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Religion and Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (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

The course in Religion and Asian and Middle Eastern Studies offers students an in-depth understanding of one of a number of the world's great religious traditions including Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism.

To engage with all the different aspects of the course, you will have to become something of a historian and a philosopher, a textual and literary critic, as well as an accomplished linguist. These disciplines together, not only enable students to appreciate the qualities of religions that can be radically different from those in Western societies, but also equip graduates with the analytical and critical abilities to embark on a wide range of careers.

Religion and Asian and Middle Eastern Studies enables students to study a major world religion through its primary texts in their original languages. It provides them with an understanding of the intellectual underpinning of religious traditions, and of the social and cultural contexts for religious beliefs and practices. Students can also explore topics such as the relationship between religions and science, and the place of religious ethics in public life.

Between them, the Faculties of Theology and Religion and Asian and Middle Eastern Studies include more than 270 academics, ranging from experts in the ancient languages and literature of the world's religions to church historians and systematic theologians. The reputations of both faculties, together with Oxford's excellent library facilities, attract scholars from all over the world.

A typical week

Your typical weekly timetable will be divided between one or two tutorials, which may take place at your college or at the college of a specialist tutor. Each week you will also attend up to six lectures. Throughout the course and especially in your first year, you will attend at least three (and often more) language classes each week. A large part of your week will be spent in independent study to prepare for language classes and for tutorials.

Tutorials usually involve two students and a tutor. Class sizes may vary depending on the options you choose or the language you are studying, but would normally have no more than around 10 students.

Most tutorials, classes, and lectures are delivered by academics who are specialists 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

- All students take a paper on Religion and religions
- The remaining three-quarters of the first year comprises the study centred on one of the following languages, as selected by the individual student,
 - Arabic
 - Hebrew
 - Hindi
 - Pali
 - Sanskrit
 - Tibetan

ASSESSMENT

First University examinations: four papers assessed by written and (depending on the option) oral examination.

Years 2 and 3

COURSES

Students take eight papers. Three papers must be selected from those taught by the Faculty of Theology and Religion and another three must be from those taught by the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. The remaining two papers may be in either subject.

Students choose papers from a variety of subject areas offered by the Faculty of Theology and Religion, including:

- biblical studies;
- systematic and philosophical Christian theology;
- religious ethics; the study of religion;
- science and religion;
- history, teaching or practice in Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam.

ASSESSMENT

Final University examinations: seven papers (assessed either by written examination or by submitted coursework, depending upon the option), plus a thesis

Years 2 and 3

For Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, students specialise in the study of one of the following religions, particularly through the study of its texts in their original languages:

- Buddhism - for which students study one of Pali, Sanskrit or Tibetan (normally having studied any one of these three languages in the first year)
- Eastern Christianity - for which students study one of Armenian or Syriac (normally having studied Hebrew in the first year)
- Hinduism - for which students study one of Sanskrit or Hindi (normally having studied either of these languages in the first year)
- Islam - for which students study Arabic (normally having studied Arabic in the first year)
- Judaism - for which students study Hebrew (normally having studied Hebrew in the first year)

Advanced language options are for candidates who have studied the same language for the Preliminary Examination.

As one of their eight papers, all students must prepare a 12,000-word thesis on a topic of their choice in either Asian and Middle Eastern Studies or Theology and Religion.

The options listed in this section are illustrative and may change; not all languages are available every year.

More information about current options is available on the [Faculty of Theology and Religion website](#) and the [Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 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](#).

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 Religion and Asian and Middle Eastern Studies](#)

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.