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History and English (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

A joint degree in History and English requires students to think critically about how we define 'history' and 'literature', and about how the two disciplines interrelate and, to a large extent, overlap.

Close attention is given to changing methodologies, to the nature of evidence and to styles of argument. It is assumed that historical documents are just as much 'texts' as poems, plays or novels, and are therefore as subject to interpretation as works of narrative, rhetoric and, fundamentally, language.

In turn, it is assumed that poems, plays and novels represent historically-grounded ways of interpreting a culture.

Interdisciplinary study has become a thriving area in its own right as scholars have moved away from what would once have been thought of as 'purely' historical or literary criticism to a more comparative way of thinking about the written records of the past (including, of course, the very recent past).

The History and English Faculties are among the largest in Britain, with long and distinguished traditions of teaching and research. Students are offered a great deal of choice in the course over their three years, and whether their interests are in the medieval period, the Renaissance, or the later periods, intellectually fruitful combinations are always possible.

The course structure at Oxford is intended to enable students to relate literary and historical ideas as effectively as possible in the investigation of their chosen historical periods, topics or authors. The structure recognises that some students will wish to opt for variety rather than close congruity between their historical and literary papers.

An interdisciplinary approach is embedded in each year of the course, with:

- dedicated classes in the first year as part of the Introduction to English Language and Literature paper
- a bridge paper taken in the second year (examined by extended essay)
- and an interdisciplinary dissertation in the final year.

All interdisciplinary elements of this course are co-taught or co-supervised by a historian and a literary scholar.

Oxford possesses exceptional library provision for both subjects in the [Bodleian Library](#), the [History Faculty](#) and [English Faculty](#) libraries, other faculty libraries and the college libraries.

A typical week

You will have up to two tutorials a week and will often, but not always, be working on two papers simultaneously. Most students attend three to four lectures a week. In the first and second years, you will also attend interdisciplinary classes with both English and History tutors present, in preparation for the bridge paper. For the final-year dissertation you will be allocated an adviser from each discipline.

Tutorials are usually 2-4 students and a tutor. Class sizes may vary depending on the options you choose. There would usually be no more than around 12 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.

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:

- Introduction to English language and literature (interdisciplinary component)
- One period paper from single honours [English Language and Literature](#)
- One British history paper from single honours [History](#)
- One of: Approaches to history; Historiography; optional subject (from single honours History)

ASSESSMENT

Three timed written exams form the first University examination, together with a submitted portfolio of two exam essays of 2,000 words for Introduction to English language and literature.

All exams must be passed, but marks do not count towards the final degree.

YEARS 2 AND 3

COURSES

Seven courses are taken:

ASSESSMENT

Final University examinations: between three and five timed

YEARS 2 AND 3

- One interdisciplinary bridge essay (6,000 words)
- Two papers from single honours [English Language and Literature](#)
- One British Isles paper or one European/world history paper from single honours [History](#)
- Either one History special subject (counts as two papers) or two from:
 1. European/world history paper from single honours History
 2. Further subject from single honours History
 3. One of papers 1–6 from single honours English Language and Literature
- Interdisciplinary dissertation (12,000 words)

(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.)

written exams will be examined at the end of the third year; plus a combination of one or two extended essays; one bridge essay; one interdisciplinary dissertation.

Visit the [History website](#) and the [English website](#) for the latest information on all course details and 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 History and English](#)

There are no compulsory costs for this course beyond the fees shown above and your living costs.

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.