Thema Project: Initial Survey

About this survey

Welcome! Thank you for agreeing to take part in the Thema project and to share with us your experience of postgraduate life at Oxford University.

This is the first of the two online surveys that we would like you to complete. It asks you to tell us about yourself, your reasons for choosing the course and what you hope to gain from it. It also enquires into your use of digital technologies: computers, mobile phones, MP3 players and digital cameras, together with the programs and Websites that run on them. Note that the survey is for full-time and part-time students, including people living away from Oxford. Therefore, some of the answer choices may not be directly relevant to your situation.

The questions are divided into four sections (pages). Some require you to tick the response(s) closest to your opinion; others ask you to express your own thoughts. Questions marked * require an answer.

The survey should take you approximately 30 minutes to complete. However, if you don't have the time to do the whole survey right now, then exit without answering any questions and come back later. If you have any problems completing the survey itself, then do contact me at the email address below.

<u>When you have finished</u>…
Click the "Finish" button after the final question (NB Don't click the Cancel message or close this browser window as you'll lose everything that you have written).

Please complete the survey by Friday, 26th October.

Thank you,

Liz Masterman, Thema Project Manager
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To start, click "Next Page" below.

A: About you…

In this section we would like you to tell us about yourself:

1. Your name

2. Please give the email address which you would like us to use when we contact you

3. Your age

- ◯ 18-21
- ◯ 22-24
- ◯ 25-34
- ◯ 35-54
- ◯ 55 or over

4. Your gender

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female

5. If you have done a degree before, where did you study?

- ◯ Oxford University
- ◯ Another university or college. Please give its name (and country, if outside the UK):

6. If you have done a degree before, what was your main subject of study (i.e. your "major")?

7. Did you have a gap in your studies before you started this course at Oxford?
For example, you may have returned to studying after several years in a job or raising a family.
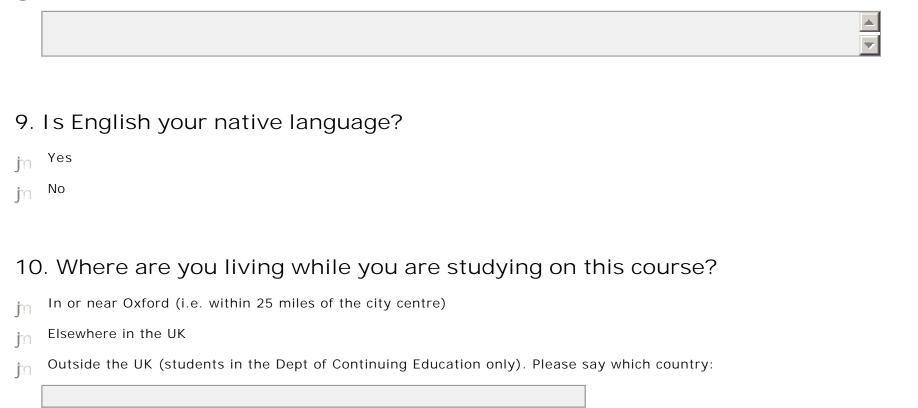
- ◯ No gap
- ◯ 1 to 2 years
- ◯ 3 to 5 years
- ◯ 6 to 10 years
- ◯ More than 10 years

  If you have had a gap in your studies, please tell us briefly what you have been doing. If you have worked, what types of jobs have you had?

8. Do you have work or other responsibilities as well as your studies? Tick all the statements that apply to you.
For example, you may work more than 20 hours a week and have children to look after.

- ☐ I have a paid job and work 10 hours or less per week
- ☐ I have a paid job and work between 10 and 30 hours per week
- ☐ I have a paid job and work more than 30 hours per week
- ☐ I have children and/or other dependants to look after
- ☐ I have no other responsibilities
- ☐ Other (please specify)

9. Is English your native language?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

10. Where are you living while you are studying on this course?

- ◯ In or near Oxford (i.e. within 25 miles of the city centre)
- ◯ Elsewhere in the UK
- ◯ Outside the UK (students in the Dept of Continuing Education only). Please say which country:

B. About your studies

Here we would like you to tell us about your plans and hopes regarding your course.

