EARTHSCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF EARTH SCIENCES

GRADUATE HANDBOOK

2026-27

EARTHSCIENCES

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A more comprehensive list of departmental contacts is given in Appendix A.

For up-to-date lists and information about researchers and staff in the department, please refer to the department's Our People webpage.

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Introduction

Welcome to the Department of Earth Sciences. We are delighted that you have chosen to join us, and we very much look forward to getting to know you and working with you.

Whether you already have a particular project to pursue, or you wish to explore a broader area, our aim is to provide you with the resources and encouragement that will enable you to produce your best work and develop as an independent scientist. You will be working alongside faculty members who are among the best in their fields, supported by highly skilled scientists and technical staff who contribute to our research.

The Department of Earth Sciences is a truly exceptional and supportive research environment, and I encourage you to make the most of the opportunities we offer. Take the time to attend departmental talks, both within your own area of research and across other research groups. Participate in workshops, and join our field trips as a demonstrator. You never quite know where these experiences may lead.

Some of the most interesting scientific advances happen in collaboration between established disciplines, and an important part of your study will be making new connections across other fields and departments. Many of the friends, contacts and scientific networks that you develop here—within the department, your college and the wider University, and through conferences, field work and other events—will stay with you throughout your career and beyond.

Research, by its nature, is difficult to predict, and there will inevitably be times when things do not go according to plan. Remember that you are surrounded by people who are here to help. While your supervisors and our administrative team can advise on and assist with course-related matters, the Department and the University also provide a wide range of other services to support you (see the Student Welfare and Representation section below).

We hope you will take advantage of the many things that make the Department a unique place to live and study. Be curious. Ask questions. Support each other, and above all, enjoy being part of this remarkable scientific community.



Chris Ballentine

Director of Graduate Studies

Department of Earth Sciences

1. Graduate Programmes

The department offers several routes towards a postgraduate degree:

1.1 DPhil in Earth Sciences

Most postgraduate students in the department are working towards a DPhil in Earth Sciences, which usually takes three to four years to complete. Students are typically funded by university scholarships, government scholarships, industrial sponsorship or research grants.

Research themes in the department include:

- Geophysics and Geodynamics
- Planetary Evolution and Materials
- Oceanography, Climate and Palaeoenvironment
- Palaeobiology and Evolution
- Geodesy, Tectonics, Volcanology and Related Hazards
- Earth Resources

Students usually join a research group and work alongside other research students, postdoctoral researchers and academics, all of whom can provide additional support and advice. Students will work alongside each other in the same general research area, although academic activity across research groups is also strongly encouraged.

While the focus of the DPhil is on developing skills to conduct independent research, formal courses are available both within the Department of Earth Sciences and other departments in the Maths, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS) Division. These courses are organised through the MPLS Graduate Academic Programme and include generic skills such as advice on science writing, as well as subject specific specialist courses. These enable you to select course components to match your specific research project needs. For more information, please visit https://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training.

Students will be encouraged to present their research at national and international meetings and to publish in internationally recognised science journals. They may also choose to take part in outreach activities, presenting the department's exciting work to schools and the wider public. There are also paid opportunities for students to gain teaching experience by demonstrating laboratory classes to undergraduates, assisting on undergraduate field courses, and in tutorial teaching.

1.2 Master of Science by Research

The Master of Science by Research (MSc(R)) is a similar course to the DPhil in Earth Sciences programme. It usually takes two to three years to complete. Occasionally students who originally applied for the DPhil in Earth Sciences change to this path for personal or logistical reasons.

1.3 Intelligent Earth (UKRI CDT in AI for the Environment)

The Intelligent Earth CDT is a four-year doctoral programme designed to equip a new generation of students with advanced AI skills to tackle some of the most pressing environmental issues.

In Year 1, students will take core courses and computational skills training courses, advanced cross-cohort courses, responsible AI training, and professional skills training modules. These will be followed by a three-month mini research project, the annual hackathon and conference.

In Year 2, students will transfer to their chosen department and to begin their DPhil research. Students will take more advanced cross-cohort courses and training modules to develop your professional and computational skills. A secondment with non-academic partners is possible at this stage, or during Year 3.

Year 3 will focus on DPhil research with optional advanced courses and professional/computational skill training modules based on individual students' training needs. A secondment with non-academic partners may also take place at this stage if it was not undertaken in Year 2.

In Year 4, students will complete their DPhil research and thesis writing. Professional training will focus on career development, job/fellowship applications and interviews.

Further information about the course can be found at https://intelligent-earth.ox.ac.uk.

1.4 Interdisciplinary Life and Environmental Science Landscape Award DTP (ILESLA)

The ILESLA Doctoral Training Programme provides students with the opportunity to undertake research across the full breadth of biological and environmental science, from cellular mechanisms and crop science through to climate change and dynamic earth processes.

Students begin their study at the Doctoral Training Centre (DTC), where they undertake a tailored training programme focusing on research skills in:

- mathematics and statistics
- programming
- imaging and image analysis
- data science
- modelling biological or environmental processes and systems

Students can also access a wide variety of training across the partnership throughout their doctoral studies.

During their first year, students will also undertake two rotation projects with different supervisory teams, and a long format team-based project before deciding on their substantive three-year doctoral project.

To gain experience working in a professional environment and develop transferable skills, students will also undertake a 12-week internship. Internships can be full- or part-time. Areas that may be explored during internships may include (but are not limited to):

- industrial research and development
- science policy
- teaching
- science communication
- publishing
- entrepreneurship

- project management

If students are working on a project co-supervised by a non-academic partner organisation, they will normally undertake a placement with that organisation instead. These placements may range from 12 weeks to 18 months. If students are working on a project with translational potential, they can choose to focus their internship on relevant aspects, such as market research or business plan development.

Further information about the course can be found at https://www.ilesla.ox.ac.uk.

2. Supervision

It is a departmental policy that each graduate student must have at least two faculty members as named supervisors. The primary supervisor should be a member of the Department of Earth Sciences. The second can belong to another department of the University, if appropriate. Additional supervisors may be included from external organisations and/or postdoctoral students within the Department of Earth Sciences.

Any proposed changes to the supervisory team must be submitted to the DGS for approval. Students can submit requests via Student Self Service.

Details of eligibility and responsibility of the supervision team can be found in the MPLS Division's Code of Practice on the Supervision of Graduate Research Students webpage (Essentials of Supervision), and in the University's policy on Research Degrees.

Students should expect to meet with their lead supervisor at least once every term. They should also have meetings with one member of the supervisory team at least once every two weeks (averaged across the year).

2.1 Graduate Supervision Reporting

At the end of every term, and again during the Long Vacation, students are required to report on their progress in training and research by completing an online form on the Graduate Supervision Reporting system (GSR).

Access to GSR for students is available via Student Self Service. You will be sent an automated email notification with details of how to log in at the start of each reporting window, and who to contact with queries.

GSR reports are an important way of ensuring that students are getting the support that they need. They do not need to be long, but we encourage you to include any concerns you have about your progress. Your supervisors will also submit a report via the same system. These reports are accessible to you, your supervisors, your College Advisor and the DGS.

You will also be able to complete the Divisional Training Needs Analysis (TNA) form in Student Self Service and add this to your GSR reports.

2.2 What to include in your GSR Report

- A general description of progress, including indicators of success but also issues of concern
- Attendance at scientific meetings and conferences.
- Attendance at departmental seminars.
- Organisation of events, both within and outside the department, social and academic.
- Any worries about resources (for example, computing or in the lab, inability to attend conferences, etc.) or a need for any additional training requirements.
- Any concerns about EEDI can be raised here (or separately with the DGS).
- Any concerns about well-being can be raised here (or separately with the DGS).

Note: Recording any difficulties or concerns about your progress in GSR is important as the reports may be referred to later (for example, if you apply for a retrospective Suspension of Status or an Extension of Time).

2.3 Flagging concerns

Flags of minor or major concerns should be used to raise issues and concerns about a range of factors including resources, data, skills and so on. Most students will have a reporting period with concerns at some point during their graduate studies, and it is important to note that they are not indicative of your ability to complete your degree.

It is worse to indicate ‘no concerns’ when a simple issue could be resolved (for example, by attending a training course).

Student concerns should primarily relate to academic progress. If you are dissatisfied with any other aspects of provision, e.g., your supervisory relationship or working environment, you should raise these with the DGS in the first instance and, if necessary, pursue them through the department’s complaints procedure.

Supervisors should discuss any concerns about academic progress with the student before flagging a concern in GSR.

The DGS will review all flagged concerns and take any appropriate action. A severe concern should result in a meeting with the DGS without delay. The DGS should briefly note any action being taken to resolve the matter, and all concerns raised will be treated in a confidential manner.

Minor concerns should be flagged where satisfactory progress is being made, but actions may be required to keep progress on track.

Major concerns should be flagged where one or more factors are significantly affecting progress, and further action is required to keep progress on track.

Severe concerns should be flagged where progress is being seriously affected by one or more factors. A meeting with the DGS should be held as soon as possible to discuss further action and to get progress back on track.

3. Training

3.1 Mandatory Graduate Training

Graduate students are required to undertake several mandatory training courses.

Please ensure that you complete all the relevant courses listed on the department's Required Training for Staff and PG Students page. This includes a new Harassment and Sexual Misconduct training course.

The department also expects all students to complete the Being an Effective Bystander course, which forms part of the MPLS ED&I Training Programme.

3.2 Research Integrity Training

All researchers are expected to be committed to ethical principles and professional standards. Research integrity is a commitment to creating an environment that promotes responsible conduct by embracing standards of excellence, trustworthiness and lawfulness.

In order to apply for Transfer of Status, students must first complete the Research Integrity online training course.

The University expects its students to maintain the highest standards of integrity in their research. Not upholding such standards, either intentionally or through lack of knowledge, damages the scientific process and may harm research participants, colleagues, the University and wider society.

Your supervisor will play an important role in helping you to develop skills for good practice in research and advising you on all aspects of research integrity. You can also seek support and advice from our DGS and faculty members in the department, as well as the ethics advisors at University Research Services.

3.3 Information Security Training

The department encourages all students to complete the following training courses produced by the University's Information Security team:

How to keep safe online

Information Security and Data Protection (for students handling University data)

3.4 Departmental Training

The department also offers a range of activities open to graduate and postdoctoral students. Training opportunities include the Preparing for Teaching and Learning at Oxford (PLTO) course (a mandatory requirement for anyone wishing to teach in the department).

Where there is sufficient demand, we additionally run in-house field work first-aid training for graduate students, postdoctoral students and faculty members. First aid qualifications are essential for those demonstrating undergraduate field classes and for all those undertaking research in the field (whether in the mountains, at sea, or even somewhere relatively safe, like the fields around Oxford!). First-aid qualifications can also be obtained through courses offered by the University Safety Office or external providers. Please discuss with your supervisor about what sort of training you require.

The department asks students to participate and contribute towards its research and academic activities, such as organising the graduate conference and group seminars. This is an integral part of researcher training and prepares students for a research career where

they will be expected to undertake peer reviews, organise and chair conferences and contribute towards similar activities.

You will also receive any training necessary to carry out your research, which will be organised in consultation with your supervisor.

The department is always working to improve in-house training for graduate students, including training on teaching and demonstrating to undergraduates, and developing students' research, writing and publishing-related skills. A list containing details of current graduate students' interest and teaching experience are on the department's SharePoint site.

We are also open to suggestions to fill training gaps, so please don't hesitate to contact the Academic Office with your suggestions.

3.5 Departmental seminars

Departmental seminars are a very good way of keeping up with aspects of Earth Science research across the subject. There are often opportunities to meet up with the visiting speakers before their talks, and to join the speakers for dinner afterwards.

Seminars take place in the department during term time. Look out for announcements from the member of staff who is hosting the speaker

3.6 Library Training

There is an introduction to the Departmental Library and other Oxford libraries in Hilary term. It introduces SOLO (the library catalogue) and various bibliographic databases, how to access theses, Open Access content, geospatial information and saving/managing references. It is worth attending even if you have been an undergraduate at Oxford.

The Bodleian Libraries offer training throughout the year on number of topics. More information can be found at Bodleian iSkills workshops.

3.7 MPLS Divisional Training

A range of courses on basic skills (communication and presentation skills, time management, assertiveness, managing relationships) is provided by the Division of Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences. Please do take advantage of these courses. More information is available at: www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training.

3.8 IT Services Training

IT Services runs many training courses on computers, common systems and packages. You will find a listing of currently available courses at https://cosy.ox.ac.uk.

They will help you to set up your basic IT services such as email and internet access. The IT Services website also provides information and guidance on getting started.

Please seek advice from your supervisor about courses that will be useful for you. Further details about courses on offer can be found at www.it.ox.ac.uk.

3.9 Doctoral Training Centre (DTC)

The DTC runs a variety of training courses that students find useful. Non-DTC graduate students wishing to join the lectures or training courses should contact the relevant course administrator (https://www.dtc.ox.ac.uk).

3.10 Language Courses

These are available to all members of the University at www.lang.ox.ac.uk.

3.11 Internships

If you wish to undertake an internship during your studies, you should discuss this with your supervisors. Supervisors have overall responsibility for a student's progression and hence supervisory support is needed to undertake an internship.

There have been instances where students have been asked to sign agreements during their internships, which subsequently had a negative effect on their thesis or future career, particularly where agreements have included clauses claiming rights to intellectual property (IP) which may otherwise have been freely available for the student to use. It is therefore important that you are equipped to make your own assessment of IP risk before deciding to take up an internship. There may also be potential risks to the University in terms of compliance with our obligations to external organisations, particularly in relation to visa or ATAS requirements.

Compliance is rarely an issue with internships, but it is important that the University complies and/or can take steps where compliance may be necessary. The MPLS Internships Monitoring form will help you to create a self-assessment of any threat to your IP, and to meet your internship obligations.

You must discuss your internship with your supervisor prior to submitting the MPLS Internship Monitoring Form. Within the form there is a link to the supervisor form that the supervisor must complete and return to you, which you will then upload with your form.

3.12 Vitae and the GRAD Schools Programme

The Research Councils UK (RCUK) and the Career Development Organisation (CRAC) have created Vitae, which offers valuable advice on your development as a researcher.

Periodically they run residential graduate schools designed to help you reflect upon and develop the skills you have as a postgraduate researcher. They are well worth considering, and feedback from students who have taken part has been extremely positive.

4. Safety

4.1 Safety Policies

The current University Safety Policy and department's Statements of Health and Safety and are regularly updated and should be read and observed by all working or studying in the department. Safety legislation is governed by criminal, not civil, law, and lays heavy responsibility on both the department and the individual.

The use of departmental building space and facilities is conditional upon compliance with all safety standards and practices.

4.2 Accidents and Near-misses

The University uses an online Incident Reporting and Investigation System (IRIS) to record, review and investigate health, safety and environmental accidents or near-misses (incidents) that take place at the University and while staff and/or students are travelling on University business.

The use of this system allows for a swift, managed response to any incidents allowing the University to comply with its legal and moral requirements to its staff, students and visitors.

You must report any health, safety, or environmental incidents that you witness or are involved in as soon as possible to the University. **Report any incident by completing the University's incident reporting form.**

4.3 First Aid

Lists of the department's first aiders, and the location of the nearest first aid kit, are displayed on each floor. There is always a first aid box in reception and the kitchen area.

Report any possible hazards to your supervisor, Building Safety Officer, or the Area Safety Officer.

4.4 Fire Safety

Make sure you know the location of the fire assembly points, fire exits, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, and how to use them. Fire doors **must not** be propped open.

The fire alarm is tested every Wednesday at 8am. There is also a termly fire drill. If you are in the building, you must participate in any fire drill.

The fire alarm consists of long notes with short breaks between. When you hear the alarm, close all windows, leave the building and assemble in the car park area (to the left of the building as you leave through the main entrance doors).

4.5 Smoking

The department does not allow smoking or vaping anywhere in the building, including the roof terrace.

