Pathway Overview

Citizenship is among the most debated and contested issues of our time. Questions of the rights and duties of citizens, access to citizenship, and the local, regional and international dimensions of citizenship (including the movement of populations) are increasingly on the agendas of governments and international organisations. Citizenship studies is an inter- and cross-disciplinary field in which citizenship is investigated as not only a contested legal or political status, but also as field of practices through which individuals and groups (regardless of their status) struggle for, demand, or claim, rights, recognition or redistribution. The varied dimensions of citizenship and noncitizenship, the multiple actors involved in struggles over citizenship, and the numerous sites at which these struggles take place translate to a conceptually, empirically and methodologically rich field of study and research.

Pathway Particulars

The Open University is an international hub for citizenship studies, with researchers studying aspects of citizenship from a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives, using a range of methodological approaches. Staff across the faculties of Arts and Social Sciences and Business and Law have expertise in the following areas:

- migrant, refugee and diaspora politics; statelessness; borders; identities; belonging
- active and activist citizenship (contentious politics, social movements, civil society)
- global and cosmopolitan citizenship (including transnational solidarity initiatives)
- social justice and social harm
- social exclusion and marginalized populations (including issues such as crime, deviance, policing, punishment, homelessness, welfare, and poverty, and their gendered and racialised aspects)
• psychological, social psychological, psychosocial and psychoanalytic approaches to citizenship
• everyday articulations and conceptions of citizenship
• gendered, intimate and sexual citizenship
• citizenship in historical, postcolonial and comparative contexts
• citizenship in art, literature, visual culture, mass media
• minority and marginalized articulations of citizenships (including non-western, indigenous, and non-heteronormative)
• environmental citizenship; citizenship and religion; citizenship and spirituality
• digital citizenship and participation; urban citizenship
• citizenship and education (including critical pedagogies)
• corporate citizenship and responsibility; neoliberal and alternative models of citizen responsibility; citizens as consumers
• legal and institutional approaches to citizenship; immigration, citizenship and human rights law
• theoretical and philosophical approaches to and debates in citizenship and noncitizenship

We welcome applications and research proposals in the above areas, and have expertise in a broad range of qualitative methodological approaches including: ethnographic, participatory, and performative methodologies; discursive, narrative and archival methodologies; visual methodologies; dialogical and Q methodologies; genealogical and phenomenological methodologies.

Pathway Structure

The citizenship pathway is provided through two routes: 1+3 and +4. Students following the 1+3 route will spend their first year completing an MSc in Political Theory or Migration Studies at Oxford University. On successful completion of the MSc, students will advance to the Open University to complete their subject specific and advanced research training, and their PhD research. Students following the +4 route will complete all of their training and research at the Open University.

Please indicate in your application which route you would like to be considered for (if 1+3 please also indicate whether you would like to pursue an MSc in Political Theory or Migration Studies). Please also indicate whether you would like to pursue the degree on a full- or part-time basis. Students on the 1+3 route will be expected to complete their MSc at Oxford on a full-time basis, but can opt for a full- or part-time option for the remainder of their degree at the Open University.

Training and skills

Students on the 1+3 route of the citizenship pathway will complete their core research training as part of the MSc in Political Theory or Migration Studies at Oxford University. Students on the +4 route of the pathway will complete their core research and skills training at the Open University. All students will then be expected to complete subject specific and advanced research training in citizenship studies at the Open University.
Subject specific and advanced research training will introduce students to fundamental theoretical debates in citizenship studies; to methodological questions that ensue from these debates; and to tools for studying aspects of citizenship and citizenship-related issues. The training will consist of a set of compulsory seminars in Citizenship Theories and Methods, and compulsory advanced seminars on topics such as the histories and historiographies of citizenship, the philosophies of citizenship, and citizenship laws.

**Internships**

Students on the citizenship pathway are strongly advised to apply for and complete a three-month (maximum) internship (FT or PT) at governmental or non-governmental organization whose work is relevant to the broad field of citizenship studies. Students with existing professional experience will be encouraged to sustain and develop this during their PhD. As well as giving invaluable career development and practitioner links, internships will help students facilitate knowledge exchange and social change.

**Knowledge Exchange and Research Environment**

The Open University is an international hub for citizenship studies, with a growing community of researchers and academics studying issues of citizenship from a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives.

Among the hubs for the study of citizenship is the Citizenship and Governance Strategic Research Area, which brings together researchers from the faculties of Arts and Social Sciences and Business and Law. The interdisciplinary nature of citizenship studies means that students on the pathway can also benefit from cutting edge research and knowledge exchange opportunities provided by the OpenSpace Research Centre, strategic research areas in International Development and Education, and the Harm and Evidence Research Collaborative.

**Student profile**

Prospective students should have a strong background in a social sciences or humanities discipline relevant to the kind of citizenship studies research they wish to conduct. A relevant Master’s degree, or experience relevant to research in the field of citizenship studies are not strictly necessary, but are highly recommended.

If you have questions regarding the relevance of your previous academic or work experience, or the suitability of your proposed research, please contact Agnes Czajka (agnes.czajka@open.ac.uk) or Tendayi Bloom (tendayi.bloom@open.ac.uk) for an informal discussion. They will also be able to advise you about other academics who might be interested in your work. It is a good idea, if possible, to identify potential supervisors before making your application. You are strongly advised to make contact with as much time as possible before the application deadline.

**Applying for a studentship:**

- Applications should include a cover letter outlining why the project is an important area of study, how your background relates to the proposed research topic and why you wish to study at the Open University;
• An outline research proposal of no more than 2,000 words, covering research topic and methodology. General advice on the proposal can be found here: http://www.open.ac.uk/postgraduate/research-degrees/how-to-apply/mphil-and-phd-application-process;
• an academic CV that includes contact details of three referees, of which at least two should be academic;
• an Open University application form, downloadable from http://www.open.ac.uk/postgraduate/research-degrees/how-to-apply/mphil-and-phd-application-process

Applications should be sent to research-degrees-FASS@open.ac.uk by 17:00 on 19th January 2018.