

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MSc in Archaeological Science



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	12 months

About the course

The MSc in Archaeological Science provides a broad introductory education for those with a first degree in archaeology wishing to apply science-based research methods, or for those with a first degree in a science subject wishing to learn specifically about archaeological issues amenable to scientific methods.

The MSc in Archaeological Science is designed to give a broad but detailed grounding in the theory as well as practical experience in the major applications of science in archaeology. It is intended for archaeologists or scientists who wish to go on to undertake research in archaeological science, or archaeologists who intend to pursue a career in the management of archaeological projects or become policy makers in this area and would like to have a sound understanding of the potential of science to elucidate archaeological problems. The MSc also acts as preliminary training for doctoral research.

The MSc in Archaeological Science is based on the research strengths of the Research Laboratory for Archaeology. The MSc consists of three elements taught over two nine-week terms, comprising materials analysis and the study of technological change, molecular bioarchaeology, and principles and practice of scientific dating, plus a five-month research project chosen in consultation with the supervisor. The research project provides opportunity for specialisation within these areas.

Each course has a co-ordinator who will be responsible for arranging your teaching, while the course director has overall responsibility for your progress. You will also have a supervisor for your individual research project.

Teaching is through a combination of lectures, classes and laboratory sessions requiring regular written work, and is supplemented by a range of graduate seminars. The course benefits from the small size of the cohort (usually about eight), allowing many opportunities for student contribution. Class presentations are also required, providing valuable experience and the opportunity for feedback from your peers.

Graduate students run their own organisation, Graduate Archaeology at Oxford, which provides skills seminars, a mentoring programme, social events and a very successful conference series. This provides many opportunities for you to develop your skills, present your research and develop ideas for the next stage of your career.

Attendance

The course is full-time and requires attendance in Oxford. Full-time students are subject to the University's Residence requirements.

Resources to support your study

As a graduate student, you will have access to the University's wide range of world-class 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.

Archaeological Science students are all based at the School of Archaeology premises at 1 South Parks Road. You will also have the use of workspace in the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art (RLAHA) which has desk space with points for laptop computers.

The RLAHA also has excellent laboratory facilities, which are available to students undertaking research for their dissertations. Within the School of Archaeology, there are computer rooms with specialist GIS and mapping-related software.

Oxford's Bodleian Libraries multiple institutes give students access to world class collections across every field. The Radcliffe Science Library is the university's main teaching and research library for sciences and will provide for the scientific aspects of

student's needs. The Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library is the central facility for archaeology, classics, and art history, supplemented by the Balfour Library. The RLAHA library also carries some core texts and journals that can be viewed on site. The school has close ties with the University museums, including the Ashmolean Museum and the Pitt Rivers Museum, the collections of which contribute to graduate teaching.

Supervision

For this course, the allocation of graduate supervision is the responsibility of the School of Archaeology 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 School of Archaeology. You will meet with your supervisor at least once a term.

Every student will have a general supervisor appointed to them prior to the start of term. You will also be allocated a dissertation supervisor who, during your supervision meetings, will discuss and guide your research.

Assessment

The course is assessed using a diverse range of methods including written assignments (such as a lab report, blog and review article), written examinations, oral tasks (such as presentations and viva voce examination), and the submission of a dissertation.

Changes to this 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 you commence your course. These might include significant changes made necessary by any pandemic, 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>).

Costs

Annual fees for entry in 2025-26

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home	£19,470
Overseas	£36,250

Information about 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, 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 (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/terms>).

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, as part of your course requirements, you may need to choose a dissertation, a project or a thesis topic. Please note that, depending on your choice of 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.

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.

The likely living costs for the 2025-26 academic year 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 one month

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£330	£515
Accommodation	£790	£955
Personal items	£200	£335
Social activities	£45	£100
Study costs	£40	£90
Other	£20	£40
Total	£1,425	£2,035

Likely living costs for nine months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£2,970	£4,635
Accommodation	£7,110	£8,595
Personal items	£1,800	£3,015
Social activities	£405	£900
Study costs	£360	£810
Other	£180	£360
Total	£12,825	£18,315

Likely living costs for twelve months

	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£3,960	£6,180
Accommodation	£9,480	£11,460
Personal items	£2,400	£4,020
Social activities	£540	£1,200
Study costs	£480	£1,080
Other	£240	£480
Total	£17,100	£24,420

When planning your finances for any future years of study at Oxford beyond the 2025-26 academic year, it is suggested that you allow for potential increases in living expenses of 4% each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation.

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

Document accessibility

If you require a more accessible version of this 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/form>).