11. Which MSc course are you taking?

We know this information already, but telling us again here will help us to analyse the survey responses more quickly!

- Applied Landscape Archaeology
- Applied Linguistics
- Bioinformatics
- Comparative & International Education
- Educational Research Methods
- E-learning
- Higher Education
- Integrated Immunology
- Neuroscience

12. What motivated you to study this subject?

13. What were your reasons for choosing to study at Oxford University?

14. Do you have any idea yet what you want to do after the course?

(e.g. study for a doctorate, take up a specific career)

15. Roughly how many hours a week do you expect to spend studying during term-time?

Include time spent in lectures, seminars, practicals etc.

16. If you are a PART-TIME student, how do you plan to fit your studies around your work and/or home life?
(e.g. study during the lunch-hour/when the children are at school; read on the train)

17. Where do you like to do your private studying (i.e. when you aren't in classes, lectures or tutorials)? You can tick more than one box.

- Home/college room/student residence
- Library
- Postgraduate study room in my department
- Learning centre or other study facilities within the university
- In my place of work (if you are in employment or self-employed)
- Cafe, pub or other "public" place
- While travelling (e.g. bus, train, aeroplane)
- Other (please tell us)

18. Looking back over your previous studies, can you tell us about one significant learning experience that has stayed in your mind? Here are some prompts to help you:

- Was it a recent experience or did it happen long ago?
- Did it happen during your formal school/college education, or outside ("informal" learning)?
- Was it a single lesson or series of lessons on a particular subject?
- What made it special: the subject-matter; the teacher; a particular piece of technology; the sense of achievement you felt on acquiring a new skill or understanding a difficult concept...?

C. Your use of technology

The questions in this section ask about your use of computers and other digital technologies, both in your studies and in general:

19. How many of the digital technologies listed below do you own at the moment? Tick as many boxes as you need.

- ⊖ Desktop computer
- ⊖ Laptop or tablet computer
- ⊖ Mobile phone
- ⊖ iPod or MP3/MP4 player (also tick this box if your mobile phone has one)
- ⊖ Personal digital assistant (PDA) or handheld computer e.g. iPAQ (also tick this box if your mobile phone has PDA-like functions)
- ⊖ Digital camera and/or digital video-camera
- ⊖ Webcam
- ⊖ Other. Please tell us what else you use:

20. How easy is it for you to get access to a computer and the Internet for studying in your own time (i.e. when you aren't in lectures, tutorials or other classes)?

This may not be a problem for you if you have your own computer and a high-speed internet connection. However, if you do not own your own computer, where do you have to go to use one, and does this restrict the times when you can study? Or, if you have to share the computer with your children, do you have to wait for them to finish their homework before you can use it?

21. Do you use any special hardware or software ("assistive technology") because of problems with your sight, hearing, mobility, ability to use a keyboard and/or mouse, or because of any other issues (e.g. dyslexia)?

These are often referred to as "accessibility" issues.

- ʲⁿ Yes
- ʲⁿ No

If you answered "Yes," what special equipment and/or programs do you use?

22. How well can you use the following programs?

	By myself (using help or a manual if necessary)	Need help from someone who can do it already	Never used

Word processor (e.g. Word, to write an essay or report with subheadings and page numbers)	jn	jn	jn
Spreadsheet (e.g. Excel, to design a new sheet & enter simple numerical data)	jn	jn	jn
Database (e.g. Access, to create a new database of your own with simple text entries)	jn	jn	jn
Graphics program (e.g. Photoshop, to crop an image or convert it from colour to B&W)	jn	jn	jn
Web authoring tool (e.g. FrontPage or Dreamweaver, to create a personal webpage)	jn	jn	jn
Presentation tool (e.g. Powerpoint, to create a short talk with slides)	jn	jn	jn
Chat program (e.g. MSN Messenger, to communicate with someone over the Web)	jn	jn	jn
Search engine (e.g. Google, to find websites related to a particular theme or keyword)	jn	jn	jn

23. How confident do you feel about using the tools and technologies that are required in your course? (Exclude any specialist items for which you know you will receive training e.g. equipment for use in experiments or field work.)

jn   Very confident

jn   Fairly confident

jn   Not very confident

jn   Not at all confident

jn   It's difficult to say

Would you like to say more in response to this question?

