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Human Sciences Course Information Sheet for entry in 2024

Human Sciences is an interdisciplinary degree course which enables students to study humans from multiple interconnecting perspectives across the biological and social sciences.

Underlying the degree concept is the recognition that it is important to understand connections among biological, social, and cultural phenomena in order to address the major issues and problems humans face in a rapidly changing world. The programme offers an exciting and challenging alternative to more traditional undergraduate courses.

The BA in Human Sciences was founded in 1969 by specialists across a range of departments at the University. They recognised the need for an interdisciplinary understanding of fundamental issues and problems confronting human societies. This need is as critical now as it was then, as is reflected in the global intensification of interdisciplinary research across traditional subject boundaries in the decades since the degree began.

Central topics include:

- the evolution of humans and their behaviour
- molecular and population genetics
- population growth and ageing
- ethnic and cultural diversity
- and human interaction with the environment, including conservation, disease, and nutrition.

Studying the connections among human biology, evolution, development, psychology, behaviour, ecology, society, and culture equips the human scientist to develop professional competencies suited to addressing multidimensional human problems within a framework of human diversity and sustainability.

The course is taught by specialists from across the University. Lectures introduce the material and provide the core concepts and theories for each paper. Tutorials allow students to consider particular topics in greater depth and draw connections across different perspectives and parts of the degree. They also allow students from different academic backgrounds to gain the necessary grounding across a range of competencies.

Option courses and dissertation preparation in the final year enable students to deepen their interdisciplinary training and expertise in particular topics of interest.

A typical week

During Years 1 and 2 your work will be divided between lectures (about ten a week) and tutorials (one or two a week with more in the first year). In addition, some practical experience in genetics, physiology, demography or statistics will be offered in certain terms. Computers are used in the teaching of quantitative methods.

In the third year the tutorial and class requirement is reduced to allow more time for option papers and research for your dissertation.

Tutorials are usually 2-4 students and a tutor. Class sizes may vary depending on the options you choose. There would usually be no more than around 20 students although the more popular classes may include up to 30 students.

Most tutorials, classes, and lectures are delivered by staff who are tutors in their subject. Many are world-leading experts with years of experience in teaching and research. Some teaching may also be delivered by postgraduate students who are usually studying at doctoral level.

To find out more about how our teaching year is structured, visit our [Academic Year](#) page.

Course structure

YEAR 1	
<p>COURSES</p> <p>Five compulsory courses are taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecology and evolution • Physiology and genetics • Society, culture and environment • Sociology and demography • Quantitative methods for the human sciences 	<p>ASSESSMENT</p> <p>First University examinations: five written papers; satisfactory practical record</p>
YEAR 2	
<p>COURSES</p> <p>Five courses are taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour and its evolution • Human genetics and evolution • Human ecology • Demography and population • Either Anthropological analysis and interpretation or Sociological theory 	<p>ASSESSMENT</p> <p>The Human Ecology course is assessed by an extended essay written in the final term of the second year and a presentation given in the first term of Year 3.</p>

YEAR 3

COURSES

- Dissertation to be completed by the beginning of the final term
- Option courses (two chosen) from a list which may vary slightly depending on teaching availability: Anthropology of a selected region (for example Japan, Lowland South America or South Asia); The anthropology of Buddhism; Biological conservation; Gender theories and realities: cross-cultural perspectives; Geographies of migration, Health and disease; Physical and forensic anthropology: an introduction to human skeletal remains; Quantitative methods; Social policy; plus a range of psychology options.

ASSESSMENT

Final University examinations: currently six written papers and a dissertation; extended essay and presentation (see under Year 2)

The University will seek to deliver this course in accordance with the description set out above. However, there may be situations in which it is desirable or necessary for the University to make changes in course provision, either before or after registration. For further information, please see the University's [Terms and Conditions](#).

Fees

These annual fees are for full-time students who begin this undergraduate course here in 2024.

Information about how much fees and other costs may increase is set out in the University's Terms and Conditions.

Please note that while the University sets out its annual fees as a single figure, this is a combined figure for both your University and college fees. More information is provided in your [Terms and Conditions](#).

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home (UK, Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands & Isle of Man)	£9,250
Overseas (including most EU students – see Note below)	£38,550

Note: Irish nationals living in the UK or Ireland, EU, other EEA, and Swiss nationals who have been granted settled or pre-settled status in the UK under the EU settlement scheme are eligible for 'Home fee' status and student loan support, subject to meeting residency requirements. We will contact you directly if we need further information from you to determine your fee status.

Please refer to the [Undergraduate fee status](#) pages for more information.

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS AND OUTREACH

University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD



Living costs

Living costs for the academic year starting in 2024 are estimated to be between £1,345 and £1,955 for each month you are in Oxford. Our academic year is made up of three eight-week terms, so you would not usually need to be in Oxford for much more than six months of the year but may wish to budget over a nine-month period to ensure you also have sufficient funds during the holidays to meet essential costs. For further details please visit our [living costs webpage](#).

Living costs breakdown

	Per month		Total for 9 months	
	Lower range	Upper range	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£315	£495	£2,835	£4,455
Accommodation (including utilities)	£745	£925	£6,705	£8,325
Personal items	£190	£320	£1,710	£2,880
Social activities	£40	£95	£360	£855
Study costs	£35	£85	£315	£765
Other	£20	£35	£180	£315
Total	£1,345	£1,955	£12,105	£17,595

In order to provide these likely living costs (which are rounded to the nearest £5), the University and the Oxford SU conducted a living costs survey to complement existing student expenditure data from a variety of sources, including the UK government's Student Income and Expenditure Survey and the National Union of Students (NUS).

The current economic climate and high national rate of inflation make it very hard to estimate potential changes to the cost of living over the next few years. When planning your finances for any future years of study in Oxford beyond 2024-25, it is suggested that you allow for potential increases in living expenses of around 5% each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation. UK inflationary increases will be kept under review and the [living costs webpage](#) updated.

Additional Fees and Charges Information for Human Sciences

There are no compulsory costs for this course beyond the fees shown above and your living costs.