1. Criteria
Within equal opportunities principles and legislation, applications will be assessed in the light of a candidate’s ability to meet the following criteria:

2. Academic ability

Proven and potential academic excellence.

Admissions criteria for M.Sc. degrees: All applicants are expected to be predicted or to have achieved a good Honours degree (normally 2.1 or equivalent international qualifications, such as a GPA of at least 3.6/4.0) in a relevant subject, preferably in the social sciences. Relevant work experience may be desirable. Candidates for the MLT will be assessed according to their previous performance on an M-level PGCE programme. Applicants must submit full details of qualifications (transcripts, certificates or diplomas). Different requirements apply for applicants to the PGCE.

Admissions criteria for D.Phil. degrees include: a good Honours degree (normally 2.1 or equivalent international qualifications, such as a GPA of at least 3.6/4.0), achieved or be on course to achieve a Masters degree (normally a mark of at least 68 or a GPA of 3.6 or equivalent) in a relevant subject, relevant professional experience (as appropriate to the research topic), and a research proposal on a topic in which the department can provide research opportunities and supervision. Applicants must submit full details of qualifications (transcripts, certificates or diplomas).

Whilst entry is highly competitive, each application is considered on an individual basis, ensuring that candidates are well-matched to their chosen courses. Professional and practical experience or other capabilities relevant to the programme may be required, and will be considered. We do not require GRE or GMAT tests.

Academic references/letters of recommendation (all applicants)

All applicants must supply three academic references. These will normally be highly positive, supporting the applicant’s intellectual ability, academic achievement, motivation and ability to work in a group.

Written work produced by the student (for all except MLT applicants)

All applicants are required to submit two samples of written work. Each sample should be in English and no more than 2,000 words in length. The written work should be related to the programme to which they are applying and should be on two separate topics.

Applicants may submit a piece of written work previously completed for a prior course of study if the topic is relevant i.e. an assignment or chapter of a dissertation etc. If the piece of work is significantly longer than 2,000 words it should be shortened.

If applicants do not have any existing material that fits this requirement, they are advised to write a book review based on the course subject. A list of relevant references is required for the two samples of written work and should be included in this word count.

These pieces of work will be assessed for their understanding of the subject area, their ability to construct and defend an argument, and proficiency in academic English.
**Statement of purpose/Personal statement (for all applicants)**

All applicants (M.Sc. and D.Phil) should provide a personal statement between 1-2 pages in length and include the following: reasons for applying to this programme of study, the areas of study of interest to the applicant, relevant academic, research and/or practical experience, and what is hoped to be achieved from the programme. The statement should also briefly discuss future aspirations, and for M.Sc. applicants offer an initial indicator as to a potential Masters research project.

**Research proposal (for applicants to the D.Phil. programme)**

All applications for the DPhil programme need to provide a research proposal in English of up to 2,500 words in length. An indicative bibliography is required but not included in the word count. They should demonstrate that the applicant has: a well defined area or topic of research interest, some familiarity with the relevant literature, and a specific focus, issue or set of related questions that they wish to explore within this field.

The proposals should include an indicative title and a short introduction/synopsis, a discussion of the most relevant scholarly literature, and some idea of the research questions or hypotheses to be explored. These questions should build on the literature review, and include a rationale for the importance of this research topic.

The proposal should also indicate the proposed methodological approach to the research. Once again, this will vary depending on the kind of research envisaged. If empirical research is planned, then a discussion of the likely ‘data’ to be collected would be appropriate. It is understood that at this stage these ideas are exploratory, and very likely to develop and change once an applicant is accepted.

**Performance at interview(s)** Interviews are normally held as part of the admissions process. Interviews will usually be around 20 minutes long, and are usually conducted by two members of academic staff, either in person or by phone/skype. During the interview the candidate will be asked about their educational background, their knowledge of social research methods, their research proposal, and reasons for applying to study on the programme.

3. **Publications**

Evidence of published work may be an advantage.

4. **Other qualifications and experience**

Work and professional experience in a relevant area may be desirable for both MSc and D.Phil. applicants. Applicants for the MLT should hold Qualified Teacher Status and are normally currently employed in a teaching post in school or other educational context (further details on the [MLT course pages](#)). Applicants for the PGDip TELUS should hold a teaching qualification and normally be currently employed in a teaching post in a university or other educational context.

5. **Availability of supervision, teaching, facilities and places**

The following factors will govern whether candidates can be offered places:

The ability of the department to provide the appropriate supervision, research opportunities, teaching and facilities for the student’s chosen area of work.
There are limits to the numbers of students who may be admitted onto the departments’ research and taught programmes.

Appropriate supervision may not be available for a particular area of academic study.

Well-qualified candidates may not be offered a place because other candidates have been judged to have greater academic ability.

Graduate supervision is the responsibility of the department as a whole and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff.

6. **English language requirement**

Applicants whose first language is not English are usually required to provide evidence of proficiency in English at the higher level required by the University. The requirement for certification may be waived if there is suitable alternative evidence of the candidate having met the required level of English language proficiency.

7. **Deadlines and required full set of application materials**

Please refer to the Graduate Admissions website for information on the deadlines which must be met, and the full set of supporting materials required, in order for applications to be guaranteed to be considered.

8. **Funding** is not taken into consideration in the decision to make an initial offer a place, but initial offers of a place will not be confirmed until 1) the college which makes the initial offer of a place is satisfied that the applicant has sufficient funding to cover fees and living costs for the standard period of fee liability for the course and 2) all the department’s academic conditions have been met.

9. **Disability, health conditions and specific learning difficulties.**

Students are selected for admission without regard to gender, marital or civil partnership status, disability, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or social background. Decisions on admission are based solely on the individual academic merits of each candidate and the application of the selection criteria appropriate to the programme of study. Further information on how these matters are supported during the admissions process is available here.

10. **Other information**

Applicants for the DPhil programme should consider whether their proposed area of research fits with the interests of current members of staff or the department’s research centres. Applicants with queries should contact the Admissions Tutor (maria.evangelou@education.ox.ac.uk). She will be able to handle or forward your query appropriately.

It is not normally possible to defer an offer of a course place to a subsequent year. Any decision to withdraw an application and reapply will lead to a full reassessment, with decisions made in the light of any subsequent changes to the selection criteria and in relation to the new competitive field.
The department sees its Masters courses as the ideal preparation for research at doctoral level, and the best students from these courses are encouraged to continue to doctoral study. Applicants to the D.Phil programme without a background in the social sciences or social research are likely to be redirected to study for a Masters degree in the first instance.

It is the candidate’s responsibility to secure funding. Places offered on a conditional basis cannot be confirmed without a financial guarantee.

Equal opportunity is promoted at every stage during the application procedure. Care is taken to ensure that applicants are able to demonstrate their appropriate strengths, suitability for the course, and potential to benefit from the course.

11. Assessors

All applications will be assessed by at least two members of academic staff with relevant experience and expertise.

In all cases the Tutor for Graduate Admissions will give final approval to a decision.

Admissions panels or committees will always include at least one member of academic staff who has undertaken appropriate training.

12. Course webpages www.education.ox.ac.uk/courses