

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: PGDip in Wildlife Conservation (Recanati-Kaplan)



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	8 months

About the course

The Postgraduate Diploma in Wildlife Conservation (Recanati-Caplan Centre) is an eight-month, full-time course for early-career wildlife researchers.

The course is designed to enhance the skills of conservation science practitioners by teaching field survey techniques, data analysis methods, and reporting techniques commonly used in the study of terrestrial mammals. The course aims to help ecologists and field biologists in the developing world to implement effective conservation research and action.

The course is delivered by the Department of Biology's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), which has been active in conservation research and practice for more than three decades. The course is made possible by a donation from the Recanati-Kaplan Foundation, and is jointly managed with Oxford Lifelong Learning.

The focus of the course is on methods commonly used in the study of large mammals, and especially carnivores, in the developing world. The curriculum consists of modules on wildlife ecology, monitoring and survey techniques, GIS and habitat assessment, population management and statistics, as well as two reports which together complete an independent research project. The mode of teaching in the modules consists mostly of lectures, group discussions, technical practicals on the use of computer software, field sessions, tutorials and (group) workshops.

Ten to twelve students are accepted each year and applications are particularly welcomed from conservationists working in economically less-developed parts of the world, for whom need-based scholarships are available. Suitable candidates are early-career field conservationists, working with government agencies or NGOs, who will implement and disseminate their skills to their home countries.

The course is not suitable for individuals who are not currently working in an ecology or conservation research role. For entry-level ecology and wildlife conservation courses, please see the [Short and Online Courses](https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/about/natural-sciences) (<https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/about/natural-sciences>) in the natural sciences run by Oxford Lifelong Learning.

Course structure

An overview of the course structure is provided below. Details of the compulsory elements of the course are provided in the *Course components* section of this page.

Within the eight-month course the first three-month phase which consists predominantly of taught material, while the remaining five months is a mix between taught material and independent work on projects.

The independent research project concentrates on the organisation, analysis and reporting of previously collected data that you bring with you or is provided by WildCRU researchers. There is no time to undertake primary data collection in country or abroad during the course duration.

The project is divided into two phases:

- Phase One consists of a literature and methods review and a section containing data exploration;
- Phase Two builds upon this but also includes the full data analysis and discussion of results.

Unifying threads running through the course are the global and human dimensions of biodiversity conservation. You will learn both the theory and practical aspects of field techniques, so that you can confidently adopt them in the future, as well as critically evaluate other projects.

Attendance

This course is full-time. Teaching takes place in the Life and Mind Building, Oxford and student accommodation is facilitated by Pembroke College.

Resources to support your study

As a graduate student, you will have access to the University's wide range of resources including libraries, museums, galleries, digital resources and IT services.

The Bodleian Libraries is the largest library system in the UK. It includes the main Bodleian Library and libraries across Oxford, including major research libraries and faculty, department and institute libraries. Together, the Libraries hold more than 13 million printed items, provide access to e-journals, and contain outstanding special collections including rare books and manuscripts, classical papyri, maps, music, art and printed ephemera.

The University's IT Services is available to all students to support with core university IT systems and tools, as well as many other services and facilities. IT Services also offers a range of IT learning courses for students to support with learning and research, as well as [guidance on what technology to bring with you as a new student \(https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/what-to-bring\)](https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/what-to-bring), at Oxford.

WildCRU has an on-site library developed specifically for the needs of the postgraduate diploma students covering comprehensive material relevant to the course. Depending on your research projects, you may need to use other libraries as well, such as the Radcliffe Science Library (RSL) and the Rewley House Continuing Education Library.

The course provides various IT facilities, including a laptop for your use during the course.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the WildCRU and the Department of Biology and this role may be performed by the Course Director.

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 WildCRU and the Department of Biology.

Assessment

Assessment is through the two reports of the independent research project and four assignments. Most assignments will be short-answer questions, presenting data to be analysed, scientific research to critique, a problem for which you will design solutions, or information to be synthesised into a brief report/recommendation.

Course components

Compulsory study

Core modules

You will take four modules in total. The four core modules are:

- Wildlife ecology
- Monitoring and survey techniques
- GIS and habitat assessment
- Population management and statistics.

Research project

You will also complete an independent research project which is comprised of two reports.

Changes to this course

The University will seek to deliver this course in accordance with the description set out in this course page. 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. The safety of students, staff and visitors is paramount and major changes to delivery or services may have to be made if a pandemic, epidemic or local health emergency occurs. In addition, in certain circumstances, for example due to visa difficulties or because the health needs of students cannot be met, it may be necessary to make adjustments to course requirements for international study.

Where possible your academic supervisor will not change for the duration of your course. However, it may be necessary to assign a new academic supervisor during the course of study or before registration for reasons which might include illness, sabbatical leave, parental leave or change in employment.

For further information please see our page on [changes to courses \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses), and the [provisions of the student contract \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract), regarding changes to courses.

Costs

Annual course fees

The fees for this course are charged on an annual basis.

Fees for the 2026-27 academic year at the University of Oxford

Fee status	Total Course fees
Home	£17,910
Overseas	£17,910

What do course fees cover?

Course fees cover your teaching as well as other academic services and facilities provided to support your studies. Unless specified in the additional information section 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 costs information below.

How long do I need to pay 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 fees will usually increase annually, as explained in the University's [Terms and Conditions \(//www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract).

Our [fees and other charges \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges) pages provide further information, including details about:

- [course fees and fee liability \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/courses-fees-and-liability\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/courses-fees-and-liability);
- [how your fee status is determined \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/fee-status\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/fee-status); and
- [changes to fees and other charges \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/changes-to-fees-and-charges\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/changes-to-fees-and-charges).

Information about how much fees and other costs will usually increase each academic year is set out in the University's [Terms and Conditions \(//www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract).

Additional costs

This course is residential in Oxford, so you will need to meet your accommodation and travel costs; however, grants are available covering fees, accommodation, travel and living expenses. Please see the course page on the department's website for further details. Furthermore, as part of your course requirements, you may need to choose a dissertation, a project or a thesis topic. Depending on your choice of topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel expenses, research expenses, and field trips. You will need to meet these additional costs.

Living costs

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

Living costs for full-time study

For the 2026-27 academic year, the range of likely living costs for a single, full-time student is between £1,405 and £2,105 for each month spent in Oxford. We provide the cost per month so you can multiply up by the number of months you expect to live in Oxford. Depending on your circumstances, you may also need to budget for the [costs of a student visa and immigration health surcharge \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) and/or [living costs for family members or other dependants \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs#field_listing_content_content-item--2\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs#field_listing_content_content-item--2), that you plan to bring with you to Oxford (if [dependant visa eligibility criteria \(//www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/family\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/family) are met).

Further information about living costs

The current economic climate and periods of high national inflation in recent years make it harder to estimate potential changes to the cost of living over the next few years. For study in Oxford beyond the 2026-27 academic year, it is suggested that you budget for potential increases in living expenses of around 4% each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation.

A breakdown of likely living costs for one month during the 2026-27 academic year are shown below. These costs are based on a single, full-time graduate student, with no dependants, living in Oxford.

Likely living costs for one month in Oxford during the 2026-27 academic year

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£315	£545
Accommodation	£825	£990
Personal items	£160	£310
Social activities	£50	£130
Study costs	£35	£90
Other	£20	£40
Total	£1,405	£2,105

For information about how these figures have been calculated as well as tables showing the likely living costs for nine and twelve months, please refer to the [living costs \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) page of our website.

Document accessibility

If you require a more accessible version of this document please [contact Graduate Admissions and Recruitment by email \(graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk\)](mailto:graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk).