



Doctoral Programme in Chemical Biology

The **Doctoral Programme in Chemical Biology** is a 4-year graduate training programme that brings together the expertise of three world-leading organisations to train outstanding students to work at the frontiers of chemical biology research. **The University of Oxford** was ranked 1st in the 2016 Times Higher Education World University Rankings and is one of the world's leading research universities. **GSK** is a world leading, global healthcare company, which develops and manufactures pharmaceutical medicines, vaccines and consumer healthcare products. **The Francis Crick Institute** is a biomedical discovery institute dedicated to understanding the fundamental biology underlying health and disease. GSK works closely with researchers at The Francis Crick Institute through the GSK - Crick (LinkLabs) open science collaboration to explore new avenues of medical research and drug discovery.

Chemical biology is an interdisciplinary field of science in which chemical techniques, tools, and analyses are used to study and manipulate biological systems, to address questions related to small molecule drug and probe discovery, and to investigate the pharmacology of small molecules that modulate biological targets.

The programme will admit its second cohort of students in October 2018 supported by funding from EPSRC, BBSRC and GSK. It is anticipated that the majority of students admitted to the programme will have an academic background in chemistry or in related fields. The programme will be based in the University of Oxford's Doctoral Training Centre (DTC) (www.dtc.ox.ac.uk), which currently houses five interdisciplinary graduate programmes focused on research at the interface between physical and life sciences, providing extensive opportunities to interact with students from a wide range of academic backgrounds.

The Training Programme

During their first term (October to December 2018) students will undertake an intensive interdisciplinary training programme which will include training in programming and scientific computing, drug discovery and chemical biology. During this term and throughout their studies students will participate in a comprehensive career development programme, which will include specific training in communication and business skills, entrepreneurship skills and the commercialisation of research.

Commencing in January of their first year, students will undertake two 12 week rotation projects with at least two of the partner organisations (Oxford, GSK, Crick), before identifying their main DPhil research topic. They will submit a written report on each of these rotation projects which will be assessed by an expert from one of the three partner organisations. It is envisaged that for many students these rotation projects will be complementary projects that will provide the foundation for a collaborative DPhil project involving both project supervisors. During their DPhil project all students will have an academic supervisor at the University of Oxford and a supervisor/mentor at GSK. Some students will also have a supervisor at The Francis Crick Institute.

Students will select rotation projects from a portfolio of projects proposed by researchers within the partnership. These rotations will provide students with the opportunity to interact closely with both

their academic and industrial/institute supervisors and to gain direct experience of the working environment and facilities available in the partner organisations.

At the end of their first year students will be required to write and submit for approval a research proposal describing their proposed DPhil project, written in collaboration with their academic, industrial and institute supervisor(s), and will then undertake 3 years of full time doctoral research.

Industrial Placement

All students will be expected to undertake a placement of no less than 12 weeks with GSK. In some cases this placement may be undertaken as one of the two rotation projects undertaken in the first year, in other cases this may occur during years 2-3.

Funding

Research council studentship funding administered by the University of Oxford will provide a standard UK stipend (currently set at £14,553 per year) and university fees for eligible students for 4-years. This will be increased by contributions from GSK, and where relevant, the Francis Crick Institute to a minimum of £17,553 per year. Both GSK and the Francis Crick Institute will provide additional funding towards cost of accommodation or travel from Oxford for students undertaking rotations with these organisations during their first year. Funding from The Francis Crick Institute for first year rotation students will be up to £1677. The Francis Crick Institute will subsequently top up the combined Oxford and GSK stipend to the Crick level (up to £22,000 per year) for up to 18 months for students who carry out a jointly supervised PhD project with a Crick Group Leader as one of the supervisors.

How to Apply

Applicants are normally expected to be predicted or have achieved a first-class or strong upper second-class undergraduate degree with honours (or equivalent international qualifications), as a minimum, in a relevant academic subject.

This programme is funded by the EPSRC and BBSRC and therefore is only open to UK and EU nationals or to students who meet BBSRC/EPSRC residency and eligibility requirements.

Application to this programme is via the University of Oxford's online application system, details of which are available at: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/applying-to-oxford>. The admissions process is being administered by the Systems Approaches to Biomedical Science CDT, therefore please select this as your programme of interest and follow the application instructions available on www.sabscdt.ox.ac.uk. Please include with your application a 500 word statement explaining your interest in and suitability to join this programme. Applications should be submitted by **9th March 2018**.

If you have previously applied to or have been offered a place on a different graduate programme at the University of Oxford you may not need to submit a new application, but we will require a statement of interest in joining the programme. Please contact us at dtcenquiries@dtc.ox.ac.uk to discuss this before submitting a new online application.

We encourage prospective students to send their CV to the Academic Administrator at dtcenquiries@dtc.ox.ac.uk prior to submitting a full application to assess their suitability for the course.