

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2026-27: MSc in International Human Rights Law



Course facts

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Mode of study | Part Time Only |
| Expected length | 2 years |

About the course

The part-time, two-year MSc in International Human Rights Law is aimed at mid-career lawyers and other human rights advocates who wish to pursue advanced studies in international human rights law but seek to do so alongside work responsibilities.

A central objective of the course is to ensure that you not only know about but can also effectively and expertly apply human rights law. The curriculum places equal emphasis on the substance of human rights law, its implementation and research.

Students come from all over the world and from a variety of advocacy settings; from various international and non-governmental organisations, governments, universities, foundations, the media, the armed forces, medicine and other fields and from private and corporate practice. The faculty is also diverse and includes internationally recognised human rights scholars and advocates. The programme seeks the widest possible diversity among both students and tutors.

The course is undertaken part-time over a period of 24 months. It includes two periods of online distance learning as well as two summer residences held at New College, Oxford.

During the summer residences, past students have found it beneficial to immerse themselves within the MSc in International Human Rights Law community. If your personal circumstances permit therefore, we strongly encourage you to consider booking your accommodation during the residential sessions with New College, which will be facilitated by the course organisers. This may help you to benefit from what the course offers in terms of additional opportunities for discursive engagement and networking. Lunches and dinners are already included in the course fee and will also be provided at New College. If you have any concerns around this, for example regarding dietary restrictions, please get in touch with the Course Administrator to discuss them.

Course structure

An overview of the course structure is provided below. Details of the compulsory and optional elements of the course are provided in the *Course components* section of this page.

Year one

The first period of distance learning is the compulsory Fundamentals of Human Rights Law online course. This comprises guided online study over two terms, with each of its units including reading periods followed by tutor-guided asynchronous seminars supplemented by some live encounters. You will require consistent, ready and reliable internet access.

The first summer residence in Oxford will comprise three weeks of tutor-led small group seminars plus a week for independent revision and two exams. During the first in-person residence you will take two electives, which will be selected from a list of options. In addition, the first summer session will include one week of dissertation-related exercises to prepare you for the independent dissertation work you will undertake in your second year. In total, the first summer residence is just over five weeks in length.

Year two

For the second period of distance learning you will work independently on researching and writing your dissertation with one-to-one online support from your supervisor. The dissertation will be on a topic of your choice related to international human rights law, however the topic must be approved by the course examiners. You will require consistent, ready and reliable internet access.

The second summer residence in Oxford will comprise three weeks of tutor-led small group seminars plus a week for independent revision and two exams. During the residence you will take two more electives, which will be selected from a list of options. Not all are offered every year. In total, the second summer residence is four weeks in length.

Attendance

This course is part time. It includes two periods of online distance learning as well as two summer residences held at New College, Oxford.

For the online learning, you will be expected to devote 15-20 hours per week to private study when not in Oxford. For the compulsory Fundamentals of International Human Rights Law course, teaching is not live so you are not required to be online at specific times, but you will be expected to contribute to online discussions within a certain timeframe.

The summer residences are a compulsory part of the degree programme. You will be expected to be in Oxford for just over five weeks for the first residence and four weeks for the second, in July/August. Provisional dates for the residences are provided on the course page of the faculty's website. The summer residences are intensive and you are expected to be able to study full-time during these periods.

Resources to support your study

As a graduate student, you will have access to the University's wide range of resources including libraries, museums, galleries, digital resources and IT services.

The Bodleian Libraries is the largest library system in the UK. It includes the main Bodleian Library and libraries across Oxford, including major research libraries and faculty, department and institute libraries. Together, the Libraries hold more than 13 million printed items, provide access to e-journals, and contain outstanding special collections including rare books and manuscripts, classical papyri, maps, music, art and printed ephemera.

The University's IT Services is available to all students to support with core university IT systems and tools, as well as many other services and facilities. IT Services also offers a range of IT learning courses for students to support with learning and research, as well as [guidance on what technology to bring with you as a new student \(https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/what-to-bring\)](https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/what-to-bring) at Oxford.

