OXFORD AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

2019–20
CONTENTS

The University of Oxford .................................. 3
Oxford and Southeast Asia .................................. 8
The University of Oxford aims to advance learning by teaching and research for the benefit of society on a global scale.

Drawing strength from its distinctive, college-based structure and interdisciplinary culture, Oxford has consistently developed its capacity to generate and share knowledge. For hundreds of years the University has continued to make significant contributions to global society, culture and economics.

Oxford’s expertise encompasses science, health, society and culture. In each of these areas the University has made key contributions to the advancement of knowledge.

Research carried out by Oxford’s staff, students and alumni has made an enormous impact on the world over the centuries. Among the most distinctive elements of Oxford’s unique profile are the University’s success in spinning out companies that convert scientific research into high-tech products and services; its global network of tropical medicine laboratories, which have been at the forefront of the fight against infectious disease for decades; and its close connections with British history, philosophy, religion and literature.

The impact of Oxford’s expertise in research and education is further enhanced by Oxford University Press, the world’s biggest English-language academic press and English language teaching publisher.

In the coming decade the University will further expand the impact of its research and education to maintain Oxford’s position as one of the world’s most renowned centres of learning.

**Nobel Prizes**

Current and former Oxford staff and students had won a total of 56 Nobel Prizes by 2020, with multiple Oxford alumni and staff winning prizes in each of the six categories.

Notable Nobel laureates associated with the University include chemist Dorothy Hodgkin; economists Amartya Sen and Joseph Stiglitz; Howard Florey, a member of the team that discovered penicillin; authors VS Naipaul and TS Eliot; physicist Erwin Schrödinger; and Peace Prize recipient José Ramos-Horta.

Current and former Oxford staff and students have also won a total of 21 Fields Medals, Balzan Prizes, Rolf Schock Prizes and Abel Prizes.
The University of Oxford is the oldest university in the English-speaking world. The exact date of the University’s foundation is not known, but teaching was taking place in Oxford by 1096. The University developed rapidly after 1167, when King Henry II banned English students from attending the University of Paris.

Despite a popular legend that University College was founded by King Alfred the Great in 872, it is now accepted that Oxford’s three oldest existing colleges – University, Balliol and Merton – were founded between 1249 and 1264. Colleges continued to be founded in Oxford in the centuries that followed, with the most recent, Reuben College, being founded in May 2019.

By the late medieval period, Oxford had achieved eminence above every other seat of learning, winning the praises of popes, kings and sages. In 1355, Edward III paid tribute not only to the University itself, but also to the services to the country provided by Oxford graduates.

Since that time, the University has been at the heart of Britain’s scientific, cultural, religious and political development. Oxford hosted King Charles I’s counter-Parliament during the English Civil War, was the scene of famous debates about evolution, and educated almost half of Britain’s prime ministers. Over the centuries Oxford’s ancient teaching and research departments such as the Faculty of Divinity and Faculty of Classics have continually evolved, and have been joined by new centres for teaching and research such as the Blavatnik School of Government and the interdisciplinary Oxford Martin School. The University will continue to grow its teaching and research capabilities to meet society’s ever-evolving needs.

Emo of Friesland became the first international student at Oxford, when he travelled from Groningen (now in the Netherlands) to Oxford in around 1190. His time at the University marks the start of Oxford’s long history of internationalisation: alumnus Thomas Stephens was the first recorded Englishman to visit India in 1579, while the University began collecting Chinese publications in 1604.

Oxford played a leading role in training British civil servants for service abroad from the middle of the nineteenth century. In the 1960s these courses opened up to aspiring diplomatic leaders from around the world, transforming into the Diplomatic Studies Programme, also known as the Foreign Service Programme, which still exists today. The Programme now has more than 1,200 alumni and has contributed staff to more than 140 countries’ diplomatic services.

World leaders educated at Oxford

Around 60 heads of government or state, including close to half of all British prime ministers and at least 30 leaders of other nations, have either been educated or have taught at Oxford.

