



# **GENERAL COURSE HANDBOOK**

**2025**

## Welcome

Welcome to Oxford! You have chosen to study at one of the world's leading centres for the development, application and teaching of Computer Science. You join a rapidly expanding group of researchers, lecturers and students, attracted to Oxford from all over the world. You are here because you deserve to be here and you want to study Computer Science. Our aim is to give you the best opportunity to study that we can.

The Department of Computer Science has an international reputation for the strength of its research and teaching, built up over many years. Our current research ranges from exploring the fundamental issues of the meaning of programming languages, to the engineering of large-scale systems and the modelling of biological processes. Many of the people that will teach you are involved in cutting-edge research, and this influences and informs the courses, which are continually evolving.

This handbook is intended to help you find your feet in the Department, and to give you a handy reference to many of the things that will be unfamiliar about the way we run things here. In addition to this handbook, you will find specific information on your course in a supplement [on the departmental website](#). If you think that the handbook could be improved in some way, or if you find that there is something misleading in it, do let us know.

During your study at Oxford we all hope to share with you some of the understanding we have gained from our own study, research and industrial collaboration. We hope too that you will be able to share with us – and with each other – your enthusiasm for the subject, and your own varied experiences. Above all, we hope that you will enjoy developing your talents in this exciting field.

## Mission Statement

Christopher Strachey, the founder of the Programming Research Group at Oxford, wrote:

*It has long been my personal view that the separation of practical and theoretical work is artificial and injurious. Much of the practical work done in computing, both in software and in hardware design, is unsound and clumsy because the people who do it have not any clear understanding of the fundamental design principles of their work. Most of the abstract mathematical and theoretical work is sterile because it has no point of contact with real computing. One of the central aims of the Programming Research Group as a teaching and research group has been to set up an atmosphere in which this separation cannot happen.*

The specific teaching mission of Department of Computer Science upholds this view, and our mission statements are:

1. to teach computing as a coherent science, with due emphasis on its mathematical foundations;
2. to teach information technology as an engineering discipline with its overriding goal of correct and cost-effective design based on rigorous scientific reasoning;
3. to offer a progressive range of options including hardware and software, theory and practice, general technology and illustrative applications;
4. to keep the syllabus in correspondence with the long-term needs of the employers of our graduates;
5. to develop the students' intellectual abilities and personalities to fit them for future leadership of a demanding profession;
6. to conduct research contributing to these goals, and to publish textbooks to help ourselves and others to reach them.

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## Disclaimer

This handbook applies to students starting an undergraduate or postgraduate degree in Computer Science, or one of the joint degrees with Computer Science, in Michaelmas Term 2025. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

The information in this handbook is accurate as at October 2025, however it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at [www.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges](http://www.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges). If such changes are made the department will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.

Version	Action	Date
Version 1.0	Published start of MT25	

# 1 Sources of information

This handbook is a general handbook designed to help you find your way around the Department of Computer Science and the University of Oxford. It provides guidance to what facilities are available to you, how teaching and learning are organised, and how to find help if you've got any problems. In addition to this handbook, you will find specific information regarding your course in a supplement which is [available on the departmental website](#).

The handbook tries to save you time by telling you many of the things which you might discover by experience, or by asking; but it cannot tell you everything. This University is a complex institution, so do not be afraid to ask for information or advice. Your tutor is your first and best guide, so do ask them when you need help or advice. Below is a list of other places where you will find useful information regarding your degree.

## 1.1 [Examination Regulations](#)

The *Examination Regulations* is the authoritative document on University examinations. The *Examination Regulations* define the format for examinations, and changes to them are strictly regulated by the University to ensure that you cannot be disadvantaged by any changes which are made after you start your course. [The Examination Regulations are available online](#).

## 1.2 [Department of Computer Science Moodle](#)

This is one of the most important sources of information for your degree. [Moodle](#) has details of all course synopses and syllabuses which form part of this handbook, as well as past exam papers and examination documents. Some practicals are also managed through Moodle.

## 1.3 [Department of Computer Science Website](#)

The [website](#) has [timetables](#), information about projects and links to Minerva and other resources. The website provides an overview of the degrees offered by the Department, lists of courses offered in 2025-26 and information on the different faculty members and research themes in the Department.

The [intranet](#) has information specific to the day-to-day use of the Department, such as IT Support, Health and Safety, and the room booking calendar.

## 1.4 University Guidance to students

Further information for students can be found on the University website. You must also read the [University Student Handbook](#). This forms part of your contract with the University.

## 1.5 College information

Your college will probably also have detailed guidance about its own regulations and requirements. Your tutor (for undergraduates) or college advisor (for graduates) and your college office will be able to point you in the right direction.

## 2 Finding your way around

Your academic life in Oxford will involve two connected but distinct institutions. You are a member both of a college and of the University; the teaching of your degree course involves lectures, classes, and practicals in the Department of Computer Science, which is part of the University, as well as, for undergraduates, your tutor in college.

The University and its departments enable you to study for a degree, examine your competence at the end of that study, and award you a degree. Your College provides you with a home, feeds you, guides your study and, for undergraduates, organises some of your teaching. Traditionally, most undergraduate teaching was organised by and between the colleges; however, in science subjects in particular, the central provision of expensive equipment has led to an increased role for departments like the Department of Computer Science.

Your college has a key role in providing pastoral support to you. However, if you have any questions or concerns during your studies you can speak to your college tutor or advisor, the college office or the department's Academic Administration team. If you are unsure who to speak to, the [Academic Administration Team](#) are happy to help!

### 2.1 Computer Science Glossary

The University of Oxford can be quite a confusing place, with a lot of words and phrases that may be new to you. There is a comprehensive [Glossary](#) on the University website, and we have supplemented this with an explanation of terms commonly used in the Department of Computer Science: [Glossary of CS Terms](#)

### 2.2 Academic Staff

The academic staff you will encounter are likely to be in three kinds of roles: there are college tutors and college lecturers who are employed by your College to teach you and guide your study here; there are University Lecturers and other university staff who are employed to give lectures, to organise the degree courses and to examine; and there are departmental staff who are employed to run practical work and organise laboratory work and classes. However, most of the academic staff that you meet will be in at least two of these categories; thus you may well encounter the same person as a tutor in College, and as a lecturer in the Department of Computer Science.

