.

4.2.1 Skills training

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

Each student will undertake further research training which is specifically geared to the task of completing an MSc. This is delivered via a dedicated seminar series for graduate students running in Trinity Term. The seminar series will include presentations by speakers, including a session on the mechanics of writing a thesis. Each week students will present their thesis work for approximately 20 minutes (previous and related literature or work on their topic, gaps in previous work, preliminary findings, hypotheses, problems encountered). Students' training needs will be discussed with their supervisor at the beginning of each term. Further information about training needs, including the Training Needs Analysis Form, can be found at <https://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/training/tna>.

The OII holds weekly lunchtime brownbag seminars during term time in which students and OII research staff discuss ongoing research projects. Students are able to sign up to other OII organised seminars and those which individual research groups or groups with common areas of interest organise for their own members and others within the department. Full details of forthcoming events are available on the OII website.

The compulsory methods training will provide students with the basic methods required in order to undertake, analyze or apply Internet research, whilst the two core papers will provide students with the theoretical, conceptual and technical understanding needed for sophisticated analysis of Internet-related issues, whether this be for the purposes of academic or practical research, or policy-making. More specialised development of particular research methods will be supported by the 4-week methods option courses in Hilary term and through the process of thesis preparation, in which students will be closely supported by their personal supervisors. Students will also be given the opportunity to take two option papers, which will give them specialist knowledge of particular areas of internet research, such as economics, law, or social network analysis.

All OII MSc students will receive specific training within the department on academic writing and thesis preparation if needed.

5. Feedback, Concerns and Queries

5.1 Feedback to students

Students will receive regular feedback through their supervisor and the reports uploaded on GSR. MSc students are also encouraged to speak to the course convenor about any issues or concerns.

During their time in Oxford, students will be expected to undergo both formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment does not contribute to the overall outcome of your degree and has a developmental purpose designed to help you learn more effectively. Summative assessment does contribute 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.

Feedback on formative and summative assessment is an important element of all Oxford's Master's programmes. Feedback on formative assessment e.g. mid-course essays/ assignments, should provide guidance on academic writing, will indicate areas of strength and weakness in relation to an assessment task, and will provide an indication of the expectations and standards towards which students should be working. Feedback on summative assessment e.g. end of course assessments and theses, should provide a critical review of the work and suggestions for improvements to enable students to develop their work for future continued study.

In 2011, the University's Education Committee introduced new policies in response to requests from students for enhanced formal mechanisms for the provision of feedback on both formative and summative assessment. In addition to informal feedback, all students on taught Master's programmes can expect to receive formal written feedback on at least one designated piece of formative assessment during their first term.

Students can expect to receive informal feedback on their progress and on their formatively assessed work. Students will receive feedback on formative assignments for each course throughout the terms. These will come from the Course Tutors in either written or oral format. Please see Appendix E for further information on exact timings.

Students will receive formal written feedback on all their summative essay assessments submitted over the year via email.

All students will also receive formal written feedback on their thesis, submitted in the final term of the course via email by 31st October in the relevant year.

5.2 Feedback from students

5.2.1 Course evaluation

The OII is concerned that students should also have the opportunity to comment on the structure, teaching and content of the programme and courses. Feedback will thus be sought through the use of student feedback meetings and student evaluation forms at the end of each lecture or seminar series. Further information about this will be given by course providers and the MSc Coordinator. The feedback received from students is anonymous. The evaluations are reviewed at the Graduate Studies Committee and if there appears to be a common topic that comes up this is discussed and students are notified of how this will be either resolved or changed for the next academic year.

5.2.2 Opportunities to provide evaluation and feedback

The OII analyses any feedback received from any University wide surveys via the Graduate Studies 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: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/aad/surveys/>.

The OII asks all MSc students to complete a survey in the last taught session each year. This survey is about the academic aspects of their course. This is analysed and discussed at the Graduate Studies Committee in October.

5.2.3 Student representation

The OII has a Graduate Joint Consultative Committee (GJCC) which is a staff-student committee designed to enhance opportunities for feedback and participation amongst both MSc and DPhil students (see Appendix A: Graduate Joint Consultative Committee for further details).

Students have the opportunity to elect two representatives from each of the full-time and part-time MSc cohorts to sit on this committee. Details on student representatives and committee members will be added to Canvas in Michaelmas Term.

The student representative will serve on the committee for one academic year and elections will take place in Michaelmas Term. The nominated representative shall be entitled to attend the termly meetings and contribute to discussion. The student representative is responsible for sending a brief report to all students after each meeting listing all the issues discussed and request any feedback if required.

The GJCC committees will meet once during term time, normally in week 2. GJCC committee meetings are open to all interested students at the OII, although in matters of voting, the elected representatives will be the only voting members.

The Chair of the GJCC will be a DPhil student representative and will also serve on the Graduate Studies Committee at the OII. It is normally expected that the Chair will be a student who has served on the GJCC for at least one year previously, although the committee can decide to waive this in exceptional circumstances.

Student representatives sit on the Graduate Studies Committee and the Research Committee and they will be nominated by the GJCC. The Research Committee normally meets in week 6 and the Graduate Studies Committee normally meets in week 3. The Research Committee discusses all relevant academic and research issues with a view to promoting and co-ordinating those activities within the Institute. The Graduate Studies Committee is responsible for the oversight and evaluation of all courses and provision for graduates, as well as the admissions process, and the implementation of teaching policy.

Please see appendix A and B for descriptions of the Graduate Joint Consultative Committee, Graduate Studies Committee and Research Committee responsibilities and membership.

At divisional level, there is a PGT Discussion Forum, made up of student representatives from each department/faculty of the division. Issues raised by this body are reported to the division's Graduate Studies Committee. MSc students are asked to elect two representatives to sit on this forum at the start of the first term.

Student representatives sitting on the Divisional Board are selected through a process organised by the Oxford University Student Union (OUSU). Details can be found on the OUSU website at <http://ousu.org/> along with information about student representation at the University level.

5.3 Sources of advice, help and counselling

If a student has concerns, academic or administrative, and they are uncertain of the proper way to go about solving them, they have several possible courses of action open to them.

For academic issues:

- Within the OII students can consult their supervisor, the course convenor, the Director of Graduate Studies, or the Head of Department, who will if necessary, consult the appropriate authorities on the student's behalf.
- At the student's College they can consult the Senior Tutor, the Tutor for Graduates or their own College Advisor, who will give similar help.
- Students can also consult the OII's Graduate Studies Manager, or the MSc Coordinator, who will advise on the obtaining of necessary forms, submission of applications, dates and deadlines, deposit of theses, etc.

For careers advice:

- The Careers Service of the University at 56 Banbury Road can help students evaluate their career prospects.

On a more personal level:

- Students can consult one of the OII's harassment officers, Vicki Nash and Tim Davies, if they believe they are being harassed or have any other personal issues that they would like to discuss.
- The University Counselling Service at 3 Worcester Street (which acts strictly in confidence) is experienced not only in general psychological problems but also in the special problems and blocks associated with academic work. See <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling> or phone: (2)70300 or email counselling@admin.ox.ac.uk.
- "Nightline" is a confidential listening and information service run for students by students and is open from 8pm until 8am from 0th week to 9th week each term. Students can phone (2)70270 or visit Nightline at 16 Wellington Square.
- The student's College nurse or the local doctor with whom they are registered may be able to help.

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

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

5.3.1 Disability Advisory Service

The University operates a Disability Advisory Service which provides information and advice to students with impairments, health conditions, specific learning disabilities, and any other physical or mental difficulties (see <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability>). The Oxford Internet Institute works closely with this service to support students who require additional support or accommodation in their coursework, examinations, assessments, and interactions with the faculty and their peers at the OII.

Students who require support of this nature are advised to contact the Disability Advisory Service as soon as possible during the academic year, or when a new situation arises, for advice and support. The Service will liaise with the OII to provide you the support you need.

The OII supports the University's *Common Framework for Supporting Disabled Students* (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability/staff>). Victoria McDermott is the OII's disability contact, who is available to discuss any related issues, and to assist with connecting the student with appropriate support.

5.4 Complaints and academic appeals

The University, the Social Science Division and the OII all hope that provision made for students at all stages of their course of study will result in no need for complaints (about that provision) or appeals (against the outcomes of any form of assessment).

Where such a need arises, an informal discussion with the person immediately responsible for the issue that you wish to complain about (and who may not be one of the individuals identified below) is often the simplest way to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

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

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

5.4.1 Complaints

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by the faculty/department, then you should raise it with the Director of Graduate Studies (Dr Greg Taylor) as appropriate. Complaints about departmental facilities should be made to the Graduate Studies Manager (Victoria McDermott). If you feel unable to approach one of those individuals, you may contact the Head of Department (Prof Phil Howard). 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.

5.4.2 Academic appeals

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

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

If you still have concerns you can make a formal appeal to the Proctors who will consider appeals under the University Academic Appeals Procedure (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>).

6. Applying for the DPhil programme

Students wishing to apply for the OII *DPhil in Information Communication and the Social Sciences* programme with no break in study can do so by applying for [readmission](#). When accessing the [online application system](#), students should make sure that they choose the **readmission** application form instead of the standard application form. **Readmission** applicants do not have to pay the application fee. To this effect, students will need to enter a unique **code** which, if they are eligible, can be found in their [Student Self Service](#) account.

The readmission form must be submitted together with the following supporting materials:

- transcript(s) of previous higher education;
- three academic references (one of which must be written by their Master's supervisor);
- curriculum vitae;
- research proposal;
- one sample of written work.

For guidance on supporting materials please refer to the Notes of Guidance for Applicants to Graduate Study <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/applying-to-oxford/continuing-oxford-graduates>.

Students should ensure that their re-admission form and all supporting materials, including references, are submitted to the Graduate Admissions Office in time to meet the application deadline(s). Please refer to <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/dphil-information-communication-and-social-sciences> for OII application deadlines.

If a student does take any break in study (even if only for a term), then they will not be able to use a readmission form and will need to submit an application form for graduate study, http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/postgraduate_courses/apply/index.html, and pay the application fee.

Students who have successfully completed the *MSc in Social Science of the Internet* degree who then go straight onto the *DPhil in Information Communication and the Social Sciences* degree may be exempt from the DPhil core courses (Digital Social Research, Social Dynamics of the Internet) subject to the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

7. Regulations and Policies

The main University regulations governing Postgraduate Taught Courses can be found at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/pgpghtaughtcourses/>.

7.1 Examination Regulations

Examination Regulations are published in July each year covering the academic year from October to September. It can be obtained from colleges and is also available online at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>. Any amendments made during the academic year are published in the *University Gazette*. This handbook has been compiled using the latest Examination Regulations.

You should note that references in the regulations to the 'board' should be taken to refer to the OII's Graduate Studies Committee and references to the 'Secretary to the Faculties' should be construed as the Graduate Office.

7.2 Fees regulations

University fees are paid termly through the student's College. Fees are charged whether or not a student is working in Oxford. Fees are not charged if student status is formally suspended (see section 2.8.1).

College fees are also payable, and students should enquire with their college about these. Current College fees can also be found at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/feesandfunding/fees/information/college/>.

7.3 Residence requirements

Students are required by the University's regulations to be in residence in Oxford during term time. That means a commitment to be in Oxford for at least the full eight weeks of all three terms of the academic year. The dates of full term can be found at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/about/facts-and-figures/dates-of-term> and in the front of the *Examination Regulations*.

MSc students at the OII attend an extended Hilary term with teaching through 9th week. MSc students are also required to sit written examinations in 9th week of Michaelmas term, 0th week and 10th week in Hilary term and thus must also be resident in Oxford at these times. MSc students will need to submit their thesis by 1st August (or the nearest working day if this falls at the weekend) although this may be done remotely, but will also need to be available to return to Oxford in late August or September in the event of being called back for viva voce.

7.3.1 Suspension of status as a postgraduate student

Suspension of status as a postgraduate student enables students to suspend their studies without payment of fees if there is good reason for a student to do so (removal of graduate students from the Register is a different matter arising from academic or disciplinary offences; see 6.5.2 below).

Application

You may apply to the Graduate Studies Committee for suspension of status for a specified period. Any such application should be submitted using the **form GSO.17** (available from <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>) with details of the anticipated period required and with supporting comments from both the student's supervisor and college.

Fees

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

Period of suspension

MSc students must suspend for an entire year, and cannot suspend for one term, as research students can. When the student returns from suspension, they are to complete the GSO 17A *Confirmation of Return from Suspension* form.

Grounds for suspension

The Graduate Studies Committee is prepared to consider applications for suspension of status on the following grounds:

1. Where a student is effectively prevented from pursuing their course of study in circumstances which are outside their control though there are good grounds for believing that they will be able to resume work within a reasonable period for example, cases of:
 - a. unforeseeable financial difficulty,
 - b. physical or mental incapacity, (including, maternity leave and unexpected domestic crises);
2. Where it is desirable that a student should give up their work for a *limited period*, either:
 - a. in order to concentrate on some other project which cannot reasonably be deferred until their postgraduate work is completed (for example, in order to acquire some ancillary qualification); or
 - b. to take up temporary work which is likely to be relevant to their subsequent career and the opportunity for which is *unlikely to recur*.
3. In the case of study abroad:
 - a. where a student holds a research studentship which is suspended during the period of study abroad because of the nature of the study; or
 - b. where a student's work is unduly delayed by difficulties in making arrangements for study, or in carrying out such study, in another country.

Notifying funders

If a student is funded by an external body or bodies, they must communicate with them about any planned or granted suspension of status, and must secure the funders approval if required.

7.4 Illness

The University records should show correctly for how many terms a student has been actively working on a thesis. If a student's work is unavoidably interrupted by illness, they will be encouraged to apply for suspension of status. If their illness is not serious enough or of too short duration to justify suspension of status, but the student nevertheless feels that it is likely to have an adverse effect on their performance in the examination, they must ask their Senior Tutor, supervisor and doctor to take up the case with the Proctors, who have the option, at their discretion, of writing to the examiners and asking that the student's illness be taken into account.

Students should not write directly to the examiners, who cannot take account of pleas which do not arrive through the official channels. If a student falls ill and thinks that this might result in a subsequent application for extension of time, it is desirable to obtain a medical certificate at the time. Students should always let their supervisor know when illness has prevented work on the thesis.

7.5 Policies

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

7.5.1 Codes of Conduct and University Regulations

The University has a wide range of policies and regulations that apply to students. These are easily accessible through the A-Z of University regulations, codes of conduct and policies available on the Oxford Students website <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/regulations>.

University Statutes and Regulations

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/196-052.shtml>

This contains numerous useful documents, for example: Regulations Relating to the Use of Information Technology Facilities

Notes of Guidance issued by the Educational Policy and Standards Committee

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/>

This contains up-to-date versions of the following:

- Notes of Guidance for Research Degrees
- Learning and Teaching Strategy
- Notes of Guidance on Examinations and Assessment
- Notes of Guidance on Introduction of New Courses and Major Changes to Existing Courses

Disability Office

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/disab/>

This contains a wide range of rules and useful information for students and staff in respect of many different types of disability. It contains the University statement on:

- Access to Teaching and Learning for Students with Disabilities

Diversity and Equal Opportunities Unit

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/>

This contains numerous useful documents, including information on racial equality, gender equality, disability services, childcare and harassment. The last of these includes a detailed discussion of all types of harassment and bullying, how to identify it and what to do about it:

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

“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.” Equality Policy (2013)

Oxford is a diverse community with staff and students from over 140 countries, all with different cultures, beliefs and backgrounds. As a member of the University you contribute towards making it an inclusive environment and we ask that you treat other members of the University community with respect, courtesy and consideration.

The Equality and Diversity Unit works with all parts of the collegiate University to develop and promote an understanding of equality and diversity and ensure that this is reflected in all its processes. The Unit also supports the University in meeting the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people with and without the ‘protected characteristics’ of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and/or belief and sexual orientation. Visit our website for further details or contact us directly for advice: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop 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: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice

There is range of faith societies, belief groups, and religious centres within Oxford University that are open to students. For more information visit: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/religionandbelief/faithsocietiesgroupsorreligiouscentres/

Student Welfare and Support Services

The Disability Advisory Service (DAS) can provide information, advice and guidance on the way in which a particular disability may impact on your student experience at the University and assist with organising disability-related study support. For more information visit: www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/das

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

A range of services led by students are available to help provide support to other students, including the peer supporter network, the OUSU Student Advice Service and Nightline. For more information visit: www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/peer

OUSU also runs a series of campaigns to raise awareness and promote causes that matter to students. For full details, visit: ousu.org/get-involved/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

Academic Integrity in Research

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/cops/researchintegrity/>

This sets out the University’s Code of Practice together with procedures in the case of suspected misconduct, including plagiarism.

Proctors’ Office

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/>

This contains information about complaints procedures and numerous other matters including student welfare and student support as well as student discipline. See especially:

Essential Information for Students <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam/index.shtml>

Council Regulations 6 of 2003 (about complaints procedures: See para 48 onwards for Appeals concerning higher degrees involving research) <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/247-062.shtml>

Research Services

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/researchsupport/>

This contains several key documents, addressing interesting issues including plagiarism and outside consultancies.

- Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Conduct and Procedure
- Public Interest Disclosure: Code of Practice and Procedure
- Statement of Policy and Procedure on Conflict of Interest

7.5.2 Fieldwork safety and training

Many students will, as part of their course, be required to undertake fieldwork. Fieldwork is considered as any research activity contributing to your academic studies, and approved by your department, which is carried out away from the University premises. This can be overseas or within the UK. The safety and welfare of its students is of paramount importance to the University. This includes fieldwork and there are a number of procedures that you must follow when preparing for and carrying out fieldwork.

Preparation

Safe fieldwork is successful fieldwork. Thorough preparation can pre-empt many potential problems. When discussing your research with your supervisor please think about the safety implications of where you are going and what you are doing. Following this discussion and before your travel will be approved, you will be required to complete a travel risk assessment form. This requires you to set out the significant safety risks associated with your research, the arrangements in place to mitigate those risks and the contingency plans for if something goes wrong. There is an expectation that you will take out University travel insurance. Your department also needs accurate information on where you are, and when and how to contact you while you are away. The travel assessment process should help to plan your fieldwork by thinking through arrangements and practicalities. The following website contains some fieldwork experiences which might be useful to refer to <https://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/fieldworkers-experiences>

Training

Training is highly recommended as part of your preparation. Even if you are familiar with where you are going there may be risks associated with what you are doing.

Social Sciences Division Research and Skills Training (termly) <http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/training>

- **Preparation for Safe and Effective Fieldwork.** A half day course for those carrying out social science research in rural and urban contexts
- **Fieldwork in Practice.** A student led course on negotiating the practical aspects of fieldwork.
- **Vicarious trauma workshops.** For research on traumatic or distressing topic areas or contexts.

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

- Emergency First Aid for Fieldworkers.
- Fieldwork Safety Overseas: A full day course geared to expedition based fieldwork.

Useful Links

- More information on fieldwork and a number of useful links can be found on the Social Sciences divisional website: <http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/services/research-and-impact/fieldwork/fieldwork;>
<http://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/services/research-and-impact/fieldwork/fieldwork-more-information;>
<http://researchtraining.socsci.ox.ac.uk/site-search?keys=fieldwork>

7.5.3 Information on data protection

The Data Protection Act 1998 is a key piece of UK legislation regarding data. Please see <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/dataprotection/> for further information.

7.6 OII Code of Conduct

The Oxford Internet Institute is committed to promoting and maintaining a positive, supportive and professional work and study environment for students, staff, visitors and all associates of the Department and University (whether employed or otherwise). All members of the Department – staff, students and associates – must abide by the University's Equal Opportunities policies and Code of Practice relating to harassment and should treat everyone, whether inside or outside the

Department, equally, with respect and without distinction, regardless of role or status. Department staff, whether established, non-established or administrative, must act at all times honestly, conscientiously, reasonably and in good faith, having regard to their responsibilities, the interests of the Department and University, their legal obligations and the welfare of colleagues and students.

