

## Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MSt in Ancient Philosophy



### Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	9 months

### About the course

The MSt in Ancient Philosophy is a one-year, full-time taught graduate course offering graduate training in ancient philosophy of high quality, and aims to provide a foundation on which you can go on to pursue doctoral work in the area. This course is not available in part-time mode of study and is not offered via distance learning.

Teaching and learning on the MSt in Ancient Philosophy normally consists of individual supervisions with members of the faculty during term-time, classes and lectures, and ongoing independent research.

During the course, you will take two subject options. The first must be chosen from the following list of undergraduate papers in ancient philosophy:

- Plato: Republic
- Plato on Knowledge, Language & Reality in the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*
- Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics
- Aristotle on Nature, Life and Mind
- Knowledge and Scepticism in Hellenistic Philosophy
- Latin philosophy

Tuition for these subjects is offered in the form of supervisions, as well as lectures and classes.

The second subject option consists of two classes, which change every year, and you must attend both classes. In the last four years, the following classes have been on offer, which give an idea of the sort of subjects that have been tackled: Plato on Education, Happiness and Time in Ancient Philosophy, Seneca's Moral Letters, Aristotle's Defence of Natural Slavery and its Legacy, *Techne* in Ancient Philosophy, Vice in Ancient Philosophy, Virtue and Eros in Stoic Philosophy, The Ontology of Action: Aristotle and After, The Stoics on Emotions, Plato and Aristotle on Truth, Prudence in Aristotle's Ethics, Sophistry and Fallacy in Plato and Aristotle, and Plato's Political Philosophy.

Finally, you will write a thesis of 10,000 to 15,000 words on a topic you have chosen in consultation with the course coordinator and a prospective supervisor.

In a typical fortnight during term-time, a student can expect to spend around one hour receiving one-to-one supervision, between four and eight hours attending ancient philosophy seminars, and up to six hours of Ancient Greek tuition (voluntary). This translates as around 20–30% of a full-time working week. Students can expect to spend the remaining time on self-directed study.

It is not a course requirement for students without any (or with little) Ancient Greek to attend the language classes currently run by the Faculty of Classics, but it is highly recommended that they do so, as being able to read philosophical texts in the original language is an advantage for Ancient Philosophy students. Students with intermediate or advanced Greek may choose to attend more advanced Ancient Greek classes.

Each term many graduate classes and research seminars are organised by faculty members in which graduate students are full and important participants.

Moreover, during term-time the Faculty of Philosophy normally offers a weekly workshop that allows members of the faculty and graduate students to discuss work in progress in ancient philosophy by speakers from Oxford and elsewhere. All graduate students specialising in ancient philosophy are encouraged to attend this workshop.

In some years the Faculty of Classics and Faculty of Philosophy jointly offer the Nellie Wallace lectures, which enable scholars from outside the University to visit Oxford in order to lecture and conduct seminars in a subject in the field of Literae Humaniores.

You may also decide to attend any graduate or undergraduate classes, seminars and lectures in and outside of the Faculty of Philosophy which are of interest to you, provided those classes, seminars and lectures are open to you.

Graduates are encouraged to organise their own seminars and reading groups, and they also run two societies: one invites distinguished speakers from the UK and around the world, while the other gives graduates the opportunity to present papers to a graduate audience.

Each year there is an Oxford Graduate Philosophy Conference, in which most graduate philosophy students participate in some way.

The course has no fieldwork, industrial placement or year abroad element, but you may decide to attend conferences, workshops or research training elsewhere.

### **Course outcomes**

Upon completion of the course, you should have:

- pursued a course requiring a high standard in each of the three examined elements (a thesis and two subject options);
- selected at least two areas of ancient philosophy and studied them through individual supervisions with an expert supervisor and either by lectures (offered by an expert or experts in the relevant field) or by classes (convened by an expert or experts in the relevant field) at which students give presentations;
- written a thesis under the guidance of an expert supervisor;
- had the opportunity to attain some knowledge of Ancient Greek, or consolidate and increase existing knowledge;
- had many opportunities to hear and give talks in philosophy, by attending the annual Graduate Philosophy Conference, talks by invited speakers, philosophy societies, and discussion groups; and
- been a member of a college graduate community, associating with graduates from many countries, cultures, and academic disciplines.

Students who successfully complete the MSt in Ancient Philosophy may wish to consider applying for the DPhil in Philosophy. However, if you have no to little Ancient Greek and you would like to progress to the DPhil in Philosophy, you should attend the Ancient Greek classes as attendance and progress in these classes will normally be an academic condition for admission to the DPhil in Philosophy.

### **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**

The Faculty of Philosophy will be based in the Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, a brand-new building at the University of Oxford, 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 Philosophy. 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.

### **Supervision**

For this course, the allocation of graduate supervision is the responsibility of the Faculty of Philosophy 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 Faculty of Philosophy and Faculty of Classics.

Most students have the opportunity to receive four, one-hour supervision sessions per term with their appointed supervisor for that term.

Before each supervision you will research, write and submit a formative supervision essay on which you receive detailed feedback in the one-to-one supervision session. This should then allow you to further improve your essay for assessment.

### **Assessment**

In addition to writing your thesis, you will be assessed through written work. The first subject option will be assessed by one 5,000-word essay on a topic chosen by you and approved by the course co-ordinator.

Assessment of the second subject option is by two 5,000-word essays on topics linked to the area covered in the two classes you have taken. You may choose to write both essays on topics linked to one class or to write one essay on a topic linked to the first class and the other essay on a topic linked to the second, but overlap in subject material between the essays is to be avoided.

### **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	£17,900
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

The Philosophy Graduate Studies Committee has a research and travel fund for graduate students to which students may apply for assistance with, for example, the costs of attending conferences or workshops. BPhil and MSt students may only apply for funding if they are presenting a paper. Probationary Research Students and DPhil students are entitled to apply for funding to attend a workshop, conference, etc, whether or not they are presenting a paper.

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
<b>Food</b>	£330	£515
<b>Accommodation</b>	£790	£955
<b>Personal items</b>	£200	£335
<b>Social activities</b>	£45	£100
<b>Study costs</b>	£40	£90
<b>Other</b>	£20	£40
<b>Total</b>	£1,425	£2,035

### Likely living costs for nine months

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

### Likely living costs for twelve months

	Lower range	Upper range
<b>Food</b>	£3,960	£6,180
<b>Accommodation</b>	£9,480	£11,460
<b>Personal items</b>	£2,400	£4,020
<b>Social activities</b>	£540	£1,200
<b>Study costs</b>	£480	£1,080
<b>Other</b>	£240	£480
<b>Total</b>	£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](http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/livingcosts).

## Document accessibility

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