4.6 Safety in the Field

All independent graduate field work plans must be assessed for safety, and approval should be sought from the Field Work Safety Officer **in advance** of any travel arrangements. The department may withhold travel loans if approval has not been given.

You must complete a Field Work Risk Assessment form in consultation with your supervisor and submit this by email to the department's Field Work Safety Officer. This must be done at

least 3 weeks in advance of departure. Approval of University travel insurance can take up to two weeks, or longer in the case of especially hazardous activities.

You should consult with your supervisor to arrange for a thorough safety briefing and risk assessment before you depart on field work.

Hard hats for field work are available for loan from the Academic Office. You must not provide your own unless it has been cleared as acceptable under current Safety Regulations. Hard hats more than five years old must not be worn. Report any damage caused to your hard hat during your trip, as we may need to replace it.

Training courses provided by the University may be helpful to those planning fieldwork. Please see department's Travel and Field Safety page for more information.

4.7 Travel Insurance

The University's travel insurance policy can be used for all travel overseas that is associated with your degree. The department's Travel and Field Safety page also contains useful information, including advice on submitting a risk assessment.

You should also obtain a Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) for travel in Europe. This will cover you for emergency medical treatment only. You can apply for the card online.

5. Course Progression: Transfer of Status

Every graduate student starting to work for a research degree in Oxford is first given the st6atus of a Probationary Research Student (PRS). Only after an assessment of your progress during the probationary period is your status formally transferred to that of a DPhil or Masters by Research student.

5.1 Transfer of Status (from Probationer Research Student to DPhil / MSc(R))

The purpose of Transfer of Status is to ensure that you have a convincing research proposal, that you are making satisfactory progress in its development, and to satisfy the assessors that the work is potentially of DPhil or Masters by Research quality. The assessors will also use the process to assess and confirm the likelihood of submission within your funded period/within 12 terms (for DPhil) or 9 terms (for Masters).

Transfer of Status should result in the completion of a substantive piece of work that will form a chapter of your final thesis. Although Transfer of Status is a formal milestone in your programme, the process will help support your development as a researcher and ensure that you are on track to complete a scientifically important thesis within the time available to you.

5.2 Timing of the Transfer of Status Process

The deadline for submission of the material is Friday of Week 8 in Michaelmas Term of the second year (fourth term for Michaelmas Term starters, fifth term for Trinity Term starters). Where possible, Hilary Term starters are encouraged to submit by Friday of Week 8 in Michaelmas Term of their first year (i.e., their third term).

We recommend that you start writing your submission no later than the term preceding the deadline. For most this will mean starting to write no later than Trinity Term of the first year (i.e., third term for Michaelmas Term starters, second term for Hilary Term starters, or fourth term for Trinity Term starters).

5.3 Steps to apply for Transfer of Status

The University Regulations require you to complete your first attempt to transfer before the end of your fourth term (or sixth term for DTP students).

5.3.1 Meeting with your supervisors

You should arrange a meeting with your supervisors in Trinity Term (third term for most) to discuss Transfer of Status. It is recommended that you use the Preparing for Transfer of Status form (available on Canvas) as a guide for this meeting. The questions are based on the criteria your assessors will be considering for your assessment.

5.3.2 Applying for Transfer of Status

Preparation for your presentation and interview components of your application (outlined below) should take no more than one week. You should be progressing with the written work as part of your daily study. Please consult your supervisors if you have any concerns.

You should submit the application for Transfer of Status via Student Self Service. You can submit your application without written work attached in the first instance (we recommend no later than Friday of Week 6, this will allow for it to proceed through the approvals process before the deadline).

Once you have submitted your application, it will be sent to your supervisors, college, and the DGS for approval (your application cannot be passed onto your assessors until it has been approved by **all** of them).

You should upload your application documents using the following naming conventions for the files:

- Surname_Forename_ToS_Report
- Surname_Forename_ToS_Abstract
- Surname_Forename_ToS_Research Integrity Certificate
- Surname_Forename_ToS_Budget

If your application documents are too large to upload, you should select the option to 'generate a placeholder document' in On-Course Applications, which will enable you to complete the rest of the online application. You will then need to email those application document/s to graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk separately.

5.3.3 Report

You should upload a PDF copy of your report as a single file via Student Self Service. Please do not email the report to your assessors.

The report can take two forms: 'paper' mode and 'review' mode. Paper mode presents your work in the form of a scientific paper. This paper does not have to have been submitted for publication, but it should be in draft form. This option is particularly suitable for those who have data that will contribute to a peer-reviewed paper, along with a short research proposal. 'Review mode' is the submission of a literature review alongside a research proposal as a single report.

You should discuss with your supervisor which option is better for you. There is no inherent advantage in either, but both will hopefully contribute to your final thesis. If you have already drafted a paper, the first option might be better for you. Alternatively, if you are awaiting or processing data the second option might be preferable.

In both cases the research proposal should contain details of the work planned for the following year, with well-considered ideas for the remaining period of your studies. You should be planning for submission of a thesis within your funded period, and no later than your maximum submission date.

5.3.3.1 'Paper' mode

For this mode, you need to submit two parts:

Part I: This should be written in the form of a scientific journal. It should have all the usual elements: a title, abstract, introduction and review of relevant work; several sections describing research output; a conclusions section; and a bibliography.

The paper should be no fewer than 10 A4 pages in length (one page being a single side of A4), including all diagrams and bibliography. The page layout and formatting should be the same as your final thesis (see 'Notes of Guidance for Research Examinations' in Form GSO.20a, available on the University's Graduate Forms page).

Part II: This should comprise a thesis plan, setting out the major objectives of the work, with a realistic timeline. This should not be longer than 2 pages of A4, formatted as Part I.

5.3.3.2 'Review' mode

For this mode, you need to submit two parts that together express the clear motivation for your research:

Part I: The work should be a literature review that comprises a substantive part of your initial thesis chapter. It should be no fewer than 10 pages in length (a page being a single side of

A4), including all diagrams and bibliography, with the aim that it forms a significant part of the initial chapter of your final thesis.

It should contain all the usual elements of an introductory chapter: title; introduction; review of relevant work; a short section detailing the research questions to be addressed; and bibliography. The page layout and formatting should be the same as your final thesis (see 'Notes of Guidance for Research Examinations' in Form GSO.20a, available on the University's Graduate Forms page).

Part II: This should comprise a thesis plan, setting out the major objectives of the work, with a realistic timeline. This should not be longer than 2 pages of A4, formatted as Part I.

5.3.3 Abstract

Prepare a 300-word abstract to be incorporated into the booklet for the Graduate Conference. An abstract must be uploaded as part of your application, even if you are not taking part in the conference. A template for the abstract is available on Canvas.

Your abstract must include the following details:

- Thesis title
- Primary supervisor
- Assessors. You must have at least two assessors (one will be your proposed internal examiner, plus the DGS or DDGS). To ensure they are willing and able to take part in the assessment process. the choice of the proposed internal examiner should be both agreed with your supervisor(s) and contacted before submitting your abstract. Your supervisor should also add your assessors' details to your application.
- Research theme.

5.3.4 Research Integrity Training

Students must complete the University's online Research Integrity Training (an introduction to good research practice) before applying for Transfer of Status, which is available on the MPLS Research Integrity online courses page. You will need to upload your Research Integrity Training Certificate as part of your Transfer application.

5.3.5 Budget

Students should discuss the budget for their project with their supervisor(s) as early as possible. This should be submitted to the Finance Office (accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk) as soon as possible after enrolment, so they can help to manage your project's finances.

Your budget should take into account any projected use of Small Research Facilities (SRF). The department's policy on the billing and use of SRF is given in Appendix M.

You will be asked to review and submit an updated budget with your Transfer materials. A template budget form is available on Canvas.

5.3.6 Presentation

You will be asked to deliver a 20-minute presentation (15-minute talk, plus 5 minutes for questions) at the Graduate Conference (the audience will include your two assessors). This is an opportunity to share your project with the rest of the department. Your presentation should also include a timeline of your future work.

To reduce the amount of delay between presentations at the conference, we recommend uploading it to the Seminar Room PC before the start of the session. The Academic Office staff will be on hand to help you if needed.

5.3.7 Interview

Following the conference, you will be asked to attend an interview with your two assessors (this will usually take place during the same week). They may ask you to make a brief presentation if they were unable to attend your appearance at the conference. The interview will typically last around 20 minutes. You should be prepared to spend some of the time discussing your plans for future work. Please note that your supervisor will not attend the interview.

Typically, your assessors will consist of at least one faculty member who has expertise in your research area. You are advised to talk this over with your supervisor and approach a suitable faculty member prior to submission. The second interviewer will be either the Director or Deputy Director of Graduate Studies.

Your assessors will consider all aspects of your submission, including a report from your supervisor (where the DGS or DDGS is also a supervisor, the recommendation would be passed onto another senior faculty member, such as the Head of Department or Head of Teaching). They will consider all the evidence and make a recommendation to the University. The University will then inform you of the outcome.

5.4 Transfer of Status: what assessors will be expecting

Assessors must be satisfied that:

1. The student has proposed a viable DPhil project that can be completed within the proposed timeframe and funded period or within 12 terms of study. Periods of suspension do not count.

2. The work undertaken to date provides an appropriate background and platform for progress.

3. The student has developed a critical understanding of the relevant literature.

4. The student understands, can justify and defend their research project, its objectives and rationale.

5. The student has a clear plan for the future direction of the project.

6. The student has begun to take intellectual ownership of the project.

More generally, the assessors will also be looking for evidence of your competence as a researcher: someone who is able to read, understand and appreciate the significance of existing literature; the ability to come up with relevant and timely ideas, and to pursue them via theory, experiment, and analysis; to draw conclusions about the outcome and ’what next?’; and to present their work clearly and engagingly.

5.5 Progression Outcomes

In most cases, the assessors will recommend your progression to Transfer of Status without any concerns. A formal letter from the University will be issued, confirming your Transfer of Status.

It is possible that the assessors may raise some concerns that you will need to address more formally than simply by discussion in the interview. In such cases, the assessors will

ask you to provide a written response within two weeks of the interview, agreed with your supervisor, before recommending Transfer of Status.

It is also possible that the assessors will not be able to recommend Transfer of Status. You will receive a formal letter from the University confirming this decision, along with a copy of the assessors' report. You will then be granted one further term in which to reapply for Transfer of Status. You should discuss the situation with your supervisor and the DGS, who will be best able to advise you.

The Graduate Handbook of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences Division explains all possible outcomes in more detail.

6. Course Progression: Confirmation of Status

Every DPhil student who has passed Transfer of Status is also required by the University Regulations to confirm status before submitting a final thesis (Masters by Research students are not required to apply). As with Transfer of Status, Confirmation of Status is designed to support your development as a researcher and provide an independent assessment of your progress.

Although the process is very similar to that of Transfer of Status, there are some important differences. Confirmation of Status consists of a review of a student's work by two assessors, excluding your supervisor(s). Its purpose is to confirm whether the submission of a thesis by the end of a student's funded period (or by their maximum submission date, whichever is sooner) is on schedule.

The assessors will focus on how research is progressing, the quality of the work already completed, and whether it meets the required academic standard. They will also want to confirm that you are continuing to make adequate progress in the development of your thesis, that it will be delivered on time, and that it will represent a significant and substantial contribution to your field of study. The Confirmation of Status process also acts as good preparation for the viva voce examination of the thesis.

Confirmation of Status should result in the completion of a second piece of substantive work that will form a chapter of your final thesis (the first having been completed at Transfer of Status).

It should be noted that successful completion of Confirmation of Status provides an indicator of readiness for thesis submission, not the final outcome of the examination.

6.1 Timing of the Confirmation Process

According to University Regulations, you are required to complete your first attempt at Confirmation of Status within 9 terms of beginning your DPhil studies (not including suspensions). Since the 9 terms refers to the time to complete the process, it is important to begin preparation in good time.

The deadline for submission of the material is Friday of Week 8 during Michaelmas Term of their third year (seventh term for Michaelmas Term starters, or eighth term for Trinity Term starters). Where possible, Hilary Term starters are encouraged to submit by Friday of Week 8 of Michaelmas Term in their second year (i.e., in their sixth term).

We recommend that you start writing your report no later than the term preceding the deadline, for most this will mean starting to write no later than Trinity Term of the second year (6th term for Michaelmas Term starters, 5th term for Hilary Term starters, 7th term for Trinity Term starters).

6.2 Graduate Mini Conference

The graduate mini conference is held in January, during Week 0 of Hilary Term. Any students undergoing Transfer of Status or Confirmation of Status will participate by presenting their work at the conference. All members of the department are encouraged to attend.

6.3 Steps to apply for Confirmation of Status

6.3.1 Meeting with your supervisors

You should arrange a meeting with your supervisors in Trinity Term (6th term for most) to discuss Confirmation of Status. It is recommended that you use the Preparing for Confirmation of Status form (available on Canvas) to as a guide for this meeting. The questions are based on the criteria your assessors will be considering for your assessment.

6.3.2 Application to Confirm DPhil Status

You should submit the application for Confirmation of Status via Student Self Service.

You can submit your application without written work attached in the first instance, we recommend no later than Friday of Week 6. This will allow for it to proceed through the approvals process before the deadline. Once you have submitted your application it will be sent to your supervisors, College, and the DGS for approval.

Note**:** your application cannot be passed onto your assessors until it has been approved by your supervisors, College, and the DGS.

Before the deadline you will need to upload your application documents using the following naming conventions for the files:

- Surname_Forename_CoS_Report
- Surname_Forename_CoS_Abstract

If your application documents are too large to upload you will need to select the option to 'generate a placeholder document' in On-Course Applications. This ensures that the on-system process can still proceed, and you will need to email your document to graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk (do not share a document with the Graduate Studies inbox as that does not have OneDrive).

6.3.3 Abstract

Prepare a 300-word abstract, this will be incorporated into a booklet for the Graduate Conference (an abstract must still be uploaded as part of your application even if you are not taking part in the conference). A template is available on Canvas. Your abstract must include the following details:

- Thesis title
- Primary supervisor
- Assessors - you must have at least 2, one of which should be the DGS or DDGS, the other is your proposed internal examiner. The proposed internal examiner should be agreed with your supervisor(s) and contacted before you put their name down to make sure they are able and willing to be part of the assessment process. Your supervisor should also add your assessors' details to your application if the assessors are known.
- Research theme.

6.3.4 Presentation

You will be asked to deliver a 20-minute presentation (15-minute talk, plus 5 minutes for questions) at the Graduate Conference to share information about your project with the rest of the department, with the expectation that the audience will include your two assessors. Your presentation should include a timeline of work still to be done.

To reduce the amount of delay between presentations at the conference, if you are taking your presentation on a USB stick, we recommend uploading it to the computer before the start of the block of presentations in which you will be presenting (so in the breaks or at the start of the day). You can delete them after each block, or at the end of each day.

6.3.5 Interview

As with Transfer of Status, you will be asked to attend an interview with a faculty assessor and either the Deputy or Director of Graduate Studies, at a time and place to be arranged by the assessors. They may ask you to make a presentation, but this is not compulsory. The interview will typically last around 20 minutes to 30 minutes, although it can be shorter or longer. Note that your supervisor will not attend.

Normally, the faculty assessor will be the same as at Transfer of Status, although changes are made in cases where the research topic has changed emphasis, or the previous assessors are unavailable. Together, the panel will consider all aspects of your submission, including a report from your supervisor, and make a recommendation to the University. You will then hear back formally from the University with the outcome, although you should hear back more informally as well from your assessors in the meantime.

6.3.6 Report

You should upload a PDF copy of your report as a single file via Student Self Service. Please do not email the report to your assessors.

The report builds on reading and research that you have done, but that research is something that will help form your thesis eventually, and the time taken to undertake that research will of course vary depending on student and project. You should ask for advice from your supervisors if you have any concerns.

There is no prescribed form for this report, but remember that the assessors must read it all and hence conciseness is a virtue. You can simply use a PDF from a publisher for item (1) if you wish, rather than re-typeset it. Your plan for completion must be realistic.

