Cambridge Judge Business School
PhD pathway: Organisation Theory & Information Systems (OTIS)

Contents

Contents ............................................................................................................................................. 1

Organisation Theory & Information Systems (OTIS) PhD pathway: Course outline .......... 2

Coursework ......................................................................................................................................... 2
Core modules ...................................................................................................................................... 2
Elective modules ............................................................................................................................... 2

Foundation year: masters degree ....................................................................................................... 3
Pre-course reading ............................................................................................................................... 3
Masters dissertation ............................................................................................................................. 3
PhD continuation requirements ............................................................................................................ 3
Summer (July–September) .................................................................................................................. 3

First year of the PhD ............................................................................................................................ 4
Coursework ......................................................................................................................................... 4
First year report ................................................................................................................................... 4
Second year continuation requirements ............................................................................................. 4

Second year of the PhD ....................................................................................................................... 4

Third year of the PhD .......................................................................................................................... 5

Fourth year of the PhD ....................................................................................................................... 5

Optional fifth year ............................................................................................................................... 5

Note: The modules provided and their timing is subject to availability of faculty and may be subject to change.
Organisation Theory & Information Systems (OTIS) PhD pathway: Course outline

The Organisation Theory and Information Systems (OTIS) PhD pathway at Cambridge Judge Business School brings together the fields of organisation theory and information systems. The pathway runs over a period of four to five years. It includes a foundation year, when you will be registered as a masters student – either on the MPhil in Innovation, Strategy & Organisations (ISO) or the Master of Research (MRes) – followed by three to four years as a PhD student. The programme is designed to prepare you for an academic career in a top international business school. The PhD programme consists of two components:

- A coursework component, comprising a suite of foundational and methodological courses complemented by research seminars that introduce you to exciting current streams of research in the field.

- A research component, which builds on the coursework and normally consists of two or three supervised research projects connected by a common theme, which constitute the core of your PhD dissertation.

Coursework

The coursework component comprises of a suite of foundational and methodological courses complemented by research seminars that introduce you to current debates and research streams in the field. The coursework component (nine required modules) will be completed during your foundation year (contributing to a masters degree) and the first year of your PhD. Typical coursework for the OTIS PhD pathway includes a combination of the following modules:

**CORE MODULES**
- Organisations and Strategic Innovation
- IS, Innovation & Organisational Change
- Organisation Theory
- Qualitative Research Methods
- Statistical Concepts for Management Researchers
- PhD Research Practicum

**ELECTIVE MODULES**
- Seminar in Strategy Content
- Seminar in Strategy Process
- Organisational Research Methods
- Organisational Behaviour
- Strategic Organising for Digital Innovation
- Econometrics I
- Field Research in an Era of Grand Challenges

Your individual coursework requirement may deviate from this list as we take into account your prior training and research interests when designing your coursework programme. We will determine a final list of coursework modules towards the end of your masters year.

The trademark of an academic career is continuous, lifelong learning. During the course of your PhD we will therefore expect you to expand your field knowledge and methodological skill set further by
participating in relevant courses offered by CJBS or cognate departments at Cambridge, such as Sociology, History and Philosophy of Science, and Social Anthropology, as well as by attending appropriate courses or workshops in other business schools.

**Foundation year: masters degree**

During your foundation year you will be registered for a research masters programme, either the MPhil in Innovation, Strategy & Organisation (ISO) or the Master of Research (MRes). In this year you will take six of the nine required PhD coursework modules and write a masters dissertation. You will take the remaining PhD coursework modules during your first PhD year.

The MPhil in Innovation, Strategy & Organisation is the standard route to an OTIS PhD. A small number of students may be admitted via the Master of Research.

Students who are registered for another MPhil at Cambridge, such as Sociology can enter the OTIS PhD pathway by taking the MRes degree.

**Pre-course reading**

Students complete a pre-course review of statistics concepts. A reading list will be issued six weeks before the start of term. A one-hour test will take place in the first week of term, and the results will determine which Econometrics module you take.

**Masters dissertation**

During your masters year, you will write a dissertation under the supervision of a faculty member. For the MPhil, the dissertation accounts for one third of the overall mark, for the MRes the dissertation accounts for 50 per cent of the overall mark.