Notable world leaders associated with the University include: King Abdullah II of Jordan, former President of the United States Bill Clinton, King Harald V of Norway, former Prime Minister of Australia Bob Hawke, Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan, former President of Ghana John Kufuor, former President of East Timor and Nobel Peace Prize recipient José Ramos-Horta and former Prime Minister of India Dr Manmohan Singh.
A PERSONAL APPROACH TO EDUCATION

Oxford’s approach to undergraduate teaching is based around the intensive Oxford tutorial: the heart of an undergraduate education at the University. The Oxford tutorial is a conversation, normally between two or three students and their tutor, who is an expert on the topic. Teaching in this way offers a level of personalised attention from academic experts that is rare even at other world-leading universities.

Tutorials are provided at Oxford’s colleges. Every student is a member of a college as well as the University. The colleges are academic communities, comprehensive in their provision of education yet focused in terms of scale. They also provide libraries, study spaces and lodgings for many students, and are the hub for social life.

At their tutorials students are encouraged to go beyond the facts they have learned, developing their own theories to challenge the assumptions of their classmates and even their tutor. The tutorial makes an undergraduate education at Oxford intensive and challenging; its spirit of free inquiry and discourse is an essential expression of Oxford’s culture and values. Tutorials are combined with learning through lectures, seminars and laboratory work.

WORLD-CLASS RESOURCES

Roughly half of Oxford’s students are postgraduates. Postgraduate students are also members of a college (with the exception of those on non-matriculated courses). Although their teaching and research activities take place in their department, they also benefit from their college’s resources and are able to draw upon the expertise of its interdisciplinary community, as well as the subject specialists in their department.

Education is bolstered by lectures from leading academics, some of the world’s largest libraries and best-equipped laboratories, and a rich term-time schedule of public lectures, debates and screenings. Oxford students are also able to draw on the collections of the University’s four museums, including the Ashmolean, the world’s first university museum and one of the most-visited sites in Britain.

Oxford’s postgraduate students are part of a world-renowned research community. The University’s research output was rated first out of all UK universities in the Research Excellence Framework 2014, and its medical and health teaching and research has been rated best in the world for eight years running by Times Higher Education.

Around half of Oxford’s postgraduate research students receive full or partial funding. Scholarships available to Oxford postgraduate applicants include the prestigious Clarendon Scholarships, awarded to the most promising research students, and the world-famous Rhodes Scholarships.
The University of Oxford has been a centre of learning, research and innovation for more than 900 years.

- **1190**: Oxford admits 1st international student. Today almost 50% of students are from outside the UK.
- **1249**: Oxford’s earliest existing college is founded. The University now has 44 colleges and halls.
- **1579**: Oxford alumnus Thomas Stephens visits India. The University now employs 170 Indian faculty.
- **1636**: The first Laudian Professor of Arabic is appointed. More than 70 faculty now study the Middle East.
- **1684**: Oxford welcomes its first Chinese visitor. Chinese student numbers have increased more than tenfold in the last 20 years.
The University has been ranked top every year since in 2017.

*Barack Obama used the same bible*
MOVING WITH CHANGING TIMES

The University of Oxford is seeking to deepen its strong links to Southeast Asia, as the region grows in international importance.

Southeast Asian nations are building on their rich cultures and long history of commerce, with the region emerging as a centre of global trade, industry and culture. Oxford hopes to enhance its engagement with Southeast Asia, deepening research as the region develops, while continuing to attract talented students and scholars.

In the coming years, the University will launch a new Southeast Asian Studies Centre that will become a home for cutting-edge research on the region and play a pivotal role in forging new connections for Oxford. The Centre will focus on the politics, international relations, history, geography and environment of the region.

The new Centre will complement Oxford’s existing work in the region: the University’s network of tropical medicine laboratories in Southeast Asia includes many of the largest research centres run by any university overseas, while other Oxford researchers carry out work on Southeast Asia’s geology, plants and wildlife. The University’s collections include numerous outstanding items that illustrate Southeast Asia’s vibrant history.

There are currently close to 700 students from Southeast Asian countries studying at Oxford, and more than 4,000 Oxford alumni live in the region. Oxford employs around 50 staff from the region. In the coming years the University hopes to grow the number of scholarships it is able to offer to the region’s applicants.

CREATING A WORLD-LEADING CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

Southeast Asia’s economic dynamism is bringing rapid change to a region with a rich history and unique cultural traditions. The region is increasing its investments in education, attracting more visitors, and forging trade links around the world.