The report should comprise two sections:

6.3.6.1 Written work

This should be a journal or conference paper, or a research-based thesis chapter (i.e., not an introductory chapter or one based on a review of literature or build of equipment). If this was submitted at the Transfer stage, a literature review that comprises a substantive part of your initial thesis chapter should be submitted. The aim is that by this stage in your DPhil, you will have submitted work that will largely comprise two chapters of your final thesis - an introductory chapter, and a data chapter.

The written work should be no fewer than 10 A4 pages in length (a page is deemed to be a single side of A4), including all diagrams and bibliography. The page layout, font size, etc should be the same as your final thesis, see the Notes of guidance for research examinations for students submitting their thesis (GSO.20a).

6.3.6.2 Plan for completion

This should not be longer than 2 pages of A4, with typesetting as above, and should be a detailed plan for completion and include:

a) Outline of the overall research contribution of your thesis

b) Description of your research contributions to date

c) Estimate of the fractions of your thesis chapters that have been completed

d) Detailed timetable for completion, including any potential risks

Note that sufficient time must be allocated for writing up and that you must plan to complete within your funded period or by your maximum submission date.

6.4 Confirmation of Status: what assessors will be expecting

To achieve Confirmation of Status, assessor must be satisfied that:

a) The student's DPhil project is following a trajectory that will lead to completion and submission within the proposed timeframe and funded period or within 12 terms of study. Periods of suspension do not count.

b) The work undertaken to date provides a sufficient background and a platform for completion/submission.

c) The student's work/research has the potential to make a 'significant and substantial contribution' to their field of study.

d) The student has developed critical knowledge and understanding of the relevant literature.

e) The student understands, can justify and defend their research project, its objectives and rationale.

f) The student has a clear plan for the future direction of the project.

g) The student has taken intellectual ownership of the project.

6.5 Progression Outcomes

In many cases, the assessors will recommend Confirmation of Status without any concerns. A formal letter from the University will be issued, confirming your Confirmation of Status.

It is possible that the assessors may raise some concerns that will need to be addressed by you more formally than simply by discussion in the interview. In such cases, they will ask you to provide a written response within two weeks of the interview, before recommending confirmation.

In some cases, the assessors will agree to Confirmation of Status, but subject to conditions. They will discuss these conditions with you and explain what will be required.

It is also possible that the assessors will not be able to recommend Confirmation of Status and will provide a detailed report outlining the rationale for this decision. You will be granted one further term to reapply for Confirmation of Status. You should discuss the situation with your supervisor and the DGS, who will be best able to advise you.

The Graduate Handbook of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences Division explains all possible outcomes in more detail.

7. Adjustments to Assessment Arrangements

If you wish to bring to the attention of your assessors or examiners any circumstances that you feel should be taken into consideration, it is important that you let us know. If you would like to discuss your circumstances before making a formal application for adjustments, please feel free to approach any staff you feel comfortable talking to. We will always do our best to help you.

You should always notify the Academic Office if you are ill. They will do all they can to help and initiate any formal procedures that may be necessary.

Students can request adjustment to their assessment by submitting an Application for Adjustments to Assessment Arrangements (GSO.19) form, available on the University's Graduate forms webpage.

The form must be reviewed and signed by the DGS, but does not need to be seen or signed by the student's supervisor or college. This form can be used to initiate the development of a Student Support Plan, if required.

8. Submitting Your Thesis

You may submit your thesis at any time after you have passed Confirmation of Status (or Transfer of Status, for those on the Masters by Research programme).

Guidance for submitting your thesis is given in Submitting a thesis guidance (GSO.20a) available on the University's Graduate Forms webpage.

Please plan well ahead and aim to complete your submission before your funding runs out, or by your maximum submission date. Sanctions are imposed on departments (not on individuals) with low on-time submission rates.

If you are likely to overrun the maximum submission date stated on your student record, you will need to make an application for an extension of time. Where possible, this should be submitted six months before your maximum submission date.

Applications for extensions are considered on a term-by-term basis. You can only make an application if your residency requirement in Oxford has been met (please check with your college if necessary).

8.1 Thesis Structure

You can decide to submit either a conventional thesis consisting of chapters, or an integrated thesis. An integrated thesis may either be a hybrid of conventional chapters and high-quality scientific papers, or it can be fully paper based. Regardless of the format, the content of the thesis should reflect the scope, originality and level of work expected of a conventional thesis.

There is no minimum or maximum number of papers a candidate is expected to include in an integrated thesis. It will remain a matter for the examiners to conclude whether the contributions are equivalent to that expected of a conventional thesis. If you are granted permission to submit an integrated thesis, it should not be assumed that the act of publication (in whatever form) means the work is of suitable academic quality and content for inclusion in a thesis, and you should discuss all papers in detail with your supervisor before including. For all papers included, you are expected to be a lead contributor rather than a minor author (see guidance for submitting an integrated thesis).

Any papers submitted must concern a common subject, constitute a continuous theme and conform to the following guidelines:

(a) Students who wish to be examined through an integrated thesis should apply for permission when they apply for Confirmation of Status (relevant for doctoral students only), or by submitting a written request to the Academic Office, for the attention of the DGS. Requests must include the reason(s), and written support from your supervisors. Normally a request for permission to be examined in this way should be submitted no later than six months before submitting the thesis for examination.

    If you subsequently wish to revert to a conventional thesis, you must have the support of your supervisors and submit this in writing to the Academic Office, for the attention of the DGS.

(b) Work may be included regardless of its acceptance status for publication, but students may be questioned on the publication status of their work by the examiners.

(c) Any submitted/published papers should relate directly to the student's approved field of study. They should also have been written while holding the status of PRS, DPhil, or a student for the Masters by Research.

(d) The collection of papers must include a separate introduction, a full literature review, discussion and a conclusion, so that the integrated thesis can be read as a single, coherent document. The format of the thesis (style, font, referencing, equations and figure numbering) should be consistent throughout the thesis.

(e) The student must ensure all matters of copyright are addressed before a paper's inclusion. A pre-print version of any published papers should be included as standard.

(f) Joint/multi-authored papers are common in science-based subjects and thus acceptable if the student can both defend the paper in full and provide a written statement of authorship, agreed by all authors, that certifies the extent of the student's own contribution. A standard template is available for this purpose on the MPLS website.

If some part of the thesis is not solely your work or has been carried out in collaboration with one or more persons, you should also submit a clear statement of the extent of your contribution.

8.2 Deadlines

Make sure you know your maximum submission date by checking on Student Self Service.

You may submit at any time after you have passed Confirmation of Status (or Transfer of Status, for those on the Masters by Research programme). Do not risk over-running your maximum submission date, and aim to complete comfortably by the end of your funded period or by your maximum submission date (whichever is sooner).

If you fail to submit by your maximum submission date without being granted a suspension or extension of time, you may have your student status withdrawn. This will mean that you are no longer a registered student of the University and will have no access to University facilities.

If your status is withdrawn, you may be able to apply for reinstatement using the Application for reinstatement to the Register of Graduate Students (GSO.23) form. In most cases reinstatement would usually only be granted for a single term.

8.3 Submission Regulations

All regulations that apply to the preparation and submission of theses can be found in the Examination Regulations under the following sections:

- General Regulations Governing Research Degrees
- General Regulations for the Degree of Master of Science by Research
- General Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
- Research Degrees in the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division
- Research Degrees in Physical Sciences

Additional useful information and advice can be found in the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Graduate Handbook.

The Department of Earth Sciences imposes the following additional special regulations:

- Students may, if they wish, submit with their theses, both the abstract required of all candidates (300 words) and a longer abstract (not more than 1,500 words for the Masters by Research; and 2,500 for the DPhil). Should such an abstract be submitted, a

copy of it must be bound into the copy of the thesis which, if the application for leave to supplicate for the degree is successful, will be deposited in the Bodleian Library.

- The theses submitted for the Degree of DPhil in Earth Sciences must not exceed 250 pages*, but there is no limit on diagrams, tables, and other supplementary material. A page is deemed to be a single side of A4. For the Masters by Research, the thesis should not normally exceed 125 pages.

If you have a large amount of data that is too big to include in your thesis or in the appendix, you should include a link to the material. If it has been deposited with the Oxford University Research Archive (ORA), it would be preferable to link to that rather than an external source. If you are unsure if the data is held on the ORA, the Departmental Librarian will be able to help you check.

It is not advisable to use weblinks to a third-party provider for your data. It should either be included in the thesis or appendices, or deposited with the University's data repository. Data held by a publisher may not be accessible in the future.

* The total number of pages should include all references, diagrams, tables, etc. that are included in the main text of the thesis. Appendices do not count towards the page count. In exceptional cases, a request to increase the page count can be submitted to the Academic Office for the attention of the DGS. Requests must have the written support of the supervisors.

8.4 The Use of Generative AI (GenAI)

MPLS has recently published interim guidance on Generative AI use in PGR summative assessments, which includes how to acknowledge and reference use of Generative AI tools. This guidance applies to Transfer and Confirmation of Status applications, as well as theses and examinations. This guidance should be treated as definitive and authoritative.

It is acknowledged that some students may already be using GenAI for their research. Where students are concerned that their use may conflict with the policy guidance, they are advised to discuss the situation with their supervisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

We expect this guidance to be developed by MPLS division in the coming months. Any additions or changes to the guidance will be published in this handbook when it becomes available. You may also wish to consult the University's general policy on using Generative AI in research.

8.5 Proofreading

It is your responsibility to ensure your thesis has been adequately proofread before it is submitted. Your supervisor may alert you if they feel further proofreading is needed, but it is not their responsibility to do the proofreading for you.

You should proofread your own work, as this is an essential skill in the academic writing process. However, for longer pieces of work it is considered acceptable for students to seek the help of a third party. This can be a professional proofreader, fellow student, friend or family member. Proofreading assistance may also be provided as a reasonable adjustment for disability.

Students should adhere to the terms of any agreements with an outside body or sponsor governing the supply of confidential material, or the disclosure of research results described in the thesis. For more guidance, please refer to the University's Use of Third-Party Proof-Readers policy.

8.6 Application for Appointment of Examiners

The Application for Appointment of Examiners form (GSO.3) must be submitted via Student Self Service.

It is your supervisor's responsibility to suggest the names of potential examiners, but this should be discussed with them at this stage. If the proposed examiners have not agreed informally to act by the time you submit your Application for Appointment of Examiners, then alternative names should also be supplied.

If you are planning to submit an integrated thesis, you must have been granted permission from the DGS before submitting your Application for Appointment of Examiners, and your thesis. Further information can be found in the Thesis Structure section.

If some part of the thesis is not solely your work or has been carried out in collaboration with one or more persons, you should also submit a clear statement of the extent of your contribution.

8.7 Thesis Submission

Research students are required to submit a digital copy of their thesis via the Research Thesis Digital Submission (RTDS) for their examination. Your card is linked to your access to RTDS, so you will need to contact your college to arrange for a new card if it is due to expire before you submit your thesis. In most cases this will only be necessary if you have suspended or extended your student status.

Examiners may still request a hard copy of the thesis from the Examination Schools. This will be arranged and paid for centrally by the Submissions and Research Degrees Team. The minimum time between both examiners receiving the official copy of the thesis via RTDS and a viva date is 4 weeks.

Important Note

The University will not release your thesis to the examiners until it has received written agreement from both, confirming that they are willing to act. This cannot begin until the Application for Appointment of Examiners and any other forms, approved and authorised by the DGS, have been processed. To minimise delays, you should plan ahead and arrange to submit all the required paperwork 4-6 weeks before you submit the thesis itself.

8.8 Viva

It is the responsibility of the internal examiner to make all the arrangements for the viva examination. Your internal examiner should normally contact you to arrange a date for your viva within a month of receiving your thesis. The average length of time between submission and the viva is approximately eight weeks.

If the Research Degrees Team does not receive a date for your viva within a month of sending out your thesis, they will contact your examiners. **On no account should you contact the examiners yourself except to agree a date for the viva**.

Normal expectations relating to the length of an oral examination should be a minimum of one hour and a maximum of three hours. More information about the viva and what you can expect can be found in the guidance on submitting a thesis.

8.9 Applying for an Early Viva

It can take 3 months or more for the examining process to run its course. If you have a valid reason for attempting to speed up the process, you may apply for an early examination as

part of the Application for Appointment of Examiners. If this situation is likely to arise, it is more usual to agree an early examination date informally by discussion between your supervisor and the examiners. Students are not allowed to ask for a viva to take place sooner than one calendar month after submission of the thesis.

8.10 Viva Notices

We invite you to share your upcoming DPhil viva dates in the department's newsletter. If you have an upcoming viva and would be happy to share the date with other students, please email communications@earth.ox.ac.uk. This is entirely voluntary, but it encourages other students to offer their support and wish each other well on the day.

9. Extensions, Suspensions and Deferrals

9.1 Extension of Time

In exceptional circumstances, students may apply for an extension of one to three terms at a time, up to a maximum of six terms for DPhil students and three terms for Masters by Research students. It is a policy of the MPLS Division that only one term of extension may be applied for at a time, so progress can be kept under close review.

Exceptional circumstances may include, but are not limited to, major technical difficulties experienced with laboratory equipment while preparing or carrying out experiments, or personal circumstances that slowed the progress of work.

An application for Extension of Time can be completed in Student Self Service. Although submitting an application is straightforward, it will need to be signed off by your supervisor, your college and the DGS. The completion of your termly GSR self-assessment progress reports will help to support your application.

Please note that we are typically not able to offer desk space beyond the end of the 4th year, even if you are granted an extension of time.

9.2 Suspension of Status

If you are unable to pursue your course of study or research for a temporary period, you may apply for a suspension of your student status. Relevant circumstances could include illness, accident, domestic crisis, or unforeseeable financial difficulty. Alternatively, you may need to concentrate temporarily on some other project that could not reasonably be deferred until after your thesis is completed (for example, to gain another qualification). Or you may wish to accept an opportunity undertake temporary work relevant to your future career.

If you feel you have experienced difficulties that have slowed, rather than halted, your progress (for example, an illness that reduced your working hours for a significant period of time), you are encouraged to note this in your GSR reports. Aside from enabling us to keep track of your progress, it will be very helpful if you later need to apply for an extension of time or a break from your study.

If you are undertaking an internship that is related to your research, then a suspension of status will not be appropriate (see the section above regarding internships). Students wishing to suspend their status should submit a Suspension of Status (GSO.17) application via Student Self Service as soon as possible. In the case of foreseeable circumstances such as temporary work, the form should be submitted in advance for consideration. Where possible, students suspending on medical grounds should provide a doctor's note with their application.

On or prior to your return, you must complete and submit a Return from Suspension of Status application form (GSO.17a). Failure to return the completed form will delay the reactivation of your student status.

Students wishing to suspend their status for Maternity, Paternity, or Adoption Leave, will need to complete a Suspension of Status for Maternity, Extended Paternity and Adoption Leave form (GSO.17b). Further information and guidance can be found later in this handbook.

9.3 Deferring Transfer of Status

In exceptional cases, a request to defer the submission of written work and the progression interview for Transfer of Status may be submitted to graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk.

Requests must include written support from the student's supervisors. You will be advised if you need to submit a formal application to defer via Student Self Service.

Those who defer their Transfer of Status will be required to submit their application no later than Friday of Week 8 in the last term of deferral. For example, if you are granted a deferral of one term, you would need to submit your application by Friday of Week 8 in Hilary Term of your second year.

In most circumstances students are still expected to present at the Graduate Conference in Week 0 of Hilary Term (fifth term for Michaelmas Term starters, fourth term for Hilary Term starters, sixth term for Trinity Term starters).

9.4 Deferring Confirmation of Status

A request to defer the submission of written work and the progression interview for Confirmation of Status may be submitted to graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk.

You will be advised if you need to submit a formal application to defer your Confirmation of Status via Student Self Service.

