

## Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: MPhil in Egyptology



### Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	21 months

### About the course

The MPhil in Egyptology is a taught course offering advanced study in ancient Egyptian languages, cultures, and history, with tailored paths for specialists or newcomers, and a strong emphasis on primary texts in context.

While the MPhil functions as a course in its own right, it is also designed to take students to the stage where they can embark on doctoral research in Egyptology.

### 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.

The course has two distinct pathways through the curriculum, Syllabus A and Syllabus B. In both cases, syllabuses are tailored to the interests of individual students as much as possible and as far as planned teaching and supervising specialism allows. The syllabuses can also be designed with an archaeological and/or material-culture focus where teaching allows. You will have the opportunity to develop your skills in working with Egyptian artefacts from the extensive and diverse collections of the Ashmolean Museum.

The number of students accepted for the course each year is very small. This ensures that teaching can be tailored to the research interests and training requirements of individual students. Teaching is also very much focused around small groups and one-on-one tutorials and supervisions for which small cohorts are vital. Some classes may be shared with undergraduates and graduates on other degrees where appropriate for your research training needs. Depending on options, there are usually on average six to nine contact hours a week.

During the teaching term, Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies holds a regular research seminar with invited speakers. These are usually on Tuesday afternoons and you are expected to attend regardless of the specialism of the speaker. All seminars offer perspectives on method and analysis which can be useful for your own project development.

### 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>)

The MPhil is a very intensive course. For example, you must treat the University vacations as integral parts of your work time and you will be expected to take relatively limited holidays. Where possible, if you have not been to Egypt before you should ideally try to visit before the end of the course, to experience something of the landscape and country (some colleges offer travel grants). Currently, it is usually not possible to engage in fieldwork in Egypt, but there can be possibilities for fieldwork elsewhere.

### 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.

You will have access to the facilities and resources of the Griffith Institute, which is home to one of the most significant Egyptological archives in the world and two major research projects, the Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian

Hieroglyphic Texts, Statues, Reliefs and Paintings, and the Online Egyptological Bibliography. It is possible for archive holdings to form the basis of dissertation work or special fields. Volunteering in the archive or for the institute's projects offers excellent training in the management of primary sources as well as archival practices.

The Griffith Institute, as well as teaching rooms and staff offices, is located in a wing of the Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library. This library houses the principal collection of books on Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies, and is one of the finest libraries for the subject in the world. The Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library also includes general archaeology, Classical civilisation, and Western and Eastern art. An additional Egyptology resource is the Peet Library in The Queen's College (accessible to all Egyptology students, regardless of college affiliation).

A further vital University resource in Egyptology is the Ashmolean Museum. You will be strongly encouraged to make yourself familiar with the collections, both on display and in the stores. You may like to consider working with a specific category of material in the museum for a special field or dissertation. It may also be possible to gain museum work experience on a voluntary basis in the Department of Antiquities. Artefact classes for Egyptology undergraduates are held in the museum, and MPhil students are strongly encouraged to attend these where possible. Another Oxford museum with an Egyptian collection is the Pitt Rivers Museum. You may wish to explore the possibility of working with its collection, as well as those of other museums in the UK, such as the British Museum.

As well as these facilities, you will also be able to use the Nizami Ganjavi Library at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and the Bodleian Asian and Middle Eastern Collections. You will have access to the University's centrally provided electronic resources, the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies' IT Officer, and other bibliographic, archive or material sources as appropriate to the topic. There is a computing room for the use of graduate students in the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, as well as a common room where tea and coffee are available and staff and students can meet.

## **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, or co-supervisor, may be found outside the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

Most students have the opportunity to meet individually with their supervisor 2-3 times per term in the first year and 4 times per term in the second year, with further meetings outside term as needed and if possible.

## **Assessment**

Students on Syllabus A are normally required to sit one or two qualifying examinations in the language(s) and/or language phase(s) they are specialising in, during or after the end of Trinity term of their first year. Students on Syllabus B will sit two qualifying examinations in Middle Egyptian during or after the end of Trinity term of their first year.

During the second year, you will write a dissertation. This will give you the opportunity to identify and design your own research project and to develop advanced research skills. You should expect to spend the Easter vacation finishing your dissertation, which must be submitted half way through Trinity term.

Two research essays developed out of work done for one part of the course must be submitted by the end of Hilary term of the second year. Depending on the course design, there can also be a take-home examination at the start of Trinity term of the second year.

The final examinations are sat towards the end of Trinity term. Different examination provisions may be made for students who have chosen options that are offered in other faculties, such as Classics or Archaeology.

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.

## **Course components**

### **Pathway selection**

You will need to choose one of two distinct pathways through the curriculum.

### **Syllabus A**

Syllabus A allows those with previous training in Egyptology to pursue their study of the subject to a higher level, to gain specialised expertise, and to begin advanced research in an area of their choice. Applicants for this pathway should specify potential areas of research and/or training in their proposals. This might include training in phases of Egyptian language/scripts that could not be acquired during their undergraduate degree, or work on particular corpora, all in support of related research (eg demotic, Greco-Roman hieroglyphs, Old Egyptian, autobiographies, letters etc.). The department recommends that you contact potential supervisors.

## Syllabus B

Syllabus B enables graduates in another related discipline, such as for example Classics, history, archaeology, or linguistics, to convert to Egyptology through a graduate level course that offers a certain amount of specialisation, including a significant element of advanced research. It is also usually the recommended pathway for those who have had only basic training in Egyptian language in their undergraduate degrees. In the first year of Syllabus B you will share Middle Egyptian language classes (three hours a week) and lectures on history and culture (two hours week) with first year undergraduates.

## Compulsory study

### Study of ancient Egyptian language and textual culture

The study of ancient Egyptian language and textual culture lies at the heart of the degree and is generally a major component of both Syllabus A and B. The principal focus throughout both syllabuses is on detailed familiarity with the primary textual sources, studied in the original language and through the original manuscripts where possible, and with various methods and approaches. Use of a range of interpretive and analytical approaches to the primary sources is integral to the course, including, for example, historiographical and/or literary-critical frameworks; overall there is an emphasis on texts as artefacts in a material context.

### Dissertation

During the second year, you will write a dissertation. This will give you the opportunity to identify and design your own research project and to develop advanced research skills. You should expect to spend the Easter vacation finishing your dissertation, which must be submitted half way through Trinity term.

## Options

Options that are regularly offered for Syllabus A students and second year Syllabus B students include:

- Art and iconography
- Deir el-Medina, sources and analysis
- Coptic language and texts
- Demotic language and texts
- Greco- Roman hieroglyphic texts
- Hieratic texts
- Egyptian literary and/or religious texts
- Egyptian letters
- aspects of material culture.

## 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](https://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](https://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	£18,290
Overseas	£43,730

### 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 the course requirements, students may need to choose a dissertation, a project or a thesis topic. Please note that, depending on the choice of topic and the research required to complete it, there may be additional expenses, such as travel expenses, research expenses, and field trips. Students will need to meet these additional costs, although they may be able to apply for small grants from their faculty to help 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
<b>Food</b>	£315	£545
<b>Accommodation</b>	£825	£990
<b>Personal items</b>	£160	£310
<b>Social activities</b>	£50	£130
<b>Study costs</b>	£35	£90
<b>Other</b>	£20	£40
<b>Total</b>	£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).