

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: MPhil in Latin American Studies



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	21 months

About the course

This course offers an interdisciplinary approach towards the understanding of modern Latin America, allowing you to develop an in-depth research project that may involve a period of fieldwork in the region.

This is a 21-month course spanning six academic terms, including a fieldwork project in Latin America for up to three months.

The course will be informed by a range of disciplines: history, political science, environmental geography, economics and international relations. Major trends in the development of Latin America will be analysed with reference to the main categories of explanation advanced to interpret that development.

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.

In the first year, you will choose two disciplinary papers.

In addition, you will choose three option papers, or you may substitute these with further disciplinary papers. One paper will be taken in the first year, and two papers in the second year.

You will also be required to attend and participate in the research methods course. The course will provide you with a critical understanding of the major elements in the development of Latin America over the past two hundred years. You will be taught to relate economic and political trends, and to assess the importance of international influences. The course will demonstrate the way in which different disciplines contribute to an overall understanding of the historical development of the continent. You will also be taught the importance and the limitations of the comparative method of analysis.

A lively programme of Latin American Centre (LAC) seminars, workshops and conferences with visiting speakers complements the MPhil course, and you are encouraged to make the most of these opportunities to meet with and learn from fellow Latin Americanists.

The centre's main seminar room serves to host the regular Latin American seminar, a weekly event where Oxford-based and visiting academics present and discuss the results of their most recent research activities on a wide range of topics. In addition, the seminar room serves to host the Latin American History seminar.

Attendance

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

A typical week during term time will involve around 40 hours of study, including two to six hours of scheduled contact hours, two hours for the weekly seminar and at least thirty hours of independent work. During peak times around deadlines, the amount of work could be higher depending on your own study habits.

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.

The Latin American Centre houses an important collection of books, academic journals, periodicals and some other significant documents relevant for the study of the region. It is a specialist loan collection, whose primary role is to support graduate students taking the master's courses in Latin American Studies, although the library welcomes all current resident members of the University who are interested in the subject area.

The library has three reading rooms, all with Wi-Fi, including a seminar room and workspace. It subscribes to a number of journals, including popular titles like the Latin American Research Review, the Journal of Latin American Studies and the Hispanic American Historical Review.

Events in the LAC are often accompanied by social receptions, which will offer you opportunities to mix socially with your fellow students, staff and visitors.

Spanish and Portuguese classes at the Language Centre

If you are a non-native speaker of Spanish or Portuguese and feel that you could benefit from additional classes, you may wish to register for one of the courses offered by the University Language Centre. As a LAC student you are eligible to make a 'priority application' to attend a Spanish or Portuguese course.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Oxford School of Global and Area 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 Oxford School of Global and Area Studies.

Assessment

Year One

In your first year, the disciplinary, research methods, and option papers will be assessed by a combination of written exam papers and/or submitted essays.

During the first year, you will also work with your supervisor on your thesis proposal and preparation for field work, and will write a number of essays to be arranged with the various tutors of each of the courses. The timetable and subject of the essays should be arranged with the tutors of the respective courses. Assessments at the end of the first year will serve to qualify for entry to the second year of the course.

Year Two

In the second year, you will be expected to write a thesis.

Assessments for the option papers or further disciplinary papers will be by a combination of written exam papers and/or submitted essays, or with the permission of your supervisor, the LAC Administrator and the relevant department, you may take methodologies or other assessment papers from another MPhil of the University of Oxford as appropriate. In the second year, you may be required to attend a viva voce as part of the examinations process.

Course components

Compulsory study

You will be required to attend and participate in the research methods course organised in collaboration with other units from the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies. The course will provide you with a critical understanding of the major elements in the development of Latin America over the past two hundred years.

Options

In the first year, you will choose two disciplinary papers from the following:

- Latin America since Independence
- Introduction to the Latin American Economies
- Environmental Geography of Latin America
- The International Relations of Latin America
- The Politics of Democracy in Latin America

In addition, you will choose three option papers, or you may substitute these with further disciplinary papers. One paper will be taken in the first year, and two papers in the second year. As a guide, the following option papers are available in the current academic year, however they may vary from year to year:

- Andean Politics

- The Politics of Brazil
- Roman Catholicism in Latin America
- Histories of Inequality: Race and Racism in Latin America
- Issues in the Political Economy of Latin America

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](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses) (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses>) and the [provisions of the student contract](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract) (<http://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	£19,540
Overseas	£31,110

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

You will need to cover all costs related to the compulsory fieldwork element of this course, eg travel and living expenses. Travel to Chile from the UK is estimated to cost between £900 and £1600. Monthly living expenses (accommodation and food) are expected to range from £300 to £600. Other costs, including visas, photocopying, researcher fees for some institutions are expected to be in the region of £200. You may be eligible to apply for grants from the Latin American Centre and/or external sources, to assist with these costs. Standard travel insurance can be provided by the University, however students may be required to pay any additional insurance premiums associated with travel to areas with an increased level of risk and/or for travel of more than 12 months' duration, and should factor this into their planning for fieldwork.

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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