Those who defer their Confirmation of Status will be required to submit their application no later than Friday of Week 8 in the last term of deferral. For example, if you are granted a deferral of one term, you would need to submit your application by Friday of Week 8 of Hilary Term in your third year.

In most circumstances you would still be expected to present at the Graduate Conference in Week 0 of Hilary Term (eighth term for Michaelmas Term starters, seventh term for Hilary Term starters, ninth term for Trinity Term starters).

Please note that the Department of Earth Sciences assesses Confirmation of Status earlier in the programme than most other departments. While they use Confirmation of Status as a means to ensure that students have reached the stage where they are ready to write up their research, our approach allows for any potential problems with their project or study to be evaluated and addressed much earlier.

A student must achieve Confirmation of Status before applying to appoint their examiners and submitting their thesis.

10. Leaving the Department

After you have been granted leave to supplicate, you will be sent a clearance form to complete. Please return this as soon as possible so that we can update your record.

If you clear your desk and leave before you have been granted leave to supplicate, please inform the Building and Facilities Manager as soon as possible. Please do not forget to collect your deposit/s by returning any keys to reception.

Personal property should not be left in the department after you have been granted leave to supplicate. If you wish to request the use of your desk for longer, contact the Building and Facilities Manager as soon as possible. Please note that we are not normally able to offer desk space beyond the end of the fourth year.

10.1 Submitting a Copy of your Thesis to the Library

Once you have been granted leave to supplicate, and before your degree conferral ceremony, you will be required to submit a copy of your final thesis (which incorporates any corrections required by the examiners) to the Oxford Research Archive (ORA).

In certain circumstances, you may also be required to submit a hard copy to the Examination Schools for depositing in the Bodleian Library. Details about these processes will be provided with your leave to supplicate letter, along with details on how to apply for an embargo or dispensation from consultation.

You are encouraged to submit a copy of your thesis to the Departmental Library. The department will meet the cost of binding one copy of the thesis to be deposited in the Departmental Library. To reclaim the cost, you should submit an expenses claim.

DTP students may be able to use up to £150 of their RTSG for additional copies. This should be confirmed with their DTP Administrator first.

10.2 Returning Books to the Earth Sciences Library

When you are due to leave the department, please make sure you take books you have borrowed back to the library.

Library material will have a spine label similar to that shown in Figure 1, and inside the book, there will be a bookplate similar to ones shown in Figure *2* and Figure 3.

You remain responsible for a book until it is returned. Do not give books to another reader unless they have been returned and re-issued. If a book is not returned, you will be sent an invoice for its replacement.



Figure 1

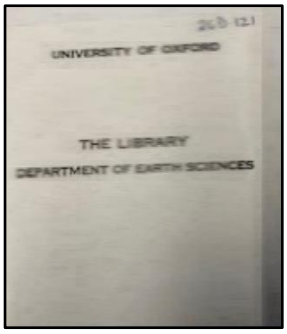


Figure 2

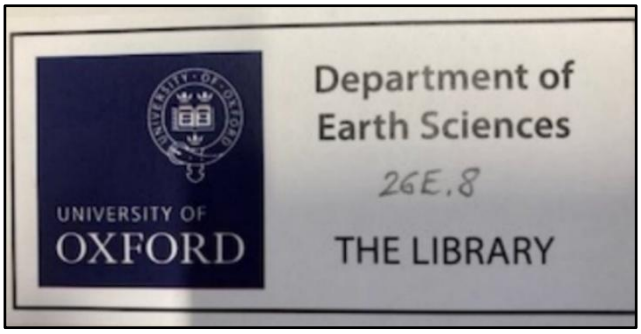


Figure 3

10.3 Donating Books to the Library

Donations of library material which support the work of the teaching and research of the department are gratefully received.

If you wish to donate, please email library@earth.ox.ac.uk with a list, including the:

- author
- title
- publisher
- publication date

Due to space constraints and staff time involved, donations are accepted on a selective basis. Donations will be added to the library's collection according to their:

- Relevance to the teaching and research of the department
- Condition of the material e.g., unmarked, clean, binding intact
- Resources required for selecting, receiving, processing and cataloguing the material
- Availability of the material in the Earth Sciences and other Oxford libraries
- Availability of the material in electronic format

Donations are accepted on the understanding that the material becomes the property of the department. The material will be integrated with the existing stock and cannot be kept as a discrete collection. The donor will be acknowledged on each item's bookplate.

Material that is not added to the collection, either at the time of receipt or subsequently, may be passed on to other libraries or offered, for free, to members of the department. Where the material is not passed on, it may be sold or sent for disposal. The proceeds of any sales will be used to benefit the department.

10.4 Rock Disposal

When your thesis is complete, you are required to leave a numbered, representative selection of your rocks (with thin sections) to be incorporated into the Departmental Accessions Series, which is administered as part of the Petrological Collections of the Museum. The specimens should be clearly marked with your reference number, and you should supply a spreadsheet giving at a *minimum*, the reference number, identification, full locality (including grid or map reference), geological context (including any stratigraphic information), and the date of collection for each specimen.

Please contact the relevant Collections Manager (see Appendix A) when you are close to completion for further advice. **All other rocks must be removed from your office or other departmental storage when you depart**.

10.5 Requesting references

Due to the high demand for references at the end of the calendar year, any references that that will be required for January should be requested before the end of Week 8 of Michaelmas Term.

When requesting a reference at other times of year, we suggest giving a minimum notice period of at least 2 weeks.

Please note that there is no requirement to provide a reference where a student has not requested one in advance; has not given sufficient notice; or has ignored career advice.

11. Finance

11.1 Departmental Contacts

The Finance Office administers student funds as agreed with sponsors.

David White is our Management Accountant and oversees all Earth Sciences accounts.

All procurement questions should be directed to orders@earth.ox.ac.uk. This includes requisition and purchase order queries, conference bookings, travel bookings on credit card or through Key Travel.

All payment questions should be directed to accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk. This includes invoice (supplier payments), expense payments, and accounts receivable, financial reporting and management accounts.

All project and post-award questions should be directed to the Research Finance Manager for Earth Sciences, Gabriela Rotari (project@earth.ox.ac.uk). This includes grant management, Oracle project management, reporting and forecasting.

11.2 Research Training Support Grant (RTSG)

Students should discuss the budget for their project with their supervisor(s) as early as possible. This should be submitted to the Management Accountant as soon as possible so they can help to manage your project's finances.

You will be asked to review and submit an updated budget with your Transfer of Status materials. A template budget form is available on Canvas.

Students funded by a research council will be allocated a Research Training Support Grant (RTSG) to cover their research expenses. DPhil students should discuss the value of their RTSG with their supervisors (students on DTP programmes should contact their DTP Administrator). RTSGs can usually be used to cover field expenses, analysis, and conference attendance.

Your supervisor will need to approve all expenditure from your RTSG. Please also refer to the department's policy on the billing and use of Small Research Facilities (SRF) in Appendix M.

There may be additional strategic funds available for significant purchases, but you will need to present a plan or justification for the expenditure and obtain the agreement of your supervisor/s. These funds will be distributed according to availability.

11.3 UK Research Council Funding

The department will directly administer all funds for students funded by a research council. This means we will pay the stipend and course fees, and manage the funds allocated for field work and exceptional consumables. Your stipend will be paid in four equal quarterly instalments in advance of each quarter for each year of your scholarship, subject to the terms of your funding offer letter. Payments will be made directly into your UK bank account.

Please note that payments to students require bank details to be supplied in advance on the form supplied. It may take up to 4-6 weeks to reach your account from the date of request.

It is the responsibility of the department and supervisor to ensure that your research is properly supported. Any queries relating to your funding should be directed to the Head of Administration and Finance or DGS.

Students funded by other means should discuss the administration of their funding with the Finance Office.

11.4 Claiming for Expenses

To claim reimbursement for costs incurred, you will need to submit an expenses claim. Queries about the expenses process should be directed to the Finance Office.

11.5 Travel and Field Work

Any travel and field work associated with your project should have been agreed by your supervisor and budgeted for. In most cases funds are strictly limited, and supervisors will have provided an advance estimate of costs. If in doubt about spending in association with your project, please consult your supervisor(s) or the Finance Office.

If your field work is funded, the department can pay part of the estimated costs in advance, as some arrangements and payments must be made prior to the trip. You must account for the actual costs on your return with all supporting documents such as tickets and receipts. contact the Finance Office (accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk) **at least 2 weeks** before you require travel advances.

Travel should be undertaken by the cheapest possible method. The Academic Office can sign and stamp application forms for Railcards. Rail costs will be reimbursed at the railcard rate only.

Your research may require you to undertake field work in a variety of terrain and weather conditions. It is therefore essential that you have suitable outdoor clothing for all eventualities.

11.6 Sick, Parental and other Exceptional Leave Policies

The MPLS Division's policy on Sick, Parental and other Exceptional Leave is published on its website.

The University additionally maintains a policy on Student Maternity, Extended Paternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave. This addresses student parent interactions with the University in relation to data collection, defining entitlement to parental leave, arrangements for return to study, and access to University graduate accommodation and childcare services.

11.7 Carers Fund

We recognise that parents with young children, or those with caring responsibilities, can find it very difficult to take opportunities to attend seminars or present work at conferences, yet these are important things to do for research, teaching, and career development, and to foster networking and collaboration opportunities. The Department of Earth Sciences offers discretionary funds of up to £250 (per event) to help towards increased caring costs resulting from such activities.

This is open to all members of staff and postgraduate students, particularly those in the early stages of their career, who are attending conferences, seminars and courses.

The Carers Fund application form is available on the department's SharePoint site.

11.8 Young Adult Carers

The University also offers support dedicated to young carers aged 16-25. Please see the Young Adult Carers page for more information.

11.9 Additional Sources of Funding

Please see the Appendix I for other potential sources of funding for field work, travel, conferences, etc.

11.10 Demonstrating

You must contact HR before doing any work on behalf of the department. Please see the Working for the Department section of this handbook for further details.

11.11 Tutorials

You may also give tutorials to undergraduate students. Tutorials are administered and paid for by the colleges, and they should instruct you on how to claim payment. We advise that you contact your College Office if you would be interested in giving tutorials.

11.12 Burdett-Coutts Fund

The Burdett Coutts Fund provides a possible source of funding for travel (e.g., field work), use of field assistants, or attendance at conferences (students will not receive funds towards attendance at more than one conference during their programme). Funds are limited, but every DPhil student is eligible to apply. Priority will be given to first time applications.

The Committee would expect that applicants also apply for any other available funding e.g., college funds or other funding that their supervisor might be aware of. Applications are invited at the beginning of Michaelmas and Hilary terms, and application forms are available on the department's SharePoint site. They include a section to be completed by the supervisor, who then submits the form to the Committee Secretary.

12. Administration and Building Facilities

12.1 Building Access using your University Card

Your college will issue you with your University Card. The card is widely used for identification, and you will need it for accessing the department building and facilities. Reception can arrange card entry to the building and any additional authorisation to access restricted areas.

Your card is also necessary for accessing the University's online systems. Where you have extended or suspended your period of study and your card is due to expire, you will need to contact your college to renew it.

12.2 Term Dates and Department Closures

The dates of term can be found on the University website.

The department usually closes during the Christmas period, and over the Easter weekend. It is also closed on all bank holidays. Laboratory services and reception do not operate during these times.

12.3 Notices

Notices of conferences, special lectures, safety concerns, and jobs and courses are regularly posted throughout the building. If you wish to display a departmental notice, see the reception staff. We reserve the right to refuse to display, or remove, any notices that the department considers inappropriate.

12.4 Collecting and Sending Post/Mail

Incoming post is placed in the pigeonholes on the ground floor.

Internal post is collected from reception by messenger for delivery to other departments/colleges twice daily (no stamp needed).

Outgoing post is collected twice a day by the University Mail staff at roughly 11.00am and 2.00pm. Please leave all post in the trays provided and write your initials in the corner of the envelope. Please see reception if this needs to be tracked. We do not wrap your parcels or dispatch them.

Any business post should be initialled by your supervisor, or in their absence, by the Head of Administration and Finance or the Academic Office.

If you are expecting a parcel, please look out for it in the post room behind reception. Please collect parcels promptly, or let reception know if you are unable to do so.

12.5 Office Space

All graduate students are usually assigned with desk space in the department. At certain times (for example, if you are a CDT/DTP student and have not yet been registered with the department, or if your studies extend beyond 4 years) you may be assigned a hot desk.

Office space is managed by the Building and Facilities Manager. Reception issues keys against a deposit of £30 each (this charge is subject to increase), and you will be charged for any losses. Keys must not be transferred to any other person.

Our keys are on a Master Suite and cannot be cut 'over the counter' without authorization from the Head of Administration and Finance. The replacement charge is subject to increase.

12.6 Office Space for DTP and CDT students

We aim to provide desk space for all DTP/CDT students who transfer to the department. If space is required before the formal transfer process has been completed, please contact the Academic Office.

12.7 Office Inspections

Annual inspections of office spaces take place each summer. Please take note of the following rules:

- Do not rearrange office furniture without first seeking advice to ensure the change is safe and approved by the department. Do not bring in personal items of furniture without department approval.
- Any office furniture should be in good mechanical order and properly assembled. Report any faulty equipment in your office to the Building and Facilities Manager.
- Each office should have a good standard of general cleanliness and housekeeping (no unnecessary debris, trip hazards, loose carpet, excessive accumulation of dust, standing water, other spilled liquids etc). Offices should be free from out-of-date food and mouldy items.
- Offices should be kept in a reasonable tidy state and avoid safety hazards such as paperwork or other materials stacked on the floor or on desktops.
- Any filing cabinets, bookcases etc. taller than 4 feet must be attached to the wall.
- Walkways must be free of cords, boxes and other trip hazards and obstructions.
- Electrical sockets and cords must be in good working condition and not misused (no multi-way adapters or extension leads plugged in to extension leads, no dangerous wiring or damaged plugs). Report any faulty electrics to the Building and Facilities Manager.
- All lighting in the office should be working. Report any faults to the Building and Facilities Manager.
- The temperature in each office should be comfortable. Report any issues to the Building and Facilities Manager.
- Any personal items, e.g., coffee makers, must be compliant with building electrics and PAT tested, so you must notify the Building and Facilities Manager if wanting to bring anything in. Any unauthorised personal electric items, e.g., fan heaters, will be removed.
- In shared offices spaces it is expected that each person keeps their belongings within their own workspace (i.e., within their desk, drawers and shelf space).
- Each office must have access to adequate waste disposal, either in the room or a nearby corridor.
- Chemicals and hazardous waste should not be stored in offices except with prior approval from the Departmental Safety Officer. Any storage of chemical or hazardous waste must always comply with all safety regulations.

If you have any queries, please contact the appropriate Safety Officer, Head of Administration and Finance, or Building and Facilities Manager.

12.8 Fault Reporting

Report any faults with the building, fixtures or fittings to the Building and Facilities Manager. The Safety at Work Act requires that we test electrical fittings regularly. Do not remove labels attached to any apparatus or plug, and **never attempt repairs yourself - not even rewiring a plug**.

12.9 Teaching and Meeting Rooms

Spaces in the department for teaching and meetings can be booked via reception. When using whiteboards, please only use the markers supplied by reception. If you wish to make use of audio-visual equipment, please consult IT at least 24 hours before.

12.10 Telephones

Emergency calls can be made using the telephones located in the corridors of the office spaces. Some labs also have a telephone.

12.11 Recycling

There are recycling points around the building that take paper, cardboard, cans and plastic bottles. Glass (bottle) recycling is available in the Researchers Common Room (RCR, Level 5).

Confidential papers that need to be disposed of securely can be placed in the grey plastic bin in the post room on the ground floor.

12.12 Green Impact

Since the Green Impact scheme was launched, the department has been awarded Bronze, Silver and Gold awards in recognition of its efforts to recycle, reduce waste, save energy and reduce our carbon footprint across the building and the laboratories.