This dramatic change is taking place throughout a diverse group of countries that are home to multiple ethnic and religious communities, political regimes and cultural characteristics. Southeast Asia continues to face unique challenges, while also being home to some of the most successful recent international transformations.

To understand the changes taking part in Southeast Asia and their consequences for the world, the University of Oxford plans to assemble a new community of scholars in a dedicated Southeast Asian Studies Centre. The Centre’s work will bring academic attention to the region and will have tangible relevance and impact on life in Southeast Asia. Scholars will study areas including the politics and international relations of the region, as well as its history, geography and environment.

The Centre will be housed within the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA), which unites seven existing area studies programmes in a single vibrant hub of activity. OSGA takes deep, contextually sensitive knowledge of world regions and applies it to global issues of paramount importance – from economic development to social change, from political institutions to environmental sustainability, from digital inclusion to ethnic pluralism. Themes such as these resonate in the ten Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, and the new Southeast Asian Studies Centre will ensure that they benefit from comparative research, always grounded in local experience, and with deep investment in history, language and culture.

As well as ground-breaking research about Southeast Asia, the Centre will also focus on recruiting and training graduate students from the region, creating a new generation of world-class scholars of Southeast Asia. In the coming years, the University intends to support the Centre with a dedicated new building that will ensure strong linkages between OSGA, St Antony’s College and the entire global and area studies community at Oxford.
UNDERSTANDING A DEVELOPING REGION

Southeast Asia’s vibrant economy and politics are currently researched by social scientists in several Oxford departments.

In the **Blavatnik School of Government**, Professor Julien Labonne has carried out extensive research on the politics of the Philippines. He has researched topics including the ways in which voters’ sentiment is swayed by campaign promises, policymaking by female members of political dynasties, and the role family networks play in political competition.

MSc and MPhil students in the **School of Geography and the Environment** can elect to study a module on ASEAN Environments, with a particular focus on Indonesia. The module explores the reasons for the creation of ASEAN, and the governance of a range of environmental issues including pollution, forest governance and community adaptation. Module leader Dr Mari Mulyani has published extensively on forest governance in Indonesia and the impact of climate change; outside of her role at Oxford Dr Mulyani regularly lectures at the University of Indonesia’s School of Environmental Science.

Dr Tim Schwanen leads the School of Geography and the Environment’s **Transport Studies Unit**, which is collaborating with De La Salle University in Manila, the Philippines, on a research project to enhance the research capabilities with respect to transport planning in cities and the effects of flooding on urban transportation.

Professor Dariusz Wojcik, also in the School of Geography and the Environment, is a founder-member and chair of the Global Network on Financial Geography, an interdisciplinary network of academics, practitioners and experts interested in research on the spatiality of money and finance and its implications for the economy, society, and nature. The Network’s research includes work on the role of Singapore as a global and regional finance hub.

The Ecosystems Governance Group within Oxford’s interdisciplinary **Environmental Change Institute** (ECI) is chaired by Dr Constance McDermott. She is currently the Oxford lead on a project that examines dynamics of resilience and access to sustainable growth in post-conflict regions of upland Nepal and Burma/Myanmar. The project looks at resilience across social difference (gender, caste, class and ethnicity) in the context of a number of major changes in the region, including climate change, but also the accelerating development of infrastructure, commercialisation, foreign remittances and post-conflict political change.

Dr Ma Khin Mar Mar Kyi, a Senior Research Fellow in the **Department of Politics and International Relations**, is a senior gender advisor and country advisor on Burma for international agencies including the UN, DFID, the EU, Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Humanitarian and Resilience Programme (HARP), which provides extensive funding for development programmes in the country. Dr Mar’s own research investigates issues including gender, child protection, education, migration, trafficking, conflict and religious nationalism in Burma.
Preserving Southeast Asia’s Environment

Oxford is a centre of scientific research in the environment. Notable ongoing research that is relevant to Southeast Asia includes projects on biodiversity, land use, climate change and the risk of environmental damage from infrastructure projects.

