

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2023-24: MPhil in Modern Middle Eastern Studies



About the course

The MPhil in Modern Middle Eastern Studies is a two-year (six-term) course intended for students from all social science and humanities backgrounds. The course provides intensive training in a Middle Eastern language, training in research methods and topics relevant to the study of the Middle East.

The MPhil Modern Middle Eastern Studies accepts students who are complete beginners in a Middle Eastern language (Arabic, Hebrew, Persian or Turkish). The course also accommodates students in any of these languages at an advanced level. If you already have research-level proficiency in one of these languages you will be required to take a different language.

Intensive language training takes place through all six terms of the course. This training takes place in classes and language laboratories. In addition to language training, in the first term you are expected to attend the weekly MPhil Qualitative Research Methods for Modern Middle Eastern Studies lecture and seminar, held in the first term. In addition to the lecture, this seminar is an interactive forum in which you are expected to present arguments and to respond to the lecture, associated readings, and each other's formative essays, which are a crucial element of teaching, but do not count toward the student's final marks. In addition to Qualitative Research Methods, you will be encouraged to attend other lectures and seminars offered by the teaching staff during the first term. You will complete and submit a take-home written assignment based on the Qualitative Research Methods Seminar after the end of the first term which will form the first of two elements of your Qualifying Examination. The second element of the Qualifying Examination is a language qualifying examination taken at the end of the first year (first three terms) of the course.

In the second term, in consultation with your supervisor, you will attend a series of tutorials for one of three options to be offered for the final examination. These are taught in the second, third and fourth terms of the course. Tutorials typically involve weekly meetings and between four and six formative essays, arranged between you and your tutor. Most options have an associated lecture series, either concurrent with the tutorials or in some cases delivered in a different term, which you are expected to attend.

Tutorial options offered on a regular basis include the following:

- Hebrew Literature
- History and Politics of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- History of Qajar Iran
- History of the Maghreb since 1830
- History of the Middle East, 1860-1970
- Iranian History from the Constitutional to the Islamic Revolution, 1905-1979
- Main Themes in Israeli Politics and Society
- Mass Media in the Middle East
- Modern Islamic Thought
- Modern Turkish Literature: Texts and Contexts
- Nahda: Literature, Modernity and Institution-building in the Arabic 19th Century
- The Political Economy of the Middle East and North Africa
- Political Institutions in Contemporary Iran
- Political Islam, Islamism, and Modern Islamic Movements
- Politics of the Maghreb
- Politics of the Middle East
- Social Anthropology of the Middle East

Applicants may wish to confirm with the course coordinator that a specific option listed above will be available to the applicant's cohort, as scheduled sabbaticals or other research leave may sometimes interrupt the annual teaching schedule.

Language training continues in the third term, and you will have tutorials for the second of your three options. You will at this stage begin your thesis preparations, meeting with staff members to identify a thesis supervisor. You will sit the qualifying language examination at the end of the third term.

During the long vacation from the end of June to early October you are urged to pursue intensive language training in an appropriate course in the region, political circumstances permitting. Information on the different courses can be obtained from the relevant language instructors, in consultation with supervisors. You are encouraged to take the opportunity provided by study abroad to conduct research for your thesis in the region.

In the first term of the second year, you will continue language training, and have tutorials for your third option. Over the Christmas vacation research and writing of the thesis should continue. In the second term, you will have further language training and attend an MPhil research seminar where you will present your research findings to your peers and faculty. A complete draft of your thesis should be ready for the supervisor to assess by the end of the second term. By the second week of the final term, you will submit your thesis. The final examination is held at the end of the final term.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. Under exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be found outside the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

Assessment

You are evaluated in five areas: a language examination, three written examinations on course options taught through tutorials and lectures, and a thesis.

Further information on the course, and the examination process, can be found in the course handbook via the course webpage on the faculty's website.

Changes to courses

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. These may include significant changes made necessary by a pandemic (including Covid-19), epidemic or local health emergency. For further information, please see the University's Terms and Conditions (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/terms>) and our page on changes to courses (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges>).

Expected length of course

	Full Time Only
Expected length	21 months

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2023-24

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£19,210
Overseas	£29,700

Information about course fees

Course fees are payable each year, for the duration of your fee liability (your fee liability is the length of time for which you are required to pay course fees). For courses lasting longer than one year, please be aware that fees will usually increase annually. Information about how much fees and other costs may increase is set out in the University's Terms and Conditions (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/terms>).

Course fees cover your teaching as well as other academic services and facilities provided to support your studies. Unless specified in the additional cost information (below), course fees do not cover your accommodation, residential costs or other living costs. They also don't cover any additional costs and charges that are outlined in the additional cost information.

Additional cost information

You will normally be expected to spend the summer after your first year attending an intensive language course in the Middle East. The faculty estimates the cost of attendance to be between £1,400 and £3,000, depending on the country and the fees charged by the various institutes that provide such courses. This estimate includes tuition fees, living expenses (both housing and food) and airfare. The faculty currently provides some funding toward these costs.

Living costs

In addition to your course fees, you will need to ensure that you have adequate funds to support your living costs for the duration of your course.

The likely living costs for 2023-24 are published below. These costs are based on a single, full-time graduate student, with no dependants, living in Oxford. We provide the cost per month so you can multiply up by the number of months you expect to live in Oxford.

Likely living costs for one month

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£300	£470
Accommodation	£715	£860
Personal items	£180	£305
Social activities	£40	£90
Study costs	£35	£80
Other	£20	£35
Total	£1,290	£1,840

Likely living costs for nine months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£2,700	£4,230
Accommodation	£6,435	£7,740
Personal items	£1,620	£2,745
Social activities	£360	£810
Study costs	£315	£720
Other	£180	£315
Total	£11,610	£16,560

Likely living costs for twelve months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£3,600	£5,640
Accommodation	£8,580	£10,320
Personal items	£2,160	£3,660
Social activities	£480	£1,080
Study costs	£420	£960
Other	£240	£420
Total	£15,480	£22,080

When planning your finances for any future years of study at Oxford beyond 2023-24, it is suggested that you allow for potential increases in living expenses of 5% or more each year – although this rate may vary significantly depending on how the national economic situation develops.

More information about how these figures have been calculated is available at www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/livingcosts.

Document accessibility

If you require an accessible version of the document please contact Graduate Admissions and Recruitment by email (graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk) or via the online form (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/ask>).