### 2.3 Support Staff

The Academic Administration team at the Department of Computer Science are responsible for supporting all aspects of teaching and examinations and work closely with the academic staff to do this. You will receive communications from them throughout the year, usually with regard to lectures, classes, practicals, examinations and projects. Please ensure that you read these emails and memos and respond where necessary. You can contact them with questions about aspects

of your course, department life, or if you are not sure who else to speak to. You can reach them on: [academic.administrator@cs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:academic.administrator@cs.ox.ac.uk).

You can find details of the team, their responsibilities and contact information on the Intranet [here](#).

Academic Admin Team:

**Rachel Breward** – Head of Academic Administration, and Disability Co-ordinator

**Caroline Davies** – Deputy Head of Academic Administration

**Archie Hunter** – Undergraduate Administrative Assistant

**Kathy Jones** – Academic Assistant

**Jo Ponting** – Academic Administration Officer

Rachel, Caroline, Archie, Kathy and Jo share an email address. To reach them please email [academic.administrator@cs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:academic.administrator@cs.ox.ac.uk)

## **2.4 The Department of Computer Science**

The Department of Computer Science is spread over several buildings. The biggest one is the Wolfson Building, which houses lecture rooms, classrooms and computing labs. Some lectures and classes will take place in the Robert Hooke Building.

### **2.4.1 [The Wolfson Building \(Google Maps\)](#)**

The main building of the Department of Computer Science is the Wolfson Building which stands at the south-eastern corner of what is known as the Keble Road Triangle consisting of Keble Road, Banbury Road and Parks Road. The building loops around a central courtyard. All rooms on the basement floor are numbered with a number beginning with 0-, rooms on the ground floor (Level 1) with a number beginning with 1-, rooms on the first floor (including the Library) with a number beginning with 2-, and so on.

The reception desk is at the main entrance, which is on Parks Road and is open during office hours.

The building has two lecture theatres and one seminar room: they can be reached through the door to the right of the main Parks Road entrance. Lecture Theatre A and the seminar room (051) are on the basement floor and the Bill Roscoe Lecture Theatre is on the ground floor. The Undergraduate Student Social Area (room 048) is also in the basement: in there is a small kitchen which can be used to make hot drinks. Please do not take food or drinks (other than water) into lecture rooms, seminar rooms, computer rooms, or laboratories.

### **2.4.2 [The Robert Hooke Building \(Google maps\)](#)**

The Department has four seminar rooms in the Robert Hooke building: the Richard Bird Room, the Christopher Strachey room, the Tony Hoare Room and Room 114. These rooms are used for classes and from time to time will be used for small lecture



courses. The building is located on Parks Road, to the north of the University Museum of Natural History. The building can be accessed using your University card.

### **2.4.3 Lost Property**

The process for lost property around the department is as follows:

- All lost property is handed into reception (this includes items left in hotdesking rooms if the desk is not booked)
- Lost property is logged here- [Full lost property list](#)
- You can sign up to receive notifications of lost property by emailing [cs-lostproperty-subscribe@maillist.ox.ac.uk](mailto:cs-lostproperty-subscribe@maillist.ox.ac.uk) and you can unsubscribe from receiving these notifications by emailing [cs-lostproperty-unsubscribe@maillist.ox.ac.uk](mailto:cs-lostproperty-unsubscribe@maillist.ox.ac.uk)
- Lost property will be held for a maximum of 3 months then it will be disposed of, on the list the date found of the item turns amber after 2 months and red after 3 months

## **2.5 Other Departments**

### **2.5.1 The Mathematical Institute**

[The Mathematical Institute](#) organises the degrees in Mathematics and joint disciplines. Lectures and tutorial classes for Mathematics courses are held in the Andrew Wiles Building, [in the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter](#) on Woodstock Road.

### **2.5.2 The Department of Engineering Science**

[The Department of Engineering Science](#) organises the University's Engineering degrees. The departmental building also houses our undergraduate Computing Laboratory in the [Thom Building](#). This building is the glass and concrete tower which dominates the Keble Road triangle and its entrance is from the elevated walkway. The Practicals Laboratory is on level 6 of the Thom Building, and there are lecture rooms on levels 1 and 8.

### **2.5.3 The Faculty of Philosophy**

The [Faculty of Philosophy](#) is part of the Humanities Division and organises the University's degrees in Philosophy. The Faculty of Philosophy is housed in the Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, in the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter on Woodstock Road and this is where some Philosophy lectures for the joint degree will take place.

### **2.5.4 The Department of Statistics**

The [Department of Statistics](#) organises lectures for undergraduate degrees in Mathematics and Statistics, as well as for postgraduate courses in Statistical Science. The [Department of Statistics Building](#) is on St Giles, near the junction with Keble Road.

### **2.5.5 Oxford University Language Centre**

The [Language Centre](#) provides courses and other resources to help you learn modern foreign languages, or to keep up and develop your skills. The [Language](#)

[Centre Building](#) just north of St Giles church, and at the back of the IT Services building.

### 2.5.6 The Examination Schools

The Examination Schools is the department of the University that administers public examinations. It is [a building on the south side of High Street](#), next to University College. This building is likely to be the location of your final examinations. When not in use for examinations the rooms and halls of the Examination Schools are used for lectures in subjects which do not have their own lecture theatres, and for special lectures which draw large audiences. Some lecture courses in Philosophy are also held at the Examination Schools.

Students with examinations will be told where the examinations are to be held nearer the time. Timetables are published on the [University's Timetables site](#).

## 2.6 Libraries

Your principal source for books and journals should be your College library. Your College librarian will tell you what it provides, and your College tutor will try to ensure that it provides the textbooks which are of most use for the course.

The main university library is the [Bodleian Library](#) and its science department is the [Radcliffe Science Library](#). The Radcliffe Science Library provides multiple copies of undergraduate text books on science reading lists and may be able to provide books unavailable in your College library. The Mathematical Institute houses the [Whitehead Library](#), for all things mathematical, and philosophy texts can be found in the [Bodleian Humanities Library](#).

The [Department of Computer Science Library](#) contains books, monographic series, journals, technical reports and past theses covering the main research interests of the Department. It is principally for use by graduate students and staff, and is situated in room 240 on Level 2 of the building.

**Library Opening hours:** The library is open 24/7. Library staff are normally available from 09:00-13.00 and 14.00-16.30 Monday to Friday.