Dr Alexander Shenkin of the ECI’s Ecosystem Lab is working with researchers at UCL to scan and build 3D models of tropical trees. He has mapped trees in Malaysia and other countries. His research aims to understand why trees are shaped the way they are and how they may react to a changing climate.

Oxford is a partner in the Human Modified Tropical Forests programme that investigates the ecological and biogeochemical impacts of tropical forest degradation, agricultural conversion and biodiversity loss in Malaysian Borneo, and explores how best to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem health in this region. This is part of a long-term research presence in Malaysian Borneo which includes an annual biology undergraduate field course in Sabah.

Professor Gideon Henderson of the Department of Earth Sciences leads a research programme to assess the quality of river and groundwater in Burma and train Burmese organisations to monitor water quality and help develop water policy.

Professor Henderson is also one of several Oxford scientists to take part in the UK-Burma TIDE consortium, which aims to improve the quality of higher education in Burma at a critical time in the country’s development. The programme brings together universities in the UK and Burma to improve the quality of university teaching, with a particular focus on the environmental sciences, where a skilled workforce will be important for the future of the country.

Also from the Department of Earth Sciences, Professor Mike Searle and Professor Laurence Robb have been working in Burma for more than 10 years, carrying out joint research and teaching, notably with the Universities of Mandalay and Yangon, in an effort to better understand the country’s fascinating geological evolution. Burma’s extraordinary mineral wealth – tin, tungsten, copper, gold, jade, rubies and many other commodities – is largely a product of the country’s unique geology. Deformation of this section of the Earth’s crust, as the Indian plate was subducted beneath the Eurasian plate, caused the transfer of magma, fluids and metals to the surface and resulted in a mineral endowment that is unsurpassed in the broader region.

Geological studies in Burma are also linked to active tectonics, earthquakes and faulting across the entire region and extending north to the Himalayas in Tibet, which in turn inform the evolution of the Mogok ruby belt, the formation of the Indo-Burman Ranges in the west of the country, and the formation of its offshore oil and gas resources.

Oxford’s Wildlife Conservation Research Unit runs one of the world’s largest wildlife monitoring programmes in Southeast Asia, with an extensive series of camera-trapping sites stretching from Nepal through northern Burma, to Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and the Malaysian Peninsula, as well as Indonesia’s Sumatra Island, and Malaysian and Indonesian parts of Borneo. Working with local partners in every country, the sites have recorded more than two million images of wildlife. The studies of populations of rare animals such as the clouded leopard, tiger and golden cat, along with Indian civet, muntjac, wild boar and guar, play a vital role in designing international policies for the protection of endangered species.
STUDYING ANCIENT AND DIVERSE CULTURES

Southeast Asia’s varied cultures and long history are studied across Oxford departments.

Professor Mary Dalrymple of the Faculty of Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics has carried out a series of studies on Indonesian languages, including working with two universities in Papua province, Universitas Cenderawasih and Universitas Negeri Papua, to investigate the Austronesian languages Biak and Dusner. Dusner is now a very endangered language with only three remaining fluent speakers.

The Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology, which is part of the School of Archaeology, works in collaboration with the Far Eastern Foundation for Nautical Archaeology and the National Museum of the Philippines on underwater excavation and publication projects in Philippine waters. Dr Damian Robinson and Dr Linda Hulin are collaborating with Philippine and French colleagues to research the wreck of the Santa Cruz, a 15th-century Southeast Asian trading ship that sank with a collection of Chinese Ming porcelain, as well as Thai, Vietnamese and Burmese ceramics. Centre members and doctoral students have also carried out research on other shipwrecks from the region and fluvial societies in Cambodia and Vietnam.

Also in the School of Archaeology, the Palaeogenomics and Bio-Archaeology Research Network, led by Professor Greger Larson, has carried out extensive research on Southeast Asia, tracing the arrival of what are perhaps the first humans to inhabit Sulawesi and other Indonesian islands through analysis of the DNA of animals believed to be descended from livestock they brought with them. Other research by the Network seeks to understand how the island’s unique landscape was formed through analysis of the largest animals that inhabit it.

Professor Mark Pollard of the School of Archaeology has carried out research into the production of copper in prehistoric Southeast Asia. Working together with researchers from France’s National Centre for Scientific Research, he has worked to answer questions such as when copper production began in central Thailand.

