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Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (BA) (three-year or four-year course with year abroad) Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026

Arabic, Assyriology, Chinese, Egyptology, Hebrew, Japanese, Jewish Studies, Persian, Sanskrit and Turkish

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 Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies is unique for its focus on introducing students to civilisations that are different from the Western ones upon which the curriculum in most British schools and colleges is based.

The various courses offered by the Faculty present both the major traditions and cultural trends of the regions studied and, in most cases, their modern developments. All courses include a combination of linguistic, literary, historic and cultural studies. There is a wide range of options in fields such as art and archaeology, history, literature, philosophy, religion and modern social studies.

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies has a long history in Oxford. The Bodleian and other libraries possess extensive collections. These include the Nizami Ganjavi Library, the KB Chen China Centre Library and the Bodleian Japanese Library which contain significant collections in their respective fields.

Around the corner from the Faculty building on Pusey Lane is the [Ashmolean Museum](#), which houses superb collections relevant to Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. Nearby are also the Leopold Muller Memorial Library at the Clarendon Institute for Hebrew and Jewish Studies material, and the [Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library](#). The Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library contains the renowned Griffith Institute Archive, one of the finest collections in the world for the study of ancient Egypt and the Ancient Near East.

Work placements/international opportunities

Most courses offer the opportunity to spend time in the region being studied. For example, students of Arabic spend a year in an Arabic-speaking country; students of Turkish in Turkey; students of Chinese in China or Taiwan; students of Japanese in Japan; students of Persian in Iran, Tajikistan and/or Armenia.

For Persian, the Faculty decides each year whether it is advisable for its students to spend their year abroad in Iran. In years when Iran is not possible, they study in Tajikistan and/or Armenia instead.

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 a course's requirements for

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international study. Students who consider that they may be affected are asked to contact their department for advice.

A typical week

Most teaching takes place in Oxford and your time will be divided between lectures, tutorials (up to three students and a tutor) and language classes that will develop your writing, speaking - when relevant - and comprehension skills. The rest of your time will be dedicated to independent study, working on regular assignments in reading, writing and translation.

Seminar and language class sizes may vary depending on the options you choose or the language you are studying, but there would usually be no more than around 10 students and often fewer, while lectures are normally around 15-25 students.

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 usually studying at doctoral level.

Visit our [Academic Year](#) page to find out more about how our teaching year is structured.

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

Course structure

Arabic (T601), Persian (T613), Turkish (T600)

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEARS 3 AND 4
COURSES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elementary language• Islamic History and Culture	COURSES <p>Year abroad: approved course of language instruction</p>	COURSES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Core work on language• History• Literature• Specialisation or subsidiary language• Islamic Religion (Arabic only)
ASSESSMENT <p>First University examinations after term 3: three written papers; an oral exam (Arabic only)</p>		ASSESSMENT <p>Final University examinations at the end of Year 4: oral exam and eight or nine written papers (one of which must be a dissertation)</p>

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The options listed in this section are only illustrative of what is available. A full list of current options is available on the [Asian and Middle Eastern Studies website](#).

Assyriology (Q401), Egyptology (Q400)

For students starting Assyriology (Ancient Near Eastern Studies) in 2025 or thereafter, please note that the degree title for course Q401 has changed from BA in Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies to BA in Assyriology. In the new structure, the Egyptology course will lead to a BA in Egyptology (Q400), and the Ancient Near Eastern Studies course will lead to a BA in Assyriology (Q401).

The course content and options will remain the same.