The Department regards as unacceptable any behaviour that is contrary to these commitments. All complaints of improper conduct or treatment will be treated seriously and in confidence. Anyone who believes they have been treated improperly should, in the first instance, speak informally to their line manager, the Harassment Officers, or, where appropriate, the Head of Department. Complaints that are substantiated, or cannot be resolved informally, may lead to formal grievance or disciplinary action as outlined in both Department and University policies.

7.7 Discipline

Infringements of the OII's and the University's codes of conduct may lead to disciplinary action. Student discipline is the responsibility of the Proctors' Office and full details are given at: <http://www.proctors.ox.ac.uk/studentconduct>. Sanctions include removal from the register of graduate students and fines.

7.8 Disability and special needs

The OII has a wide range of facilities for those with disabilities, including (for those using wheelchairs) an entrance ramp, lift to all floors at the rear, a designated toilet for those with disabilities, and a kitchen and common room together with the library and seminar room on the ground floor. It also has induction loops in reception and in the seminar room for those with hearing impairment and a number of audio-visual aids for those with visual impairment.

If you have a disability or special needs you are urged to let the Graduate Studies Manager, your supervisor, or the Director of Graduate Studies know at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate support arrangements can be made wherever reasonably possible. Information about your health will be treated in confidence and only divulged on a need to know basis with your consent.

For full information on University policy on matters relating to disabilities, including the document *Access to Teaching and Learning for Students with Disabilities*, see the Disability Office website at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/disab>.

7.9 Health and safety

All Oxford Internet Institute employees, academic visitors, students and any other persons entering the OII building are responsible for exercising care in relation to themselves and others who may be affected by their actions. This includes responsibility to:

- Make sure that your work is carried out in the approved way and in accordance with best possible practice (for work with VDUs, please see the checklist at Z:\admin\Health & Safety\VDU Assessment).
- Obey all instructions from a Safety Officer or the Head of Administration and Finance in respect of health and safety.
- Inform the Head of Administration and Finance of any significant new hazards to be introduced, or newly identified risks found in existing procedures.
- Report all fires, incidents and accidents immediately to reception staff or to the Head of Administration and Finance.
- Familiarise yourself with the location of fire fighting equipment, alarm points and escape routes, together with the fire procedures.
- Ensure that you sign in and out of the OII buildings at all times

Further details about health and safety including fire drills are given in the Induction pack.

7.10 University policy on student maternity, paternity and adoption leave

Students who give birth may choose to suspend their status normally up to a year. For further information please see <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/childcare/>.

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

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.

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

Students who have been given permission to record lectures or other formal teaching sessions as a reasonable adjustment on disability-related grounds do not need to ask for permission to record from individual academics. Students who believe they have disability-related grounds for recording should contact the University's Disability Advisory Service (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability/study> or disability@admin.ox.ac.uk) for further information on the process for obtaining such permission.

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.

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.

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

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

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).

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.

Where a student breaches this policy, the University will regard this as a disciplinary offence. All such breaches will be dealt with in accordance with Statute XI (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/352-051a.shtml>).

8. The University

The organisation of Oxford University is complex and it may be helpful to outline some of the main institutions and their functions. The University's academic departments are divided among four divisional boards. The Oxford Internet Institute is a department within the Social Sciences Division.

The University is also collegiate and all graduate students belong both to a department and a college. Departments deal with lectures, examinations, and administration of graduate work, while colleges deal with undergraduate tutorial teaching and with the provision of various 'domestic' facilities. All graduate students must be admitted first by the University and then by a college.

The University deals with educational standards and the committee with primary responsibility for academic quality assurance, including in relation to graduate studies, is the Educational Policy and Standards Committee (EPSC). It has issued Notes of Guidance on a range of topics relating to graduate studies which can be available from the University Website and which are printed in the *Examination Regulations*.

8.1 The OII as a department

8.1.1 Organisation

Details of the organisation of the department, contact information and photographs of OII personnel are available for both faculty and support staff at <https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/people/>.

Some key people related to the MSc Programme include:

- OII Director: Professor Phil Howard
- Head of Administration and Finance: Douglas Thornton
- Graduate Studies Manager: Victoria McDermott
- MSc Coordinator: Laura Gamble
- DPhil Coordinator: Laura Maynard
- Graduate Studies Assistant: John Francis
- IT Officers: Arthur Bullard and Patrick Wenham
- Director of Graduate Studies: Dr Greg Taylor
- MSc Programme Director: Professor Ralph Schroeder

8.1.2 Graduate Studies Committee

This is the main University administrative body so far as the management of graduate studies in your field is concerned.

The Committee is chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies (Dr Greg Taylor) who has broad overall responsibility for the graduate programme. Details of the committee are listed in Appendix B: Standing Committees.

The GSC normally meets twice a term in weeks 3 and 7.

8.1.3 Research Committee

The Research Committee is to discuss all relevant academic and research issues with a view to promoting and co-ordinating those activities within the Institute. This includes research funding opportunities, development and fundraising, publication and dissemination of research findings, events programme, teaching, academic resources including OII Library policy and research policy including ethical issues.

The Committee is chaired by the Director of Research (Dr Andrew Przybylski). Details of the committee are listed in Appendix B: Standing Committees.

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

8.2 The Colleges

The student's College is treated as their official address for all University correspondence. If a student is to be away from Oxford, it is important that the college and their supervisor are both informed. **Students should ensure that the OII's MSc Coordinator has full details of the student's college address, email address and telephone number.** All colleges provide dining and common room facilities where students can meet people from other disciplines. All have a Tutor for Graduates (or

some equivalent post) who can give general advice and guidance. In addition each graduate student is assigned to a College Adviser, who takes a general interest in the student's well-being and will normally be working in politics or a cognate discipline.

There is considerable variety among the colleges. Six (Green, Nuffield, St Anthony's, Linacre, Wolfson, and St Cross) take graduates only, while there are around thirty colleges that admit both graduates and undergraduates. All colleges admit men and women.

8.3 Social Science Graduate Office

At the Social Sciences Divisional Offices, the main office dealing with the organization of graduate studies is the Graduate Office (GO). Academic records of all students registered for higher degrees and diplomas of the University are maintained centrally on a student database. Each student's record is opened on receipt of the student contract. All information is updated as student's progress on their courses.

The Graduate Office within the Social Science Division also keeps individual correspondence files on current students, in which are retained copies of all applications (e.g. for transfer of status) and related correspondence, copies of supervisors' termly reports, and other relevant documentation. Please note however that candidates' initial application forms for admission to Oxford, and all supporting materials including transcripts, are held by their colleges, **not** by the Department or the Graduate Office. They can be contacted at graduate-studies-2@socsci.ox.ac.uk.

8.4 Library facilities

8.4.1 Oxford libraries

The library resources of Oxford are rich, but geographically scattered. The Search Oxford Libraries Online (SOLO) catalogue covers print and online holdings for almost all Oxford libraries, including the OII Library, and the Bodleian Libraries. Some important libraries for graduate work are mentioned here, but several others may be useful for specialised purposes; particulars of these will be found in the leaflet on Oxford libraries that is issued to all new students. Most Oxford libraries are part of Bodleian Libraries. Full and up-to-date information on all Oxford libraries including times of opening, borrowing rights etc can be found at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/libraries>.

8.4.2 The OII Library

This subject-specific library houses many volumes on the social aspects of information and communication technologies. The library also holds current subscriptions to several journals not found elsewhere in Oxford. Suggestions of titles for the library are welcome and should be sent to the teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk.

8.4.3 The Bodleian Social Science Library

This library in Manor Road has books for loan on Criminology; Economics; Politics and International Relations; International Development; Sociology; Social Policy and Social Work; and Socio-Legal Studies. It has an extensive run of periodicals not for loan. Around 8 million volumes of Bodleian Libraries material is housed offsite, and can be ordered to the Social Science Library. All library material, print and electronic, is listed on SOLO.

8.4.4 Bodleian Libraries

This is the main library service of the University. This is one of the UK's Legal Deposit libraries and in this role is entitled to request *inter alia* all works published or distributed in the UK. The Bodleian Libraries comprise 30 locations, including the Old Bodleian Library, Bodleian Social Science Library and Law Library. To obtain access to the Bodleian Libraries it is necessary to have a University Card. It is not possible to borrow books received under Legal Deposit. Photocopying of material in the Bodleian Libraries is permitted, subject to copyright laws; detailed arrangements for photocopying vary.

8.5 Computing facilities

8.5.1 University facilities

Students will receive an Oxford University email address as soon as they have registered. The University's IT services have extensive computing facilities available:

- courses in programming, word-processing, communications, and other topics;

- a shop at 13 Banbury Road selling hardware and software;
- an advice line at advisory@oucs.ox.ac.uk;
- repairs service for hardware.

In addition to its website at <https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/>, IT services produces various publications and leaflets giving full information about its services.

Computer services offer the following inductions for new graduate students in Michaelmas term:

- One 2 hour session for highlighting electronic resources for research.
- One shorter session during general departmental inductions for pointing out IT services.

8.5.2 OII facilities

The OII is currently located across three separate sites (1 St Giles, 41 St Giles and 34 St Giles). There are hot desks and seating areas allocated for MSc students in GF1 at 1 St Giles (located just behind reception). MSc students are also welcome to use the garden room and café at 41 St Giles as study spaces.

Master's students will have card access to 1 St Giles and 41 St Giles in office hours, 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. For meetings at 34 St Giles, students will need to liaise with faculty to get access.

The following are also available to students if required:

- specialist software (e.g. statistics packages) if already licensed to the OII or the University and agreed with the IT Manager;
- space for a personal blog;
- use of a wiki;
- calendaring via Outlook exchange;
- external access to the OII server;
- loan of laptop or other ICT equipment (e.g. audio equipment for recording interviews) for work on OII research projects for a maximum of two weeks unless exceptional circumstances deem a longer period as agreed with the IT Manager.

The OII has its own IT support and web development team. They can be contacted at help@oii.ox.ac.uk and webhelp@oii.ox.ac.uk.