Several members of Oxford’s Faculty of History carry out research on Southeast Asia and collaborate with scholars from throughout the region. Professor Gregg Huff works on the economics of war in Southeast Asia and researches the region’s economic growth and development since 1870; his next book World War II and Southeast Asia: The economic and social consequences of Japanese occupation is due to be published in 2019. Dr Kevin Fogg researches the history of Islam in the region, with a particular focus on modern Indonesia. Dr Atsuko Naono is currently researching the history of malaria in Southeast Asia; her broader interests include the history of epidemic diseases, public health and rural health in 19th- and 20th-century Southeast Asia, with a particular focus on Burma.

Dr Michael Feener was Research Leader at the National University of Singapore’s Asia Research Institute before moving to Oxford in 2016. He has published extensively in the fields of Southeast Asian history and Islamic Studies, as well as on post-disaster reconstruction, religion and development in the region.
The University’s **Ashmolean Museum**, the oldest public museum in the world, includes a collection of historic bronzes, ceramics, terracotta and sculptures from Southeast Asia. Much of the material dates from up to 1,000 years ago, the period when Southeast Asia’s awe-inspiring temple complexes, such as at Borobudur in Indonesia and Angkor in Cambodia, were built. Southeast Asian artists in this period were influenced both by maritime trade with India and cultural influences from China, assimilating techniques from neighbouring civilisations to produce powerful and elegant styles of their own.

The most prominent part of the Southeast Asian collections at the University’s **Pitt Rivers Museum** are the artefacts from Borneo, notably those from Sarawak collected by Sir Charles Brooke, the Second Rajah of Sarawak from 1868 until 1917. Of particular note are containers of finely decorated bamboo and exquisite bead-worked items as well as iconic hornbill bird figures. The artefacts from Sarawak comprise over half the 3,945 total object holdings from Malaysia.

The collections from Java are particularly strong on musical instruments and shadow puppets, including a complete set of Wayang Kulit donated in 1899. Finely worked textiles are highlights across the Southeast Asian collections at the Museum, some of which tell intriguing stories of interlinked islands. One example is a cloth which originated in Java – where there was a specialism in resist-dyed batik textiles – and then was traded to Bali which specialised in gold overlay often used for wedding garments.

The Pitt Rivers Museum also holds over 11,000 photographic items from Southeast Asia, including early images of Thailand in the 1880s by William Kennett Loftus, images of 1920s Burma collected by Godfrey Eric Harvey, images from 1940s Cambodia, Thailand and Indonesia by Frederick Spencer Chapman; a large collection of images taken between 1947 and 1963 in Taiwan, South Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia by former Director of the Raffles Museum (now Singapore National Museum) Carl Alexander Gibson-Hill, and images from the British naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace during his time in the Malay Archipelago, including Wallace’s Giant Bee (*Megachile pluto*) and Wallace’s Golden Birdwing butterfly (*Ornithoptera crenus*) – both collected and described by Wallace himself.

The Museum also houses one of the most important collections of Indo-Malayan cockroaches.

More recently Museum staff have been involved with several projects with partners in the UK, Malaysian Borneo and Indonesia (Sumatra), to look at the impact of habitat loss, fragmentation and palm oil on biodiversity using insects as a model group.

The Museum’s palaeontology, mineralogy and petrology collections include approximately 500 fossils, minerals and rocks from Southeast Asia. They include historic rocks and dredge samples from the HMS Challenger expedition (1872–1876), encompassing 35 specimens from Indonesia and 28 from the Philippines, and a small selection of tektites (meteorites) from Cambodia, the Philippines and Thailand.

One of Europe’s oldest libraries, the Bodleian Library has been acquiring books and manuscripts since its inception more than 400 years ago. Today the **Bodleian Libraries** encompass 28 dependent libraries and have become the largest academic library system in Europe. They hold more than 13 million printed items including outstanding treasures from Southeast Asia. These include many books and manuscripts donated to the Libraries by its great benefactors of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, and others acquired mainly in the 1970s and 80s.

