

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: MPhil in Classical Archaeology



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	21 months

About the course

The MPhil in Classical Archaeology is designed for those interested in continuing to a doctorate in Classical archaeology, and for those with experience in other areas of classical studies wishing to develop an understanding of the material culture.

The MPhil combines the flexibility of the MSt in Classical Archaeology (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/mst-classical-archaeology>), which allows you to choose from a wide range of broad periods and detailed options, with the opportunity to research a topic of your choice in the form of a thesis.

Course structure

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

Teaching is mainly through small-group tutorials or classes of usually one to five students, for which you will prepare short essays on a weekly basis, supplemented by a wide range of lecture courses and graduate seminars.

Each member of the academic staff in Classical archaeology offers a different subject in their areas of specialism in each of the first two terms, so you can normally choose from about eight different subjects each term, covering major topics from the Bronze Age to the Byzantine period.

In the second year, you will take a fourth taught subject from within Classical archaeology, and work on your thesis.

Graduate students run their own organisation (Graduate Archaeology at Oxford) which provides further skills seminars, a mentoring programme, social events and a very successful conference series. This provides many opportunities for you to develop your skills, present your research and develop ideas for the next stage of your career.

Attendance

The course is full-time and requires attendance in Oxford. Full-time students are subject to the University's Residence requirements (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/accommodation/residence-requirements>)

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>) at Oxford.

The School of Archaeology provides computer rooms for the use of all graduate students, with 24-hour access, offering the usual range of software, while a number of computers provide specialist GIS and mapping-related software.

The School of Archaeology has a wide-range of digital facilities, including desktop imaging and manipulation for publication and dissertation/thesis production such as full-colour scanning of slides, negatives, maps and other paper plan originals.

Students in Classical archaeology also have access to networked computers in the Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies.

The Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library, a world-class library for archaeology, classics, and art history, is situated between the Institute of Archaeology, Ioannou Centre and the Ashmolean Museum, and is the central facility; this

provides for most student needs.

The School has close ties with the Ashmolean Museum, the collections of which, including the Cast Gallery of Classical Sculpture, contribute to graduate teaching. The School of Archaeology has lecture and seminar rooms, and a common room.

There is also a small library at the Institute of Archaeology on Beaumont Street, while lectures and graduate seminars in Classical archaeology are also held in the nearby Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies, where there is a further common room.

For students who chose to take modules in Archaeological Science, the Research Laboratory for Archaeology at the History of Art has a range of equipment for cutting edge techniques across scientific dating, bio-archaeology and materials analysis.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the School of Archaeology and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to be supervised by particular member of staff. Under exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be found outside the School of Archaeology. You will meet with your supervisor at least at the start of each term.

You will have a departmental supervisor, normally your MPhil thesis supervisor in your main area of interest, who may also provide some of your teaching but whose main role is to advise on option choices and monitor overall progress.

Assessment

The three subject options are examined by pairs of pre-set essays, submitted early in the following terms. The period paper, which is the focus of the final term of the first year, is assessed by written examination at the end of that term.

The thesis subject is decided by the end of the first year, with any fieldwork taking place in the long vacation, and the research and writing usually occupy the second and third terms of the second year. There is also a compulsory viva voce examination for each year of the course, which is held in week nine of Trinity term.

Course components

Compulsory study

You will submit a final thesis.

Options

In the first year, you will choose one period option module. A list of typical period modules is provided below (not all modules run every year).

- Early Iron Age Greece, 1200-700 BC
- Archaic, 800-480 BC
- Classical, 500-300 BC
- Hellenistic, 330-30 BC
- Late Republican, 200-30 BC
- Early Imperial, 30 BC-AD 120
- Middle Imperial, AD 70-250
- Late Antiquity, AD 280-650
- Byzantine, AD 600-1453

You will then take two further option modules which will enable you to develop a deeper understanding of a particular field of research. A list of typical option subjects is provided below and more information is available on the school's website (See *Further information and enquiries*). (Not all modules listed will be available every year).

- Topics in Aegean Prehistory
- Roman Architecture
- Greek Coinage
- Greek Sculpture
- Greek and Roman Landscape Archaeology
- Roman Provincial Art
- Late Roman and Byzantine architecture
- The Archaeology of Greek Religion
- Historical Narrative in Art
- Aegean Bronze Age Trade OR Religion
- Burials, settlements, and society in Iron Age Greece, 1200-650 BC
- Greek Vases

- Greek and Roman wall paintings
- Etruscan Italy
- Hellenistic Far East
- Gandharan Art and the Classical World
- Pompeii and Ostia
- Roman Coinage
- Archaeology of the Roman Economy
- Maritime Archaeology
- Lived Religion in Late Antiquity

You may also be permitted to study an unlisted topic within Classical archaeology, or another directly related to it, provided that the topic is appropriate and teaching is available, or a subject from among those offered in a number of cognate disciplines.

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	Annual Course fees
Home	£17,310
Overseas	£32,960

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

There are no compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees and living costs. However, as part of your course requirements, you may need to choose a dissertation, a project or a thesis topic. Please note that, 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, although you may be able to apply for small grants from your department to help you cover some of these expenses.

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

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