8.5.3 Canvas

The most up to date reading lists and course deadlines are held on the University of Oxford VLE called Canvas which can be accessed at <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/>. Students can use their Single Sign-On to login. If you have any technical issues or queries on content such as reading lists please contact the MSc Coordinator at teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk.

Canvas also provides the ability to submit formative coursework and receive feedback, threaded discussion forums and other features.

8.5.4 College facilities

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

8.6 Training facilities (The Oxford Learning Institute)

The Learning Institute exists to support excellence in learning, teaching and research at the University of Oxford by promoting professional, vocational and management development and contributing to policy development. The Institute is also host to Oxford's [Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning](#) which offers:

- Discipline-specific teaching programmes for PRS who want to gain teaching experience and improve their teaching skills.
- Skills development courses for PRS.
- Aspire, the University's online Professional Development Planning system, which can be used to record and build your portfolio of academic skills.

Further details can be found at <http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/>.

The Learning Institute also has a research supervision website at <http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/supervision/> which is intended as a convenient resource for supervisors and other audiences. The pages include explanations of Oxford's policies and practice with links to University policy documents, downloadable tools and ideas for supervisors and students, links to further national

and international websites, examples of good practice, listings and links to some of the research literature on doctoral study, including links to journal articles which the University has on subscription.

8.7 The Language Centre

The Language Centre provides a wide range of services at 12 Woodstock Road which are available free of charge to students.

- Courses in English as a foreign language.
- Specialist courses in Academic Writing.
- Library, with adjacent audio and video study laboratory, containing self-instruction material in more than eighty languages.
- Regular courses in French, German, Modern Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Welsh.

Details of language courses for the current year (which start on the Monday of first week of Michaelmas Term), and of the Centre's opening hours, library facilities, registration procedures etc., are available at the Language Centre and at <http://www.lang.ox.ac.uk>.

Applications to register must be done by handing in a registration form on Monday – Wednesday of Week 1 of Michaelmas Term. **If students think they need any such courses, they should not hesitate to apply for them.**

8.8 Careers guidance

The Careers Service of the University, <http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/>, with offices at 56 Banbury Road, can help students evaluate their prospects of finding appropriate employment. They also provide course in CV writing.

8.9 Skills Toolkit

The Skills Toolkit (<http://www.skillstoolkit.ox.ac.uk/>) brings together information about workshops, seminars, conferences and on-line resources which will give students the opportunity to extend their research skills and further develop transferable skills. These have been designed with the intention of helping students achieve their research goals as well as enhancing their employability.

8.10 Other useful contacts

Oxford Students - <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students>

International Students - <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa>

Student Health and Welfare - <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare>

Contains a large array of information and advice, including information about the Counselling Service.

9. Financial matters

9.1 Grants, prizes and other funds

Financial help towards research expenses, when not available through the ESRC or other bodies financing your work, may be obtainable through various University funds. Details of University scholarships, prizes and trust funds are published each term in a supplement to the *University Gazette*. The main list is published annually around the start of Michaelmas Term.

There is also information on these matters in the University's *Graduate Studies Prospectus*. This can be found on the university website at: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/feesandfunding/>. There may also be various college funds and awards available and students should speak with the college adviser about such opportunities.

9.2 Financial Assistance

The OII has a policy of seeking to support MSc students with help towards expenses connected with their study. Such expenses might include travel essential to conduct thesis research, participant compensation, conference attendance and so on.

There are 2 particular areas of support available to MSc students for the duration of your degree. In both cases, students are expected to seek support from other sources as well as approaching the OII.

1. Expenses connected with thesis – the funding available is up to a maximum of £150 per student.
2. Conference attendance (Trinity Term) - the funding available is up to a maximum of £100 per student.

Students wishing to apply for either grant should contact the OII's Finance Officer, Duncan Passey (finance@oii.ox.ac.uk) to request an application form. Completed application forms should then be submitted to Duncan along with a brief email of support from the students supervisor.

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

9.3 Paid work

For full-time student's their first commitment must be their Oxford degree work, which is demanding and intensive. If they need, or wish, to undertake paid employment of any kind (whether inside or outside the University), they must first obtain the approval of their college, their OII supervisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. Full-time MSc students should note that the demands of the degree leave very little time during the week for any paid employment.

MSc students are not considered to be on vacation during any period when you are expected to study or be working on your dissertation / thesis, even if this is outside term time. This includes Trinity term up until the thesis submission deadline of 1st August.

Overseas students should also check with the Student Information and Advisory Service if they are eligible to work at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/during/work>.

Your college is also likely to have a number of small jobs available, some of which – such as library jobs and occasional portering duties – can comfortably be combined with study. Such employment would still need to be approved as detailed above.

Please see the University guidance on Paid Work for Oxford graduate students at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/policyonpaidwork/>.

For any queries about working during your studies, please speak to the MSc Coordinator, or the OII Personnel Officer, Ornella Sciuto.

9.4 Travel Insurance

The University offers free travel insurance to all students travelling for University business (e.g. for research purposes and fieldwork). The Travel Insurance Application and Travel Registration (TIRS) is a new online portal for submitting and processing travel insurance applications and registering travel details. Application details are held centrally, for use when processing claims. You are able to register their travel details even if you do not require University insurance. The University will use the information in the system to locate and contact travellers who are in areas impacted by an incident.

The online form is easy to use and includes instructions to guide you through as you enter your details. The form is available here: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/finance/insurance/travel/>. You will need your Single Sign-on to login to the system, and after submitting their travel insurance application form online, you will receive notifications as the application moves through the approval process.

9.5 University awards

The University has a number of prizes and awards available for academic achievement. For more information please see <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding/prizes-and-awards>.

Appendix A: Graduate Joint Consultative Committee

1. The terms of reference of the Graduate Joint Consultative Committee of the Oxford Internet Institute are:
 - 1.1 To act as a two-way channel of communication between the department and its students on all aspects of their educational experience in the department.
 - 1.2 To refer matters raised through the representation system to the relevant department committee.
 - 1.3 To receive and comment on any changes planned by the department with respect to admissions, induction, teaching, and assessment as referred to them by any department committee.
 - 1.4 To comment on physical resources within or related to the department, for example but not limited to, computer facilities, laboratory provision, library provision, and online resources.
 - 1.5 To comment upon safety within the department.
 - 1.6 To receive and consider analyses of and department responses to: the outcomes of course evaluation mechanisms; national statistics such as the Student Barometer; student performance through summary statistics; and annual reports of the Chairs of boards of examiners and external examiners reports.
 - 1.7 To receive and consider reports from department reviews, course reviews and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies as is allowed by the terms of the relevant committees/bodies.
 - 1.8 To review on an annual basis the effectiveness of the student representation system in the department including identifying any changes to the system.
 - 1.9 To discuss follow-up action resulting from previous GJCC meetings, in particular any matter which was referred to other department committees
 - 1.10 To report to the OII's Graduate Studies Committee by submission of notes/summary of each meeting of the GJCC.
2. The membership of the Graduate Joint Consultative Committee shall be as follows:
 - (a) Director of Graduate Studies
 - (b) MSc Programme Director (SSI)
 - (c) MSc Programme Director (SDS)
 - (d) DPhil Programme Director
 - (e) Head of Administration and Finance
 - (f) Graduate Studies Manager
 - (g) MSc Coordinator
 - (h) DPhil Coordinator
 - (i) Graduate Studies Assistant
 - (j) three representatives of postgraduate research (DPhil) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
 - (k) two representatives of full-time postgraduate taught (MSc Social Science of the Internet) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
 - (l) two representatives of part-time postgraduate taught (MSc Social Science of the Internet) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
 - (m) two representatives of full-time postgraduate taught (MSc Social Data Science) students of the Institute in accordance with paragraph 3 below
 - (n) such other co-opted members as the committee shall determine
3. Students of the Institute shall elect representatives of their number to serve on the committee prior to the first committee meeting of each year.
4. The committee shall be chaired by one of the student members, to be elected by the committee at the first meeting of the year. If the student chair becomes unavailable (for instance, if they have completed or left the programme and a new chair has not yet been elected), the DGS will serve as interim chair only until such a time as a new chair can be elected.
5. The secretary to the committee will be the OII Graduate Studies Assistant. The secretary will take the notes from the meetings, and liaise with the chair to create the minutes of the meeting.
6. The committee will normally meet at least three times a year, with meetings usually held once each term. The committee shall have leave to allow the chair to take action as appropriate between meetings.

Appendix B: Standing Committees

Graduate Studies Committee

Function:

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

Terms of reference:

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

- a) to implement all aspects of teaching policy for the OII as agreed by the Steering Committee
- b) to decide on
 - i. applications for admission as a Probationer Research Student and transfer to the OII DPhil programme, and applications for admission to the OII's MSc programme
 - ii. suspension or removal of OII students from the register of graduate students,
 - iii. applications for transfer and confirmation of status,
 - iv. the examiners' recommendation regarding the award of the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Science, and
 - v. the award of scholarships
- c) to approve:
 - i. nominations of assessors for transfer and confirmation of status of research students
 - ii. nominations for the board of examiners for the OII's MSc programme
- d) to review and make recommendations for changes and updates to the following in the light of university guidance and feedback from teachers, examiners and students :
 - i. induction materials,
 - ii. OII graduate studies handbook,
 - iii. student feedback questionnaires,
 - iv. MSc courses and DPhil programmes,
 - v. teaching methods and examination and marking schemes
- e) to receive:
 - i. supervisors' termly and annual progress reports on all research and MSc students at the OII,
 - ii. reports of examiners and external examiners,
 - iii. results of student feedback questionnaires,
 - iv. statistics of success rates and details of complaints and academic appeals lodged and ensure that appropriate action is taken in the light of them.
- f) to consider and approve applications for Visiting Student status.

Membership

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

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

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

Postgraduate students of the Department shall elect four of their number to serve on the committee. The student representatives shall not be entitled to take part in any reserved business except by leave of the chair.