24. Suppose that you need to use an online tool or a computer program in your course that you haven't used before. Here are three ways in which you might learn how to use it. Please indicate on the scale how likely you are to try each one:

	Very likely	Quite likely	Not sure	Not very likely	Very unlikely
Try to learn to use it by myself, perhaps using a help system or manual	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Get together with a friend, perhaps using a help system or manual	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Rely on the department to teach us how to use it	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Find out whether the central Computing Services provide a training course	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

Would you like to comment on the responses you have given to this question?

25. Here are some statements about what students expect universities to provide in terms of support for their use of technology. For each statement, please tick the response that is closest to your own opinion.

	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
If a course requires students to have a particular technology (e.g. laptop), the university should provide it free to students who don't already own it.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
There should be a single wireless network in all departments and colleges.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Tutors should use text messaging (SMS) as well as email to communicate with students.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
The university should allow students to use their personal email addresses instead of their university email addresses for communicating with tutors.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
All lectures should be recorded so that students can download and listen to them at their own convenience.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
The university should not block Websites that it considers harmful or offensive, because a) students can decide for themselves and b) they may need to access such sites for legitimate purposes (e.g. research).	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

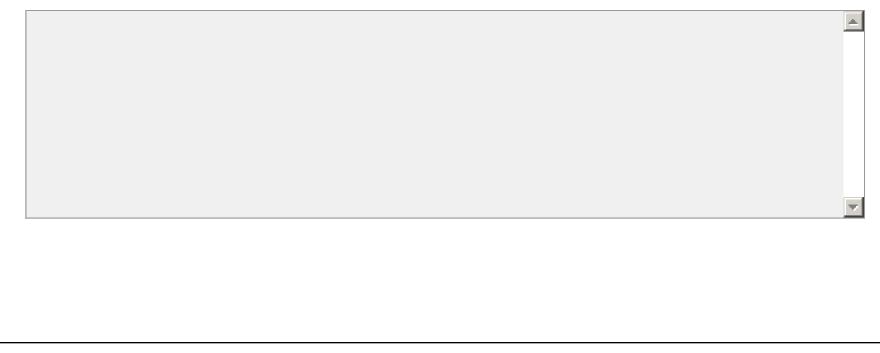Would you like to comment on your responses to this question?

26. In what ways do you expect digital technologies to benefit your learning over the coming year?
You can give examples from your past experience if these are relevant.

27. In what ways do you think that digital technologies might have a negative impact on your learning?
You can give examples from your past experience if these are relevant.

D. "Social software"

We are also investigating students' use of "social software" or "Web 2.0 tools:" i.e. Websites that are characterised by user-generated content and often involve collaboration and sharing.

In this final section of the survey, we ask you to indicate how familiar you are with different types of social software.

28. Websites for storing photographs, images and/or videos and sharing them with other people, e.g. Flickr, YouTube:

- ꞁ I have put my own materials on such sites
- ꞁ I have looked at other people's material on this sort of site but haven't added any of my own
- ꞁ I have heard of such sites but have never used one
- ꞁ I do not know what these sites are

Do you have any comments about Flickr, YouTube and similar sites?

29. Podcasts (incl. video podcasts):

- ꞁ I have listened to podcasts (e.g. for studies, work or general interest)
- ꞁ I have heard of podcasts but have never listened to one
- ꞁ I do not know what podcasts are

If you have listened to podcasts, please give brief details here:

30. Wikipedia and other online encyclopaedias to which anyone can contribute information:

- ꞁ I have looked up information in Wikipedia or other online encyclopaedias
- ꞁ I have heard of Wikipedia but have not used it
- ꞁ I do not know what Wikipedia is

Do you have any comments about Wikipedia?

