

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MPhil in Celtic Studies



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	21 months

About the course

The MPhil in Celtic Studies is designed to give you the opportunity to concentrate on the study of aspects of the history and culture of Celtic-speaking peoples from antiquity to the present day.

Options in language, literature and linguistics form the core of the degree, while a range of optional subjects in these areas and beyond is also available. The MPhil in Celtic Studies is suitable if you wish to proceed to a research degree or if you would like to spend only two years at Oxford on a free-standing degree.

This two-year course is normally restricted to those who have taken a first degree in a relevant subject area; however, it is also suitable for students with no previous background in Celtic, but with sufficient linguistic ability to acquire grounding in Welsh and/or Irish quickly.

Course structure

You will take a core course which introduces the medieval Celtic languages through the close study of texts in class, while other areas are taught through tutorials which may be supplemented by lecture series. A weekly Celtic research seminar brings all students together with talks by invited, mainly external speakers, run jointly in collaboration with the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, Aberystwyth.

You will take one or two core options, from a choice of:

- Celtic linguistics;
- Welsh literature; or
- medieval Irish literature.

You will also take one or two special options, which may develop one of these areas in more depth; or may be another ancient or modern Celtic language and its associated culture; or may be on a historical or other relevant topic.

You will write a dissertation that typically arises out of one of the options studied; and will also be required to develop a reading knowledge of a modern Celtic language which you have not previously studied at degree level.

Teaching and learning

Generally, student numbers in the MPhil are relatively small and this allows the teaching to be tailored to the particular choice you may make. Teaching is provided through a mixture of classes and tutorials.

Teaching for the course is shared among three faculties, English, History and Linguistics. Faculty members who have previously taught on the course and have particular expertise in Celtic topics include Prof David Willis (course director; Celtic linguistics, Welsh language and culture); Prof Mark Williams (medieval Irish and Welsh literature; modern reception of Celtic literature); Jenyth Evans (medieval Irish literature); Dr Rosalind Temple (Welsh phonetics and sociolinguistics); Nora Baker (Irish language instructor); and Hanna Hopwood Griffiths (Welsh language instructor).

Opportunities for interdisciplinary exchange are provided by the communities fostered within individual colleges, which also offer you dedicated support by means of personal advisors. The Oxford Centre for Research in the Humanities (TORCH) offers a stimulating range of interdisciplinary activities.

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 Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities

You will be based in the Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, a brand-new building at the University of Oxford expected to open in 2025, which will accommodate seven faculties, two institutes, a new library, a large number of well-equipped teaching and seminar rooms, and performance and arts venues. Each faculty will have its own centre and social hub within a building which will also facilitate interdisciplinary and collaborative work. At the heart of the building will be a large atrium – called the Great Hall – which will be a beautiful space, bringing light into the building, and serving as a space for informal work, relaxation, meeting with friends, taking breaks, having refreshments – and much more.

The library, part of the Bodleian Libraries, will be open to all students, and will house lending collections for English, Film Studies, History of Medicine, Internet Studies, Music, Philosophy and Theology. There will be 340 general reader seats, and around 80 graduate study seats – with a further 320 formal and informal study seats throughout the building outside the library.

Open-shelf lending collections will be complemented by access to electronic resources, scan on demand, and material requested from the Bodleian's Collections Storage Facility. As well as the Library's extensive staffed hours, there will be a 24/7 study space, including smart lockers for self-collect of borrowable items out of hours. Subject support is provided by a team of subject librarians.

The building will enable the recently-established Cultural Programme to flourish, with a 500-seat world class concert hall, a theatre, experimental performance venue, 100-seat cinema, and exhibition hall. Many of these venues will support academic and student-led activities, as well as performances and creative works by professional artists. The cultural programme will enrich the lives of students, and will also provide opportunities to get involved.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Humanities Division 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 Humanities Division.

Assessment

The course assessment consists of the following elements:

- three essay submissions for each of the core and option papers
- a dissertation on an approved topic.

The option papers allow you to focus on both Irish and Welsh or on only one of the two. If you wish, you may also select aspects of the history of the Celtic-speaking peoples, as well as linguistic and literary options. Although the regulations are flexible enough to allow for individual preferences, there is a compulsory language element requiring the close study of texts in the original language(s).

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	£18,770
Overseas	£41,250

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>).