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Modern Languages (BA) (four-year course with a year abroad)

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026

Czech (with Slovak), French, German, Modern Greek, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

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

Studying Modern Languages provides both practical training in written and spoken language and an extensive introduction to literature and thought written in European languages.

As well as learning to write and speak the language(s) fluently, you can study a broad range of literature, or focus your studies on any period from the medieval to the present day.

A wide range of other options allow you to explore subjects including linguistics, philology, film or gender studies or (in French, German and Spanish) advanced translation.

Modern Languages have been taught in Oxford since 1724. The faculty is the largest in the country, with a total intake of more than 250 students a year (including joint courses).

Undergraduate students have access to the [Taylor Institution Library](#), the biggest research library in Britain devoted to modern languages, and the University's central library the [Bodleian](#), as well as many online resources. The University's well-equipped [Language Centre](#) has resources specifically tailored to the needs of Modern Language students.

Language is at the centre of the Oxford course, making up around 50% of both first-year and final examinations. The course aims to teach spoken fluency in colloquial and more formal situations, as well as the ability to write essays in the foreign language, and the ability to translate into and out of the foreign language with accuracy and sensitivity to a range of vocabulary, styles and registers. You will also develop your reading skills to a high level.

The study of literature gives you an understanding of other cultures that cannot be acquired solely through learning the language. It leads you into areas such as: gender studies, popular culture, theatre, aesthetics, anthropology, art history, ethics, history, philosophy, politics, psychology and religious studies. These areas of study develop your skills as a critical reader, writer and thinker.

International opportunities

Modern Languages students spend a compulsory year abroad, usually in the third year. Opportunities for the year abroad include (but aren't restricted to):

- working as a paid language assistant in a school;

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- undertaking an internship;
- and/or studying at a University.

These opportunities all provide valuable experiences for improving language competence.

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

A typical week

Most course teaching takes place in Oxford and your week's work will include a tutorial in, or organised by, your college, language classes in the language(s) you study, and typically three to four hours of lectures for each subject.

Tutorials usually involve two to three students and a tutor. 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 20 students and classes would often be much smaller.

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 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](#). Undergraduate courses at Oxford are full-time during term time. Students typically spend approximately 40 hours per week on academic work.

Course structure

Your first year is closely structured. You will attend oral, grammar and translation classes. You will also attend typically three to four hours of introductory lectures and participate in seminars and/or tutorials on literature.

If you study French, German, Spanish or Russian as a single language you will take a range of further options in that language in the first year. All other languages must be studied in combination with another language or another subject.

Your other years of study give you more freedom to choose the areas on which you wish to focus, from a very wide range of options.

Students may take Polish as a subsidiary language, beginning in the second year. Catalan, Galician, Yiddish and most of the Slavonic languages (including Ukrainian) may also be taken as additional options.

Deferred entry

Students are welcome to apply for deferred entry for any language courses except those including Beginners' Russian.

YEAR 1

COURSES

- **Two-language course**
 - Practical language work
 - Study of important works and/or topics in the literature of each language

- **One-language course:**

Further options in addition to the above, including: film studies; literary theory (French); medieval studies (German/Spanish); key texts in French or German thought; short fiction (Spanish); Polish and Church Slavonic (Russian)

ASSESSMENT

First University examinations ("Prelims"): written papers in both language and literature (language only for Beginners' Russian)

YEAR 2

COURSES

- **Two-language course**
 - Practical language work
 - A period of literature (medieval, early modern or modern) in each language
 - Optional subjects, including historical and contemporary linguistics; detailed study of individual authors and texts

- **One-language course**

As above, but with a greater choice of optional subjects

- **Courses with Beginners' Russian (or a Middle Eastern language)** have their year abroad in the second year. Students attend centrally organised courses at partner institutions. For Russian, this currently takes place in Tallinn, Estonia. The third year is spent in Oxford.

There are no formal examinations in the second year.

YEAR 3

COURSES

ASSESSMENT

YEAR 3

Typically spent abroad (with the exception of courses involving Beginners' Russian or a Middle Eastern language – see above).

Students spend a minimum of 24 weeks in an immersive target language environment. Opportunities for the year abroad include (but aren't restricted to):

- Working as a paid language assistant in a school;
- undertaking an internship;
- and/or studying at a university.

There are no formal examinations during the year abroad.

YEAR 4

COURSES

Continues the course from Year 2, plus an optional dissertation, and special subjects across a very wide range of options such as film studies, advanced translation, women's writing, visual cultures, race and representation, new ecologies.

ASSESSMENT

Final University examinations: a combination of written papers, coursework submissions and an oral examination are taken.

The [options](#) listed above are illustrative and may change - as explained in the [Terms and Conditions](#) and for reasons of staff availability and student demand. The department may add extra options. More information about the options available in each of the different languages can be found on the [Modern Languages 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)

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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
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

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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 Modern Languages

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.

Work placement costs, study costs, visa costs and living costs (such as accommodation) and travel expenses will vary depending on the destination and the activity undertaken.

Certain year abroad activities may provide a salary, depending on placement type and terms. 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. 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, the faculty and the University.

At present, students taking part in approved study exchanges supported by the Turing scheme do not pay tuition fees to other institutions. However, for some destinations, additional charges, which apply to all students at that institution, may be payable. Students who study outside the Turing scheme framework currently are liable to pay course fees and any other applicable charges to the relevant institution.

You can find the latest information about the Turing scheme at Oxford, on our [dedicated webpage](#).

Beginners' Russian

Courses including beginners' Russian (or a Middle Eastern language) are slightly different, as they are the only courses with a prescribed year abroad activity (see course structure tab). Students will not incur an additional course fee for this, however, they will be liable for additional administration and visa fees. Currently the combined fee for these is approximately £250.

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.

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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.