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
COURSES Broad survey of history and cultures of Egypt and the Ancient Near East Intensive language and text classes in Egyptian or Akkadian as main language	COURSES Addition of either second language, or Archaeology and Anthropology as second subject Language options with Akkadian: Arabic, Aramaic and Syriac, Early Iranian, Egyptian, Hebrew (Biblical and Rabbinic), Hittite (if available) or Sumerian Language options with Egyptian: Akkadian, Arabic, Aramaic and Syriac, Coptic, Demotic, Early Iranian or Hebrew (Biblical and Rabbinic) Intensive language and text classes in main language Literary and historical topics through study of texts and other sources and through essay writing Museum artefact classes	COURSES Continuation of second language or subject Intensive classes in main language in the first and second terms Literary and historical topics through study and essay writing Museum artefact classes Special option Dissertation
ASSESSMENT		ASSESSMENT

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First University examinations: four written papers		Final University examinations: ten units
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Chinese (T101)

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEARS 3 AND 4
COURSES Elementary language in Modern and Classical Chinese History and culture of China	COURSES Year abroad in China or Taiwan	COURSES Extended language classes in modern Chinese Classical Chinese philosophy and history Interdisciplinary course on modern China Dissertation Two options from a range covering ancient philosophy, history, literature, art and cinema, contemporary Chinese law, politics and society, and international relations; or a subsidiary language: Tibetan, Japanese or Korean
ASSESSMENT First University examinations: three written papers; an oral exam		ASSESSMENT Final University examinations: oral examination; eight written papers (including extended essay for candidates who have taken these options); dissertation

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The options listed in this section are only illustrative of what is available. A full list of current options is available on the [Asian and Middle Eastern Studies website](#).

Mastering the ability to handwrite in Chinese has been identified as a competence standard for a **mandatory** core element of this course. This means that students will be required to produce handwritten work for assessment and it will not be possible to complete the assessment in an alternative format. If you are interested in this course and your personal circumstances mean that handwriting may present a challenge, please contact the department/faculty for further information.

It has also been identified that mastering the ability to handwrite in Chinese, Japanese and Korean is a competence standard for an assessment for an **optional** component of this course which means that students will be required to produce handwritten work for assessment and it will not be possible to complete the assessment for that optional component in an alternative format. If you are interested in this course and your personal circumstances mean that handwriting may present a challenge, please contact the department/faculty for further information.

Hebrew (Q480)

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEARS 3 AND 4
COURSES Intensive study in Hebrew language in all periods Introduction to Jewish history and culture	COURSES Intensive language study Study of history, literature, religion and culture through texts Choice of two optional papers from Jewish Studies Subsidiary language options: Akkadian, Arabic, Aramaic and Syriac, Egyptology, Persian or Turkish	COURSES Continued language and textual study Tutorials in history, culture and society Year 3 is a compulsory year abroad for students on the four-year track.
ASSESSMENT First University examinations: four written papers		ASSESSMENT Final University examinations: seven written papers; dissertation; oral examination if taking a year abroad (four year course)

The options listed in this section are only illustrative of what is available. A full list of current options is available on the [Asian and Middle Eastern Studies website](#).

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Japanese (T201)

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEARS 3 AND 4
COURSES Intensive Japanese language classes Japanese and East Asian history and culture Formal grammatical analysis of Japanese	COURSES Year abroad at Kobe University	COURSES Continued language classes Classical Japanese Dissertation Options with tutorials (five subjects to be chosen), from a range of specialised subjects within: Classical literature; Modern literature; Linguistics; History; Politics; Economics; Society, Art; Subsidiary language (counts as three subjects) from: Chinese, Korean or Tibetan
ASSESSMENT First University examinations: three written papers	ASSESSMENT Test at end of course	ASSESSMENT Final University examinations: oral examination; eight written papers; dissertation

The options listed in this section are only illustrative of what is available. A full list of current options is available on the [Asian and Middle Eastern Studies website](#).

Mastering the ability to handwritten in Japanese has been identified as a competence standard for a **mandatory** core element of this course. This means that students will be required to produce handwritten work for assessment and it will not be possible to complete the assessment in an alternative format. If you are interested in this course and your personal circumstances mean that handwriting may present a challenge, please contact the department/faculty for further information.

It has also been identified that mastering the ability to handwritten in Chinese, Japanese and Korean is a competence standard for an assessment for an **optional** component of this course which means that students will be required to produce handwritten work for assessment and it will not be possible to complete the assessment for that optional component in an alternative format. If you are interested in this course and your personal circumstances mean that handwriting may present a challenge, please contact the department/faculty for further information.