31. Wikis (excluding Wikipedia and similar online encyclopaedias):

- ꞁ I have contributed to a wiki (e.g. for studies, work or other purposes)
- ꞁ I have heard of wikis but have not used one
- ꞁ I do not know what a wiki is

If you have contributed to a wiki, please give brief details here:

32. Blogs (online journals) written by other people:

ʄ͂ I read other people's blogs and add comments if I have something to say

ʄ͂ I read other people's blogs but don't add any comments

ʄ͂ I have heard of blogs but have never read one

ʄ͂ I do not know what blogs are

Do you have any comments about blogs and blogging?

33. Do you have your own blog?

ʄ͂ Yes, I write in it regularly and respond to the comments that people make

ʄ͂ I have started a blog but I don't write in it very much

ʄ͂ I did have my own blog but have stopped writing in it

ʄ͂ I have never had my own blog

If you currently have your own blog, can you tell us briefly about it? Include the URL if you're willing to let us read it.

34. Social networking sites e.g. MySpace, Facebook:

ʄ͂ I have an account (profile) and use it regularly

ʄ͂ I have an account (profile) but don't use it very much

ʄ͂ I have heard about this sort of site but have never used one

ʄ͂ I do not know what social networking sites are

Do you have any comments about social networking sites?

35. Social bookmarking tools e.g. del.icio.us, Furl:

ʄ͂ I currently use one or have used one in the past

ʄ͂ I have heard of social bookmarking tools but have never used one

ʄ͂ I do not know what social bookmarking tools are

Do you have any comments about social bookmarking?

36. Online calendar e.g. Google Calendar, iCal, Yahoo Calendar:

ⅉ I currently use one <u>or</u> have used one in the past

ⅉ I have heard of online calendars but have never used one

ⅉ I do not know what online calendars are

Do you have any comments about online calendars?

37. Newsfeeds (RSS) which can be read on Websites, through a browser and/or through an aggregator (e.g. Bloglines, Google Reader):

ⅉ I currently read newsfeeds <u>or</u> have read them in the past

ⅉ I have heard of newsfeeds but I don't read them

ⅉ I do not know what newsfeeds are

Do you have any comments about newsfeeds?

38. Communication tools:

	Yes, I use this regularly	Yes, I use this but not very often	I have heard of this but have never used it	I do not know what this is
Internet telephony (VOIP): e.g. Skype, Ventrilo	ⅉ	ⅉ	ⅉ	ⅉ
Chat or instant messaging: e.g. MSN Messenger, Google Talk	ⅉ	ⅉ	ⅉ	ⅉ
Discussion forum	ⅉ	ⅉ	ⅉ	ⅉ
Newsgroup	ⅉ	ⅉ	ⅉ	ⅉ

Do you have any comments about any of these communication tools?

39. Virtual worlds e.g. Second Life, There

ⅉ I regularly spend time in a virtual world

ⅉ I have created my own avatar but don't spend much time in the virtual world

ⅉ I did have an avatar but have stopped using the virtual world

ⅉ I have heard of virtual worlds but have never been in one

ⅉ I do not know what a virtual world is

Do you have any comments about Second Life and similar virtual worlds?

40. Multiplayer online games that you play over the Internet with other people: e.g. EverQuest, Eve, chess

ⅉ I regularly play at least one such game

ⅉ I have tried playing them but I don't play regularly

jn   I did play such games but have stopped

jn   I have heard of multiplayer online games but have never played one

jn   I do not know what multiplayer online games are

Do you have any comments about online games?

41. Finally, do you have any other comments about your course, the role of digital technologies in your learning, or anything else in this survey?

This is the end of the survey: please click the "Finish" button below.