**PhD continuation requirements**

If you are registered for an MRes degree during your foundation year, you will proceed to PhD registration without a further application process, provided you achieve a mark of 70 per cent in your dissertation and a mark of 60 per cent in each module separately in your MRes year (the dissertation counting for 50 per cent of the mark).

As an MPhil student you need to develop an initial research proposal during the first term of your MPhil year and apply for continuation to the PhD in January. Your application will be assessed by the PhD admissions committee in January on the basis of your research proposal, an admissions interview and your module performance during the first term. Continuation to the PhD will be conditional on your overall performance in the MPhil or parts thereof; the usual conditions being a mark of 70 per cent overall and a mark of 70 per cent in the dissertation.

**Summer (July–September)**

Continuing PhD students are strongly advised to discuss with their faculty supervisor how to continue their research over the summer prior to the start of their first PhD year. This ensures that you don't lose valuable time that could be put towards completing your PhD. Students may continue the work that they have begun on their masters dissertation or an individual research project. We prefer
students to remain in Cambridge over this period if possible. If this is not practicable (e.g. for visa reasons), students can be supervised remotely via Skype and email.

**First year of the PhD**

The first year of the PhD is probationary and consists of two assessed components:

**Coursework**

In your first year, you will be required to complete your coursework requirements for the OTIS pathway, as communicated to you in your PhD continuation acceptance letter. This coursework will consist mainly of electives in your base discipline of organisations/strategy/information systems, those in the broader disciplines of sociology, history and philosophy of science, or, those centred on research methods.

**First year report**

You will also work with a faculty supervisor to produce a first year report. This research report may take one of three forms:

- A draft scientific paper addressing a specific research question; this can form the basis for your first PhD paper.
- An extended research proposal on the broader theme that you wish to address in your PhD research, including a thorough literature review and a clear plan for the execution of a first research paper during your second PhD year.
- A case study on a phenomenon that you wish to address in your PhD research; this would be based on a company placement conducted during the summer between your masters and first PhD years.

The first year report should demonstrate your ability to formulate sharp research questions, summarise relevant academic debates, critically assess the extant literature and choose appropriate research methods. While you are not required to, you can incorporate any part of your masters work, such as your module essays, individual research project, dissertation or summer project (if applicable), into your first year report.

**Second year continuation requirements**

To proceed to the second year of the PhD you will have to gain a mark of 70 per cent for your first year report and pass all required courses (60 per cent pass mark).

**Second year of the PhD**

During your second year, you will focus on producing your first research paper. Most students do this by ‘learning on the job’ – by joining a project proposed by a faculty member or working closely with a faculty member to define a project to work on jointly. This usually results in a co-authored paper. You will present your progress periodically through the OTIS subject group and PhD lunchtime seminars. You will be expected to submit this paper to a top conference in your field early on in the academic year for presentation by the end of the year.
Third year of the PhD

During your third year, you will focus on completing your first paper for journal submission and begin working on your second paper. You may continue to work with your co-author, choose another co-author or work on this paper independently. You can expect your advisors to play a significant role in helping shape the idea for this paper, but you will be expected to take the lead in executing it and be the clear primary author. You will be expected to submit this paper for presentation at a top conference during this year. In parallel with the development of this second paper, you will revise your first paper and continue to present it at seminars and conferences.

Fourth year of the PhD

The fourth year is your job market year. You will be expected to present your paper or papers at top American and European job market conferences and continue to revise and polish them. We encourage you to spend part of your fourth year as a visitor in another university to build closer ties with potential collaborators and the global management research community. You will submit your PhD dissertation during your fourth year.

Optional fifth year

Good research requires you to take risks, to explore avenues and tackle issues that are new and original. Research may therefore not unfold as planned and your work may require substantial revision. In fact, many of the most influential research projects ended up taking considerably longer than anticipated. We encourage students to be aspirational and take risks — and we work with them to manage these risks. To accommodate early “wrong turns” and unforeseen delays, we sometimes recommend that a student delays entering the job market by a year and spend an additional year at CJBS (and possibly another university) to work on paper revisions with faculty and strengthen their portfolio of research paper before applying for a junior faculty position. This optional fifth year is typically funded through a combination of post-doc research grants (which are contingent on progress toward publication) and targeted teaching opportunities, which further strengthen the student’s job market prospects.