In 2019, the department appointed a new team to act as the department's ambassadors for Green Impact. If you would like further information regarding the Green Impact initiative, please contact the Building and Facilities Manager.

12.13 Cleaning

Cleaners are employed to undertake normal cleaning in your office, and are not able to move papers, rocks etc. If you need to dispose of a large amount of rubbish, please contact the Building and Facilities Manager.

12.14 Catering

There is a self-service coffee machine in the Researchers Common Room (RCR) on Level 5, and a tap for both hot and chilled water. Coffee and tea are available in the RCR at 11am, Monday to Friday. There is also a vending machine on the ground floor, and a smaller coffee machine on Level 2.

Those who bring their own meals to prepare and eat in the kitchen area are asked to put crockery and cutlery in the dishwasher, or wash, dry, and put them away, rather than leave anything soaking in the sink.

Security

NEVER lend your University Card to anyone else or allow an unknown person entry to the department. Thieves operate in the Science Area. Ensure that the door closes and locks when you leave. Do not leave your room unlocked or leave valuable possessions unattended. Please do not leave windows open, especially on the ground floor.

12.15 Security Alarm

The security alarm has longer breaks between the notes than the fire alarm. Its use indicates the existence of an emergency such as a bomb alert or the escape of toxic gases. On hearing the alarm, you should exit the building safely and assemble in front of the building.

12.16 Parking

12.16.1 Cycle Parking

There is ample **cycle parking** around the department, including a swipe card-accessible bike room at the back of the building. Please do not use the bike room to store bikes during periods of absence, and keep bikes padlocked. Please do not bring bikes elsewhere inside the building.

We recommend that you should have personal insurance for your bicycles, as they, along with all other personal belongings, are not insured by the University. The University's Security Officers can help with secure bike labelling and registration (ask reception for details).

12.16.2 Motorbikes

Please be careful and park motorbikes away from car parking areas. Never park in front of fire exits.

12.16.3 Cars

Car parking spaces are not generally available, but departmental spaces can sometimes be booked via reception.

13. IT Facilities

13.1 IT Services

Upon joining the department, you will receive an Earth Sciences domain account for use on the local network.

Unlike most universities, Oxford has a decentralised computer network. Most departments have their own, semi-autonomous systems which are tailored directly to their research areas, meaning that research can be done more efficiently.

The department's IT Policy and other useful information can be found on the department's SharePoint site.

A variety of additional course-related resources are available on the department's Canvas site (https://canvas.ox.ac.uk).

The department provides the following six main IT services. All can be accessed using your departmental user account (note that this is separate from your central University/college account):

- Email: You will receive a Nexus365 email account run by IT services. You can login using your Oxford SSO (in the format 'abcd1234@ox.ac.uk').
- Printing: see guides on printing from Windows and MacOS
- Cloud Storage: You will be provided 100GB of cloud storage space provided by Nexus 365. This can be accessed by signing in to your Nexus365 account. Additional SharePoint sites can be requested which provide an extra 1TB of cloud storage space. You can login using your Oxford SSO.
- Web services
- Wireless networking (Eduroam): To gain access to educational networks around the world, register for a remote access account from IT Services at https://register.it.ox.ac.uk/self/index.
- Virtual private networking (VPN)
    - The departmental VPN uses your departmental domain credentials and connects you to the department's network. To request access to the departmental VPN service please email itsupport@earth.ox.ac.uk. Please note access is only provided if necessary, so please provide a valid reason.
    - The University VPN uses your SSO to authenticate and connects into the central University network (https://help.it.ox.ac.uk/vpn).

In addition to the services centrally supplied by the department, your research group may have dedicated computers and/or storage space available for your research project.

More details of these services are available on the department's SharePoint site.

13.2 Computer Provision

It is the policy of the MPLS Division that all graduate research students should have access to adequate personal computing resources.

You must take up the offer of computing provision (either of a desktop or the £1000 contribution) before the end of your third term as a graduate student. Any requests after this time must be first submitted to the Academic Office for the attention of the HAF, including the written support of your supervisors and an explanation as to why the offer was not taken in the initial three terms.

You should discuss what computing facilities are available to you with your supervisor. If you are unhappy with your computing provision, you should let them know. If this cannot be resolved satisfactorily, you should raise the issue with the DGS.

Computers lost or accidentally damaged are not covered by the University's insurance and are not covered by a replacement scheme. If a computer is irredeemably damaged, the student will need to fund a replacement. Hardware faults (other than batteries) are covered by manufacturers' extended warranty schemes.

DTP and CDT students must submit their research proposal in preparation for formally transferring to the department. They should also register the name of their primary supervisor before attempting to order a computer.

13.3 Standard Laptop

It is the policy of the department to provide each graduate student with a laptop computer suitable for normal office applications when they join the department.

The machine will be procured through the department. It will remain the property of the department and must be returned upon either completion of the degree or withdrawal. For information regarding standard laptop specifications, please refer to the IT Equipment Purchasing section of the Earth Sciences IT page.

13.4 Specialist Machines

If you require a more advanced machine to undertake your research, you must first obtain approval from your supervisor before contacting the department's IT Office to arrange a purchase.

The department will contribute £1000 towards the cost. You can contribute from your own funds. All students can use part of their RTSG towards a specialist machine.

DPhil students will have access to this offer from the time they enrol, DTP students will gain access once they transfer into the department.

The machine will be procured through the department's IT Office and will remain the property of the department They must be returned upon either completion of the degree or withdrawal. If you contribute towards the initial purchase of your machine, then at the end of your studies you will be given the option of purchasing your machine for a nominal sum, however your contribution for the initial purchase cannot be applied retrospectively.

13.5 Software

If you require software, you may be able to purchase what you need through the department or through the University. More information can be found on the department's SharePoint site and on the University website.

If you need to use your own computer for your research (that is, one not purchased by the department), you may be limited in what software can be installed for you, and may have to purchase what you need yourself.

13.6 Photocopiers, scanners, and printers

To use these, you will need to register your University Card using the PIN given to you.

- Photocopiers are on the ground and third floors. Poster printing is also available in-house.
- A3 and A4 scanning to PDF is available on the third floor.

13.7 Data Security: Research Computing and backing up work

- It is your responsibility to make sure that your work is backed up and advised that all important data is cloud based rather than locally stored. Research groups' own file stores are their responsibility, and you should check with them what their data security policy is.
- Your data is your most valuable and possibly irreplaceable asset. Make sure that you know how to back it up safely and in multiple places, preferably with archived older copies just in case of virus infection.

13.8 Viruses

- Viruses and ’Trojan horse’ programs are a real threat, even on Macs.
- Anti-virus software is reactive and not a total guard against infection, so be wary and **never** download and run a program from an untrusted source. It may look like a good idea at the time, but could put all your work at risk.

13.9 Passwords

- Make sure you use unique passwords. If you use the same password for multiple sites and one is hacked, you could be vulnerable everywhere.
- Beware of cyber cafés as they may have keyloggers installed, which will harvest your passwords.
- When accessing your bank or other personal sites. never store the password in the browser and preferably use a ’private’ window and close the browser directly afterwards.
- Never give anyone else your password. Report phishing attempts to target University credentials by emailing phishing@infosec.ox.ac.uk. Please include the original phishing email as an attachment.

13.10 Portable storage

- USB thumb drives are very easy to lose or damage. Just keep them for temporary storage to transfer them between computers
- Do not store anything important or sensitive on them.
- USB hard disks may seem robust, but are susceptible to bumps and shocks and often only last a couple of years.
- Dropbox, iCloud and other cloud providers are convenient but can be a security risk and may store sensitive data outside of the EU, which can breach data laws. For this reason, computers fully integrated with department network storage must not have Dropbox installed. Purchasing individual Cloud services can be deemed taxable by HMRC, so OneDrive by Nexus365 should be used exclusively.

14. Laboratory and Technical Facilities

In the first instance, students should discuss their requests for equipment and facilities with their supervisor. All of our laboratories are in the charge of a Laboratory Manager, Research Associate, or Technician. None should be used without prior arrangements with your supervisor(s) and the laboratory support staff.

Small Research Facilities (SRF) usage should be paid for from a student's RTSG or from a grant of a supervisor. In the exceptional circumstances that these funds are unavailable, each student can request a departmental grant of £2,000 per year to spend between the department SRFs. Departmental funds are usable only in the year of issue and are non-transferable. Note that a certain portion of a student's RTSG will be ring-fenced to allow them to attend a conference or to complete field work near the end of their degree. Cost allocations (RTSG and/or supervisor research grant funds), should form part of the project budget that students (in consultation with their supervisor) create at the start of their degree.

IT Services have guidance to help you get set up with all your basic IT needs, such as email and internet access. Their website also provides information and guidance about other services they offer that can help you make your study easier.

14.1 Workshop Facilities

- **Basement Workshop**: You are not permitted to use workshop machinery, borrow tools, etc., under any circumstances. For requests for work to be carried out in the Basement Workshop, contact the Workshop Manager. Requests must be accompanied by support from your supervisor and authorisation by the Head of Administration and Finance.

- **Equipment**: See your supervisor about any equipment needs. You must have permission to use any hazardous machinery or electrical hand tools (for example, in the Workshop). Equipment may not be removed from any area without the permission of the Head of Administration and Finance. The location of all equipment is recorded in the department inventory, which is subject to frequent inspections.

- **Ionising Radiation**: If your work takes you into laboratories where ionising radiation is used, you **must** be registered as a radiation worker, contact the Radiation Protection Supervisor (see Appendix A).

- Students should feel that they can approach the appropriate technicians with requests for use of specific pieces of equipment, but it should be borne in mind that there are many competing demands on the technicians' time and expertise, and that the department runs a relatively lean support service that is sometimes fully stretched. It may not always be possible to provide the services that would be ideal.

14.2 Geological Facilities

The Geological Facilities Manager should be approached initially with any requests. For specific laboratories and facilities, please Appendix A and Appendix H.

- **Optics Laboratory**: Contains a range of incident and transmitted light microscopes including epi-fluorescence and cathodo-luminescence and digital imaging equipment. For initial booking and training, contact the Geological Facilities Manager.

- **Electron Beam Laboratories**: The department possesses an FEI Quanta-FEG electron microscope together with and a Cameca SX5-FEG electron microprobe (~January 2016) and a large volume carbon evaporator for sample coating. For initial training and booking please contact the Geochemistry Laboratory Manager or the Geological Facilities Manager.

- **Macropalaeobiology Laboratory**: Contains equipment for the study of computed tomography (CT) datasets, digitisation of three-dimensional landmarks, and optical imaging of palaeontological samples at a variety of scales. For use of equipment and facilities contact the Geological Facilities Manager.

- **Rock Crushing Laboratory**: Contains equipment for splitting, powdering and sieving. For use of the equipment and facilities, contact the Geological Facilities Manager.

- **Rock Preparation Laboratories** (rock cutting, polishing and thin section preparation): Work must be detailed on the appropriate form (available from the laboratory and administration). For use of the equipment and facilities, contact the Geological Facilities Manager.

14.3 Online Booking

A list of the main equipment within the department is detailed in Appendix H.

It is important to negotiate scheduling and costs with supervisors and support staff in advance of use of facilities or equipment.

There is an online booking facility available for the SEM. For technical advice and booking for the ICP-MS and Sector-Field ICP instruments, please contact the ICP Laboratory Manager.

14.4 Formal training and sign-off

The support staff responsible for the day-to-day running of laboratories require all new users of the equipment and facilities to be trained, irrespective of their past experience. Training and supervision will be specifically tailored to an individual user's needs by the person in charge of the relevant facility. You and your supervisor(s) should liaise with laboratory managers before starting work.

14.5 Rock Acquisition, Storage and Disposal

Depending on your project, you may need to collect sample material from the field for study in Oxford. This requires thought and advance planning to find the ideal balance between collecting enough of the right material to achieve your scientific objectives, yet not over-collecting, which can lead to excessive transportation costs, wastage of resources, and storage problems in the department.

Discuss your sampling strategy with your supervisor. Samples for geochemical or isotopic study have an ideal size determined largely by the analytical technique. Samples purely for petrographic study and in-situ microanalysis can be kept small. Trim waste and weathered material in the field.

See your supervisor for any matters regarding rock storage. A very limited amount of space is available in the department basement. Any rock specimens placed in storage should be boxed, the box clearly labelled with the owner's name. Different sized boxes are available in the store. Unlabelled material is in ever-present danger of being thrown out.

Please consult the Finance Office about importing rocks. **Keep all documents and make the arrangements before you leave for your field work**. Rocks must be imported by the cheapest possible means, so plan this in advance and agree the arrangements with your supervisor before you go into the field.

Bear in mind that you will probably need special permission to import water, soil and biological materials from abroad. This permission may take some months to put in place, so

plan well in advance of your field trip. Equipment that is taken into/out of the country for fieldwork will need to be insured and may also need to be declared for customs purposes.

When your thesis is complete, you are required to leave a numbered, representative selection of your rocks (with thin sections) to be incorporated into the Departmental Accessions Series, which is administered as part of the Petrological Collections of the Museum. The specimens should be clearly marked with your reference number, and you should supply a spreadsheet giving at a *minimum*, the reference number, identification, full locality (including grid or map reference), geological context (including any stratigraphic information), and the date of collection for each specimen.

When you are close to completion, please contact the relevant Collections Manager for further advice. All other rocks must be removed from your office or other departmental storage when you leave the department**.**

14.6 Supplies

Supplies should be ordered through the finance system by raising a requisition form approved by your supervisor. For general stationery supplies, please ask at reception.

15. Libraries

Oxford has a wealth of library provision, including the Bodleian Libraries, college libraries and the departmental library. Your University card will allow you access to many of these libraries.

When you join the department, the Departmental Librarian will introduce you to the library services available at Oxford. This session will outline the various resources, systems and training opportunities you will encounter during your course.

15.1 Departmental Library

There is a library within the Department of Earth Sciences, situated on the ground floor. It is a pleasant place to study and contains a wealth of resources geared towards the subjects we study and research.

15.2 Register with the Library

Please register your University card number and expiry date with the library, either in person or by emailing library@earth.ox.ac.uk.

15.3 Library Opening Hours

Members of the department have 24-hour swipe card access to the library. The library is staffed between 9am and 1pm every weekday (the librarian may work from home on Wednesdays). At other times, reception may be able to help with access to some library material.

Details of borrowing/returning, loan limits, the library collection and resources, and interlibrary loans can be found on the department's website.

15.4 Library etiquette

Please make sure you:

- Keep noise to a minimum.
- Do not eat, or drink anything but bottled water.
- Use the self-service machine to borrow and return books, even when you are taking them to the Labs, your office or to the Common Room.
- Return your loans promptly.
- Leave desks free for others to use – personal belongings may be left in the slots by the outsize books.
- Switch the lights off if you are the last person to leave.

15.5 Book Donations

Please see Donating Books to the Library

16. Working for the Department

Probationer Research Students (PRS) students may act as demonstrators, take translation classes, support academic study skills development and so on. However, students will normally have completed their Transfer of Status before participating in more substantial teaching activities, such as a series of tutorials.

No PGR student is allowed to teach without some form of initial training. At the very minimum, students should undertake the Department's Preparation for learning and teaching at Oxford (PLTO) course. The Associate Head of Teaching (AHoD Teaching) will advertise PLTO sessions at appropriate points throughout the year.

Before participating in any teaching, students should first seek agreement from their supervisor. Supervisors should record any relevant discussions in their GSR reports.

Before doing any work, you must have a signed contract filed with HR. This is a Casual Worker Agreement and is not the same as your student contract. You must also have a right to work check. **Please note that you will not be paid if a right to work check and a contract are not in place before you begin working**.

We strongly advise that you contact HR (personnel@earth.ox.ac.uk) as soon as you are invited to undertake work on behalf of the department. Contracts for demonstrating are renewed at the start of each academic year, and you will need to visit HR again before you undertake any work in subsequent years.

