

## Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MSt in Syriac Studies



### Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	9 months

### About the course

The MSt in Syriac Studies has been designed to give students experience in reading and interpreting a wide range of Syriac texts, from a choice of genres and in all the major scripts, as well as a broad knowledge of Syriac literature and history, and an ability to use key research tools. It is either a stand-alone qualification or a solid foundation in the subject for those intending to go on to do doctoral research.

You must choose to study texts in three of the following subjects:

- biblical versions
- exegetical literature
- early poetry
- liturgy
- historical literature
- secular literature
- monastic literature
- hagiography
- translations of Greek patristic texts
- theological texts
- any other subject approved by the Faculty Board

The choice of the precise texts to be read in each of the three subjects selected is decided by consultation between yourself and your supervisor in the first week of Michaelmas term. No more than three of these subjects will be taught in any one year.

Teaching takes the form of:

- text-classes (usually six hours per week), for which you are expected to prepare;
- seminars (usually one and a half hours per week), for which you are expected to prepare oral or written presentations on specified topics; and
- lectures on the general background of Syriac literature (normally one hour per week).

These classes and lectures are normally given by Professor David Taylor or Professor Alison Salvesen.

You are also encouraged to attend seminars in relevant areas. There are regular series in:

- Patristic studies
- Late Antique and Byzantine studies
- Armenian Studies
- Jewish Studies in the Greco-Roman Period
- Old Testament and New Testament
- Ancient Near Eastern studies.

### 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.

Syriac has been studied and taught in Oxford since the 1570s. As a result of this 450-year tradition, the University of Oxford has one of the world's greatest library collections of printed Syriac books, and related materials, as well as an important collection of Syriac manuscripts. The Bodleian Library is the main research collection, but the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies also has a major collection of Syriac books. Other relevant collections are housed in the Bodleian Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library (archaeology, Classical languages, ancient Near East) and the Philosophy and Theology Faculties Library.

You will have access to the University's centrally provided electronic resources, the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies' IT Officer, and other bibliographic, archive or material sources as appropriate to the topic. There is a computing room for the use of graduate students in the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, as well as a common room where refreshments are available, and staff and students can meet.

## **Supervision**

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 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 Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

## **Assessment**

The assessment (towards the end of the third term) takes the form of four timed examinations. These consist of:

- one paper with essay questions on the history, literature, and culture of the Syriac Churches; and
- three papers on the three specialist options, containing passages from the set texts for translation from Syriac into English and for comment, and also essay questions related to the set texts.

Further information on the course, and the examination process, can be found in the course handbook via the course webpage on the faculty's website.

## **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	£23,400
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
<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

If you require a more accessible version of this document please contact Graduate Admissions and Recruitment by email ([graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:graduate.admissions@admin.ox.ac.uk)) or via the online form (<http://www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/ask/form>).