**Registration:** you will be pre-registered but you must confirm your registration by bringing your University Card to the library before you begin to borrow.

**The Catalogue:** books and journals are listed on [SOLO](#) (the University-wide online catalogue).

**Borrowing:** members are limited to 12 books at any one time. Books may be borrowed for 3 weeks at a time with possibility of renewal for a further three periods of three weeks unless a book has been recalled by another reader. Books are borrowed using the automated self-issue system. Please ask if you have problems using the machine.

**Short-loan Collection:** books in the short loan collection may be borrowed for 6 days with possibility of renewal for a further six periods of 6 days. They are kept in locked bookcases and can only be borrowed when the library is manned or by email request.

**Other services:** The library has a compact study area with a dedicated terminal for SOLO catalogue searches and a computer for general internet searches. The library

also contains copies of the MSc and D.Phil. theses submitted by students attached to the Department.

**Contact the Library:** Aza Ballard-Whyte (Librarian), telephone 73837, email [library@cs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:library@cs.ox.ac.uk).

**Finding resources:** see [www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/finding-resources](http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/finding-resources)

## 3 Studying at Oxford

Please see the [University's Study Skills and Training](#) site for useful advice on a variety of study skills, from Managing your Workload, over Research and Library Skills, to Revision and Examinations.

### 3.1 Lectures

Lectures are the main forum where course material is presented. Each term's Computer Science lecture timetable with details of lecture rooms is posted online at [www.cs.ox.ac.uk/teaching/timetables/](http://www.cs.ox.ac.uk/teaching/timetables/)

Those for mathematics appear on the screen in the Mathematical Institute, and can also be found online at <https://www.maths.ox.ac.uk/members/students/lecture-lists>.

Philosophy lectures are usually given in Examination Schools. You can find the timetable here: <https://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/lectures>

Details of where to find lectures will be posted on the [course page for each course](#).

You will be notified of any changes via email.

### 3.2 Problem sheets

Lecturers will usually suggest exercises that relate to the material in their lectures. Your attempts at these will often be taken as a framework for the tutorials or classes that accompany the course. In some cases you will find the sheets of suggested problems give you only a start on work in the subject; in others you will find that the sheet consists of a range of exercises intended to suit groups with different backgrounds and that your tutor suggests that you tackle only some of them.

Problem sheets for courses in Computer Science subjects are normally available on the [course page for each course](#) as well as [the course pages on Moodle](#).

### 3.3 Practicals

Each practical requires a report to be submitted for assessment. The report should not be a major burden: it is simply to provide evidence that you have done the work properly. Practical exercises usually give specific instructions as to what should be included in the practical report. In any case the following guidelines should be followed.

In many practicals, most of the report will be in the form of a program. Of course, you are expected to follow good programming practice:

- in a multi-module program, you should include some text explaining the role of each module, and the relationship between them;
- you should include suitable comments explaining the purpose of variables and procedures;
- you should also include comments to explain any interesting algorithms you have used: writing down an invariant will often help;
- you should make the code easy to read, for example by following standard indentation conventions, and by suitable use of white space;
- you should also include some evidence that the program works, for example by including sample output or screen shots: testing is a very important

programming skill, and so you should show that you have considered suitable tests.

Many practicals will include specific questions for you to answer. Make your answers concise and relevant.

If the aim of the practical is to produce some experimental results, then you should present and discuss those. Do not just include pages and pages of numbers spewed out by the program. A concise summary is better, perhaps using another program to show the results are correct (by making a graph, say).

Try to avoid reproducing large volumes of code from the practical materials or repeating program code that you have already listed in the report. If a second program has to include the same procedure definition (say), just write "Procedure Sort(x) defined as before."

You are encouraged to write up reports on practicals as you do them during the term. The demonstrators will happily look at your reports and give you advice about them at the practical sessions, and will mark them there and then. It is perfectly acceptable to have your report marked at one practical session, then do further work on the practical and submit an improved report by the deadline. Please note that you must turn up at the beginning of the session in which you wish your practical to be marked; the demonstrators will not have time and will not be willing to mark your practical if you turn up for only the latter part of the session.

You may want to produce the report using a text formatter like TeX or LaTeX, or a word processor running on your personal computer. Be careful that the time you spend in formatting the document prettily does not distract you from getting the content right. A cogent, concise, neatly hand-written report is preferred to pages of word-processed verbiage. If you do produce a typed report, please ensure that it is legible, with adequate margins and with type that is no smaller than 10 points. While working on your practical, keep a record of the tests you performed on your program, so that you can easily copy relevant data into your report.

Do not copy any other person's practical report. You may have general discussions with other students about the practicals, but the code, test data and report must be all your own work

Please find more information in the [Courses section of the website of the Department of Computer Science](#).

### **3.3.1 Colab Pro**

As a member of the department you will automatically be given access to the free tier of Google Colab, you will just need to use your University SSO to log in to Google. Some courses have practicals and mini-projects that require access to GPUs - any students who sign up to those courses will be given a Colab Pro licence.

Although the Colab Pro licence is meant to be to enable you to do practicals and mini projects, they will be available until the end of June so that you can review your

practical work in the run up to your exams. If you think you need a Colab Pro after this, please talk to the Academic Admin office.

### 3.4 Projects

[Please find more information here.](#)

### 3.5 Expectation of study and student workload

This document concentrates on the *teaching* arrangements for the course, but of course the important thing is *learning*. We will provide facilities and resources to assist your learning, and do what we can to help and encourage you to learn; but you are responsible for your own academic progress.

As well as attending and preparing for lectures and tutorials, you will need to read other material and to work through additional problems to fully master the course material. The lists of books which accompany course synopses are a good place to start on further reading, and (as always) your tutor will be able to suggest further avenues of study.

It is particularly important to do exercises, both paper-and-pencil calculation and design exercises, and practical work with a computer. There is nothing which fixes and deepens understanding of material in a field like this quite like doing it yourself.

You may want to have a look at [Charles Batty's notes How do Undergraduates do Mathematics?](#) which, as well as being relevant to any Mathematics courses you take, might help you with your Computer Science courses. The University provides also very useful guidance on the [Study Guidance Website](#).

If you feel overwhelmed, anxious or that you have too much to do, please get in touch with your College tutor or the Academic Administration Team in the Department. We will be able to help you.

On this note, please read the [University's guidance on paid work](#).

