

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MSc in Migration Studies



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	9 months

About the course

Migration and human mobility will shape our collective futures. This nine-month interdisciplinary master's degree positions these movements within broader social-economic and political transformations. These include – among others – border politics and security; inequality and livelihoods; urbanisation and deindustrialisation; activism and policy making. Drawing on theoretical and methodological innovations from across the social sciences, it provides the conceptual and methodological foundations for scholars and practitioners working in migration and development related fields.

The degree is jointly offered by the Oxford Department of International Development (ODID) and the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography.

Course objectives

The degree provides a broad, theoretical understanding of human mobility and the role of both internal and international migration in economic and political processes, social change and globalisation. Engaging critically with the politics of movement in today's world, it prepares you for further study or careers in government, international organisations, and civil society. Drawing on world-class scholars, it reviews major debates and literatures on contemporary migration and human mobility. You will gain insight into migration's close connection to global systems of trade, labour, politics and power.

Successful students will leave with the critical analytical and research skills needed to contribute new perspectives to the study of migration in and beyond academia. You will have the opportunity to plan, organise and carry out independent research and to gain the skills necessary to convey theoretical knowledge of migration to a variety of different audiences. Strongly focused on migration and mobility across world regions and the politics of knowledge production, the degree provides insights for students dedicated to reshaping local and international debates over human movement.

Course structure

In the first and second terms you will take the following courses:

- Migration and the Economy
- Governance of Migration
- Anthropology of Migration
- Migration and Development
- Methods in Social Research

In the second term, you will also take two highly focused, research-led option courses. These change annually to reflect contemporary debates and academic themes. In the final term, you will write a dissertation based on original research. Working closely with a supervisor, you will select both the focus and approach to your research.

Teaching and learning

There are four core faculty members from the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography (SAME) and the Department of International Development (ODID) who are dedicated to this degree. They are complemented by research staff from Oxford's Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), the Refugee Studies Centre, and researchers across the social sciences and humanities. Teaching is varied in approach and subject. Through a mix of lectures, seminars, student presentations and practical activities, it offers conceptual and theoretical insight while challenging students to address real world problems and puzzles. You will be expected to prepare for each lecture or seminar by reading a selection of recommended book chapters, articles and working papers. The MSc is a demanding course and, as is typical at Oxford, you will be expected to keep up with a considerable reading workload. Class sizes are small to mid-size, encouraging active participation and enabling students to learn from each other.

As a student on the course, you will have access to all lectures, weekly public seminars and research activity within COMPAS, and may also attend the weekly public seminars run by the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology (ISCA) and those held at ODID, including the Refugee Studies Centre (RSC) series.

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.

Libraries

In addition to the world-class resources of the Bodleian Libraries you will also have access to the Social Sciences Library, and the Tylor Library in SAME, which holds a significant collection of material on the anthropology of migration. University alumni can sign up for lifetime access to key online journals.

IT support

ODID and SAME both offer access to computing resources (including hot-desking areas with desktops, printing and WiFi), as will your college. Technical support is also available from the two departments and the college, as well as through the University's IT Services, which also offers training courses. All course material is available on Canvas, Oxford's Virtual Learning Environment.

Departmental facilities

Teaching takes place within the two departments and in ODID there is a common room area where students from all six courses offered by the department can gather. A lunch café is available during term.

Supervision

To support your academic development throughout the course, you will be assigned a dedicated supervisor. During your one-to-one meetings the supervisor will guide your work on the dissertation and prove an invaluable resource for you throughout the year. You will also have a college advisor who is available to discuss your personal wellbeing.

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Oxford Department of International Development in conjunction with the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography. It is not always possible to accommodate the preferences of incoming graduate students to work with a particular member of staff. While initial supervisor allocations are made based on your stated scholarly interests, you may be able to change supervisor after the first term if there is a strong case to be made that your dissertation topic demands it. Under exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be found outside the Oxford Department of International Development and School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography.

Assessment

Assessment consists of formative and summative assessment. Formative assessments, which do not count towards your final degree, are intended to hone your analytical and writing skills. These take the form of short essays, response papers and presentations.

Summative assessments, which count towards your final mark, take the form of examinations, essays, research methods coursework, and a dissertation based on original research.

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	£30,210
Overseas	£38,410

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 will choose a dissertation topic. Please note that, depending on your choice of topic and the research required to complete it, you may incur additional research expenses. 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>).