You will have access to The Bonavero Institute of Human Rights, which is part of the Faculty of Law, and convenes a range of interesting events and seminars during the year focused specifically on topics related to human rights, the rule of law and democracy, some of which are hosted online. Students on the course would be welcome to attend these events.

The Law Faculty is fortunate to have outstanding library facilities provided by the Bodleian Law Library. As part of the Bodleian, the Law Library shares in all the advantages of being part of the largest university library in the country, including the receipt, under legal deposit legislation, of legal material published in the UK and Ireland.

The Bodleian Law Library offers the vast majority of its holdings - some 550,000 items - on open shelves across four floors. Selected low-use material is housed in a book storage facility and is retrievable within half a day. The library serves a large community of graduate readers and academics in their research requirements. The strength of the collection lies in the depth of its UK holdings, combined with extensive holdings for European and Commonwealth jurisdictions. In addition, the library holds materials relating to international law, Roman law, and jurisprudence. To complement the paper collection, the Law Library provides a wide range of online legal resources. The Bodleian's collection of Official Papers is also housed in the Law Library.

The library has 40 reader workstations and provides access to legal databases. There is a Graduate Reading Room, a large seminar room, IT rooms and small 'discussion rooms' for private study or group work. The law librarians offer a range of classes and one-to-one sessions to support the specific research needs of graduate students.

Supervision

An important person in helping your intellectual development during the degree programme will be your academic supervisor. This person will oversee your academic work and submit progress reports.

For the first three terms of your degree, your academic supervisor will be your tutor for the online Fundamentals of International Human Rights Law course. For the next two terms, your academic supervisor will be the person allocated to supervise your dissertation. The allocation is dependent on the subject area of your dissertation. For the final term, your supervisor is expected to be another Oxford University faculty member.

For this course, the allocation of graduate supervision is the responsibility of the Law Faculty and it is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff.

Efforts will be made to meet the preferences of graduate students to work with a particular member of the course team for the dissertation. Tutors and supervisors join as academic contributors to the programme from around the world, and there is therefore a wide range of experts supporting its offerings.

Assessment

The degree is assessed by coursework (20%), examinations (50%) and a dissertation (30%).

Your first period of distance learning is assessed by way of assignments, and the second by way of a dissertation. You will sit two examinations during each of the two summer residences.

Course components

Compulsory study

Fundamentals of Human Rights Law online course

The Fundamentals of Human Rights Law online course comprises guided online study over two terms, with each of its units including reading periods followed by tutor-guided asynchronous seminars supplemented by some live encounters. You will require consistent, ready and reliable internet access.

Summer residences

You will attend two summer residences. Each residence will comprise three weeks of tutor-led small group seminars plus a week for independent revision and two exams. The first residence will include a further week of dissertation-related exercises to prepare you for the independent dissertation work.

Dissertation

You will undertake and submit a dissertation in your second year.

Options

During each of the two summer residences, you will take two electives.

To provide an indication of summer elective courses, previous options have included:

- Business and Human Rights
- International Rights of Children
- International Criminal Law
- International Equality Law
- Economic Social and Cultural Rights
- Domesticating International Human Rights Law
- Human Rights and the Environment
- International Humanitarian Law
- Racial Discrimination, Minorities and Indigenous Peoples
- Right to Life
- Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Human Rights
- Comparative Regional Human Rights Systems
- Freedom of Religion or Belief
- Transitional Justice
- International Rights of Women and Gender-Related Discrimination.

Not all options are offered every year.

Changes to this course

The University will seek to deliver this course in accordance with the description set out in this course page. 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. The safety of students, staff and visitors is paramount and major changes to delivery or services may have to be made if a pandemic, epidemic or local health emergency occurs. In addition, 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 course requirements for international study.

Where possible your academic supervisor will not change for the duration of your course. However, it may be necessary to assign a new academic supervisor during the course of study or before registration for reasons which might include illness, sabbatical leave, parental leave or change in employment.

For further information please see our page on [changes to courses \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/changes-to-courses) and the [provisions of the student contract \(//www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/after-you-apply/your-offer-and-contract) regarding changes to courses.

Costs

Annual course fees

The fees for this course are charged on an annual basis.

