

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: MSt in Literature and Arts



Course facts

Mode of study	Part Time Only
Expected length	2 years

About the course

The MSt in Literature and Arts (MLA) is a part-time, taught interdisciplinary course exploring British history and culture through literature, history, art, and philosophy from 1500–1914. It combines residences and online modules.

Based in Oxford, and taking full advantage of the remarkable resources that this university has at its disposal, the Literature and Arts course is designed around three sequential periods of British history: the early modern period (*circa* 1500-1700), the 'long' eighteenth century (*circa* 1688-1800), and the 'long' nineteenth century (*circa* 1800-1914). British history is understood in an expansive sense that includes Britain's relationships with the rest of the world.

By studying each period through the lens of multiple disciplines, you will have the opportunity to acquire a multi-faceted picture of the past and explore connections between different aspects of British culture and society. In this framework giant achievements such as Shakespeare's plays or Turner's art can be understood not only as uniquely inspired works but also as products of their times and influences on future developments.

The MLA is a two-year, part-time course.

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 year one, there are three compulsory five-day residences and one online module consisting of nine units (Core course two). In year two, there is one compulsory residence and one online module (Core course three).

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Although the online modules are not assessed, it is a requirement that students engage with the online modules to the satisfaction of the course director. The online modules are fully supported by a dedicated Virtual Learning Environment.

Students are supported by tutorials with the course director before or during each residence, input from the course director in asynchronous discussions in the online modules, supervision from tutors in relation to each assignment, and supervision from a dissertation supervisor or supervisors. The course director is also able to offer support throughout the course by email/phone.

A computer and reliable internet connection will be required as there are two compulsory online components of the course. The minimum recommended [IT specification \(https://onlinesupport.conted.ox.ac.uk/my-computerdevice/\)](https://onlinesupport.conted.ox.ac.uk/my-computerdevice/) can be found on the department's online support website. Please note that mobile devices are not compatible with uploading assignments etc.

Attendance

As a part-time student, you will be required to attend an induction day and four residences in Oxford during the course.

Each residence will comprise a full timetable of lectures and seminars in the mornings and afternoons. In keeping with the Oxford ethos of tutorial instruction, individual tutorials and supervisions will also be an integral part of the course, most notably with regard to the dissertation. Individual supervision will be undertaken both face-to-face and by email. It is generally expected that the ratio of taught content to self-directed learning will be 1:18.

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 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 Rewley House Continuing Education Library (<https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/about/library-facilities>), one of the Bodleian Libraries, is situated in Rewley House. The department aims to support the wide variety of subjects covered by departmental courses at many academic levels. The department has a collection of around 73,000 books together with periodicals. PCs in the library give access to the internet and the full range of electronic resources subscribed to by the University of Oxford. The Jessop Reading Room adjoining the library is available for study.

The department provides various IT facilities (<https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/about/online-support>), including the Student Computing Facility which provides individual PCs for your use.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Department for Continuing Education and this role will usually 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. Where appropriate a supervisor may be found outside the Department for Continuing Education.

Assessment

Assessment is through four assignments, each assignment following a residential session, and a dissertation. The four assignments contribute 40% of the final mark and the dissertation contributes 60%.

Course components

Compulsory study

The first residence (core course one) aims to develop your understanding of theories and methods of interdisciplinary study and enable you to explore aspects of British history and culture in an international context. The topics covered are likely to include:

- Returning the Gaze: Non-European Travellers in Britain;
- Orientalism in Nineteenth-Century British Painting
- The Victorians and Ideas of War and Peace: Crimea, 1854-1856
- British Collectors and Classical Antiquities.

Options

The three subsequent residences will enable you to choose from a range of options, each rooted in one of the core disciplines of literature, history, history of art and material culture, and philosophy. You will take two options out of four offered during each residence. Please note that due to timetabling constraints it may not always be possible to allocate you to your first and second choices.

For residence two, which is focused on the early modern period, the options offered are likely to include:

- Sacred Monsters: Shakespeare in History
- Tudor Monarchy
- The Elizabethan Country House.

For residence three, which is focused on the 'long' eighteenth century, the options offered are likely to include:

- Green Retreats: Nature and Landscape in Eighteenth-Century Literature
- Overseas Trade and the Rise of Britain as a Superpower
- The Rise of Landscape in British Painting.

For residence four, which is focused on the 'long' nineteenth century, the options offered are likely to include:

- History, Historiography and Medievalism: The Victorians and the Crusades
- Classical Power: Legacies of Antiquity in British Art, c 1770-1860
- The British Empire and the Country House.

It cannot be guaranteed that any particular option will be offered.

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) ([//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) ([//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	£10,210
Overseas	£16,010

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

Please note that this course requires that you attend in Oxford for residential sessions, and you may incur additional travel and accommodation expenses for this. Accommodation costs in Oxford can start at around £98 per night in a department/college or around £120 in a hotel (single rate). Students should also factor in costs for meals during their stay. In addition, as part of your course requirements, you will need to choose a dissertation topic. This element of the course is mandatory and forms part of the assessment for the course. Depending on your choice of topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel expenses, research expenses, equipment, and materials. You will need to meet these additional costs yourself. There are no other compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees and living 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 part-time study

Your living costs may vary depending on your personal circumstances but you will still need to cover your cost of living on a full-time basis for the duration of your course, even if you will not be based in Oxford throughout your studies. While the range of likely living costs for a single, full-time student living in Oxford in the 2026-27 academic year is between £1,405 and £2,105 per month, living costs outside Oxford may be different.

Part-time students who are not based in Oxford will need to calculate travel and accommodation costs carefully. Depending on your circumstances and study plans, this may include the [cost of a visitor visa to attend for short blocks of time \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) (if [visitor visa eligibility criteria \(//www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/visitors\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/visitors) 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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