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Classical Archaeology and Ancient History (BA) (three-year course) Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026

Entry requirements

Visit [Admission requirements for 2026 entry](#) to view a summary table of each undergraduate course's entry requirements.

If English is not your first language you may also need to meet our [English language requirements](#).

About the course

The course combines study of the history, archaeology and art of the classical world. It looks at the societies and cultures of the ancient Mediterranean, through written texts, visual art and material remains. The course has at its centre the two classical cultures of Greece and Rome.

The course is aimed at anyone interested in investigating ancient civilisations and their remains: from Greek temples and Roman amphitheatres to wall paintings and the poignant residues of everyday life.

While it is primarily a historical and non-linguistic degree, ancient languages can be used and learned as part of the course.

The degree is taught through a mixture of tutorials, lectures and classes. Some cover specifically archaeological or historical approaches to ancient Mediterranean cultures, but the degree is unique in also offering courses that combine both approaches.

In every year of the course there are classes led by both an archaeologist and a historian, which are designed to give an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to the topics studied.

The University's resources for this combined subject are excellent. The expertise, range and number of post-holders in the two fields are unique. Oxford has some of the best library facilities for the study of classical archaeology and ancient history in the world (especially the [Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library](#)). The [Ashmolean Museum](#) also contains wide-ranging collections of art and artefacts from classical cultures.

Fieldwork/work placements/international opportunities

Most teaching takes place in Oxford but there are two practical elements to the course:

- two weeks at the end of the first year spent on an archaeological field project or a practical museum placement
- the preparation of a report in the second and third years focusing either on a particular ancient site, or on an artefact or set of artefacts in a museum of your choice.

Fieldwork projects recently attended by Classical Archaeology and Ancient History (CAAH) students include:

- Birdoswald Roman Fort, Cumbria

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- Dobra, Albania
- Fregellae, Lazio, Italy
- Populonia, Tuscany, Italy
- Halaesa, Sicily, Italy
- Sanisera Field School, Menorca, Spain
- Thouria, Kalamata, Greece
- Demetrias Field School, Greece
- Carnuntum, Austria.

Faculty financial support may be provided for fieldwork.

A typical week (year 1)

- Lectures (4-6 per week)
- Team-taught classes (one per week for the first two terms)
- Tutorials (one every one to two weeks) and/or language classes

A typical week (year 2-3)

You will take six options and produce a site or museum report. Currently, the options are chosen from:

- Integrated classes, bringing together historical and archaeological approaches to a particular period
- Core papers, which deal with central topics in Greco-Roman studies
- Further papers, which allow you either to build up concentrated expertise in some central areas and periods or to extend into earlier and later periods, and into non-classical cultures
- Greek or Latin language papers.

Tutorials are usually two students (possibly three) and a tutor; a larger group is normally defined as a class.

Where options are taught in classes, the class size will depend on the options you choose. They would usually be no more than 10 students. For the core papers the class size is usually eight or less.

Most tutorials, classes, and lectures are delivered by staff who are tutors in their subject. Many are world-leading experts with years of experience in teaching and research. Some teaching may also be delivered by postgraduate students who are studying at doctoral level.

To find out more about how our teaching year is structured, visit our [Academic Year](#) page.

Significant self-study is expected of all students – for further details see [workload and independent study](#) information. Undergraduate courses at Oxford are full-time during term time. Students typically spend approximately 40 hours per week on academic work.

Course structure

YEAR 1

COURSES

Four courses are taken

Core elements:

- Aristocracy and democracy in the Greek world, 550–450 BC
- Republic to empire: Rome, 50 BC to AD 50

Current optional elements:

- Archaeology: Homeric archaeology and early Greece from 1550 to 700 BC; Greek vases; Greek sculpture c600–300 BC; Roman architecture
- History: Athenian Revolutions, 411–403 BC; Greeks and Persians; People and Politics, 58–52 BC; Roman Imperialism in Gaul and Britain
- Ancient Languages: Beginning Ancient Greek or Latin; Intermediate Ancient Greek or Latin; Advanced Ancient Greek or Latin

ASSESSMENT

First University examinations: four written papers

YEARS 2 AND 3

COURSES

Six courses are taken from a wide choice of options. These currently include:

- Rome, Italy, and the Hellenistic East, c300–100 BC
- Imperial culture and society, cAD 50–150
- The Greeks and the Mediterranean world, c950–500 BC
- Greek art and archaeology, c500–300 BC
- Hellenistic art and archaeology, 330–30 BC
- Art under the Roman Empire, AD 14–337
- Roman archaeology: cities and settlement under the Empire
- Alexander the Great and his early successors
- The Greek city in the Roman world from Dio Chrysostom to John Chrysostom
- Thucydides and the Greek world, 479–403 BC
- Republic in crisis, 146–46 BC
- The archaeology of Minoan Crete, 3200–1000 BC
- Etruscan Italy, 900–300 BC
- Science-based methods in archaeology
- Greek and Roman coins
- Mediterranean maritime archaeology
- The archaeology of the late Roman Empire, AD 284–641
- Athenian democracy in the Classical Age