If you have any issues with teaching or supervision please raise these as soon as possible so that they can be addressed promptly. Details of who to contact are provided in the [Complaints and Appeals section below](#).

### 3.6 Computing resources

The department's teaching network comprises two teaching labs with PCs running Linux. The largest teaching lab (T6.05) is located on level 6 of the [Thom Building](#) and contains 48 desktop PCs for students. The second lab (379) is located on level 3 of the [Wolfson building](#) and contains 35 desktop PCs.

In addition to the desktop computers in the teaching labs, there are remote access facilities available to you. You can use these facilities to do practical work using your computer while you are not in one of the teaching labs. You have some [instructions on how to set up the remote access in your computer](#) available.

You may not have specific experience with the type of systems available at Oxford. Therefore, we offer introductory sessions, designed to help you become more familiar with the systems and give you an opportunity to use the network and ask

questions. Demonstrators are present at these sessions, giving you a chance to meet them and find out more about practicals.

Those courses which have practical work associated with them are supported by practical sessions in the Practicals Laboratory throughout the term. These sessions guarantee students exclusive access to the computing facilities they require to complete their work. Demonstrators are present at each session so that you can obtain help with the practicals as you are doing the work.

Although computers are often booked for practical sessions, there are times when these computers are available for students to use. This is mainly to facilitate work on projects. Many students also find it useful to be able to do further work on their practicals outside the regular practical times, or to take the opportunity to learn more about the facilities available.

The computers available in the computer rooms must always remain connected. If you wish to connect your laptop to the existing equipment, please do so only if you can reconnect everything back to how it was, and please remember to do so before leaving the room. Otherwise, other students using the labs will be disrupted if the equipment has been disconnected.

Please do not switch off the computers that are in the computer labs. Those computers are configured to go to sleep after an idle period automatically, so please bear that in mind in case you need to run any long-running experiments.

### **3.7 Acceptable Use of Teaching Spaces**

Please do not take food or drinks other than water into lecture rooms, seminar rooms, computer rooms, or laboratories. When you bring liquids into those spaces, please make sure that you do so strictly in spill-proof and leak-proof bottles in order to avoid disturbing others or damaging the facilities.

Please also remember to leave the space as clean as you found it, disposing of any rubbish in the bins available throughout the Department.

### **3.8 Personal computers**

You are strongly advised to bring your own computer. In addition, you will be able to use the Department's computing facilities. The practical work associated with some courses is flexible enough to enable you to do the work on your own computer provided it is set up with appropriate software, or by using the [remote access facilities](#) available to you.

Your College IT officer will be able to advise you on remote access to the Department's facilities from your own computer, or the college's own computers.

If you decided to bring your own portable equipment to the Department, please note that you will not be allowed to plug into the wired Ethernet network in the Practicals Laboratory in the Thom Lab or the Department. Wireless connection, via Eduroam, is available in these areas.

Any personal electronic devices brought to the Department are subject to [policies on electrical equipment](#). ([University page: "Working safely with electricity"](#))

All staff, students, and visitors are co-responsible to ensure that they are electrically safe. In case of questions about electrical safety, please contact [technicians@cs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:technicians@cs.ox.ac.uk).

### **3.9 Access to course material pages from outside ox.ac.uk**

Teaching materials in 2025-26 will be provided through [Moodle](#). You will need to be signed in with your Single Sign-on and password to access all information.

If you try to access these pages from outside ox.ac.uk you will reach a page saying: 'Teaching material pages are only accessible to registered students and staff of Oxford University connecting from a host in the ox.ac.uk domain'. Please use your Single-Sign on username and password to access this material.

This material is made available for your use only (the copyright belongs to the authors). You must not pass it on to anyone else.

### **3.10 Panopto**

Recordings of lectures will be available on Panopto shortly after these have taken place.



## 4 Examinations

Please see also the University's [Examinations and Assessments website](#) which gives useful information on all aspects of the examination process.

### 4.1 Preparation

Your tutor or academic advisor will advise you about revision and practice. As well as any consolidation work done after the end of a term, it is usual to spend at least a good part of Trinity term revising work for that year's examinations.

In subjects that have been taught in previous years, past examination papers are good guides to the sort of examination question that you might be set. In newer subjects you will usually be offered model questions, or some other guidance on the sort of thing to expect. Past papers can be found [here](#).

Also available are the [Examiners' Reports](#) for the past few years, which contain – amongst other things – the examiners' reflections on which questions turned out to be very difficult or had other problems.

### 4.2 Entering for Examinations

Entering for examinations is completed online – please see the [University's guidance here](#). You will receive an email invitation to login to Student Self Service to complete your examination entry assessment selections by a given date. Your selections will be validated and confirmed by a series of display screens within Student Self Service, and you will be able to log back in and change your choices **within the examination entry window** as many times as you wish. A few weeks before the examinations begin a timetable showing where and when each of the written papers will happen [will be published online](#). Together with your timetable you will receive a randomly allocated *candidate number* which you will use to identify your scripts, instead of your name and College, so that they can be marked anonymously.

### 4.3 Notices to Candidates

Before your examination you will receive one or more *notice to candidates* from the examiners which will tell you of any details of the examination procedure that are different from the usual. Notices to candidates will be sent to you by the academic administration team. These notices contain important information about your examinations and should be read very carefully. If you have any questions then please ask your tutor, or the academic administration team; you must not contact the examiners directly.

### 4.4 Examination Conventions

Examination conventions are the formal statement of the specific assessment standards for the course or courses to which they apply. They set out how your examined work will be marked and how the resulting marks will be used to arrive at a final result and classification of your award. They include information on: marking scales; marking and classification criteria; scaling of marks; progression;

resits; use of viva voce examinations; penalties for late submission; and penalties for over-length work.

The Examination Conventions for all degree programmes can be found at: <https://courses.cs.ox.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=676>.

There are three sets of University examinations which you have to pass on your route to a BA degree: Preliminary Examinations ('Prelims') at the end of your first year, and the two parts (Parts A and B) of the Final Honour School ('Finals') at the end of your second and third years. These are called the *public examinations*, as opposed to any *collections* which are tests that your College may set you from time to time to help keep you on your toes and to assess your progress. If you carry on to do a Masters degree, you will take additional public examinations in the fourth year (Part C).