Highlights from the Bodleian Libraries’ Southeast Asian collection include the earliest letters written in the Malay language, spoken across Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei and Thailand, held in a British collection. These three 17th-century Malay documents from Aceh, Indonesia, are amongst the earliest surviving Malay manuscripts in the world. They date from the first official contact between the English East India Company and the Malay world. The letters preserve the earliest known Malay seal, the earliest surviving Malay envelopes and the grandest and earliest known illuminated Malay letter. The collection also comprises a selection of Buddhist manuscripts from Burma and Thailand. These include a 17th-century *samut khoi*, a Thai folding book richly illuminated with scenes from the life of the Buddha.

**Shadow puppets from the Java collection at the Pitt Rivers Museum**
The Indian and Southeast Asian Gallery at the Ashmolean Museum
WORKING ACROSS ASIA TO COMBAT TROPICAL DISEASES

Oxford’s Centre for Tropical Medicine and Global Health operates a network of research centres across Southeast Asia.

Our two largest centres are the Mahidol Oxford Tropical Medicine Research Unit in Thailand and the Oxford University Clinical Research Unit in Vietnam. Other partners in the region include centres in Burma, Laos, Cambodia, Nepal and Indonesia. The centres conduct life-saving research into malaria, melioidosis, scrub and murine typhus, dengue, encephalitis, tuberculosis, childhood pneumonia, maternal and neonatal health, critical care medicine and other tropical diseases and emerging infections.

Leading experts have developed ground-breaking research evidence on artemisinin combination therapies, now the World Health Organization’s first-line treatment for malaria. Oxford’s researchers continue to innovate by developing new treatment strategies to tackle widespread antimalarial and antibiotic drug resistance in the region. Another strength lies in clinical trials: findings in the laboratory, tested in clinical trials and then applied to the community help improve diagnosis and management. The centres also provide vital evidence on the prevalence and impact of poor-quality medicines.

The centres focus their research interests on national health priorities in the countries in which they operate. Other research topics are identified through the centres’ epidemiological expertise and researchers’ assessments of global health risk and importance.

The network of laboratories and close collaboration with governments and other research institutes enables the centres to improve disease diagnosis, provide reliable evidence to strengthen global treatment guidelines and improve the lives of the communities in which they work.
CAPACITY BUILDING IN APPLIED MATHS

In November 2018, Professor Peter Grindrod of the Mathematical Institute hosted visiting academics from Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, East Timor and Vietnam in Oxford to discuss development of a new network to connect Oxford with Southeast Asian mathematicians. The Institute hopes to develop a network that will allow mathematicians from the area to collaborate with peers at Oxford on applied maths research into regional issues such as the toll of flood damage, as well as developing their teaching.
The SCG–Oxford Centre of Excellence for Chemistry (CoE) is a unique collaboration between Siam Cement Group (SCG) – one of Thailand’s biggest companies – and Oxford’s Department of Chemistry. The CoE focuses on research and development in the area of nanomaterials – the production of very high surface compounds for applications in packaging and automotive among other areas and catalysis – the synthesis and characterisation of organometallic molecules for olefin polymerisation. Its main objective is to act as a hub for academic/industry collaboration and deliver new innovation to SCG and impact for Oxford research.

Established in 2012, the CoE’s Co-Directors are Oxford’s Professor Dermot O’Hare and SCG’s Dr Suracha Udomsak. The team at Oxford now has 18 professors, a further 14 postdoctoral researchers and six doctoral students. A further 20 people at SCG, including the company’s President, are directly involved in producing academic and industrial relevant chemistry. Through this unique link, 49 research projects have been funded and four Oxford-developed technologies have been licensed to SCG for further development, amounting to over £12 million of investment.

Professor Dermot O’Hare and partners from Siam Cement Group presented a selection of their research to HRH Princess Sirindhorn at the British Embassy, Bangkok, in 2016. The presentation, which highlighted the innovative new technologies being developed by the CoE was the first time a Thai company had been invited to showcase new chemical technologies to the Thai Royal Family.
SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDENTS AND STAFF AT OXFORD

Around 700 students from Southeast Asian countries currently study at Oxford. This figure includes all students from the 10 ASEAN states plus the two ASEAN candidates, East Timor and Papua New Guinea.

