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Geography (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

Geography provides a diverse interdisciplinary degree that bridges the natural and social sciences. It provides enhancement of a broad range of transferable skills, and an education encompassing pressing issues at a range of scales, from local up to global.

The degree spans such key topics as:

- climate and environmental change
- inequality
- social, economic and cultural transformation
- biodiversity loss
- geomorphological processes in drylands
- geographical data science
- post-colonialism
- globalisation.

The Oxford Geography degree provides a holistic view of the workings of physical and human environments, the ways in which humans are transforming the world and the implications for human societies.

Students are introduced to the full range of geographical topics in the foundational courses, which they can then follow up in more detail in the optional papers, shaping their programme to match their developing interests.

There is emphasis placed on interdisciplinary approaches within the course, with opportunities to explore the intersections between geography and other disciplines from the humanities, social and natural sciences.

The facilities available at Oxford are among the best in the country. Field equipment used by students for fieldwork reports and dissertations include:

- Lidar systems for remote sensing of winds
- theodolites for tracking balloons to calculate winds in the lower atmosphere
- high specification systems for working with climate data.

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The department also has well-equipped Geolabs for practical physical courses and individual research projects. These include the Geography Research and Teaching Labs, the Oxford Luminescence Dating Lab and the Oxford Resilient Buildings and Landscapes Lab.

Students are also trained in qualitative research methods that are particularly useful for human geography, such as:

- interviewing
- literature reviews
- archival research
- focus group and workshop facilitation
- ethnography.

There are opportunities to learn advanced data analysis and coding skills. The central and collegiate Library resources, electronically and in print are second to none.

Fieldwork and international opportunities

Most course teaching takes place in Oxford. The School of Geography and the Environment emphasises the importance of fieldwork since we believe there is no substitute for teaching subjects first-hand.

In the first year, all students take part in:

- a four-day physical geography field trip in the first term
- a one-day trip to the university research site in Wytham Woods,
- a day of human geography fieldwork in Oxford.

Second-year students will undertake a week-long overseas residential field course (currently to the Netherlands and Tenerife). All of this fieldwork is funded by the department.

Independent research, whether field-based, employing geocomputational tools, remote-sensed data, in laboratories, or archives, is also a key element of the dissertation.

A typical week

- Lectures in the morning
- Seminars/practical classes in the afternoon
- Tutorials: at least one college tutorial a week, and some college-based classes.

Tutorials usually consist of 2-4 students and a tutor. Group sizes for optional departmental seminars and classes may vary depending on the options you choose, but are typically below 20 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 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 compulsory courses:

- Earth systems processes
- Human geography
- Geographical controversies
- Geographical techniques

Induction physical geography field trip to Dorset (four days)

One-day human geography field trip exercise in Oxford

One-day physical geography field trip exercise in Wytham Woods

ASSESSMENT

Four written papers: two fieldwork reports; submitted essay on Geographical controversies

YEARS 2 AND 3

COURSES

- Geographical thought: histories, philosophies and practices (core)
- Foundational courses (two chosen)
 - Space, place and society
 - Earth system dynamics
 - Environmental geography
- Options (three chosen). Recent examples include:
 - Climate change impacts and adaptation
 - Childhood and youth in the global south
 - Climate change and variability
 - Complexity
 - Conservation
 - Contemporary issues in cultural geography
 - Critical development geographies
 - Desert landscapes and dynamics
 - Environmental governance in Central Asia
 - Finance and sustainability
 - Geographies for the Anthropocene
 - Geographic data science

ASSESSMENT

Six written papers: three extended essays; fieldwork report; dissertation

YEARS 2 AND 3

- Geography at war
 - Geopolitics in the margins
 - Geographies of heritage
 - New approaches to urban geography
 - Politics, society and culture of China
 - Sustainable development in practice
 - Sustainable urbanisms
 - The Quaternary period
 - Transport and mobilities
- Dissertation
 - Overseas field trip

(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.)

The options listed above are illustrative and may change. The University may cap the number of students who are able to take a particular one. A [full list of current options](#) is available on the Geography website.

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](#).

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Fee status	Annual Course fees in 2026/27
Home	£9,790
Overseas	£49,400

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.

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Additional Fees and Charges Information for Geography

First year students attend a four-day residential field course in the UK during their first term. The cost of the field trip is borne by the School of Geography and the Environment and there is no charge to students.

Students are also required to undertake a one-week field trip in their second year and currently have a choice between trips to the Netherlands or Tenerife. There is no additional charge to students for the fieldtrip.

These field trips provide students with the opportunity to learn and practice the field research skills that they will employ in their own dissertation research.

Some of the projects students have had the opportunity to undertake on previous trips include pilot balloon tracking of trade winds and monitoring of microclimates using i-button data in Tenerife and studying urban natures and environmental governance of transport systems in the Netherlands. Students have to write a report of their research which is assessed as part of the final examinations.

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.