Jewish Studies (QV91)

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
COURSES	COURSES	COURSES

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Intensive study in Hebrew language in all periods Introduction to Jewish history and culture	Intensive language study Options (three subjects to be chosen)	Continued language study Options (two subjects to be chosen) Tutorials in history, culture and society
ASSESSMENT First University examinations: four written papers		ASSESSMENT Final University examinations: seven written papers; dissertation

The options listed in this section are only illustrative of what is available. A full list of current options is available on the [Asian and Middle Eastern Studies website](#).

Sanskrit (Q450)

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
COURSES Intensive language learning Introduction to the study of ancient Indian civilisation	COURSES Continued language learning and text reading Study of the historically and culturally most important genres of Sanskrit literature Begin subsidiary language options: Hindi, Early Iranian, Pali, Prakrit or Tibetan	COURSES Continued language learning and text reading Option (one subject to be chosen from a range of specialised subjects relating to Sanskrit) Dissertation
ASSESSMENT First University examinations: three written papers		ASSESSMENT Final University examinations: ten papers (seven in Sanskrit, including a dissertation, and three in subsidiary languages)

The options listed in this section are only illustrative of what is available. A full list of current options is available on the [Asian and Middle Eastern Studies website](#).

The options listed in the courses above may change as explained in the [Terms and 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

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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](#).

Fees status	Annual Course fees in 2026-27
Home	£9,790
Overseas	£43,600

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.

Oxford 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

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	Per month		Total for 9 months	
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 Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Students taking Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Persian or Turkish will take the second year abroad. Students of Hebrew can choose to take a year abroad, but it is not compulsory.

During the year abroad, students currently pay significantly reduced fees to the University. Fees for later years have not yet been confirmed but as an example, the course fees for a new-cohort undergraduate student on a Humanities course going on a year abroad in 2026 would equate to:

- Home students: £1,465 for the year
- Overseas students: £14,825 for the year (please note this is an illustrative example for 2026-27)

At present course fees for students undertaking a year abroad are charged at 15% of the usual home fee rate in line with the Government cap, which is used for this example, but that may change if the Government varies that cap.

We recommend that students begin to research the costs associated with the various year abroad options as early as possible in the second year of the course. There is plenty of support, information and advice to help you.

The Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies covers the cost of language tuition abroad, but not living costs and flights. Students taking Arabic are able to choose between several institutions abroad. Depending on the choice of education provider, additional costs may be incurred. These will be confirmed in advance each year.

Some funding towards year abroad placements is currently available through the Turing scheme, which provides living costs grants and enhanced support for disadvantaged students. The University plans to bid for Turing scheme funding to support year abroad activity in future academic years.

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UK students can continue to access government funding for living costs, and those from lower-income households who are means-tested will remain eligible for generous bursaries from Oxford. Travel grants and financial assistance for those with insufficient funds may also be available through your college and the University.

Living costs support during the year abroad

Some year abroad activities provide a salary, and other year-abroad funding is available from a variety of sources.

Visit the dedicated [Study Abroad page](#) for the latest information on studying abroad.

Some funding towards year abroad placements is currently available through the Turing scheme, which provides living costs grants and enhanced support for disadvantaged students. The University plans to bid for funding available through the relevant UK government scheme(s) to support year abroad activity in future academic years.

All UK students can continue to access living costs funding from the UK government (Student Finance agencies) during their year abroad. The level of funding available to you will be assessed based on your household income and your placement type. Further information about the amount of funding which may be available can be found at: Student finance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). UK students from lower-income households with means-tested assessments will also remain eligible for Oxford's bursary provision, which is separate to the living costs support mentioned above. For UK students who are struggling financially, the University's Financial Assistance schemes may be able to provide additional support.

Travel grants may be available through your college and/or the Faculty and some financial assistance is also available from the Faculty.

Please note, at the time of publishing the CIS, full details about UK national funding agency arrangements for living costs support during the year abroad were outstanding. [Our Turing Scheme webpage](#) (will be updated as information becomes available and on-course students will be kept informed of developments.

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.