

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2021-22: MPhil in Modern South Asian Studies



About the course

The MPhil in Modern South Asian Studies is a 21-month, taught master's course, offered jointly by the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA) and the Faculty of Oriental Studies. You will study this important region, with its rich history and its complex present-day societies, via an intensive language route or a non-language route, culminating in a 30,000-word thesis.

The MPhil in Modern South Asian Studies is an exciting degree bringing together Oxford's wealth of expertise on South Asia in a single programme. You will gain access to teaching and expert supervision across departments in the Social Sciences and Humanities Divisions. You will receive rigorous training in one of three tailored modules in research methods, and have the option to build in Hindi, Urdu, Old Hindi, Persian or other language training.

You may choose to explore present-day India's social, economic and political achievements and challenges, and the connections between the country's democratic and developmental successes and failures, or to range more broadly across the states and societies of the subcontinent over the past five hundred years. You may pursue any combination of interests, including history, literature, language, religion, economy and interstate relations.

Course structure

You will also choose between the language track or the non-language track. Language track students may take one of the following intensive courses both at beginner and advanced level: Hindi, Hindi and Urdu, Brajbhasha and Old Hindi, and, if the timetable permits, Sanskrit, Persian or Tibetan. Students who are interested in any of these three 'substitute' core languages are asked to flag this interest in their personal statement.

Subject to timetabling, students with at least an intermediate or colloquial knowledge of any South Asian language also have the opportunity to take less intensive training in Hindi, Urdu, Old Hindi or Persian either continuing at an advanced level or beginning a new language. Bengali, Gujarati or Marathi may also be studied at an elementary level. Again, students interested in taking Persian either at advanced or beginner level are asked to flag this in their personal statement.

You will experience a variety of teaching modes, including lectures, seminars, classes, student presentations, and small group teaching. The MPhil is jointly taught by staff within the Social Sciences and Humanities Divisions, who will also assess your application. The application process is administered by the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies. Language teaching will be provided in the Faculty of Oriental Studies.

You will be required to gather relevant materials for your thesis during the course, usually by working in libraries and archives in the UK but potentially also via fieldwork. Required hours of study will vary between students as you will come from different backgrounds and bring different experiences to your study. However, a typical week during term time will involve around 40 hours of study, including two to six hours of scheduled contact hours (more for those following the 'language track'), two hours for the weekly seminar and at least thirty hours of independent study. In the second year of the MPhil course, the balance changes as students concentrate on the writing up stage of their theses. Success on the course requires sustained effort across the academic year, with term-times being typically prioritised with preparation for, and participation in, course lectures, class presentations, class discussion, essay reviews, and thesis supervisions. The vacation periods are not holidays as such but instead represent extended periods in the academic year when private study and dissertation research can be balanced alongside taking a well-earned break during national festivals such as Christmas and Easter. During the summer vacation between the first and second years of the programme you will be expected to undertake at least six weeks' research in archives or fieldwork as appropriate.

First year

During the first year, you will attend the core course, introducing modern South Asia across the disciplines. You will also receive training in research methods, through one of the following specially tailored programmes:

- research methods for area studies, both qualitative and quantitative
- qualitative and historical methods
- qualitative methods: literature and language

An important purpose of the research methods course is to help you develop and refine your thesis topic.

You will also choose option papers. If you are taking the language track, you will take one option paper during the first year. If you are taking the non-language track, you will take two option papers. For a full list of option papers, please see the course pages on

the department website. Please note that the options will change from time to time, and not all will be run every year.

By the end of the first year, you will have worked out a thesis proposal, and plans for field or archival work to be undertaken during the summer months between the first and second years.

Second year

In the second year, you will attend a course on advanced methods, as part of which you will make a presentation of your developing thesis project. Language track students will continue intensive language study. Both language and non-language track students will take an additional option. The major focus of the second year will be the 30,000 word thesis, for which you will receive expert supervision.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Faculty of Oriental Studies and the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA) and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. Under exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be found outside the Faculty of Oriental Studies and the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA).

All students are assigned a general supervisor at the start of term, who is usually a member of the core teaching staff on the MPhil in Modern South Asian Studies. The role of the general supervisor is to guide you through your course of study. If your research interests fall outside the expertise of your general supervisor, she/he will assist you in identifying appropriate expertise within the university, and help you approach suitable scholars for supervision.

Depending on the range of your research interests, therefore, it is possible for you to have more than one supervisor - a general supervisor who oversees your general academic progress, and a different supervisor for your thesis. Supervision for the thesis will be offered as a series of individual meetings between you and your thesis supervisor. Your supervisor(s) will discuss your progress, and answer any questions before you submit work to Examination Schools. Your thesis supervisor will read one full draft of your thesis provided it is submitted by the deadline agreed (usually Friday of Week 8 of Hilary term of your second year).