For all undergraduate courses, you will have been entered initially for the 4-year degree. Please be aware that, to proceed into Part C, you will need to have a 2:1 or higher in Parts A and B together. If you change your mind during your fourth year, and decide that you no longer want to pursue the masters level, and would rather take the BA, please discuss this with your tutor, then contact your College Office, who will assist in organising the relevant forms.

#### 4.5 Procedure for in-person written Examinations

You can expect your examinations to be held in the [Examinations Schools](#) on the High Street, although some examinations may take place at [Ewert House](#). The location of your examinations will be confirmed on your timetable. Please look at the screens in the foyer to find out in which room your exam is going to be sat.

You must wear [full academic dress](#) (sub fusc, gown and mortar board/cap) to attend public examinations, and you must bring your University card and your own stationery with you. Please find more information on what you can and cannot take into an examination [here](#).

You should make every effort to be on time for examinations. If you are not there at the start of the examination, attempts will be made to contact your College to find out why not. If you get there in the first half hour, you will still be permitted to sit the exam, although you will have less time. Nobody may leave an examination until half an hour after it starts.

Desks are identified by your name and college, with the desks in alphabetical order of names, but you will need to know your candidate number so that you can write this (and **not** your name or student number) on your script when you hand it in. For each paper that you sit you will be given a cover sheet on which you identify yourself by your candidate number, and the paper by its number and title. You must write your candidate number on **every** booklet that you use.

The question paper will be on your desk when you go in to the examination. You should check that it is the paper that you have entered for, and you should carefully read the instructions on the cover, but you may not open it until told to do so. Read the wording of each question carefully, and make sure that you have not missed out any parts. If there are any issues with the instructions on the cover page, you should raise your hand to speak to an invigilator.

You will be provided with booklets of ruled A4 paper in which to write your answers. The [University's regulations](#) require that you write in black or blue ink, rather than pencil, although you may use pencil for any graphs and drawings. Please start the answer to each question on a new booklet. This makes it much easier for the

marker(s) – sometimes exam scripts need to be split between markers, and that's difficult to do if you have the answer to more than one question in a booklet. If you do start part way through a booklet by accident, please make a clear note of the fact!

You must write legibly: if nothing else it will avoid annoying the marker; but there is a provision for illegible scripts [to be typed at the expense of the candidate!](#)

You will be given instructions at the examination about handing in your script. It is your responsibility to do this: anything left on your desk is liable to be thrown away by the person clearing the room. There will be treasury tags available for you to use to attach booklets together. The rubric on the paper will tell you whether to bind everything in one bundle, or whether to hand in answers to different parts of the paper with separate cover sheets. If you do not attempt any questions from one part of the paper, you should still hand in an empty booklet for that part, so that the examiners can check that all parts of all papers are accounted for.

#### **4.6 If things don't go as planned**

Exams are a stressful time in everybody's lives, and this can be compounded when you are experiencing stressful, upsetting or otherwise difficult circumstances in your personal life.

Information on what to do if you would like examiners to be aware of any factors that may have affected your performance before or during an examination (such as illness, accident or bereavement), alternative arrangements and more are available on the [Oxford Students website on Examinations and Assessments](#).

You may need to make an application to the Proctors (for example, for an extension to a deadline, or if you have been unable to attend an exam due to unforeseen circumstances). Such an application would be done through your college.

The Proctors are responsible for ensuring that all examinations are conducted properly, for implementing student discipline at University level, and for investigating complaints.

## **5 Feedback**

### **5.1 Feedback on learning and assessment**

During your time at Oxford there will be plenty of opportunities for you to get informal feedback: tutorial sessions provide your tutors with an opportunity to give you informal feedback on your academic progress, and the same goes for classes, practicals and even working groups with your peers.

#### **5.1.1 Formative Assessment**

There are various opportunities for you to receive feedback on formative assessment: your tutor will give you feedback on tutorial essays and college collections (termly assessments which do not count towards your degree result), and the practicals demonstrators will mark your practical reports.

#### **5.1.2 Summative Assessment**

Apart from your marks, you will not normally get individual feedback on public examinations. However, you have the right to access to information held about you, which includes examination material such as raw marks (the marks awarded before any scaling is applied to the paper) or any comments written on the script by the assessor. You can find out how to request access to this information [here](#).

Examiner's reports serve as a source for feedback on the performance of your cohort, as they include statistics on paper marks and overall outcomes, and contain the assessor's reports on each paper.

### **5.2 Feedback on teaching**

You also have the opportunity to provide feedback to us as detailed below.

#### **5.2.1 Informal Feedback**

Informally, you can make your views known directly to the academic staff who teach you in lectures, classes, and tutorials. In particular, you might like to make comments to your College Tutor, the Chair of Faculty, or the Director of Teaching. All academic staff will encourage you to make your views known to them and will give you ample opportunity to comment on syllabus content and any other issues about the delivery of the course.

#### **5.2.2 Course questionnaires**

Formally, feedback for courses is given via online and/or paper course questionnaires. You will be invited by email to complete an online survey on all aspects (lectures, classes and practicals) of the courses you have attended each term or the course lecturer will ask you to complete a paper questionnaire towards the end of the course. Even if you have decided not to continue on the course, you are welcome to give feedback and let us know why. Student feedback is greatly valued by the Department and plays a large part in the quality assurance process.

The Senior Management Team and the relevant academic committees in the Department of Computer Science review all courses after they have run, looking in particular at feedback from questionnaires, to consider ways of improving the teaching. Proposed changes to the syllabus and synopsis of courses are considered

by the supervisory committees responsible for the courses (see section 6.1), and an analysis of the statistics on each course is sent to the lecturer of that course.

### **5.3 University-wide Feedback**

Students on full-time and part-time matriculated courses are surveyed once per year on all aspects of their course (learning, living, pastoral support, college) through the Student Barometer. Previous results can be viewed by students, staff and the general public [online](#).

Final year undergraduate students are surveyed instead through the National Student Survey. Results from previous NSS can be found at on the [NSS website](#).

### **5.4 Student representation**

#### **5.4.1 Committees in the Department**

The members of the Department meet at least once a term to discuss matters including changes to the composition of the degree, and to consider reports on the previous year's teaching and examinations. You can find a [list of the departmental committees](#) on the intranet.