Meetings

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

Research Committee

Terms of reference

The terms of reference of the Research Committee are:

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

Membership

The membership of the Research Committee shall be as follows:

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

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

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

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

Meetings

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

Appendix C: Marking Scales

OII Marking Scale		
70-100	Distinction	A very good answer that has a well-structured argument, is well written, shows strong familiarity with relevant literature or theory, and includes necessary command of empirical material. Theses should also display strong analytical power and originality either in a fresh approach to texts and literature or in generating new evidence.
65-69	Merit	Work of high standard that covers the major points and shows familiarity with relevant literature or theory. It will include some elements of distinction quality, but is either not sufficiently original, or less well-written, or has a less well-structured argument, or includes inaccuracies. The marks of 68 and 69 should indicate an examiner's preparedness to move up to a distinction if a co-assessor or panel of examiners so recommend.
50-64	Pass	Work of solid scholarly standard that shows some analytical capacity and a reasonable coverage of relevant empirical material. It may include a well-structured argument, but be marred by omissions and/or some inaccuracies.
49 and below	Fail	An examination answer or thesis that fails to display the criteria necessary for a pass. It may have some or all of the following weaknesses: the standard of writing is too poor; it is without sufficiently clear structure and argument; it does not cover the literature and empirical material adequately; it does not focus on the topic; it contains serious omissions and inaccuracies. The marks of 48 and 49 should indicate an examiner's preparedness to move up to a pass if a co-assessor or panel of examiners so recommend.

Appendix D: Guidelines for MSc Thesis Supervision

Guidelines for MSc Thesis Supervision

MSc Social Science of the Internet

Background

This document outlines the typical level of supervision support provided to a student on *MSc Social Science of the Internet*. Its purpose is two-fold. Firstly, it provides supervisors with guidance on the type and level of support that they should normally expect to provide to a student. Secondly, it identifies a benchmark level of “typical supervision” for the purposes of ensuring fair treatment during examination. Significant departures from the typical level of supervision described below should be noted in the supervisor’s declaration, to be provided to examiners along with the completed thesis.

Characterisation of typical supervision

The principle role of a supervisor is to meet regularly with a student and to provide guidance on all aspects of the design, implementation, and presentation of the MSc thesis. At least one meeting is typically held in each of the three terms, and students will normally meet with their supervisor between eight and twelve times during the course of the degree. As well as in-person meetings, supervisors typically provide timely written feedback on a completed draft of the student’s thesis, and offer ad hoc advice outside of scheduled meetings (e.g., by email) as and when needed.

The role of a supervisor is an advisory one that is typically limited to providing guidance and feedback on a project that is the sole work of the student. As such, supervision typically stops short of making a substantive contribution to any part of that work.

The table below provides some examples of typical supervision arrangements and of the types of atypical supervisor involvement that merit declaration.

Examples of typical and atypical supervision

Dimension	Example of typical supervision	Example of atypical supervision (requiring declaration)
Frequency of meetings	8–12 meetings distributed across all three terms.	Significantly more than 12 or fewer than 8 meetings. One or more terms during which no meeting took place.
Framing of research topic/question	Providing feedback on student’s suggested topic. Suggesting alternative angles on a topic identified by the student. Critiquing the proposed	Proposing the research topic. Playing a significant role in the formulation of a research question.

	topic/research question (including suggestion of modifications or refinements to a question proposed by the student).	
Literature review	Providing feedback and advice on the student's literature synthesis. Suggesting a small number of key readings either as a starting point or to complement the student's own bibliography.	Playing a significant and substantive role in the development of the literature synthesis. Suggesting a significant share of the readings that ultimately form the student's bibliography.
Data collection	Suggesting possible data sources for the student to consider. Providing high-level advice on appropriate data collection or sampling techniques. Providing more specific advice on students' data collection activities (e.g., critiquing a student's survey questions, interview protocol, or software programme).	Providing the student with a <i>proprietary</i> ready-collected data set. Providing <i>proprietary</i> , ready-built tools (such as software or survey instruments) that play a significant role in data collection or processing.
Analysis	Providing high-level advice on the analytical strategy. Offering a critique of completed analysis (whether empirical or theoretical) and suggesting follow-up analyses that might be considered.	Significant hands-on involvement in the process of analysis (whether empirical or theoretical). Providing <i>proprietary</i> , ready-made tools (such as software code or qualitative coding schemes) that are responsible for a significant portion of the analysis.
Writing	Providing overall advice on structure, academic style, and presentation. Offering comments on a draft of the thesis to include, for example, high-level critique of the quality of argument and precise suggestions on wording in isolated cases.	More frequent or extensive suggestions on the specific wording of passages in the thesis. Extensive intervention in the structure or presentation of the thesis. Comments on more than two drafts. Also, cases where no comments were provided on a complete draft.

Supervisor declaration form

This form is to be completed with reference to the *Guidelines for MSc Thesis Supervision*.

Thesis title: _____

I declare that the above thesis was written under typical supervision as described in the Guidance for Supervisors.

I declare that the supervision provided for the above thesis was atypical in the manner outlined below.

Please describe the ways in which the supervision support for the above thesis departed from typical supervision as outlined in the Guidance for Supervisors.

Name of student: _____

Thesis title: _____

Name of supervisor: _____

Signed (supervisor):

Date:

For administration purposes: please take a copy of this form and then detach this bottom section in order to protect student anonymity.

Appendix E: Assessment Timetable

The following is the overall assessment timetable for 2018-2019. This is provided as guidance only: in case of changes, the course reading list on Canvas and any updates provided by the course tutors should be followed. Part-time students should refer to the part-time programme schedule in section 2.3.1 for details on which assessments are taken in Year 1 and Year 2 of the course.

Course	Term	Type of Assessment	Essay Submission Deadline / Date of Exam	Marks Available
Internet Technology and Regulation	Michaelmas	Formative	Friday of Week 6	End of February
Internet Technology and Regulation	Michaelmas	Written Exam	0 th week of Hilary Term (early January)	End of February
Social Dynamics of the Internet	Michaelmas	Formative	Friday of Week 5	By Week 8
Social Dynamics of the Internet	Michaelmas	Written Exam	0 th week of Hilary Term (early January)	End of February
Digital Social Research: Statistics Core	Michaelmas	Formative	Every Thursday weeks 1-8	Ongoing feedback
Digital Social Research: Statistics Core	Michaelmas	Written Exam	9 th week, Michaelmas Term (December)	End of February
Digital Social Research: Methods Core	Michaelmas	Formative	Friday Week 5 by noon	End of Week 6
Digital Social Research: Methods Core	Michaelmas	Summative	Friday Week 8 by noon	End of February
Accessing Research Data from the Social Web	Hilary	Formative	Nothing official, only suggested assignments each week with answers provided in class	N/A
Accessing Research Data from the Social Web	Hilary	Summative	Friday of Week 5 of Hilary Term by 12:00 noon	End of May
Experimental Approaches	Hilary	Formative	End of Week 2	End of Week 3
Experimental Approaches	Hilary	Summative	5 th week, Hilary Term	End of May
Wrangling Data	Hilary	Formative	Assignments provided in class	N/A
Wrangling Data	Hilary	Summative	5 th week, Hilary Term	End of May
Digital Ethnography	Hilary	Formative	Friday of Week 1 and on Friday of week 3 by 12:00pm	By end of week 4
Digital Ethnography	Hilary	Summative	5 th week, Hilary Term	End of May
Digital Interviewing	Hilary	Formative	Students will be required to do something practical before the session every week	N/A
Digital Interviewing	Hilary	Summative	5 th week, Hilary Term	End of May
Advanced statistics for Internet research, part 1	Hilary	Formative	Every Tuesday weeks 1, 2 and 4	By end of week 4
Advanced statistics for Internet research, part 1	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of Week 3	End of May
Advanced statistics for Internet research, part 1	Hilary	Written Exam	Week 5 (middle of February)	End of May
Advanced statistics for Internet research, part 2	Hilary	Formative	Every Tuesday weeks 6, 7 and 9	By End of Week 9
Advanced statistics for Internet research, part 2	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of Week 8	End of May

Advanced statistics for Internet research, part 2	Hilary	Written Exam	Week 10 (end of March)	End of May
Simulating Society	Hilary	Formative	Nothing official, only suggested assignments each week	N/A
Simulating Society	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of 11 th week, Hilary Term (Date has changed due to Easter holidays)	End of May
Qualitative Data Analysis	Hilary	Formative	Friday of Week 6 and Friday of Week 7 by 12:00	End of Week 8
Qualitative Data Analysis	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of 11 th week, Hilary Term (Date has changed due to Easter holidays)	End of May
Information Visualisation	Hilary	Formative	3 assignments due Monday of 7, 8 and 9	By the end of Week 10 in Hilary Term
Information Visualisation	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of 11 th week, Hilary Term (Date has changed due to Easter holidays)	End of May
Big Data Analytics	Hilary	Formative	Thursdays of weeks 7, 8 and 9	
Big Data Analytics	Hilary	Summative	Tuesday of 11 th week, Hilary Term (Date has changed due to Easter holidays)	End of May
Internet Economics	Hilary	Formative	Middle of Week 7	End of May
Internet Economics	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 st week, Trinity Term	End of May
Online Social Networks	Hilary	Formative		
Online Social Networks	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 st week, Trinity Term	End of May
Data Science of Government and Politics	Hilary	Formative	Collected in class in week 8	By week 9
Data Science of Government and Politics	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 st week, Trinity Term	End of May
Economic Development in the Digital Age	Hilary	Formative	Friday of Week 5	By Week 8
Economic Development in the Digital Age	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 st week, Trinity Term	End of May
Learning, the Internet and Society	Hilary	Formative	Friday week 5	By Week 8
Learning, the Internet and Society	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 st week, Trinity Term	End of May
Digital Technology and Economic Organization	Hilary	Formative	Weekly one page essay due the night before the next class	By the end each week
Digital Technology and Economic Organization	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 st week, Trinity Term	End of May
Law and the Internet	Hilary	Formative	Friday of Week 5	By Week 8
Law and the Internet	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 st week, Trinity Term	End of May
Subversive Technologies	Hilary	Formative	Friday of week 6	End of Week 8
Subversive Technologies	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 st week, Trinity Term	End of May

Computers in Society	Hilary	Formative	TBC	
Computers in Society	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 st week, Trinity Term	End of May
Digital Humanities	Hilary	Formative	TBC	
Digital Humanities	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 st week, Trinity Term	End of May
The Philosophy and Ethics of Information	Hilary	Formative	Friday of week 6	By Week 8
The Philosophy and Ethics of Information	Hilary	Summative	12:00pm on Monday, 1 st week, Trinity Term	End of May

Please note that the Examination Schools control the scheduling of exams and these are usually only confirmed 5-6 weeks before the date.