In the case of students who require specific help to adjust to an academic programme or to a new range of skills, the supervisor will work with them to ensure that they have additional support.

Assessment

In order to receive the MPhil degree, you must obtain pass marks in all components:

Language Track (first year)

1. Research Methods (comprising two assignments, one in Michaelmas and one in Hilary term, each of no more than 2,500 words) 10%
2. Core Course Essay (a max. 5,000 word essay, submitted at the beginning of Trinity term) 10%
3. Core Language Qualifying Exam (3-hour exam, held at the end of Trinity term) 15%
4. Option 1 (3-hour exam, held at the end of Trinity term) 12.5%

Language Track (second year)

1. Core Language Final Exam (3-hour exam, held at the end of Trinity term) 15%
2. Option 2 (3-hour exam, held at the end of Trinity term) 12.5%
3. Thesis (max 30,000 words, submitted Monday of Week 4 of Trinity term) 25%

In addition to this, you will be required to undertake formative assessment (essays, presentations etc) throughout the programme.

Non-language Track (first year)

1. Research Methods (comprising two assignments, one in Michaelmas and one in Hilary term, each of no more than 2,500 words) 10%
2. Core Course Essay (a max. 5,000 word essay, submitted at the beginning of Trinity term) 10%
3. Option 1 (3-hour exam, held at the end of Trinity term) 15%
4. Option 2 (3-hour exam, held at the end of Trinity term) 15%

Non-language Track (second year)

1. Option 3 (3-hour exam, held at the end of Trinity term) 15%
2. Thesis (max 30,000 words, submitted Monday of Week 4 of Trinity term) 35%

In addition to this, you will be required to undertake formative assessment (essays, presentations etc) throughout the programme.

Changes to courses

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. These may include significant changes made necessary by a pandemic (including Covid-19), epidemic or local health emergency. For further information, please see the University's Terms and Conditions (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/terms>) and our page on changes to courses (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges>).

Expected length of course

	Full Time Only
Expected length	21 months

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2021-22

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home (UK, Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands & Isle of Man)	£17,760
Overseas (including EU)	£25,900

Course fees are payable each year, for the duration of your fee liability (your fee liability is the length of time for which you are required to pay course fees). For courses lasting longer than one year, please be aware that fees will usually increase annually. Information about how much fees and other costs may increase is set out in the University's Terms and Conditions.

Course fees cover your teaching as well as other academic services and facilities provided to support your studies. Unless specified in the additional cost information (below), course fees do not cover your accommodation, residential costs or other living costs. They also don't cover any additional costs and charges that are outlined in the additional cost information.

Additional cost information

There are no compulsory elements of this course that entail additional costs beyond fees and living costs. However, please note that, depending on your choice of research topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses, such as travel expenses, research expenses, and field trips. You will need to meet these additional costs, although you may be able to apply for small grants from your department and/or college to help you cover some of these expenses. Standard travel insurance can be provided by the University. However, students may be required to pay any additional insurance premiums associated with travel to areas with an increased level of risk, and should factor this into their planning for fieldwork.

Living costs

In addition to your course fees, you will need to ensure that you have adequate funds to support your living costs for the duration of your course.

The likely living costs for 2021-22 are published below. These costs are based on a single, full-time graduate student, with no dependants, living in Oxford. We provide the cost per month so you can multiply up by the number of months you expect to live in Oxford.

Likely living costs for 2021-22

	Likely living costs for 1 month		Likely living costs for 9 months		Likely living costs for 12 months	
	Lower range	Upper range	Lower range	Upper range	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£280	£400	£2,520	£3,600	£3,360	£4,800
Accommodation	£655	£790	£5,895	£7,110	£7,860	£9,480
Personal items	£130	£250	£1,170	£2,250	£1,560	£3,000
Social activities	£45	£115	£405	£1,035	£540	£1,380
Study costs	£45	£100	£405	£900	£540	£1,200
Other	£20	£55	£180	£495	£240	£660
Total	£1,175	£1,710	£10,575	£15,390	£14,100	£20,520

When planning your finances for any future years of study at Oxford beyond 2021-22, you should allow for an estimated increase in living expenses of 3% each year.

More information about how these figures have been calculated is available at www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/livingcosts.

Document accessibility

If you require an accessible version of the document please contact Graduate Admissions and Recruitment by email (graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk) or via the online form (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/ask>).