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Note: The modules offered and their timing are conditional upon the availability of faculty and may be subject to change.

Organisational Theory and Information Systems (OTIS) PhD pathway: Course outline

The Organisational 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 4 to 5 years. It includes a foundation year, when you will be registered as a masters student – either on the **MPhil in Innovation, Strategy and Organisation** (ISO) or the **Master of Research** (MRes) – followed by 4 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 2 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 2 or 3 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 (typically 9 assessed required modules) will be completed during your masters degree and the PhD first year.

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
- Advanced qualitative research methods training (during PhD)

ELECTIVE MODULES

- Seminar in Strategy Content (biennial)
- Seminar in Strategy Process (biennial)
- Organisational Research Methods Part 1 (biennial)
- Organisational Research Methods Part 2 (biennial)
- Organisational Behaviour
- Strategic Organising for Digital and Social Innovation (biennial)
- Econometrics I
- Field Research in an Era of Grand Challenges (biennial)

Your individual coursework requirement may deviate from this list as we consider 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 your PhD we will therefore expect you to expand your field knowledge and methodological skill set further by participating in relevant courses offered by Cambridge Judge Business School 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 are be registered for a research masters programme, either the MPhil in Innovation, Strategy and Organisation (ISO) or the Master of Research (MRes).

During the MPhil you will take 6 of the 9 required PhD coursework modules and write a masters dissertation.

During the MRes you will take 5 modules and write a masters dissertation. You will take the remaining PhD coursework modules during your first PhD year.

The MPhil in Innovation, Strategy and Organisation is the standard route to an OTIS PhD. A very 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% of the overall mark.

PhD continuation requirements

We strongly encourage MPhil students to apply for continuation to our PhD programme. Availability of specific PhD Principal Supervisors will vary from year to year because each typically works with a maximum of 2 PhD students at any given time. The PhD programme aims to admit between 6 and 10 students (PhD and MRes) per year, depending on the strength of applications, among other factors.

If you wish to apply for continuation to the PhD at Cambridge Judge Business School, you will need to develop an initial research proposal during the first term of your MPhil year, talk to faculty about the fit of your research interests and then apply for admission to the PhD in January. Faculty will assist with the development of this proposal. Applications are assessed by the PhD Admissions committee in January on the basis of:

- quality of the research proposal and strength of references

- module performance during the first term
- performance in the admissions interview
- fit between the proposed research and the research expertise in the subject group, resulting in a recommended supervision arrangement from PhD pathway faculty
- ranking compared to other applicants, which includes prior academic performance

An admissions offer would be conditional on your overall performance in the MPhil or parts thereof. The usual condition is a mark of 70% overall (and 70% in any dissertation or project).

Due to the competitive nature of our programme, an offer of admission to the PhD is not guaranteed and we also encourage and support MPhil students in making applications to other leading PhD programmes.

If you are an MRes student you will proceed to PhD registration without a further application process, if you achieve a mark of 70% in your dissertation and an overall average of 70% in your MRes.

Summer (July–September)

As a continuing PhD student you will be strongly advised to discuss with your faculty supervisor how to continue your research over the summer prior to the start of your 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 2 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 3 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 parts 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 must gain a mark of 70% for your first year report and pass all required courses (60% pass mark).

While we will continue to monitor your progress closely after the first year of your PhD, there will not be any more formal continuation assessment until the final PhD assessment.

Second year of the PhD

During your second year, you will focus on producing your first research paper. Many 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 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.

We encourage you to spend part of your third or fourth year as a visitor in another university to build closer ties with potential collaborators and the global management research community.

Fourth year of the PhD

The fourth year is your job market year. You will be expected develop the third paper of your dissertation and present your papers at top American and European job market conferences, while you continue to revise and polish them. You will submit your PhD dissertation during your fourth year.

Optional further year of study (postdoc)

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 Cambridge Judge Business School (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.

An optional further year at Cambridge Judge Business School would be typically funded by:

- a Cambridge Judge Business School post-doctoral grant (2 grants available by competition each year)
- paid teaching opportunities, which further strengthen a student's job market prospects