

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MSc in Biodiversity, Conservation and Nature Recovery



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	12 months

About the course

The MSc in Biodiversity, Conservation, and Nature Recovery (BCNR) provides students with the knowledge and skills to think adaptively, creatively, and critically at the intersection of biodiversity science, policy and action.

Formerly titled Biodiversity, Conservation, and Management (BCM), this newly designed course retains its established strengths in conservation science and governance, while embracing ambitious, holistic and inclusive approaches to nature recovery and promoting the use of multiple values of nature and diverse knowledge systems.

Based in the School of Geography and the Environment, BCNR also benefits from close connections to the Leverhulme Centre for Nature Recovery.

The course aims are to:

- Foster an understanding of the drivers of biodiversity loss and the trade-offs inherent to biodiversity conservation and nature recovery
- Provide critical engagement with the key debates at the intersection of biodiversity science, conservation, and nature recovery
- Cultivate the skills and knowledge to design socially just and culturally attuned conservation and restoration interventions
- Integrate students into cutting-edge research taking place in the School of Geography and the Environment and the Leverhulme Centre for Nature Recovery
- Enable students to reflexively analyse their own positionality and to apply their expertise confidently and sensitively to conservation and nature recovery projects.

The course teaching and assessment is structured to ensure that students develop the knowledge and professional skills that are likely to benefit them when applying for jobs in the field of conservation after graduation. Teaching approaches, including active and outdoor learning, and the modes of assessment, including oral and written tasks, have been designed to provide a more inclusive and productive learning environment.

Upon completion of BCNR, students will be able to:

- Identify and describe the drivers of biodiversity loss and the differing motivations for biodiversity conservation and nature recovery
- Design and appraise conservation and restoration interventions to respond to a range of biodiversity challenges, drawing from diverse perspectives and case studies around the world
- Design and conduct an independent research project using appropriate research philosophies, methodologies, and protocols
- Critique and synthesise theory from the natural and social sciences to formulate and defend your position on a range of controversial issues associated with biodiversity conservation and nature recovery
- Explain and debate different aspects of biodiversity science, conservation, and restoration ecology through written and oral media and for a variety of audiences, drawing on the appropriate literature and ethical practices to support your positions
- Recognise, value, and respond sensitively to a diversity of perspectives needed to address the challenges related to scoping and implementing biodiversity conservation and nature recovery solutions.

The course is delivered through eight core modules delivered during the first two terms:

- Conservation Landscapes
- Conservation Biogeography
- Conservation Governance
- Conservation Seascapes
- Conservation and Society
- Economics of the Environment
- Global change and the Biosphere and Ecosystem Restoration.

Teaching for the core modules includes lectures, seminars, workshops, reading groups, field trips and study days. There is also a skills-based module to develop research and professional skills.

Alongside the core modules in the first two terms, you will choose two elective modules. The elective modules offer a tutorial-style teaching environment with smaller groups, based on a suite of contemporary research themes that reflect the specific interests of core faculty and visiting research associates. The teaching aim is to foster discussion and debate between academic staff and students. In the final term of the course, you will undertake an independent and original research project.

In addition to BCNR teaching, students are expected to attend seminars organised by the Leverhulme Centre for Nature Recovery and other research clusters in the School of Geography and the Environment including Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Conservation, Climate Systems, Landscape Dynamics, and Environmental Interactions.

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.

The University of Oxford has an extensive library system and the Radcliffe Science Library is the main lending service within the University for the material required for the course. The Social Sciences Library also holds collections which are valuable for students pursuing geography courses.

There is a dedicated social space for MSc students where they can meet and discuss their studies. Where appropriate, students can use the departmental laboratories for their dissertation research.

Supervision

The course has an Academic Director and a Course Director who look after the day-to-day running of the course and who provide academic welfare support. The MSc Course Director acts as study supervisor for students throughout their studies. In addition, in the third term when students commence their dissertation research, a research supervisor will usually be found within the School of Geography and the Environment.

For this course, the allocation of graduate supervision is the responsibility of the School of Geography and the Environment 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 Geography and the Environment. During the dissertation project, students typically receive 8 hours of supervision.

Assessment

The course is comprised of nine summative assessment tasks that use a diverse range of methods including a conference paper, oral presentations, a viva, a fieldtrip report, briefing notes, a written examination and a research paper. The assessment is organised into three portfolios (Foundations, Applications, and Research) which are due at different stages over the course of the year.

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	£25,300
Overseas	£34,120

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.

Most costs associated with compulsory fieldwork are paid for by the department. This excludes the costs associated with obtaining the appropriate visa required to attend the non-UK based field trips. Non-EEA nationals might require a visa in order to travel to the country where the field trip is being held and any costs associated with obtaining the appropriate travel visa is the responsibility of the student. Students will also have to pay for some meals during the field course. Furthermore, as part of your course requirements you need to develop and research a dissertation topic. Depending on your choice of topic and the field work research required to complete it, you may incur additional costs (eg relating to travel, accommodation, field assistants, lab fees and/or research visas). You will need to meet these additional costs, although you may be able to apply for small grants/bursaries 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>).