If you are on a Student visa and therefore have restrictions on the number of hours you can work per week, you can still demonstrate on undergraduate field courses, but your supervisor must submit a letter stating that you are not required to be studying at the time of the field course. HR have a template letter for supervisors to complete, but the letter must be signed and returned to HR before you go on the field course. A letter must be submitted before each field course for which you will be a demonstrator.

16.1 Demonstrating on the Undergraduate Programme

Additional income can be earned by demonstrating in undergraduate classes or on field courses. You can offer your services by completing the PLTO and registering on a database that faculty can consult. Faculty will either advertise opportunities or approach you directly.

To identify classes or field courses where you may be able to offer expertise, please take a look at the department's Undergraduate Course Information page.

16.2 Demonstrating and Teaching Policy

A job description is available on the department's SharePoint site. Demonstrators are expected to fully meet all requirements, including completing the PLTO. The current Schedule of Additional payments and the Demonstrating and Teaching Policy are available on the HR Resources intranet pages.

16.3 Outreach and Public Engagement

A large number of researchers in the department are involved in outreach activities, which promote the subject of Earth Sciences and encourage potential students to apply to the University. Outreach activities relating to the sharing or dissemination of research are referred to as Public and Community Engagement with Research (PCER). Outreach and PCER activities are coordinated by the Outreach and Communications Manager.

The outreach and PCER activities performed by the department include:

- Working with local schools and delivering workshops for students
- Developing resources for schools
- Attending science fairs, museum exhibitions and community centre activities
- Widening participation activities, such as the UNIQ Summer School
- Hosting academic taster sessions for prospective applicants
- Recruitment activities, such as the Undergraduate Open Days

The Outreach and Communications Manager is always happy to discuss potential opportunities with students and developing new ideas. If you would like to get involved in outreach or PCER, or would be interested in hearing about upcoming voluntary and paid opportunities, please join the outreach mailing list by emailing outreach@earth.ox.ac.uk.

16.4 Communications and Branding

The Outreach and Communications Manager is responsible for external communications (website, news articles, press relations, social media), internal communications (intranet, newsletters) and branding.

The Communications Team can help you to select the right channels for any news you want to share. This might include:

- Publications, which can be disseminated via news articles and with the press
- Awards and prizes, which can be celebrated externally and in newsletters
- Opportunities, updates and events, which can be publicised internally
- Photographs and video from field work, placements and conferences, which can be shared via social media

Newsletters, intranet updates, mailers and other internal communications also often contain important information and opportunities.

You are responsible for maintaining your personal profile on the departmental website. It is recommended that you keep this up to date to ensure that you are visible to potential funders, collaborators and employers.

17. Student Welfare and Representation

17.1 Holiday and Working Hours

Students are entitled to take six weeks holiday a year, in consultation with their supervisors. It is important that you take it. A standard DPhil working week should be an average of 40 hours, as advised in the Government's Working Hours Directive.

17.2 Personal Details

On registration you will be required to complete your personal details. You can update them via the Student Self Service portal at any point during the academic year. Please see the Student Self Service webpage for additional guidance.

On (re)registration, students will be asked to confirm their legal sex and title, and be invited to state the gender they identify with and preferred personal pronouns. Students can update this information at any time via Student Self Service. When providing legal sex (in line with legal documents such as birth certificate, gender recognition certificate, or passport), students will be able to choose 'Other' if their legal document recognises a sex other than male or female.

17.3 Student Representation

The department and the University are committed to hearing views from all groups in the department. The best way for these to be heard and acted upon is at the Department's committees. We therefore request that postgraduate representatives attend the following meetings (dates and times may vary):

JCC(G) (Joint Consultative Committee for Graduates)	Tuesday of Week 1, at 1pm (1 hour)
EEDI Committee (Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity)	Monday of Week 2, at 2pm (1.5 hours)
Safety Committee	Tuesday of Week 2, at 11.30am (1 hour)
Teaching Committee	Tuesday of Week 4, at 1pm (2 hours)
Management Committee	Tuesday of Week 5, at 2pm (1.5 hours)

The JCC(G) is the department's main committee to represent the interests and views of postgraduate students. It consists of the DGS, the Deputy DGS, administrative staff and postgraduates (one representative from each year; one from the DTP; and anyone else who wishes to attend). Prior to each JCCG meeting, graduate students will meet to discuss any issues. The JCC(G) meets termly and reports directly to the Teaching Committee.

A representative from the JCC(G) will usually attend the Teaching Committee meetings to represent the views expressed during the meeting.

Student representatives on the Outreach and Communications Working Group, the Health and Safety and EEDI committees are expected to represent the interests and concerns of postgraduate students in the department. They will be expected to liaise with appropriate representatives on the departmental JCCG as necessary.

One postgraduate student from each of the constituent departments of the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division is invited to the MPLS Graduate Joint Consultative

Forum. Student members are expected to represent the interests and concerns of students on all graduate courses at divisional level and will be expected to liaise with appropriate representatives on the departmental JCCG as necessary.

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

17.4 Oxford Student Union (SU)

Oxford SU Advice offers free, confidential and independent information advice and guidance on navigating the collegiate University, CCAT and OIA processes.

If you need further support you can get in touch with them via the Contact Oxford SU Advice Form).

17.5 Disability Advisory Service

The Disability Advisory Service (DAS) provides information and advice on disability issues and facilitates support for those with, for example, sensory or mobility impairments, long-term health conditions, specific learning difficulties, autistic spectrum conditions or mental health difficulties. More information is available on the University's Disability webpage.

17.6 Pastoral Care

Your first points of contact about any welfare issues should always be your College Office, College Welfare Officer and College Advisor.

If you need to speak to someone in the department, please contact the Head of Administration and Finance. You can also approach any departmental member of staff with any concerns. We will always do our best to support you.

If you are ill, please notify the Academic Office as soon as possible. They will do all they can to help with any formal procedures that may be necessary.

17.7 Mental Health

If you are struggling in any way, please do not feel you must suffer in silence. However shocking (or frivolous) you think the issue may be, we will take you seriously and do whatever we can to support you.

If we cannot speak with you immediately, we will arrange a convenient time. If we cannot answer your questions, we will endeavour to seek guidance and answers. If you do not feel comfortable approaching an office, please contact someone in the department you are comfortable speaking to. The mental health first aiders in the department are listed in Appendix A.

Earth Sciences is a close community, especially when we are in the field, so do please keep an eye on your colleagues and offer your support.

The University has welfare and wellbeing services available to help students, and the Student Union has officers working actively to promote student health and welfare. The University Student Handbook provides general information on welfare, finance, and health, as well as on student conduct and on the running of University examinations.

The University has a number of self-help resources online. There are also online courses available on LinkedIn Learning, which are free to all members of the University (use your SSO to sign in).

17.8 Harassment

The department and the University do not tolerate harassment in any form. The department currently has several trained harassment advisors:

- Darren Hillegonds: darren.hillegonds@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Helen Johnson: helen.johnson@earth.ox.ac.uk
- Conall MacNiocaill: conall.macniocaill@exeter.ox.ac.uk

If you wish to speak to someone outside the department you can contact the central University office at harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk.

The role of Harassment Advisor is an informal one, intended to be a first point of approach for members of the University. Any discussions are treated in strictest confidence, and the complainant stays in control of the process throughout. Formal action will only be taken if the complainant wishes to pursue it.

The University has published guidance on harassment procedures for students. Sexual violence is never acceptable. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwanted sexual behaviour which takes place without consent, whether you know the person or not. It can happen regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, religion or age. It can happen online or in person. For more information, please see the Oxford Against Sexual Violence campaign webpage.

Oxford's Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service is a safe place for all students who have been affected by sexual harassment or violence at any time. You can contact the service at supportservice@admin.ox.ac.uk.

The university is aware that self-swab DNA kits have been promoted to those who have suffered sexual assault. The University does not endorse or promote the use of these kits. If you have any queries or concerns, please contact supportservice@admin.ox.ac.uk.

17.9 Supervision

The relationship between you and your supervisor in terms of responsibilities and obligations is described in the Divisional Code of Practice on the Supervision of Graduate Research Students..

If problems related to project supervision arise, try to discuss them with your supervisor in the first instance. If you are uncomfortable with this, then the DGS can give advice. If necessary, they can speak to your supervisor on your behalf.

17.10 Mentors

If you would like advice on an appropriate person to act as a mentor during your period of study, other than your supervisor or college advisor, please email the Academic Office.

17.11 Equality and Diversity

The department and the University are committed to equality, diversity and accessibility. For more information, please visit the department's Equality and Diversity webpage.

The University aims to anticipate and respond positively to the needs of prospective, current and former students and staff in relation to gender identity issues, providing a professional and consistent service so that all trans members of the University feel welcome, safe, valued and supported to achieve their potential and contribute as a member of the University.

The Equality and Diversity Unit provides information and support to students and departments to promote an inclusive environment. Details about the University's Equality Policy, information and support that is available can be found on the Equality and Diversity Unit's website.

17.12 Athena Swan

The Department of Earth Sciences holds an Athena Swan Bronze Award. Athena Swan is a charter for women in science, recognising commitment to advancing women's careers in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) employment in higher education and research.

17.13 University Services

The University provides a general guide to student health and welfare issues as well as a Careers Service and a confidential Student Counselling Service that offers assistance with personal, emotional, social and academic problems (see also the Counselling Service's podcast series).

17.14 External Support

- Nightline is an independent listening, support and information service run for and by students, offering instant messaging, Skype and telephone support.
- Samaritans is an independent listening service – always available 24/7 by telephone or online chat.
- NHS Mental Health Helpline is open 24/7 for people who need mental health care when their situation is not life threatening.
- Togetherall is an NHS-approved service providing mental health support 24/7 to students, wherever you are in the world. Register free with your University email to talk online to a mental health professional using the 'message a wall guide' feature or connect with other students through online forums.
- Oxford Safe Haven offers short-term, out-of-hours support for people in Oxfordshire who are experiencing a mental health crisis including suicidal thoughts, via telephone and face-to-face support.
- Your GP will be able to provide access to wider support and resources.

17.15 Staff-Student Relationships Policy

Positive professional relationships between staff and students are crucial for students' educational development and welfare. However, intimate or close personal relationships between staff and the students they have responsibility for can cause significant problems.

Staff who have any responsibility for a current student (including applicants) are prohibited from entering into an intimate relationship with that student, and strongly discouraged from forming any other close personal relationship with them which transgresses the boundaries of professional conduct.

The policy relates to all University staff, including those on joint appointments, casual paid workers, and those with access to University privileges and facilities (such as visiting academics).

If an intimate or close personal relationship has developed contrary to this policy, the student is encouraged to disclose it to their Head of Department or Chair of the Faculty Board, and to a senior member of their college welfare team.

Students should also note the guidance and support available in any cases of non-consensual behaviour, and the further sources of support explained in the policy.

Messages or other behaviours towards members of staff that could be interpreted as flirtatious or making advances towards an intimate relationship will usually need to be reported by the member of staff to the Head of Department/Chair of the Faculty Board and/or HR Team. This may result in protective measures to separate affected parties or minimise the possibility of conflicts of interest, complaints or questions over academic integrity or professional behaviour.

Students should also note that any behaviour that constitutes harassment (towards a staff member or a fellow student) may be the subject of disciplinary action under Statute XI: University Discipline.

18. Graduate Field Trip

A field trip is arranged every year, led by graduate students themselves (usually three are appointed to act as organisers).

The department can only contribute to the cost of the trip. It is therefore important for the organisers to keep in mind that some students may not be able to afford the expense of a trip overseas. Students may also prefer several day trips spread throughout the year rather than a single long trip. It is also important to plan around study and teaching commitments: a trip held in September, for example, may be more convenient than one during term-time.

The organiser(s) need to complete a risk assessment and submit it to the Field Work Safety Officer for approval. Once approved, the risk assessment must be sent and explained to everyone joining the trip.

It is the traveller's responsibility to ensure they have appropriate travel insurance. Students are eligible to take advantage of the University's travel insurance. For information about what is covered and how to apply, please see the University travel insurance website.

Appendix A: Departmental Contacts

Academic Office	
Nigel Perrin	graduate.studies@earth.ox.ac.uk
Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)	
Chris Ballentine	chris.ballentine@earth.ox.ac.uk
Head of Administration & Finance (HAF)	
Louisa Bailey	louisa.bailey@earth.ox.ac.uk
Building Services & Facilities Manager	
Ashleigh Hewson	ashleigh.hewson@earth.ox.ac.uk
Human Resources Manager	
Emma Le Brun-Hayward	personnel@earth.ox.ac.uk
Departmental Librarian	
Elizabeth Crowley	library@earth.ox.ac.uk
Outreach & Communications Manager	
Fiona Suttle	fiona.suttle@earth.ox.ac.uk
Reception	
Jeanette Stimpson	reception@earth.ox.ac.uk
Finance	
Finance team	accounts@earth.ox.ac.uk
IT Services	
IT helpdesk	itsupport@earth.ox.ac.uk
Geological Facilities Manager	
Emily Donald	emily.donald@earth.ox.ac.uk
Department & Chemical Safety Officer	
Zheyu (Jerry) Tian	zheyu.tian@earth.ox.ac.uk
Laser Safety Officer	
Hauke Marquardt	hauke.marquardt@earth.ox.ac.uk
Radiation Safety Officer	
Stacy Carolin	stacy.carolin@earth.ox.ac.uk
Chris Day	chris.day@earth.ox.ac.uk
Field Work Safety Officer	
Richard Walker	richard.walker@earth.ox.ac.uk
Buildings Safety Officer	
Ashleigh Hewson	ashleigh.hewson@earth.ox.ac.uk

Workshop Safety Officer

James King	james.king@earth.ox.ac.uk

Biological Safety Officer

Luke Williams	luke.williams@earth.ox.ac.uk

Divisional Safety Officer

Holly Bratcher	holly.bratcher@mpls.ox.ac.uk

First aiders

Emily Donald	emily.donald@earth.ox.ac.uk
Jason Dowsing	jason.dowsing@earth.ox.ac.uk
Ashleigh Hewson	ashleigh.hewson@earth.ox.ac.uk
James King	james.king@earth.ox.ac.uk
Conall MacNiocaill	conall.macniocaill@earth.ox.ac.uk
Jeanette Stimpson	reception@earth.ox.ac.uk
Zheyu (Jerry) Tian	zheyu.tian@earth.ox.ac.uk
Andrew Walker	andrew.walker@earth.ox.ac.uk
Luke Williams	luke.williams@earth.ox.ac.uk

Mental first aiders

Louisa Bailey	louisa.bailey@earth.ox.ac.uk
James Bryson	james.bryson@earth.ox.ac.uk
Elizabeth Crabbe	elisabeth.crabbe@earth.ox.ac.uk
Hamish Hay	hamish.hay@earth.ox.ac.uk
Darren Hillegonds	darren.hillegonds@earth.ox.ac.uk
Bruce Levell	bruce.levell@earth.ox.ac.uk
Claire Nichols	claire.nichols@earth.ox.ac.uk
Stuart Robinson	stuart.robinson@earth.ox.ac.uk
Emma Smith	emma.smith@earth.ox.ac.uk
Laura Stevens	laura.stevens@earth.ox.ac.uk
Andrew Walker	andrew.walker@earth.ox.ac.uk
David White	david.white@earth.ox.ac.uk
Louise Wright	louise.wright@earth.ox.ac.uk

Harassment Advisors

Darren Hillegonds	darren.hillegonds@earth.ox.ac.uk
Helen Johnson	helen.johnson@earth.ox.ac.uk
Conall MacNiocaill	conall.macniocaill@exeter.ox.ac.uk

Appendix B: Statement of Provision

Statement of Provision for Graduate Research Students

During their first term at Oxford, each graduate student and their supervisor will discuss and agree a statement of provision. This should be reviewed by the supervisor with the student at least once a year.

What arrangements will be put in place for supervising your work?