##### **5.4.1.1 [Joint Consultative Committee for Undergraduates \(JCCU\)](#)**

We have a formal structure for undergraduate consultation and representation in Computer Science. The JCCU is a committee which comprised of representatives from the student body with a representative from each year of each degree within Computer Science, in addition the committee is co-chaired by an academic member of staff. The Department will email all undergraduate students at the beginning of Michaelmas Term so that interested students can take part in the committee. The committee meets in week 4 of each term to discuss any issues raised by student representatives.

In addition one or two members of the committee will be invited to attend the Faculty meeting in week 6 of each term to raise any issues there, as appropriate.

##### **5.4.1.2 The Mathematics Undergraduates Representative Committee**

The Mathematics Undergraduates Representative Committee (MURC) is organised by undergraduates on the various Mathematics and Computer Science degrees. It has representatives at each of the colleges, and acts amongst other things as a formal channel for bringing feedback directly to the central administration of these subjects.

##### **5.4.2 [Division and University representation](#)**

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

## 6 The University and you

The [Department of Computer Science](#) is responsible for the oversight and development of its courses within the University. The Department is a member of the [Division of Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences \(MPLS\)](#), which is one of the five teaching divisions of the University. Each Division has a role in Quality Assurance, maintaining consistency and ensuring that the constituent departments are adhering to University and Government policy.

The Department communicates primarily with the Division, who in turn, report to central University teams to ensure that our voice is heard in the wider University.

While this can be confusing, the advantage for students is that there are many sources of information and support, who are all following the same procedure. We list below some of the key details that you may find useful during your studies.

### 6.1 Student Life

On the University's webpages for students, you will find a host of information about practicalities to do with all aspects of [student life](#). This includes advice on [academic matters](#), [fees and funding](#), information on [clubs and societies](#), [sport](#), and other information, both academic and non-academic.

Your college may also have a handbook, or guide, which provides college-specific information about the facilities available to you, and who to speak to for further guidance.

The University has a wide range of policies and regulations that apply to students. These are easily accessible through the [A-Z of University regulations, codes of conduct and policies](#) available on the Oxford Students website. The University's [equality and diversity policies and more can be found here](#).

### 6.2 Get involved in outreach activities

The department offers a wide-ranging outreach programme, generally aimed at UK school students. All our students are very welcome to join the department's student ambassador scheme, which usually recruits in Michaelmas term. The scheme is for Oxford Computer Science students (undergraduate and postgraduate) who share a passion for Computer Science and for the University, and feel able to share their knowledge with young people, prospective students, parents and teachers. The Outreach team have a number of activities throughout the year for student ambassadors to support, including Open Days, and masterclasses.

If you are interested or just want to find out more may also contact the Outreach team at [outreach@cs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:outreach@cs.ox.ac.uk) to discuss opportunities.

### 6.3 Health and Welfare

#### 6.3.1 General Welfare

Life can be a bit overwhelming at times for everyone, and it is crucial to seek support before it becomes all too much. If you are feeling unwell or unhappy, your College should be your first port of call. Each College has their own systems of support for students. Please refer to your College handbook or website for more information on who to contact and what support is available through your College. In addition, and

especially for course-related matters, the [academic admin team](#) is always happy to help or just talk!

### 6.3.2 Physical and Mental Health

The University [Oxford Students website contains](#) comprehensive [advice on a variety of issues around student health and welfare](#). You have free access to the [National Health Service](#), and can see a GP ([General Practitioner](#)) when you need to. Emergency medical treatment can be obtained at the Emergency Department (A&E) of the [John Radcliffe Hospital](#). You can find more advice on what constitutes a medical emergency, and what to do if a medical emergency arises, [here](#).

An overview of the student welfare services provided by the University can be found on the University's website ([Welfare and Wellbeing | University of Oxford](#)). Your college will also have welfare provisions, and resources are additionally available through the Student Union, which includes an independent phone and email advice service ([Welfare \(oxfordsu.org\)](#)).

The University operates a Counselling Service which offers group and individual counselling by trained counsellors: [Counselling and mental health | University of Oxford](#). There are also trained peer supporters across the university, who are fellow students: [Peer Support | University of Oxford](#); if you would prefer to speak to a peer supporter who is a person of colour, LGBTQ+, disabled, or religious, then you can also contact [peersupport@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:peersupport@admin.ox.ac.uk) to request to speak to a peer supporter within the Peers of Colour, Rainbow Peers, Disability Diversity Peers, or Peers of Faiths network ([Finding a Peer Supporter | University of Oxford](#)).

If you need advice on where to turn, or someone to talk in the Department of Computer Science, please approach one of our Mental Health Champions. They have received training through Mental Health First Aid (England), regarding mental health which enables them to listen non-judgmentally, providing that first port of call within our department if you need it, and signposting further sources of support where necessary.

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. Approximately [1 in 4 people](#) in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year, and there is no shame in seeking help and support. There is a variety of things you can do yourself to [support your mental health](#). The University offers advice on [self-help strategies](#), and a free [counselling service](#) for students. It is important that you **seek help as early as possible**.

If you think you or someone you know might have a problem with their mental health, please speak to your College tutor.

If you experience sexual violence you can get [help and advice here](#).

Please click [here for a list of emergency contacts](#).

### 6.3.3 Disability Support

If you have a disability, or think you might, please [find advice on how to get support here](#) or reach out to the department's disability contact [Rachel Breward \(rachel.breward@cs.ox.ac.uk\)](#)

## 6.4 University of Oxford Equality Policy

<https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/equality-policy>

The University of Oxford is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected. 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.

The Department's Equality and Diversity Committee meet once a term to ensure the university's policies are implemented at departmental level.

## **6.5 Disability and reasonable adjustments**

If you already have, or develop during the course of your studies, a long-term condition which has an impact on your day-to-day activities, then you might be eligible for reasonable adjustments to enable you to undertake your course. The legal definition of disability is broad, and can include mental health conditions, sensory or mobility impairment, chronic illnesses, specific learning difficulties, or a social/communication difficulty such as Autism Spectrum Condition.

The University's Disability Advisory Service are able to discuss support and access requirements with students ([About the Disability Advisory Service | University of Oxford](#)), and further information on disability support and resources is available through the University's website ([Disability | University of Oxford](#)).

The department's disability co-ordinator is Rachel Breward ([rachel.breward@cs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:rachel.breward@cs.ox.ac.uk); telephone: 73833).

## **6.6 Transgender students**

The department follows the University's policy on supporting transgender students and staff ([Transgender Policy | Equality and Diversity Unit \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)).