ASSESSMENT

Final University examinations: six written papers; one site or museum report

YEARS 2 AND 3

- Cicero: politics and thought in the late Republic
- Religions in the Greek and Roman world, c31 BC-AD 312
- Sexuality and gender in Greece and Rome
- The Achaemenid Empire, 550-330 BC
- St Augustine and the last days of Rome, AD 370-430
- Epigraphy of the Greek and/or Roman world, c700 BC-AD 300
- Intermediate Ancient Greek or Latin
- Advanced Ancient Greek or Latin
- Research for a site or museum report

For more information, [visit the Classical Archaeology and Ancient History website](#). (Not all options may be available every year – these are subject to change, as explained in the [Terms & Conditions](#) and for reasons of staff availability and student demand. The department may add extra options.)

Most Oxford courses are assessed by examinations. These are typically at the end of the first and last years but you may have assessments at other times and some courses have exams in the second year also. First year examinations are often called Prelims or Moderations, and you need to pass these exams to progress to the second year. You must pass your final year exams, or ‘finals’, to pass your degree. For more information on assessment for your course, please see the Course Structure.

Finals also determine the classification of your degree. For some courses you may also be assessed on your practical work, or you may be required to submit a dissertation. Please check the assessment details for your course.

The University will seek to deliver this course in accordance with the description set out above. 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. For further information, please see the University's [Terms and Conditions](#) and information about [potential course changes](#).

You are also referred to the [Student Handbook](#) (which is updated every September).

Fees

These annual fees in 2026/27 are for full-time students who begin this undergraduate course here in 2026. Information about how much fees and other costs usually increase each year is set out in the [University's Terms and Conditions](#).

For details of annual increases, please see our [guidance on likely increases to fees and charges](#).

Fee status	Annual Course fees in 2026/27
Home	£9,790
Overseas	£43,600

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In the 2027-28 academic year course fees for Home fee status students will rise to £10,050 (in line with the government fee cap.)

[Further details about fee status eligibility](#) can be found on the fee status webpage.

Living costs

Living costs for the academic year starting in 2026 are estimated to be between £1,405 and £2,105 for each month you are in Oxford. Students at Oxford can benefit from our [world class resources](#) and [college provision](#), which may help to keep costs down. Entitlement to certain types of support may depend on your personal financial circumstances.

Our academic year is made up of three eight-week terms, so you would not usually need to be in Oxford for much more than six months of the year but may wish to budget over a nine-month period to ensure you also have sufficient funds during the holidays to meet essential costs. For further details please visit our [living costs webpage](#).

Living costs breakdown

	Per month		Total for 9 months	
	Lower range	Upper range	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£315	£545	£2,835	£4,905
Accommodation (including utilities)	£825	£990	£7,425	£8,910
Personal items	£160	£310	£1,440	£2,790
Social activities	£50	£130	£450	£1,170
Study costs	£35	£90	£315	£810
Other	£20	£40	£180	£360
Total	£1,405	£2,105	£12,645	£18,945

In order to provide these estimated likely living costs (which are rounded to the nearest £5), the University in collaboration with the Oxford SU conducted a living costs survey in May 2025 to complement existing student expenditure data from a variety of sources, including the UK government's Student Income and Expenditure Survey and the National Union of Students (NUS).

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. When planning your finances for any future years of study in Oxford beyond 2026-27, it is suggested that you allow for potential increases in living expenses of around 4% each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation.

Additional Fees and Charges Information for Classical Archaeology and Ancient History

At the end of the first year, CAAH students are required to undertake fieldwork or alternatively a practical museum placement. Fieldwork projects recently attended by CAAH students include:

- Birdoswald Roman Fort, Cumbria
- Dobra, Albania
- Fregellae, Lazio, Italy

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- Demetrias Field School, Greece
- Carnuntum, Austria

Museum placements included the Ashmolean Museum, Copenhagen Glyptothek (Denmark), Beazley Archive (Oxford) and others.

You can choose an alternative location if you wish, subject to the approval of the CAAH standing committee. The cost of participating in fieldwork will depend on your choice of fieldwork project, but will typically vary between £500 - £1,200. All CAAH students starting in 2025 may receive a fieldwork grant of up to £1,000 from the faculty; the amount is kept under review by the Faculty.

Regulation - The University of Oxford is regulated by the [Office for Students](#) and subscribes to the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education](#) student complaints scheme.