Appendix F: The GSR Graduate Supervision Reporting

At the end of each term, the student's supervisor(s) will submit a report on their academic progress. To facilitate this reporting, the University operates an online Graduate Supervision Reporting (GSR). Within this system, students have the opportunity to contribute to their termly supervision reports by reviewing and commenting on their own progress.

Students are **strongly recommended** to complete a self-assessment, taking the opportunity to review and comment on their academic progress, measure their progress against the requirements and agreed timetable for their programme of study, identify any skills training they have undertaken or may need to the future, and list their engagement with the academic community (e.g. seminar/conference attendance or any teaching they have undertaken).

The student's supervisor(s) will review and comment on their academic progress and performance during the current term and assess skills and training needs to be addressed during the next term. The supervisor should discuss the report with the student, as it will form the basis for feedback on their progress, for identifying areas where further work is required, for reviewing progress against an agreed timetable, and for agreeing plans for the term ahead.

When reporting on academic progress, students on taught courses should review progress during the current term, and measure this progress against the timetable and requirements for their programme of study. Students on doctoral programmes should reflect on the progress made with their research project during the current term, including written work (e.g. drafts of chapters) and they should assess this against the plan of research that has been agreed with their supervisor(s).

All students should briefly describe which subject-specific research skills and more general personal/professional skills they have acquired or developed during the current term. Students should include attendance at relevant classes that form part of their programme of study and also include courses, seminars or workshops offered or arranged by the OII or the University. Students should also reflect on the skills required to undertake the work they intend to carry out. Students should mention any skills they do not already have or may wish to strengthen through undertaking training.

The MSc Programme Director and the Director of Graduate Studies have access to these reports, and will review them, watching in particular for any issues flagged as a concern. If the student has any complaints about the supervision they are receiving, they should raise this directly with the Director of Graduate Studies at the OII. Students should not use the supervision reporting system as a mechanism for complaints.

Students are asked to report in weeks 7, 8 and 9 of term. Once the student has completed their sections of the online form, it will be released to their supervisor(s) for completion and will also be visible to the Director of Graduate Studies and to their College Advisor. When the supervisor's sections are completed, students will be able to view the report, as will the relevant Director of Graduate Studies and their College Advisor. Directors of Graduate Studies are responsible for ensuring that appropriate supervision takes place, and this is one of the mechanisms they use to obtain information about supervision. College Advisors are a source of support and advice to students, and it is therefore important that they are informed of the students' progress, including concerns (expressed by the student and/or their supervisor).

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.

Appendix G: Term Schedules

The following tentative term schedules are provided for your guidance. Any changes in time or location will be available on Plato and updated course reading lists, which should be understood as the definitive sources of this information.

Term Schedule - MSc Social Science of the Internet - Michaelmas Term (All Years)

Time	Monday			Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday	Friday
9:00 AM	Compulsory Social Dynamics of the Internet <i>Lecture</i>			DPhil Students Only Social Dynamics of the Internet <i>Seminar</i> Weeks 1, 3, 5 & 7		Group B Social Dynamics <i>Workshop</i> Weeks 2, 4, 6 & 8		Compulsory Digital Social Research: Statistics Core <i>Lecture</i>	
9:30 AM									
10:00 AM									
10:30 AM				Group B Social Dynamics Seminar		Group C Social Dynamics <i>Workshop</i> Weeks 2, 4, 6 & 8		DPhil Seminar	
11:00 AM	Recommended Python <i>Workshop</i> Weeks 1, 3, 5 & 7	Optional Guidance Sessions (See separate schedule) Weeks 2, 4, 6 & 8	DPhil Students Only Social Dynamics of the Internet <i>Seminar</i> Weeks 2, 4, 6 & 8						
11:30 AM									
12:00 PM									
12:30 PM								PT Students ONLY Digital Social Research: Statistics Core <i>Surgery</i>	
1:00 PM	Compulsory Digital Social Research: Methods Core <i>Lecture</i>			Group C Social Dynamics <i>Seminar</i>	Group B DSR Methods <i>Workshop</i> Weeks 1, 3, 5 & 7				Drop In Digital Social Research: Statistics Core <i>Surgery</i>
1:30 PM				Group D Social Dynamics <i>Seminar</i>	Group C DSR Methods <i>Workshop</i> Weeks 1, 3, 5 & 7				
2:00 PM				Group E Social Dynamics <i>Seminar</i>	Group D DSR Methods <i>Workshop</i> Weeks 1, 3, 5 & 7				
2:30 PM								Compulsory Internet Technologies and Regulation <i>Lecture</i>	Drop In Digital Social Research: Statistics Core <i>Surgery</i>
3:00 PM	Group A PT Students Social Dynamics <i>Seminar</i>								
3:30 PM									
4:00 PM	Group A PT Students DSR Methods <i>Workshop</i> Weeks 1, 3, 5 & 7	Group A PT Students Social Dynamics <i>Workshop</i> Weeks 2, 4, 6 & 8							
4:30 PM									

Colour	Location
Yellow	Lecture Theatre, St Cross
Blue	Seminar Room, 1 St Giles
Orange	Board Room, 41 St Giles
Green	Meeting Room, 1 St Giles

Term Schedule - MSc Social Science of the Internet - Hilary Term 2018-19

Weeks 1-4

Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri				
9:00									
9:15	Data Science of Government and Politics			Online Social Networks	Subversive Technologies				
9:30									
9:45									
10:00									
10:15									
10:30									
10:45									
11:00									
11:15									
11:30	Digital Interviewing	Accessing Research Data from the Social Web	Digital Ethnography	Advanced Statistics Part I	Experimental Approaches				
11:45									
12:00									
12:15									
12:30									
12:45									
13:00									
13:15									
13:30									
13:45									
14:00		Economic Development in the Digital Age	Learning, Internet & Society	Digital Humanities	Wrangling Data				
14:15							Internet Economics	Philosophy and Ethics of Information	
14:30									
14:45									
15:00	Technologies and Economic Organization								
15:15		Law and the Internet							
15:30									
15:45									
16:00									
16:15									
16:30									
16:45									

Colour	Location
Yellow	Lecture Theatre, St Cross
Blue	Seminar Room, 1 St Giles
Orange	Board Room, 41 St Giles
Red	Meeting Room, 1 St Giles
Green	Department of Education

Term Schedule - MSc Social Science of the Internet - Hilary Term 2018-19

Weeks 5-9

Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri				
9:00									
9:15	Data Science of Government and Politics								
9:30									
9:45									
10:00			Qualitative Data Analysis		Online Social Networks	Subversive Technologies			
10:15									
10:30									
10:45									
11:00									
11:15									
11:30		Big Data Analytics		Advanced Statistics Part II	Simulating Society				
11:45			Qualitative Data Analysis Surgery						
12:00									
12:15									
12:30									
12:45									
13:00									
13:15									
13:30									
13:45									
14:00		Economic Development in the Digital Age		Internet Economics	Philosophy and Ethics of Information				
14:15			Learning, Internet & Society						
14:30						Digital Humanities			
14:45									
15:00	Technologies and Economic Organization								
15:15		Law and the Internet							
15:30									
15:45									
16:00									
16:15									
16:30									
16:45									

Colour	Location
Yellow	Lecture Theatre, St Cross
Blue	Seminar Room, 1 St Giles
Orange	Board Room, 41 St Giles
Red	Meeting Room, 1 St Giles
Green	Department of Education

Term Schedule - MSc Social Science of the Internet - Trinity Term (All Years)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00 AM	MSc Seminar (Weeks 2-8)*				
10:00 AM					
11:00 AM					
12:00 PM					
1:00 PM					
2:00 PM					
3:00 PM					
4:00 PM					

* Note: The following exceptions:

Week 1 - 9:00-17:00 - Thursday 2nd May

Week 2 - 09:00-17:00 - Tuesday 7th May (Monday is a bank holiday)

Week 5 - 09:00-17:00 - Tuesday 28th May (Monday is a bank holiday)

Colour	Location
Yellow	Lecture Theatre, St Cross

Appendix H: Examining Conventions

MSc in Social Science of the Internet, Examining Conventions, Academic Year 2018-19

1. Introduction

Examination conventions 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.

The supervisory body responsible for approving the examination conventions is the Social Sciences Board's Teaching Audit Committee.

All students should refer to the Essential Information for Students at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/proctors/info/pam/index.shtml> for further information on examination matters and plagiarism.

2. Rubrics for individual papers

This is a one-year (full-time) or two-year (part-time) taught course which is comprised of the following eleven parts. Full-time students will take all eleven parts in a single year. Part-time students will normally take parts 1, 3, 4, 7, and 9 in their first year, and parts 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, and 11 in their second year; permission for exceptions to this schedule should be requested in writing to the Course Director.

Part 1: Digital Social Research Methods: Methods Core

Examined through assessed written work consisting of one 2,500 word essay (excluding the bibliography, but including footnotes and tables, following the same guidelines as provided for thesis word counts in the MSc Handbook) plus additional supporting documents (not counted against the word limit) as specified in the assessment details which will be distributed in class and posted to WebLearn by the end of 4th week of Michaelmas Term. The essay is due to be submitted electronically via the Assignment Submission WebLearn Site by 12.00 noon on Friday of 8th week of Michaelmas Term. In addition to submitting via the Assignment Submission WebLearn Site, students also need to submit an identical electronic copy of the essay by 5:00pm on Friday of 8th week of Michaelmas Term to teaching@oii.ox.ac.uk.

Part 2: Digital Social Research Methods: Statistics Core

Examined through one three-hour unseen written examination to be held in 9th week of Michaelmas Term. The examination will consist of a series of questions, all of which must be answered. The questions are weighted according to their relative difficulty, and the details of the weights assigned to each question are provided in the examination paper. Failure to answer any individual question will result in the loss of points for that question only.