The department is able to support students who are transitioning through practical changes such as updating the name on your email address; a checklist for transitioning students is available from the central University ([Transgender Guidance | Equality and Diversity Unit \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)).

Both gendered and gender neutral toilets are available in the department's buildings.

## **6.7 Bullying and harassment**

The department and University does not tolerate any form of bullying and harassment, and students and staff are encouraged to attend training on how to be an effective bystander, should you witness this (the Division holds sessions

throughout the year: [MPLS ED&I Training Programme — Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)). You can also read about how to be a responsible bystander on the University's website ([Responsible bystander | Equality and Diversity Unit \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)).

The department has a number of staff who are trained Harassment Advisors, who can listen confidentially to students or staff who think they may have experienced or witnessed bullying and harassment. Harassment Advisors cannot confirm whether or not a behaviour constitutes harassment, investigate what has happened, approach the alleged harasser, or guarantee the outcome of a complaint, but they can provide a listening ear, and signpost you towards the next possible steps. In some instances, it may be appropriate to resolve the issue informally, for example, the University provides a Student Resolution Service, which provides free mediation for students experiencing conflict with another student ([Student Resolution Service | MPLS](#)). The University's harassment procedure flowchart for students outlines the process if a formal complaint is made ([What to do if you experience harassment | Equality and Diversity Unit \(ox.ac.uk\)](#) – see the 'Documents' sidebar).

A list of the department's Harassment Advisors is available on the department's intranet (<https://intranet.cs.ox.ac.uk/hr/expected-behaviour/>). To speak to an advisor from another department, you can contact the University's harassment line at [harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk)

## **6.8 Complaints and Appeals**

The University, the MPLS Division and the Department of Computer Science all hope that provision made for students at all stages of their course of study will make the need for complaints (about that provision) or appeals (against the outcomes of any form of assessment) infrequent.

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

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

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

### **6.8.1 Complaints**

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by the Department, then you should raise it with the Director of Teaching (Dr Joe Pitt-Francis).

The Department has a complaints procedure which can be found here: [MPLS Division - Guidance for Students on making a complaint and academic appeals](#)

Within the department the officer concerned will attempt to resolve your concern/complaint informally.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, then you may take your concern further by making a formal complaint to the Proctors who will consider complaints under the University [Student Complaints Procedure](#).

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by your College, you should raise it either with your tutor or with the Senior Tutor or the Tutor for Graduates. Your College will also be able to explain how to take your complaint further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of its consideration.

### **6.8.2 Academic appeals**

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

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

If you still have concerns you can make a formal appeal to the Proctors who will consider appeals under the University Academic Appeals Procedure.

## **6.9 Careers**

Information about careers is provided by [Oxford University Careers Service](#), 56 Banbury Road. The Careers Service organise many events to help you choose a career that suits you, and to put you in touch with recruiters.

You are urged to contact the Careers Service for detailed information on careers, and also for advice on compiling a CV, on how to apply, and on interview technique.

When we receive information about careers suitable for Computer Science graduates, it is put on the Careers notice board in the basement of the Department of Computer Science or circulated by email. Information on job vacancies (together with summer internships and competitions) can also be found on our web site at <https://www.cs.ox.ac.uk/recruiters/internal/vacancies.html>. Please note this site can only be accessed from within the Oxford domain.

## **Annexe [A] Plagiarism**

The University's code of conduct concerning academic integrity is set out on the website [here](#). Please read also the University's [web-page on Good Academic Practice](#) and [academic good practice – a practical guide](#).

The following information and advice is of relevance and use to students for all their academic work, e.g. mini-projects, MSc Dissertations, as well as all class and practical work.

Since plagiarism is treated as a serious breach of academic integrity, it is important that you ensure you that you understand fully what is meant by the term “plagiarism”, how to avoid it in your writing, and the potential consequences of either deliberate or inadvertent plagiarism.

We recommend that you complete this online plagiarism course early in the academic year:

### [Avoiding Plagiarism](#)

At the end of the course there is a quiz to test your knowledge; if successful you can print out a certificate for your records. The course also provides an accessible source of information and advice about plagiarism. You should use it in conjunction with the advice on these pages.

### **What is plagiarism?**

Plagiarism is the copying or paraphrasing of other people's work or ideas into your own work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition. Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence.

Cases of suspected plagiarism in assessed work are investigated under the disciplinary regulations concerning conduct in examinations. Intentional or reckless plagiarism may incur severe penalties, including failure of your degree or expulsion from the university.

The necessity to reference applies not only to text, but also to other media, such as computer code, illustrations, graphs etc. It applies equally to published text drawn from books and journals, and to unpublished text, whether from lecture handouts, theses or other students' essays. You must also attribute text or other resources downloaded from web sites.

We strongly recommend that you review the University's guidance on plagiarism here: [guidance on plagiarism](#).

### **Why should you avoid plagiarism?**

Students' work is expected to meet high academic standards and will be scrutinised carefully. The University must ensure that these standards and academic integrity are upheld. Plagiarism at this level is a serious breach of academic integrity and the consequences can be severe. In some cases a student may be expelled, or they may be stripped of their degree if their work is later discovered to contain plagiarised

material. Some academics' careers have been ruined by the discovery of plagiarism in decades-old published work.

Far from being simply a disciplinary matter, plagiarism undermines the central tenets of scholarly discourse. Knowledge develops via a cumulative process as a result of years of research, innovation and debate. It is a principle of intellectual honesty that all members of the academic community should acknowledge their debt to the originators of the ideas, words, and data which form the basis for their own work. It is important to recognise that academic texts are multi-voiced, constructed from references to other texts; it is your responsibility as a writer to make it clear at all times whose 'voice' is speaking, whether your own or one of your sources'. This requirement for transparency of source use means that you must cite adequately, make it clear when you are quoting or paraphrasing, and establish the relationship between your source and your own text.

## **Citation**

Giving credit to the authors of the ideas and interpretations you cite not only accords recognition to their labours, but also provides a solid theoretical basis for your own argument. Your ideas will gain credence if they are supported by the work of respected writers. Transparent source use allows you to situate your work within the debates in your field, and to demonstrate the ways in which your work is original. It also gives your reader the opportunity to pursue a topic further, or to check the validity of your interpretations.