A named supervisor or supervisors will normally be stated in your offer letter. They will have overall responsibility on behalf of your department for the direction of your work. Typically, you should expect to have meetings with your supervisor or a member of the supervisory team with a frequency of at least once every two weeks averaged across the year. The regularity of these meetings may be subject to variations according to the time of the year, and the stage you are at in your research programme. For more information, see the MPLS Division's Code of Practice on the Supervision of Graduate Research Students.

What induction arrangements will be made?

You will have departmental induction which takes place at the beginning of your first term. The main induction to the department is provided at the start of Michaelmas Term. Other arrangements will be made for students starting at other times of the year. Your supervisor(s) will arrange more specialised induction subsequently.

What workspace will be provided?

Workspace will be related to individual circumstances. All students will have shared office space. If undertaking experimental work, you will also be provided with bench space in a laboratory.

What IT support will be available?

You will be provided with an Earth Sciences IT account providing services and associated access (e.g., use of a departmental computer, software, systems, printing).

You will be provided with a laptop computer suitable for normal office applications when you join the department. If you require a more advanced machine to undertake your research, the department will make a limited contribution towards the cost (you will need to pay the remainder from your own funding). In both instances, the machine will be procured through the department's IT team and will remain the property of the department. Desktops should be located in the department.

What experimental facilities will be available?

The department has a number of geological facilities and a workshop available as appropriate to the research topic. The provision of other resources specific to your project should be agreed with your supervisor as a part of the planning stages of the agreed project.

What library facilities will be available?

The Earth Sciences Library; the Radcliffe Science Library and other university libraries; and centrally provided electronic resources.

What research training and seminars will be available?

Beyond the compulsory training sessions at the beginning of the DPhil, training in the department will mainly depend on the individual student and the nature of their project. The department regularly runs seminars which students are encouraged at attend. These are widely advertised within the department.

In addition to courses introducing the specific area of research, the Graduate Academic Programme provides advanced courses in core techniques (for example, in (non-linear) mathematical modelling, computer programming and data analysis). Research seminars are available within individual research groups, department research groups, across MPLS and other Divisions.

MPLS is developing further cross-disciplinary provision for key research skills, to share research training expertise and skills. Please see its researcher training and development page for more information.

What access to research funds will be available?

You will find that limited departmental funds are available to assist with attendance at conferences, in addition to any allocated funds via individual research group/supervisors. Students may apply to the Burdett-Coutts Committee for limited additional funds to assist with conference attendance or unforeseen expenses.

What formal graduate skills training will be provided?

The Graduate Academic Programme brings together all the training available to graduate research students in MPLS, which means that you have access to a very large number of courses. These include academic courses, research, teaching, transferable skills and career development training. With Access to all these courses, you and your supervisor are able to tailor a training programme to suit your individual needs and interests.

You will have the opportunity to attend a variety of skills training sessions offered by the department, such as Scientific Writing and Teaching Skills, as appropriate to the different stages of your graduate career. The MPLS Division also organises courses and career planning events, details of which are emailed to students via their departments. These skills are taught in the context of the students' own current interests and needs. GSR allows students to reflect on their development and progress, and to record skills training needs and training attended.

A range of courses are organised by the MPLS Division and make up part of the MPLS Graduate Academic Programme (GAP).

What opportunities will be available for developing and practicing teaching skills (for second- and third-year graduates)?

The department provides training in teaching skills, and there are opportunities to take part in teaching activities in the department, such as undergraduate classes and laboratory demonstrating, and tutorial teaching in colleges. Information about the department's training and teaching opportunities is circulated via email.

There may also be opportunities to undertake tutorial teaching in colleges.

You will also be expected to attend the departmental training for Teaching and Lab Demonstrating Skills, and be given the opportunity to attend a course in the field on Field Demonstrating Skills.

What arrangements for accommodation, meals and social facilities will be made, on a year-round basis?

Department

Research students are encouraged to congregate in the Research Common Room, on weekdays at 11am. This encourages interaction between research groups in the department.

Departmental seminars and colloquia bring research students together with academic and other research staff in the department to hear about on-going research, and provide an opportunity for networking and socialising.

College

Many colleges will be able to provide you with at least one year's accommodation. Your college will usually provide meals throughout the year, but provision will vary from college to college, especially during vacations, and you will need to familiarise yourself with your college's detailed arrangements. In addition, there are often self-catering facilities available in graduate accommodation.

You will be a member of the Middle Common Room, or equivalent, of your college, which is the main social centre for graduates. The MCR provides a common room and usually organises a programme of social events throughout the year. The college will also provide a bar, some computing facilities and a library, and may often have dedicated funds for research (conference and field grants). It also represents the interests of its members to the college through an elected Committee or through elected representatives to College Committees. Again, details will vary from college to college. Graduates are also welcome to participate in all other social and sporting activities of the college. Please see individual college websites for further details about all aspects of college provision.

Central

Graduate Research Students may become members of the University Club in Mansfield Road, and participate in the range of sporting activities provided by the University.

What arrangements are in place for pastoral and welfare support?

Department

Within the department, your supervisor(s), DGS, and Academic Office are all available to offer support. The Joint Consultative Committee (Graduate) provides a channel through which graduate students' views and concerns can be brought to the attention of the departmental Teaching Committee.

College

There is an extensive framework of support for graduates within each college. Your college will allocate to you a College Advisor from among its Senior Members, usually in a cognate subject, who will arrange to see you from time to time and whom you may contact for additional advice and support on academic and other matters. In college you may also approach the Tutor for Graduates and/or the Senior Tutor for advice. The Tutor for Graduates is a fellow of the college with particular responsibility for the interests and welfare of graduate students. In some colleges, the Senior Tutor will also have the role of Tutor for Graduates. Each college will also have other named individuals who can offer individual advice. The University also has a professionally staffed confidential Student Counselling Service, which offers assistance with personal, emotional, social and academic problems.

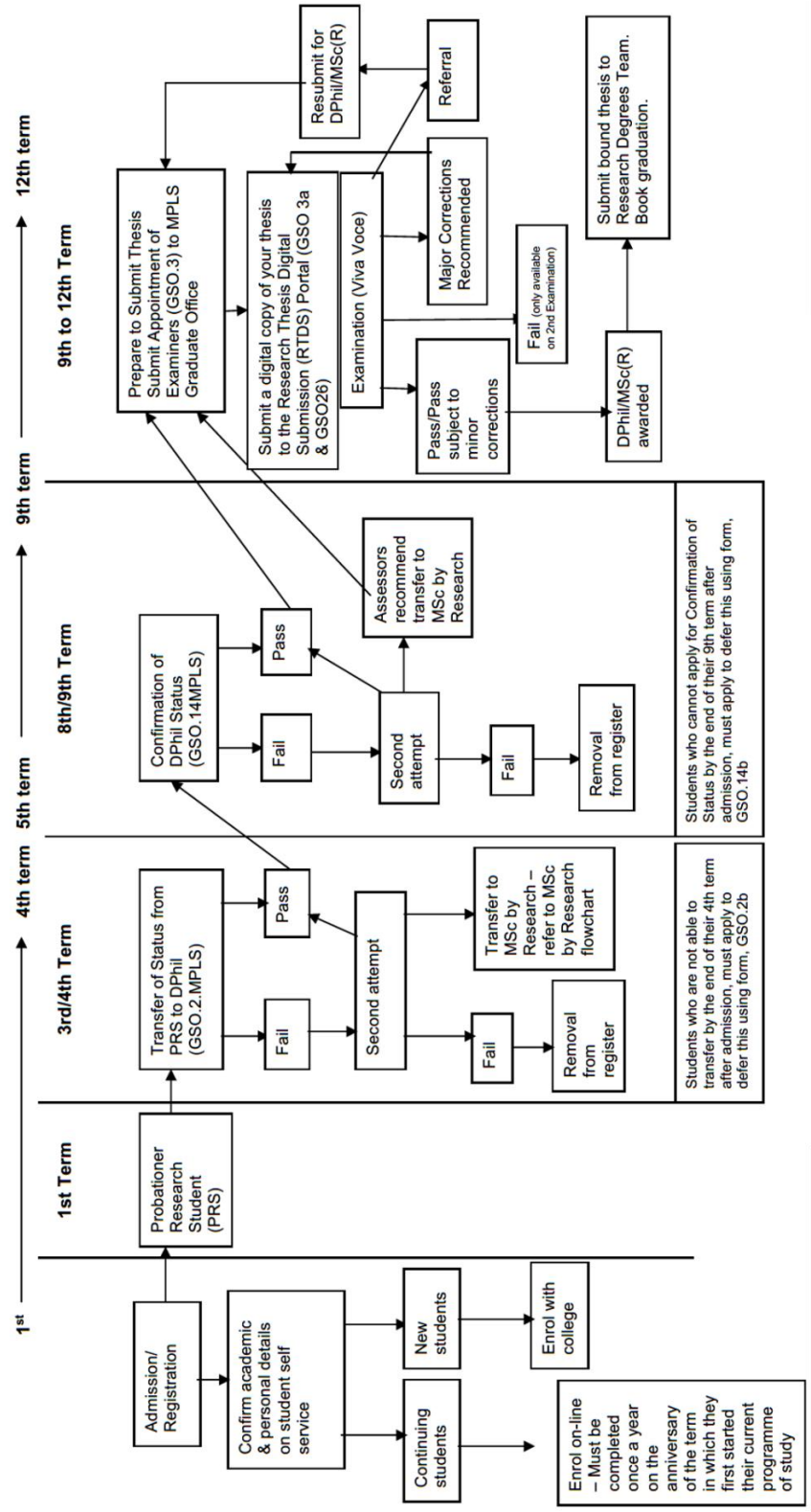
Central

The University provides a Student Counselling Service and Careers Service.

Contacts

If you have any queries about your department's statement of provision please contact the DGS or the Academic Office.

Appendix C: DPhil Progression Flowchart



(Please note that only two attempts are permitted at Transfer & Confirmation of Status)
www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/graduate-school/information-for-postgraduate-research-students/progression

Appendix D: Digital Theses

Please read this information carefully. It provides a summary of the main issues surrounding submitting your digital thesis, which research students should be aware of.

Further information can be found on the Bodleian Libraries website: www2.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ora/about.

Oxford Digital Theses

The University of Oxford is committed to the dissemination of its research, and in support of this commitment provides the Oxford University Research Archive (ORA). ORA was established in 2007 as a permanent and secure online archive of research materials produced by members of the University of Oxford.

It provides a single point of public access to electronic copies of peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings by Oxford authors and Oxford research theses, created in fulfilment of University of Oxford Awards. This also provides a means for institutional compliance with funders' Open Access requirements.

When to Deposit your e-thesis

Current students must have been granted leave to supplicate following examination of their thesis to be eligible for deposit.

Theses should be deposited in good time (a minimum of five working days) in advance of graduation so that they can be processed by the ORA team.

How to Deposit your Thesis

The deposited digital copy should be the finalised copy of the thesis, as approved by the examiners.

Go to Submitting your thesis to ORA: How to deposit and follow the instructions.

Sensitive Content in Digital Theses

When depositing digital copies of theses into ORA it is crucial to take steps to ensure that sensitive information not intended for public release is not inadvertently made freely available on the open Internet. Errors could result in serious consequences for the University or third parties which could be of a legal, personal or financial nature. Guidelines are available online.

Dispensation from Consultation

There may be good reasons why your thesis cannot be made publicly available. For example, it might contain confidential, sensitive or commercial information, infringe copyright, or there may be concerns about pre-publication. If this is the case you should compete an Application for Dispensation from Consultation of Thesis (form GSO.3c). Your request will be considered by members of your faculty in line with faculty policy. Contact your supervisor or Research Services if you are unsure about these matters. Formal dispensation is required for students following academic programmes requiring deposit of the thesis:

Students should apply for dispensation if their thesis contains sensitive or copyright information or have pre-publication concerns.

Once dispensation from consultation has been granted, the period of restricted access should be indicated on the ORA online deposit form.

Publication of your Thesis

Academic theses are increasingly becoming freely available via the internet. Authors may reach a wider audience by making the thesis electronically available in thesis form than by publishing it subsequently in other ways.

During this period of transition, authors need to consider whether to offer open access to their thesis, or publish all or parts of the work as a monograph, journal article or in some other format later. Publishers differ in respect to their policies on this issue, and you are advised to discuss this matter with your supervisor before reaching a decision.

Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights

Information about copyright/legal issues and your thesis

Plagiarism Concerns

Information about submitting your thesis and plagiarism

Appendix E: Mental Health and Harassment

See Appendix A for a list of departmental Mental Health First Aiders and Harassment Advisors.



Appendix F: Equal Opportunities Statement

Full details can be found on the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion webpage.

The University of Oxford is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected. We recognise that the broad range of experiences that a diverse staff and student body brings strengthens our research and enhances our teaching, and that in order for Oxford to remain a world-leading institution we must continue to provide a diverse, inclusive, fair and open environment that allows everyone to grow and flourish.

The University embraces diversity amongst its members and seeks to achieve equity in the experience, progression and achievement of all students and staff through the implementation of transparent policies, practices and procedures and the provision of effective support. It also seeks to ensure that its public engagement work and services benefit diverse audiences and communities.

The University recognises that equality and inclusion should be embedded in all its activities and seeks to promote awareness of equality and foster good practice. The University is committed to a programme of action to support its equality policy, to monitoring its effectiveness, and to publishing information on progress towards its equality aims.

The University seeks to ensure that no member of its community is unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, or sexual orientation (hereafter referred to as the 'protected characteristics').

In exercising its policies, practices, procedures and other functions, the University will have due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and to the protected characteristics, as well as other relevant circumstances including parental or caring responsibilities, contract type, and working hours.

The University will seek to make a positive contribution to the advancement of equality through all its activities. In particular, the University will:

- Encourage applications for study and employment from the widest pool of potential candidates, especially where representation is disproportionately low, and take lawful positive action, for example with targeted scholarships, to improve diversity where appropriate.

- Take appropriate steps to meet the particular needs of individuals from protected groups where these are different from the needs of others, and work to eliminate any barriers to their success.

- In respect of students, seek to attract and admit students of outstanding potential whatever their background, and work to ensure that teaching and assessment provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve and demonstrate their full academic potential. Decisions on the admission of students will be based solely on the individual merits of each candidate and the application of selection criteria appropriate to the course of study.

- In respect of staff, seek to ensure that entry into employment and progression within employment are determined solely by criteria which are related to the duties of a particular post and the relevant grade, and support career development and progression with the aim of ensuring diverse representation and participation at all levels.

The University understands inclusion to mean institutional and individual efforts and actions to foster an environment and institutional culture in which each member feels, and is, valued, listened to and respected, able to be themselves and empowered to participate fully in the life of the University.

The University expects all members of the University community to treat each other with respect, courtesy and consideration and does not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment or victimisation. It has a Policy on Harassment, which includes examples of unacceptable behaviour, supported by a Harassment Advisory Service.

Freedom of expression and academic freedom, as outlined in the University's Statement on Freedom of Speech, are protected by law, and by the University's statutes and policies, though these rights must be exercised within the law.

Appendix G: Regulations on the Use of IT Facilities

Anyone who uses IT facilities provided by the University must comply with the Regulations Relating to the use of Information Technology Facilities (also known as the IT Regs or IT Rules), which deal with matters such as who may use University facilities and for what purposes; access to data; and what constitutes a misuse of facilities.

Appendix H: List of Geological Facilities

Optics Laboratory

- Nikon Optiphot-Pol: transmitted and incident illumination (polarising and reflectance objectives).
- Nikon Optiphot: CL.
- Nikon Optiphot-2: compound, bright field, epi-fluorescence.
- Nikon Labophot-2: compound, phase contrast.
- Wild M8 Sterozoom binocular microscope: incident and transmitted illumination.
- Q-Imaging camera digital camera with *Syncroscopy* software attachable to any of the above.
- Zeiss Discovery 12 stereozoom microscope with imaging and camera lucida
- Zeiss Ultraphot: transmitted illumination.
- Zeiss Universal: incident illumination with single shot reflectance objectives.
- Leitz Laborlux-Pol: with 4-axis universal stage.
- Leica DMRX: incident, transmitted and epi-fluorescence, with point counter
- JCM-5000 Benchtop SEM with gold sputter coater

A number of 'research quality' microscopes are available for loan to students. Please contact Krzysztof Sokol for current instruments available.