Parts 3-6: Methods Options

The methods options component of the degree (four 4-week modules chosen from a list available in the MSc Graduate Studies Handbook and on the OII website) will be examined through a combination of assessed written work and/or by unseen written examinations, depending on the course. Assessment details for each module are provided in the reading lists available on the OII website and in the Canvas learning environment not later than the end of week one of Michaelmas Term. In the case of written work, summative assessments are due to be handed in to the Examination Schools by 12.00 noon on Friday of the week following the final teaching session for the module. Unseen written examinations will be held during the week following the final teaching session for the module, as scheduled by the Examination Schools.

Parts 7-8: Compulsory Papers (i) Social Dynamics of the Internet and (ii) Internet Technologies and Regulation

The two compulsory papers will each be examined by a 3-hour unseen written exam to be held in 0th week of Hilary term. Students must choose 3 questions from a list of 8 in each examination. The total marks for the examination are determined by averaging the marks of each of the 3 questions answered using standard rounding settings in Excel.

Parts 9-10: Two Option Papers

The options component of the degree (two 8-week options chosen from a list available in the MSc Graduate Studies Handbook and on the OII website from the start of the academic year) will be assessed by coursework, normally by one or two long essays and adding up to a total of 5,000 words (excluding the bibliography, but including footnotes and tables, following the same guidelines as provided for thesis word counts in the MSc Handbook). Specific details for each option paper are provided in the reading lists available on the OII website and in the Canvas learning environment. Students must submit their essays for the option papers to the Examinations Schools by noon on Monday of 1st Week in Trinity term.

Part 11: Thesis

A thesis not to exceed 15,000 words (excluding the bibliography, but including footnotes and tables, see the Handbook for detailed guidance) must be submitted electronically via the Assignment Submission WebLearn Site by noon of the weekday on or nearest to the 1st of August of the year in which the degree is to be taken. The topic of the thesis will be chosen by the student, subject to approval by the student's supervisor, the director of the course and the Board of Examiners. The deadline for submitting the title and topic is by 12:00pm on Friday of Week 8 in Hilary Term for full-time students, or by 12:00pm on Monday of Week 1 in Michaelmas Term for second year part-time students. Any changes to the title or topic after this date require approval by the Chair of Examiners. All requests for changes must be submitted at least 3 weeks prior to the final submission deadline for the thesis, and requests after this will not normally be approved. Students who have been given approval by the Proctors for a different submission date have until 3 weeks prior to their approved submission date to request changes to their title and topic.

All students will be required to sign a statement asserting that any coursework submitted for summative assessment is their own.

3. Marking conventions

Marking conventions are in accordance with the guidelines published in the Graduate Studies Handbook for the MSc, which can be found on Canvas.

3.1 University scale for standardised expression of agreed final marks

For students starting PGT courses from Michaelmas term 2018, agreed final marks for individual papers will be expressed using the following scale:

70 - 100	Distinction
65 – 69	Merit
50 - 64	Pass
0 - 49	Fail

For students who started their PGT courses before Michaelmas term 2018 only, agreed final marks for individual papers should be expressed according to one of the following scales:

70 – 100	Distinction
50 – 69	Pass
0 - 49	Fail

3.2 Qualitative criteria for different types of assessment

For students starting PGT courses from Michaelmas term 2018, the marking scales below are used for all elements of the Masters Programme and are laid down by the Oxford Internet Institute. All marks from 0 to 100 can be given, with lower thresholds of 50 for a pass, 65 for a merit, and 70 for a distinction – see ‘Marking Scale’ table below. This scale applies to the examination of scripts, theses and other formally assessed material.

Marking Scale (students starting from Michaelmas term 2018)		
70-100	Distinction	A very good answer that has a well-structured argument, is well written, shows strong familiarity with relevant literature or theory, and includes necessary command of empirical material. Theses should also display strong analytical power and originality either in a fresh approach to texts and literature or in generating new evidence.
65-69	Merit	Work of high standard that covers the major points and shows familiarity with relevant literature or theory. It will include some elements of distinction quality, but is either not sufficiently original, or less well-written, or has a less well-structured argument, or includes inaccuracies. The marks of 68 and 69 should indicate an examiner’s preparedness to move up to a distinction if a co-assessor or panel of examiners so recommend.
50-64	Pass	Work of solid scholarly standard that shows some analytical capacity and a reasonable coverage of relevant empirical material. It may include a well-structured argument, but be marred by omissions and/or some inaccuracies.
49 and below	Fail	An examination answer or thesis that fails to display the criteria necessary for a pass. It may have some or all of the following weaknesses: the standard of writing is too poor; it is without sufficiently clear structure and argument; it does not cover the literature and empirical material adequately; it does not focus on the topic; it contains serious omissions and inaccuracies. The marks of 48 and 49 should indicate an examiner’s preparedness to move up to a pass if a co-assessor or panel of examiners so recommend.

For students starting PGT courses before Michaelmas term 2018 only, the marking scales below are used for all elements of the Masters Programme and are laid down by the Oxford Internet Institute. All marks from 0 to 100 can be given, with lower thresholds of 50 for a pass and 70 for a distinction – see ‘Marking Scale’ table below. This scale applies to the examination of scripts, theses and other formally assessed material.

Marking Scale (students starting before Michaelmas term 2018)		
70-100	Distinction	A very good answer that has a well-structured argument, is well written, shows strong familiarity with relevant literature or theory, and includes necessary command of empirical material. Theses should also display strong analytical power and originality either in a fresh approach to texts and literature or in generating new evidence.
65-69	Pass	Work of high standard that covers the major points and shows familiarity with relevant literature or theory. It will include some elements of distinction quality, but is either not sufficiently original, or less well-written, or has a less well-structured argument, or includes inaccuracies. The marks of 68 and 69 should indicate an examiner’s preparedness to move up to a distinction if a co-assessor or panel of examiners so recommend.

50-64	Pass	Work of solid scholarly standard that shows some analytical capacity and a reasonable coverage of relevant empirical material. It may include a well-structured argument, but be marred by omissions and/or some inaccuracies.
49 and below	Fail	An examination answer or thesis that fails to display the criteria necessary for a pass. It may have some or all of the following weaknesses: the standard of writing is too poor; it is without sufficiently clear structure and argument; it does not cover the literature and empirical material adequately; it does not focus on the topic; it contains serious omissions and inaccuracies. The marks of 48 and 49 should indicate an examiner's preparedness to move up to a pass if a co-assessor or panel of examiners so recommend.

3.3 Verification and reconciliation of marks

Each MSc examination script, summative essay, and thesis (henceforth submission) will be marked independently by two examiners or assessors; normally one marker will be a course convener.

After independently marking each submission, the two markers will meet to reconcile their marks. Marks where the discrepancy is less than six points should be reconciled between the two assessors via discussion, and not simply a mechanical averaging of the two marks. When assessor's marks for a script or thesis differ by 6 points or more, the submission will be re-marked by the original assessors. If after reconsidering the submission and conferring the original assessors are unable to reach consensus on the appropriate mark, the script will be sent to a third marker who usually will be an external examiner. In the case of a fail mark or a dispute in the mark, the external examiner will be sent the work to mark. All marks will be reported to the Chair of Examiners.

For papers made up of a number of elements, the overall marks awarded are determined by the method indicated in section 2 above. In those cases where each element is equally weighted, the markers will agree each individual element first, and those agreed marks will be averaged for an overall mark. Averaging to the nearest whole number is done with Excel, using standard rounding rules.

Where marks by the first two assessors straddle a class border and resolution of the disagreement could affect the candidate's overall degree classification, the script will be read by a third marker who usually will be the external examiner.

Assessors' marks are advisory to the Board of Examiners and will be provisional until the final Board meeting in September.

3.4 Scaling

The Examiners may choose to scale marks where in their academic judgement:

- a) a paper was more difficult or easy than in previous years, and/or
- b) an optional paper was more or less difficult than other optional papers taken by students in a particular year, and/or
- c) a paper has generated a spread of marks which are not a fair reflection of student performance on the University's standard scale for the expression of agreed final marks, i.e. the marks do not reflect the qualitative marks descriptors.

Such scaling is used to ensure that candidates' marks are not advantaged or disadvantaged by any of these situations. In each case, examiners will establish if they have sufficient evidence for scaling. Scaling will only be considered and undertaken after moderation of a paper has been completed, and a complete run of marks for all papers is available.

If it is decided that it is appropriate to use scaling, the examiners will review a sample of papers either side of the classification borderlines to ensure that the outcome of scaling is consistent with academic views of what constitutes an appropriate performance within in each class.

Detailed information about why scaling was necessary and how it was applied will be included in the Examiners' report and the algorithms used will be published for the information of all examiners and students.

3.5 Short-weight convention and departure from rubric

The maximum deduction that can be made for short weight should be equivalent to the proportion of the answer that is missing.

Where a candidate has failed to answer a compulsory question, or failed to answer the required number of questions in different sections, the complete script will be marked and the issue flagged. Details for individual papers are given above in section 2. The Board of Examiners will consider all such cases on a per paper basis so that consistent penalties are applied.

3.6 Penalties for late or non-submission

The scale of penalties agreed by the board of examiners in relation to late submission of assessed items is set out below. Details of the circumstances in which such penalties might apply can be found in the Examination Regulations (Regulations for the Conduct of University Examinations, Part 14.)

Late submission	Penalty
Up to one day (submitted on the day but after the deadline)	-5 marks (- 5 percentage points)
Each additional day (i.e., two days late = -6 marks, three days late = -7 marks, etc.; note that each weekend day counts as a full day for the purposes of mark deductions)	-1 mark (- 1 percentage point)
Max. deducted marks up to 14 days late	-18 marks (- 18 percentage points)
More than 14 days late	Fail

Failure to submit a required element of assessment will result in the failure of the assessment. The mark for any resit of the assessment will normally be capped at 50.

3.7 Penalties for over-length work

Where a candidate submits a thesis (or other piece of written coursework) which exceeds the word limit prescribed by the relevant regulation, the assessors may suggest to the Board of Examiner to reduce the mark by up to 8 marks or include a tariff to be deducted according to % exceeding of word count. The final decision on penalties to be applied rests with the Board of Examiners.

3.8 Penalties for poor academic practice

The Examination Board shall deal wholly with cases of poor academic practice where the material under review is small and does not exceed 10% of the whole.

Assessors should mark work on its academic merit with the board responsible for deducting marks for derivative or poor referencing.

Determined by the extent of poor academic practice, the board shall deduct between 1% and 10% of the marks available for cases of poor referencing where material is widely available factual information or a technical description that could not be paraphrased easily; where passage(s) draw on a variety of sources, either verbatim or derivative, in patchwork fashion (and examiners consider that this represents poor academic practice rather than an attempt to deceive); where some attempt has been made to provide references, however incomplete (e.g. footnotes but no quotation marks, Harvard-style references at the end of a paragraph, inclusion in bibliography); or where passage(s) are 'grey literature' i.e. a web source with no clear owner.

If a student has previously had marks deducted for poor academic practice or has been referred to the Proctors for suspected plagiarism the case must always be referred to the Proctors. Also, where the deduction of marks results in failure of the assessment and of the programme the case must be referred to the Proctors.

In addition, any more serious cases of poor academic practice than described above should also always be referred to the Proctors.

3.9 Penalties for non-attendance

Failure to attend an examination will result in the failure of the assessment. The mark for any resit after non-attendance will normally be capped at 50.

4. Progression rules and classification conventions

4.1 Qualitative descriptors of Distinction, Merit, Pass, Fail

Classifications for the degree as a whole are awarded according to the same principles outlined in 3.2 above. In particular, a distinction will be awarded to students who consistently perform at the distinction level in individual parts of the degree (to include the thesis), and who do not fail any assessment element.

A merit classification will be awarded to students who consistently perform at or above merit level in individual parts of the degree (to include the thesis), who do not fail any assessment element, but who fall short of the expectations for a distinction.

A pass classification will be awarded to students who consistently perform at or above pass level in individual parts of the degree, but who fall short of the expectations for merit or fail one or more assessment elements.

Students who fail to achieve the standard for a passing grade on any one assessment element twice or more will be deemed to have failed the degree.

4.2 Final outcome rules

For a candidate to pass the degree of MSc the candidate must pass all eleven parts of the course.

Parts 1 and 3-6 each have weightings of 5%; Parts 2, 7-8, and 9-10 each have weightings of 10%; and part 11 (thesis) has a weighting of 25%.

Except in the event of a candidate failing one or more assessment elements, students who are awarded a 70 or higher in their thesis and have an average of 70 or higher across the eleven parts calculated with the weightings set out above will automatically be awarded a distinction.

For students starting the MSc programme from 2018 onwards only: Except in the event of a candidate failing one or more assessment element, students who are awarded a 65 or higher in their thesis; have an average of 65 or higher across the eleven parts, calculated with the weightings set out above; and who do not meet the criteria for a distinction will automatically be awarded a merit.

Candidates who have initially failed any element of the examination will not normally be eligible for the award of a Distinction or Merit.

The Board of Examiners will review all marks and may award a distinction if the overall performance of a candidate is determined to justify a distinction; this will normally only be considered in cases where the overall mark is borderline to a distinction and the thesis has gained a distinction. The board of examiners may award a merit classification if the overall performance of a candidate is determined to justify a merit; this will normally only be considered in cases where the overall mark is borderline to a merit and the thesis has gained a merit. The external examiner will normally see all work to be awarded either a distinction or fail mark. The external examiner will also normally see a selection of work from the middle range.

The Board of Examiners will consider borderline outcomes on individual assessments and on the overall performance at their regular meetings. Awarding the higher mark for a borderline case requires an affirmative vote from 3 of the 4 members of the Board.

4.3 Use of vivas

Students whose work is considered to be on the borderline between particular classifications, may be called to a viva-voce by the Board of Examiners if it is felt that they may present further evidence that would enable them to be upgraded.

5. Resits

A candidate who fails one or more summative essays, examinations or thesis will be permitted one further attempt to resit the failed assessment(s). Examinations may normally only be resat, and summative essays resubmitted, in the following academic year at the usual examination times and submission deadlines. The thesis may also only be resubmitted in August of the following academic year at the usual thesis submission deadline. The only exceptions to work being submitted at the usual times in the following year will be when special permission has been granted by the University Proctors and the department Board of Examiners. Candidates will be allowed only one opportunity to retake failed assessment elements, and must do so within six terms of initial registration (twelve terms for part-time students).

A candidate who fails an assessment on the basis of poor academic performance cannot normally be awarded a mark above 69 when resitting that assessment. A candidate who fails an assessment as a result of non-attendance/non-submissions cannot normally be awarded a mark above 50 when resitting that assessment. Candidates who fail one or more assessments will not normally be eligible for the award of an overall merit or distinction classification for their degree.

Please see the Graduate Studies Handbook for further information on resubmission and resits.

6. Factors affecting performance

Where a candidate or candidates have made a submission, under Part 13 of the Regulations for Conduct of University Examinations, that unforeseen factors may have had an impact on their performance in an examination, a quorum of the board will meet to discuss the individual applications and band the seriousness of each application on a scale of 1-3 with 1 indicating minor impact, 2 indicating moderate impact, and 3 indicating very serious impact. When reaching this decision, examiners will take into consideration the severity and relevance of the circumstances, and the strength of the evidence. Examiners will also note whether all or a subset of papers were affected, being aware that it is possible for circumstances to have different levels of impact on different papers. The banding information will be used at the final Board of Examiners meeting to adjudicate on the merits of candidates. Further information on the procedure is provided in the Policy and Guidance for examiners, Annex C and information for students is provided at www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance.

Subject to the provisions of the Proctors' rules concerning arrangements relating to illness, disability, etc., a candidate who fails to appear at the time and place appointed for any part of his or her examination shall be deemed to have withdrawn from the examination.

7. Details of examiners and rules on communicating with examiners

The External Examiner for the MSc Social Science of the Internet for the 2018-19 academic year is Dr Nick Anstead (LSE). The internal examiners are Dr Joss Wright (Chair), Dr Victoria Nash, and Dr Kathryn Eccles.

Candidates should not under any circumstances seek to make contact with individual internal or external examiners.

Appendix I: Examining Timetable

Michaelmas Term 2018

Week 1	Wednesday 10 th October 2018: Assessment Scrutiny Committee meeting: Confirm assessment questions for Michaelmas term papers
Week 2	<i>Final approved copy of Digital Social Research: Methods Core Assessment submitted to MSc Coordinator for uploading to WebLearn</i>
Week 4	<i>Camera-ready copy of Digital Social Research: Statistics Core to Examination Schools</i>
Week 4	Monday 29 th October 2018: DSR: Methods Core Summative Assignment questions released to students via WebLearn
Week 8	<i>Camera-ready copy of Social Dynamics of the Internet and Internet Technologies and Regulation to Examination School</i>
Week 8	Friday 30 th November 2018 by 12:00pm: Deadline for submission of DSR: Methods Core Summative Essay. To be uploaded via WebLearn
Week 8	Friday 30 th November 2018: Deadline for course convenors to provide the MSc Coordinator with their assessment question for their Hilary term papers
Week 9	Wednesday 5 th December 2018: Assessment Scrutiny Committee meeting: Confirm assessment questions for Hilary term papers
Week 9	Exam for DSR: Statistics Core

Hilary Term 2019

Week 0	Exams for Social Dynamics of the Internet and Internet Technologies and Regulation
Week 0	<i>Camera-ready copy of Advanced Statistics for Internet Research, part 1 & 2 to Examination School</i>
Week 1	Monday 14 th January 2019: Questions released to students via WebLearn for Option papers and Methods Options papers Group A
Week 4	Friday 1 st February 2019 by 12:00pm: Deadline for assessors to confirm marks for Social Dynamics of the Internet, Internet Technologies & Regulation, DSR: Statistics Core and DSR: Methods Core
Week 5	Monday 11 th February 2019: Questions released to students via WebLearn for Methods Options papers Group B
Week 5	Exam Board meeting: Confirm marks for Social Dynamics of the Internet, Internet Technologies and Regulation, DSR: Statistics Core, and DSR: Methods Core
Week 5	Friday 15 th February 2019 at 12:00pm: Deadline for submission of DSR: Methods Options papers Group A. To be uploaded via WebLearn
Week 5	Exam for Advanced Statistics for Internet Research, part 1

Week 6	Marks released for Social Dynamics of the Internet, Internet Technologies and Regulation, DSR: Statistics Core, and DSR: Methods Core
Week 8	Friday 8 th March 2019 at 12.00pm: Deadline for submission of Thesis Abstract form and CUREC form. To be uploaded via WebLearn
Week 10	Friday 22 nd March 2019 at 12:00pm: Deadline for submission of DSR: Methods Options papers Group B. To be uploaded via WebLearn
Week 10	Exam for Advanced Statistics for Internet Research, part 2

Trinity Term 2019

Week 1	Monday 29 th April 2019 by 12:00pm: Deadline for submission of all Option papers. To be uploaded via WebLearn
Week 1	Wednesday 1 st May 2019: Deadline for assessors to confirm marks for Methods Options papers Group A and B
Week 4	Wednesday 22 nd May 2019 by 12:00pm: Deadline for assessors to confirm marks for Option papers
Week 6	Exam Board meeting. Confirm marks for all DSR: Methods Option papers, (including Advanced Statistics for Internet Research parts 1 & 2 exams) and all Option papers
Week 8	Marks released for all DSR: Methods Option papers, (including Advanced Statistics for Internet Research parts 1 & 2 exams) and all Option papers

Summer 2019

August	Thursday 1 st August 2019 by 12:00pm: Deadline for submission of thesis. To be uploaded via WebLearn
September	Wednesday 4 th September 2019: Deadline for assessors to confirm thesis marks
September	Students will be notified by 9 th September if they are to be called for a viva voce examination
September	Monday 16 th September 2019 at 12:00pm: Exam Board meeting. Confirm thesis marks and MSc degree final results
	<i>Marks released for thesis and MSc final outcome results by the end of September</i>