When writing you should consider the ways in which your work depends upon or develops from other research, then signal this with appropriate citation. Make clear your reasons for citing a source. When paraphrasing an idea or interpretation you must ensure that your writing is not too closely derived from the original, and you must also acknowledge the original author.

You may wish to employ software which keeps track of your sources and automatically formats the footnotes and bibliography (e.g. EndNote, Reference Manager, ProCite). It is important to be meticulous when taking notes: include full citation details for all the sources you consult and remember to record relevant page numbers. It is far too time-consuming to go back to your books to find page numbers or citation details later. Citation practice varies but, depending on the type of text cited (book, chapter in an edited volume, conference paper, journal article, e-print, etc.), the elements of a reference include: author; title of the book or article; title of the journal or other work; name of the conference; place of publication; date of publication; page numbers; URL; date accessed. The conventions for citing web resources vary between disciplines. You should note as many essential items of information as possible, such as author, title, publisher, dates of publication and last revision, URL, and date of last access. When using e-print archives you should bear in mind that many contain articles which have not yet been submitted for peer review. It is good practice to review the later, published versions for important changes before submitting your dissertation.

## **Patchwriting**

Inexperienced writers, particularly those who are not native speakers of English, often develop their writing technique via a process known as "patchwriting". If they lack the requisite skills of academic writing or self-expression, they may copy or heavily paraphrase their source material. Where the derivation is not made clear, this is plagiarism. However, it is recognised that many honest students employ mimicry and borrowed language as they learn to write in the academic style, and that patchwriting can be seen as a developmental stage. As students gain more

experience at writing they must develop an independent voice and cease to rely on imitation. If work containing unattributed paraphrase is submitted for assessment, it will be treated as plagiarism regardless of the author's intentions.

### **Cultural differences**

Students who experience difficulties adapting to the culture of academic study at Oxford should not delay in seeking out sources of support and guidance. If you are not a native English speaker, you should take full advantage of the resources at the [Language Centre](#). Do not hesitate to approach your tutor to discuss your needs. Develop your academic writing skills through practice and ask for detailed feedback on your work. Ensure that you follow scrupulously the source use and referencing conventions of your discipline, even if they vary from those you have used before. You should take the online plagiarism course as early as possible to ensure that you understand the issues involved. This web site and the sites it links to will also provide useful resources. If you have specific difficulties or questions, you should always ask for advice.

### **Disciplinary process**

Plagiarism in the work you submit for assessment is considered to be a breach of the disciplinary regulations regarding conduct in examinations. Full details of the disciplinary process are available on the [University's Student conduct web-page](#).

### **A last word**

Not only is plagiarism unethical, it also seriously undermines the value of your work and of any degree you may obtain. By extension, it devalues the work of your colleagues and the standards of your institution. It can also have far-reaching consequences, the effects of which may be felt many years hence.

However, you should not avoid plagiarism for fear of disciplinary consequences, but because you aspire to produce work of the highest quality. Once you have grasped the principles of source use and citation, you should find it relatively straightforward to steer clear of plagiarism. Moreover, you will reap the additional benefits of improvements to both the lucidity and quality of your writing. It is important to appreciate that mastery of the techniques of academic writing is not merely a practical skill, but one that lends both credibility and authority to your work, and demonstrates your commitment to the principle of intellectual honesty in scholarship.

[A guide to citing and referencing for students](#) can be found on the Computer Science website.

## Annexe [B] Use of Computer Resources

The use of the department's facilities based in the [Thom Building](#) is governed by the rules of the [Department of Engineering Science](#) (as they apply to the Thom Building) and by the rules of the [Department of Computer Science](#) (as they apply to use of practical facilities). You must comply with any such rules which are brought to your attention. The University has issued [a policy on data protection](#) and [computer misuse](#) which you should read and take note of.

Before you can make use of any computer resources in the department, you have to activate the IT account issued by the [Department of Computer Science](#). You will receive via your College email address the details on how to activate your account.

**By activating the username you have been issued in the Department you agree that you will not misuse any of the resources.**

The University has formal [policies and guidelines](#) which govern the use and misuse of Computers and Networks. In addition to this, members of the Department of Computer Science are expected as a matter of honour to respect the privacy of other users of the networks to which they have access, and to refrain from actions which will cause others' work to be damaged or delayed.

### The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) from 2018 defines "personal data" as data which "any information relating to an identifiable living individual who can be identified from that data or from that data and other data,"

The University has issued a statement on its [Data Protection Policy](#), and you are requested to read and take note of this. By signing the application form you are agreeing that you will not misuse personal data. If you are in any doubt about this, or other aspects of data protection, you should contact the support staff.

### Declaration

This is a copy of the declaration which each student who requires computing facilities is asked by the Department of Computer Science to sign:

I accept that all software systems and software packages used by me are to be regarded as covered by software licence agreement, with which I agree to abide, which unless specifically stating otherwise will prohibit me from making copies of the software or transferring copies of the software to anyone else, other than for security purposes, or from using the software or any of its components as the basis of a commercial product or in any other way for commercial gain. I indemnify the Chancellor, Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford, and the Oxford University Department of Computer Science, for any liability resulting from my breach of any such software licence agreement.

I will not use personal data as defined by the Data Protection Act on computing facilities made available to me in respect of this application other than in the course of my work as per the University's registration. I accept that the Oxford University Department of Computer Science reserve the right to examine material on or connected to any of their facilities when it becomes necessary for the proper conduct of those facilities or to meet legal requirements and to dispose of any

material associated with this application for access to its resources upon termination or expiry of that authorisation.

I agree to abide by any code of conduct relating to the systems I use and the University policy on data protection and computer misuse. In particular, I will not (by any wilful or deliberate act) jeopardise or corrupt, or attempt to jeopardise or corrupt, the integrity of the computing equipment, its system programs or other stored information, nor act in any way which leads to or could be expected to lead to the disruption of the approved work of other authorised users.

### **Other Notes**

These notes are to help you to interpret the Application for Computer Resources form. If you need any additional help or information, please contact the support staff at the Department of Computer Science, Wolfson Building, Parks Road, [it-support@cs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:it-support@cs.ox.ac.uk)

Nobody may use the resources of the Department of Computer Science without signing an application form, nor continue to do so once their account has expired. Queries about the conditions imposed by particular software licence agreements should be addressed to the [it-support staff](#).

Referenced documents are available at or based upon:

- [General Data Protection Regulation](#)
- [IT Regulations](#)