

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: MSt in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	9 months

About the course

The MSt in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies is a nine-month, interdisciplinary course designed to equip you with the critical and research tools needed for women's, gender and sexuality studies in the humanities.

The course provides a systematic introduction to feminist theory (including queer and trans theory) and highlights women's contribution to culture and history alongside critical analysis and theorisation of the meanings assigned to the category 'woman' in philosophical, literary, socio-cultural and historical thought.

It also provides the practical equipment necessary to engage in original research into topics in the humanities relating to women, gender and sexuality, in a university with excellent facilities for both traditional and computer-age research. Teaching is delivered through close individual supervision, as well as a carefully designed programme of lectures and classes led by specialists from a wide variety of disciplines, promoting collaborative work as well as the development of independent and original scholarship.

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.

You will follow an intensive core course, in the form of seminars combining introductions to feminist theory and to methodologies/methods of research. In addition to this, you will take two options, drawn from a list covering a very wide range of topics.

The options allow deepening of skills acquired in a first degree or the development of new skills under specialist teaching, which can be further practised in the third assessed element of the course, a dissertation on a subject of your choice for which you will receive up to six contact hours from your dissertation supervisor.

Five faculties within the [Humanities Division](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/humanities) (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/humanities>) contribute option choices and supervision expertise to the degree: the Faculties of English Language and Literature, History, Classics, Philosophy and Medieval and Modern Languages.

The programme does not formally involve departments within the [Social Sciences Division](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/social-sciences) (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/social-sciences>) but draws on the expertise of social scientists.

Whilst you are pursuing the MSt in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies you are also encouraged to go to lectures and seminars organised by individual faculties, which might help you to frame your immediate or future projects.

Further opportunities for exchange are provided by the interdisciplinary communities fostered within individual colleges. The Oxford Centre for Research in the Humanities ([TORCH](http://www.torch.ox.ac.uk/) (<http://www.torch.ox.ac.uk/>)) offers a stimulating range of interdisciplinary activities.

For progression from the taught MSt to a research degree, the five participating faculties (Classics, English Language and Literature, History, Medieval and Modern Languages and Philosophy) accept the MSt in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies as equivalent to their respective MSt degrees, though there is no automatic right to acceptance and some faculties demand a distinction in the MSt dissertation.

In the case of the Faculty of Philosophy, applications by students who have completed the MSt will be considered for both the BPhil and the DPhil programmes on a case-by-case basis. It is the responsibility of students applying to other faculties within Oxford to clarify any conditions for progression which these faculties may impose.

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). (<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) (<https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/what-to-bring>) at Oxford.

The Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities

You will be based in the Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, a brand-new building at the University of Oxford expected to open in 2025, which will accommodate seven faculties, two institutes, a new library, a large number of well-equipped teaching and seminar rooms, and performance and arts venues. Each faculty will have its own centre and social hub within a building which will also facilitate interdisciplinary and collaborative work. At the heart of the building will be a large atrium – called the Great Hall – which will be a beautiful space, bringing light into the building, and serving as a space for informal work, relaxation, meeting with friends, taking breaks, having refreshments – and much more.

The building will enable the recently-established Cultural Programme to flourish, with a 500-seat world class concert hall, a theatre, experimental performance venue, 100-seat cinema, and exhibition hall. Many of these venues will support academic and student-led activities, as well as performances and creative works by professional artists. The cultural programme will enrich the lives of students, and will also provide opportunities to get involved.

The library, part of the Bodleian Libraries, will be open to all students, and will house lending collections for English, Film Studies, History of Medicine, Internet Studies, Music, Philosophy and Theology. There will be 340 general reader seats, and around 80 graduate study seats – with a further 320 formal and informal study seats throughout the building outside the library.

Open-shelf lending collections will be complemented by access to electronic resources, scan on demand, and material requested from the Bodleian's Collections Storage Facility. As well as the Library's extensive staffed hours, there will be a 24/7 study space, including smart lockers for self-collect of borrowable items out of hours. Subject support is provided by a team of subject librarians.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Steering Committee for the MSt in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, in consultation with faculties in the Humanities Division, 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 faculties in the Humanities Division.

The course is assessed by a dissertation to be submitted at the end of Trinity term. Each of the two option courses are examined by coursework essays, one to be submitted at the end of Hilary term, and one at the beginning of Trinity term.

Course components

Compulsory study

You will:

- follow an intensive core course, in the form of seminars combining introductions to feminist theory and to methodologies/methods of research; and
- submit a dissertation on a subject of your choice.

Options

You will take two options, drawn from a list covering a very wide range of topics. The option courses available change from year to year, but the following list is indicative of the types of topics which may be offered:

- Approaches to Queer and Trans History: Britain 1800-2000
- Crossing fiction and theory: African women writers and African feminism in conversation
- Black British Feminism: Activism, Literature, Film and Art
- Bodily Transformations in Contemporary Writing and Media
- A Cultural Analysis of Swagger: Representing Performative Masculinities in Literature and the Arts (from the 19th Century to the Present Day)

- Doing Ethnography on Feminisms Elsewhere
- Feminism and Silence
- Feminist Perspectives on the Body
- Feminist Perspectives on Abortion: Literature, Film, Politics, Praxis
- Fiction in English, 1789 to the Present: Gender and Race
- 'Friendship as a Way of life': kinship and the nature of queerness
- Gender and the Classics - Religion as Paradox and Paradigm
- Gendered Bodies in Visual Art and Culture
- Lusophone Women Writers
- Making Home in a Colonial World
- Natural Women? Gender and the Environment
- The Philosophy and Feminism of Simone de Beauvoir
- Philosophy of birth - When the uterus enters the door, reason goes out the window
- Queer Spectrality
- Queer Survival
- Researching reflexively with the South: decolonizing communication practices and engaging with intersectionality in research
- Transgender Theory & Criticism
- Women's Intellectual History from 1850 to the present
- Writing Women in the Middle Ages
- US LGBT Identities in Historical Context.

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	£19,900
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 the Humanities Division 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
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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