Southeast Asian students study across all Oxford’s divisions and at all levels of study, though just under half Oxford’s Southeast Asian students are undergraduates. The University employs almost 50 Southeast Asian staff, almost all of whom are researchers.

OXFORD ALUMNI CONTRIBUTE TO THE REGION

Close to 4,000 alumni of the University live in Southeast Asian countries. Oxford’s Southeast Asian alumni are able to join eight Oxford and Cambridge alumni clubs in Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Oxford’s notable Southeast Asian alumni include three Kings of Malaysia: Abdul Halim of Kedah, Ahmad Shah of Pahang, and Tuanku Ja’afar of Negeri Sembilan; in Singapore former CEO of the Public Service Commission Eddie Teo, former Minister for Transport Raymond Lim and former President of the National University of Singapore Professor Tan Chorh Chuan. Thai King Vajiravudh, as well as two of Thailand’s former Prime Ministers, Abhisit Vejjajiva and Seni Pramoj. Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah of Brunei Darussalam is also an alumnus of the University.

STUDENT PROFILE:
Shona Loong

Where are you from and where have you studied before?
I am originally from Singapore and I did my undergraduate and Master’s degrees at the National University of Singapore.

What are you studying/researching at Oxford?
Burma, after decades of isolation from the world economy, is now the world’s seventh largest recipient of development assistance. My research is about how this influx of aid is shaping relationships between civil society, state actors, and non-state actors in Karen State, southeast Burma. Having recently emerged from seventy years of civil war, Karen State provides a fascinating standpoint to study how the country’s margins are experiencing Burma’s rapid political transition. I am spending nine months on fieldwork to gain an in-depth understanding of these dynamics.

I am grateful to have received a Clarendon Scholarship. This has not only helped to pay for my tuition and living expenses, but also allowed me to be part of a scholarship community full of spirited, curious, and intelligent people.

What has your experience of Oxford been like?
Sometimes I feel like live in two worlds at once: the field and the University. I am grateful for the chance to spend nine months in the field, and equally grateful to be based in Oxford. I have access to libraries, seminars, and thinkers that challenge me to make the most of my field-based research. Oxford also offers a vibrant social life. I treasure dinners and pub nights with friends from a variety of disciplines — history, music, physics, biochemistry. I doubt this opportunity will come again.

What do you aspire to do after you complete your studies?
I believe that knowledge reaches its full potential when it is shared. I hope to contribute to an inclusive, equitable, and just future for Southeast Asia by putting my research skills to work.
Scholarship opportunities

Graduate students from Southeast Asian countries who are starting new courses at Oxford can receive funding from a wide range of scholarships. These include scholarships open to applicants from all countries (such as the Clarendon Fund, which makes over 130 new awards each year), and scholarships for specific courses and regions.

Oxford also offers a range of scholarships focused on particular countries in Southeast Asia. Examples include:

- the Oxford–University College–Burma Graduate Scholarship, which supports students from Burma studying for a Master of Public Policy
- the Oxford–Brunsfield ASEAN Human Rights Scholarships, which support students from ASEAN countries studying for an MSt in International Human Rights Law
- the Oxford Thai Graduate Scholarship, which supports students from Thailand studying for a Master of Public Policy
- the Oxford–Jeffrey Cheah Graduate Scholarship, which supports students ordinarily resident in an ASEAN country studying for a DPhil in the physical sciences.

Oxford University Press

Oxford University Press (OUP) started operations in Malaysia in the same month that the country gained independence: August 1957. Since then OUP Malaysia can truly claim to have contributed to nation building, through its vast publishing programme for schools and higher education.

OUP’s Schools Division in Malaysia publishes books for all ages and in most subject areas. The materials cater to the needs of students and teachers in order to make learning, as well as teaching, more impactful. At the higher education level, a rigorous local publishing programme has been embarked on, to complement titles that are carefully selected and imported from other parts of the world that correspond with courses being offered at Malaysian and Singaporean universities.

The Press also has liaison offices in the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Above: Undergraduate students outside the Law Library building

School children at an Oxford University Press dictionary giveaway. OUP has an extensive presence across Southeast Asia.
Seated figure of the Buddha, Burma, 18th century, Ashmolean Museum