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Fine Art (BFA) (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

Fine Art is the making and study of visual art. It educates and prepares students to become artists and to follow other practices that are aligned with the making of art. The curriculum is centred on the individual student's potential and imagination.

The Ruskin School of Art offers a three-year studio-based BFA course in which students work alongside each other in collaboratively-organised studios. Whereas many fine art courses run in an environment devoted exclusively to art and design, Ruskin students, as members of a collegiate university, have the advantage of contact with their contemporaries on all of Oxford's other courses.

The Ruskin course aims to develop strong independent points of view and a mature grasp of the range of critical debate surrounding contemporary art and its many international histories. Oxford's short terms, coupled with the ambitious atmosphere at the Ruskin, suit highly-motivated and resourceful students with a good sense of how to organise their time both in and out of Oxford.

The first year of the course is structured to introduce students to one another, to the resources of the school and to the staff involved in teaching and running the Ruskin. Students will familiarise themselves with their fellow students' work, take part in group criticism and engage in intensive dialogue with tutors and visiting artists.

The intimate working environment of the school, arranged in two buildings, allows art history, theory and criticism to be treated as integral to the development of studio work. The Ruskin also enjoys a strong and constructive relationship with Modern Art Oxford (an exciting and influential contemporary art space) and other local and London-based arts organisations. Students also have full access to the many exceptional University libraries and museums, including the Ashmolean and the Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library.

A typical week

A week will typically consist of several of the following:

- a one-to-one studio-based tutorial focusing on the individual student's art work
- a tutor-led group critique or other bespoke teaching session
- a skills-based workshop
- a history and theory lecture and/or seminar or essay tutorial
- a talk by a visiting speaker.

Students spend much of their time working in their own studio spaces, where they are supported by specialists in the art-making techniques available at the Ruskin.

Tutorials are usually one-to-one with a tutor. Typically, there are 6-12 students in a group critique (in which students present their work, and discussion is guided by one or two tutors). There are usually no more than 12 students in any workshop or seminar, around 30 for lectures, and 90 for the all-school visiting speakers' talks.

Teaching is delivered by staff who are dedicated tutors in their subject. Many are leading artists and writers with years of experience in teaching and research. Some teaching may 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

Students develop their studio work in discussion with the school's faculty, tutors and visiting staff. They are allocated a studio tutor each term, who monitors progress, sets targets and directs them in their studies.

Work is regularly presented and discussed at group critiques involving staff and students from across the school. Alongside this, workshops and projects are offered throughout the year to introduce a range of techniques and approaches to the making and curating of artwork.

In addition, students attend weekly anatomy classes (including visits to the Anatomy Suite at the Medical Sciences Teaching Centre), in which they explore, and produce work relating to, the human body.

ASSESSMENT

Submission of portfolios of studio-based work, including human anatomy, and an exhibition; three submitted essays in the history and theory of visual culture.

YEARS 2 AND 3

COURSES

Years two and three are similar in structure to the first year (except for Anatomy, which is taught only in the first

ASSESSMENT

Assessment (Year 2)

YEARS 2 AND 3

year), and continue the tutorial and group crit system introduced in the first year.

All students are required to continue the study of art history and theory and to submit three essays during the second year.

In their third year, Finalists choose a subject for, and research and write, with supervision from a specialist tutor, an extended, 6,000-word essay which is submitted at the end of the second term as part of the Final Examination.

In the lead-up to their final degree show, students are supported with portfolio supervision, and professional practice and exhibition workshops.

Submission of three history and theory essays, which are assessed as part of the Final Examination

Assessment (Year 3)

An extended essay; a portfolio of work made during the second and third years and an accompanying exhibition

Visit the [Fine Art website](#) for more information. 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 |

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 Fine Art

In the first year of the BFA course, students are provided with basic materials and more specialist materials are available to buy at cost. There is no expectation for students to arrive with any additional equipment or materials beyond those they may already possess.

Each student receives a materials grant (currently £475) from the Ruskin School of Art for each year of the course. Finalists also receive a further materials grant (£280) for their work in the final show. Students are expected to meet any additional costs for materials, and may apply to their college for support in the first instance. Colleges may also provide support for student projects and travel.

Throughout the course, students are able to borrow an extensive selection of equipment on a sign-up basis.

Final year students normally stage a public exhibition of their work following the final examination and they collectively raise funds for this through sponsorship, art sales and other activities.

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.