Electron beam labs

- FEI Quanta FEG electron microscope equipped with Oxford Aztec EDS, EBSD, CL, SE and BSE detectors.
- Cameca SX5-FEG electron microprobe with 5 WDS spectrometers and fully integrated Bruker EDS, SE & BSE detectors.
- HHV 306 large volume turbo-pumped carbon evaporation coater.

Rock Crushing Facilities

- Rock splitter (x2)
- *Fritsch* Jaw crusher
- *Fritsch* automatic pestle and mortar
- Roller Mill
- *Fritsch* Planetary Ball Mill (four station, agate and zirconium oxide grinding balls)
- SS White Airbrasive 6500 (airbrasive and pneumatic tools)
- Rotary and reciprocal diamond and tungsten drills, pins and abrasive wheels

- Tema Swing Mill with agate and tungsten carbide rings

Sedimentology and Mineral Separation

- Franz isodynamic magnetic separator
- Wet (stainless steel) and dry (brass) 10 and 20cm diameter sieves
- Macro and Micro sediment sample splitters
- Periosonic descaler

Rock Preparation

- Cutting: diamond rock saws
- Thin section Preparation: Diamond and carborundum slurry wheels
- Polishing: diamond paste and aluminium oxide slurry

You can also consult the list of available Small Research Facilities and equipment within the University.

Appendix I: Suggestions for Sources of Funding

Below are some suggestions of sources of funding for fieldwork, travel, attending conferences and other costs.

If you know of a source that is not listed, please let the Academic Office know.

University of Oxford

The University administers a small number of scholarship awards and exchange programmes for students wishing to travel or study abroad as part of their Oxford studies.

Burdett-Coutts Fund

The Burdett Coutts Fund exists for the promotion of the study of Geology, and of other branches of natural science bearing on Geology, among the junior members of the University of Oxford. It was established by a gift from the noted nineteenth-century philanthropist Angela Burdett-Coutts (1814-1906) who supported Geology in Oxford in its early days, among many other causes.

Graduate students are eligible to apply for grants in support of their research during Michaelmas and Hilary Terms. Eligibility for the Fund is subject to certain restrictions, which are explained on the department's SharePoint site.

Earth and Space Foundation

www.earthandspace.org

Expeditions can apply by submitting a description of the project by e-mail (info@earthandspace.org). The Foundation requests all submissions electronically. The application should NOT exceed one side of A4/letter and can be submitted as a Word or PDF document.

Most expeditions are eligible. They include university expeditions and other expeditions from private or non-profit organizations and government expeditions.

European Association of Geochemistry

www.eag.eu.com/education/student-sponsorship

Each year 12 students are sponsored up to 500 Euros per student to attend geochemistry related short courses, summer schools, workshops or conferences located in Europe, except for the Goldschmidt conference.

Students do not need to present any talk or poster at the event.

Deadlines to submit applications are 1 February, 1 May, 1 September, and 1 December.

Explorers Club

www.explorers.org

Graduate Students and Immediate Post-Doc grant supports exploration and field research for those who are just beginning their research careers.

Geochemistry Group (Travel Bursaries)

www.geolsoc.org.uk/geochemistry

The Geochemistry Group offers bursaries to postgraduate researchers registered at UK universities or research institutions to aid travel to a geochemistry meeting either in the UK or internationally. In previous years, students have received bursaries to support travel to conferences such as EGU and Goldschmidt, as well as a number of smaller meetings.

There are three application rounds each year. These deadlines are 15 January, 15 May, and 15 October. Any applications received will be considered after the ensuing deadline, unless explicitly requested otherwise.

Geological Remote Sensing Group of the Geological Society

www.grsg.org.uk

GRSG provide funds for specific projects via the GRSG student awards.

Royal Geographical Society Student Grants

www.rgs.org/in-the-field/in-the-field-grants/students

Each year, the Society supports over 40 student field work projects, from PhD students collecting data for their dissertation to groups of undergraduates looking to get out into the field for the first time.

Gilchrist Educational Trust

www.gilchristgrants.org.uk

Grants to Individuals: applications are considered from students who have made proper provision to fund a degree, or higher education course but find themselves facing unexpected financial difficulties which may prevent completion of it; also, from students who are required, as part of their course, to spend a short period studying abroad.

Grants to Organisations: modest grants are made to applications from organisations are considered if it seems likely that the project(s) for which funds are sought will fill educational gaps, or make more widely available a particular aspect of education or learning.

Grants to Expeditions: the Trust supports a number of small or medium-sized British expeditions, with teams of three or more.

Gilchrist Field Work Award: the award is given to a team of researchers with an outstanding proposal for research to advance geographical knowledge, that requires significant, challenging overseas field work.

Sasagawa Foundation

www.gbsf.org.uk/grants/overview

The Foundation’s aim is to develop good relations between the United Kingdom and Japan by advancing the education of the people of both nations in each other’s culture, society and achievements. It seeks to promote mutual understanding and cooperation through financial support for activities in the following fields: Arts and Culture; Humanities and Social Issues; Japanese Language; Medicine and Health; Science, Technology and Environment; Sport; Youth and Education.

The Jeremy Wilson Charitable Trust

www.jwct.org.uk/apply.html

The JWCT funds the following:

- Young able-bodied and disabled sportspeople and athletes.
- Young geologists.
- Young people or groups to participate in adventurous activities in the UK and overseas.
- Young mountaineers.
- Practical projects to conserve and improve access to natural environments, in particular protected areas, in the UK and overseas.
- Sports equipment for disabled people for sports clubs and other organisations.

The JWCT supports individuals and projects directly rather than contributing to other organisations' general funds.

Volcanic and Magmatic Studies Group

www.vmsg.org.uk/students

VMSG awards bursaries for student researchers from the VMSG community. Two bursary schemes are run, one to attend conferences at which the awardees are presenting an oral or poster presentation; and one to support students wishing to attend international technical and field workshops.

The bursary schemes are intended to support students who are active members of the VMSG community.

The Grey-Milne Travel Bursary

https://geophysics.org.uk/gray-milne-travel-bursary/

The British Geophysical Association administers this fund. The Gray-Milne travel bursary provides funding to support geophysics-related work and travel.

Appendix J: Student Conduct

Students at Oxford are subject to two separate, complementary sets of disciplinary regulations: the rules and by-laws of your college provided in your college handbook or equivalent document; and the University's conduct regulations including the Code of Discipline.

The University regulations on Student Conduct covering student conduct are defined in Statute XI on University discipline and come from three main sources:

- the Code of Discipline in Statute XI.
- regulations, issued by: Council; the Proctors, as the University's disciplinary officers, including emergency regulations for student conduct, published in the University Gazette, notified to you by your college and remaining in force for a set period; the Rules Committee (six Congregation members and six student members who meet annually to review and issue conduct regulations); the Curators of the University Libraries; and the IT Committee.
- local rules on access and use, made and published by people or bodies responsible for managing University land and buildings, or operating University services and facilities.

Whether you are a taught-course or a research student, it is your responsibility to consult and be familiar with the Statutes, which include rules on non-academic behaviour and academic conduct. You should also read information brought to your attention by the University, departments and faculties (for example, in the Student Handbook, course handbooks or on departmental websites). Students who intentionally or recklessly breach regulations, or incite or conspire with others to do so, may face disciplinary action.

Plagiarism

It is important for all taught course and research students within the division's subject areas, to be aware of, and to follow, good practice in the use of sources and making appropriate reference. You will need to exercise judgement in determining when reference is required, and when material may be taken to be so much a part of the 'general knowledge' of your subject that formal citation would not be expected.

The basis on which such judgements are made is likely to vary slightly between subject areas, along with the style and format of referencing. As part of your induction, the departmental librarian runs courses on academic writing, referencing and plagiarism, and will be happy to answer any questions you may have. An online course on avoiding plagiarism is also available to all students.

Cases of apparently deliberate plagiarism are taken extremely seriously. By following the citation principles and practices in place in your subject area, you will be able to develop a rigorous approach to academic referencing and avoid inadvertent plagiarism.

The University employs a series of sophisticated software applications to detect plagiarism in submitted examination work. Although the University strongly encourages the use of electronic resources by students in their academic work, any attempt to use third-party material without proper attribution may result in disciplinary sanctions.

Research Integrity

For individual researchers, research integrity entails a commitment to a range of practices including:

- intellectual honesty in proposing, performing, and reporting research

- accuracy in representing contributions to research proposals and reports
- transparency in handling conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest
- protection of human participants in the conduct of research
- humane care of animals in the conduct of research

There are no universally correct ways to do research. There are, however, standards of practice which apply generally. Researchers should:

- be aware of the legislation, codes of practice and University policies relevant to their field
- have the necessary skills and training for their field
- comply with University and funder policies relating to research data management
- be aware of the publication rules for the journals they want to publish in
- ask if they feel something isn't quite right
- not ignore problems
- be accountable to the University and their peers for the conduct of their research

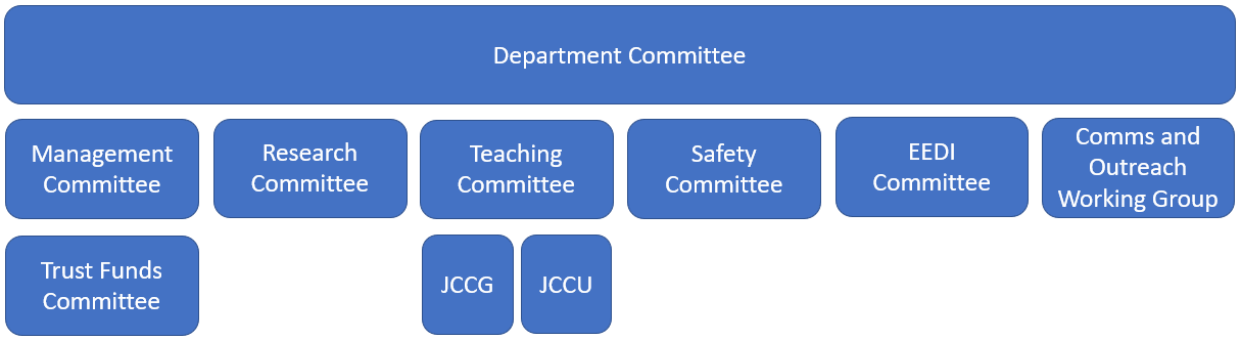
The Research Integrity core course is compulsory for all University of Oxford research staff and research students and must be completed before you apply for Transfer of Status.

Appendix K: Academic Appeals and Complaints

MPLS provides detailed guidance for students wishing to make a complaint and a guide to the complaints procedure.

Additional guidance can be found on the University's Complaints and Academic Appeals webpage.

Appendix L: Department Committee Structure



Appendix M: Billing and Use of SRF

The provision of Small Research Facilities (SRF) supports education into research techniques and facilitates original research. To ensure that the department and SRF can continue to perform their duties well into the future, all users are strongly encouraged to fully fund their usage of SRF. The purpose of this policy is to help SRF managers, students and PIs in managing these (sometimes competing) interests.

Note that this policy does not apply to fourth-year projects, which follow their own instrument-use policies.

Billing and Usage

For PIs

In general, SRF use should be paid for from a grant. In exceptional circumstances where no such funds are available (e.g., when pump-priming is required for future grant proposals), a PI can request access to a departmental grant of £2,000 per year to spend between the department SRF. Note that the departmental grant is usable only in the year of issue and is non-transferable.

For Students

SRF usage should be funded from a student's RTSG, or from the PI's grant funding (if related to the student's project). In exceptional circumstances where funds are unavailable, each student can request a departmental grant of £2,000 per year to spend between the department SRF. Departmental funds are usable only in the year of issue and are non-transferable.

Note that a certain portion of a student's RTSG will be ringfenced for certain activities, such as attending conferences or completing field work in the final stages of their degree. Cost allocations (RTSG and/or supervisor research-grant funds) should form part of the project budget that students create at the start of their degree, and should be reviewed with their supervisor during their application for Transfer of Status. If it is anticipated that the SRF budget required will exceed funds available, this should be discussed with the DGS and HAF as soon as possible.

Implementation

Lab managers will report SRF usage to the Finance department on a quarterly basis, in advance of the SRF and Research Committee meetings. This ensures that the Finance department can report on the status of each user to the SRF manager (i.e., if a grant, RTSG or departmental grant was billed). While all efforts are made to support a full range of activity within the department, priority may be given to funded projects, and usage limits will apply to projects that have exhausted their funds and allowances.

Appendix N: Departmental Code of Conduct

The Department of Earth Sciences is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment, in which all faculty, staff, and students feel welcome and valued, regardless of their background, beliefs, or culture. Everyone shares responsibility for helping to create and maintain this environment.

We expect all members of the department to:

- Treat others with respect and dignity, being mindful of different perspectives.
- Show consideration for others' views and feelings.
- Contribute positively to an inclusive atmosphere by encouraging and appreciating a range of voices.
- Refrain from and challenge any form of discrimination, bullying, or harassment, as such behaviour is unacceptable.
- Take part in relevant training and awareness initiatives offered within the department, division, and University.

All staff, students, and visitors are required to follow this Code of Conduct. Expectations for student conduct are aligned with University's guidelines.

The Code of Conduct applies in all contexts where departmental members interact with each other and with people from outside the departmental community, including within the Earth Sciences building, during field work and field classes, at conferences, and when emailing in a work context.

By upholding these principles, we aim to create a respectful and collaborative environment that supports both academic success and personal development in the Department of Earth Sciences.

Departmental Life

All academic and social activities associated with the Department of Earth Sciences, whether inside or outside the building, must promote a respectful and inclusive environment that encourages open discussion and exchange of ideas. Informal and social events linked to the department must follow the same standards as formal academic activities.

Harassment, discrimination, or intimidation—whether intentional or not—will not be tolerated. While debate and critical discussion are central to academic life, they must always be conducted respectfully. Intimidation, aggression, or disruptive behaviour are not acceptable in the workplace. Bullying, harassment, discrimination, or offensive language are strictly unacceptable.

Preventing Bullying and Harassment

The department does not tolerate harassment, discrimination, or intimidation, and expects all individuals to treat one another with fairness and respect, in line with the University's Harassment Policy. If you experience or witness inappropriate behaviour, you are encouraged to report the incident and seek support. The department has a number of Harassment Advisors that are available to listen to concerns and provide supportive, confidential and non-judgmental guidance on next steps. Harassment Advisors are also available outside of the department.

Speaking with a harassment advisor does not begin a formal process, but it can help you understand the options available for reporting an incident of bullying or harassment. Responsible Bystander training is regularly offered within the department and by the MPLS Division, to help individuals develop the confidence and skills to respond to inappropriate behaviour.

Discrimination

The Department of Earth Sciences embraces diversity and is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all members. Discrimination based on protected characteristics—including age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation—is not permitted. The department follows the University's Equality Policy, the Equality Act 2010, and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Addressing and Resolving Concerns

If behaviour breaches this Code of Conduct, you are encouraged to seek support. The department is committed to responding quickly and to providing appropriate assistance.

Available options include:

- Speaking with a supervisor, line manager, or HR team
- Speaking to field class leaders or the Head of Teaching
- Contacting a Harassment Advisor within the department or outside the department
- Using the MPLS Resolution Service, which provides informal, structured conflict resolution
- Reporting through the University's Report + Support platform (anonymously if preferred), on your own behalf or as a witness. The platform enables you to tell the University about an incident/concern of bullying and harassment.
- Accessing student support services for sexual harassment or violence. This support service will be able to help any student who has experienced sexual harassment or violence (including stalking and relationship abuse).
- Seeking support through your College

Harassment Advisors can guide you through this process. With oversight from the Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EEDI), the department is committed to learning from incidents and continually improving standards of behaviour