Fees for the 2026-27 academic year at the University of Oxford

| Fee status | Annual Course fees |
|------------|--------------------|
| Home | £19,215 |
| Overseas | £19,215 |

What do course fees cover?

Course fees cover your teaching as well as other academic services and facilities provided to support your studies. Unless specified in the additional information section 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 costs information below.

How long do I need to pay course fees?

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 fees will usually increase annually, as explained in the University's [Terms and Conditions](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract) (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract>).

Our [fees and other charges](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges) (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges>) pages provide further information, including details about:

- [course fees and fee liability](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/courses-fees-and-liability) (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/courses-fees-and-liability>);
- [how your fee status is determined](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/fee-status) (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/fee-status>); and
- [changes to fees and other charges](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/changes-to-fees-and-charges) (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/fees-and-other-charges/changes-to-fees-and-charges>).

Information about how much fees and other costs will usually increase each academic year is set out in the University's [Terms and Conditions](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract) (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new/contract>).

Deposits

If your application is successful, you will be asked to pay a deposit against your course fees at the application stage as a condition of your offer. The deposit amount and date by which payment must be made are shown below.

| Amount of deposit | Date by which deposit must be paid |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| £1,000 | 15th May 2026 |

The department's website provides [further information about deposits for this course](https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/content/course/msc-international-human-rights-law) (<https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/content/course/msc-international-human-rights-law>).

Additional costs

This course has summer residences in Oxford so you will need to meet any travel, accommodation and breakfast costs you will incur in attending these. The tuition fee includes the cost of all compulsory reading materials plus lunches and dinners at the summer residences. Students will need to pay accommodation ('bed and breakfast') costs whilst attending the summer residences. Accommodation is usually offered to students on the MSc by New College, and this accommodation is estimated to cost £60-70 per night ('bed and breakfast') for each of the two summer residences— 37 nights in Year 1 and 28 nights in Year 2. You should therefore allow between £2,220 and £2,590 for the Year 1 residence and £1,680 and £1,960 for Year 2. Students who wish to make other arrangements will need to book accommodation in central Oxford. The estimated cost of this is approximately £2,000 to £3,500 per residential depending on the size of property and its location. Further, as part of your course requirements, you will need to choose a dissertation topic. Depending on your choice of topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional expenses. You will need to meet these additional costs, although you may be able to apply for small grants from your department to help you cover some of these expenses.

Living costs

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

Living costs for part-time study

Your living costs may vary depending on your personal circumstances but you will still need to cover your cost of living on a full-time basis for the duration of your course, even if you will not be based in Oxford throughout your studies. While the range of likely living costs for a single, full-time student living in Oxford in the 2026-27 academic year is between £1,405 and £2,105 per month, living costs outside Oxford may be different.

Part-time students who are not based in Oxford will need to calculate travel and accommodation costs carefully. Depending on your circumstances and study plans, this may include the [cost of a visitor visa to attend for short blocks of time](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs>) (if [visitor visa eligibility criteria](https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/visitors) (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa/before/visitors>) are met).

Living costs for online study

Your living costs may vary depending on your personal circumstances but you will still need to cover your cost of living on a full-time basis for the duration of your course, even if you will not be based in Oxford during your studies. While the range of likely living costs for a single, full-time student living in Oxford in the 2026-27 academic year is between £1,405 and £2,105 per month, living costs outside Oxford may be different.

Further information about living costs

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. For study in Oxford beyond the 2026-27 academic year, it is suggested that you budget for potential increases in living expenses of around 4% each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation.

A breakdown of likely living costs for one month during the 2026-27 academic year are shown below. These costs are based on a single, full-time graduate student, with no dependants, living in Oxford.

Likely living costs for one month in Oxford during the 2026-27 academic year

| | Lower range | Upper range |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Food | £315 | £545 |
| Accommodation | £825 | £990 |
| Personal items | £160 | £310 |
| Social activities | £50 | £130 |
| Study costs | £35 | £90 |
| Other | £20 | £40 |
| Total | £1,405 | £2,105 |

For information about how these figures have been calculated as well as tables showing the likely living costs for nine and twelve months, please refer to the [living costs](https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs) (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/living-costs>) page of our website.

Document accessibility

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