

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MSt in Modern Languages



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	9 months

About the course

The MSt in Modern Languages is designed to allow those who have a high level of attainment in a foreign language, and have studied literature to a degree level, to undertake more advanced work. The course is suitable both for candidates wishing to proceed to a research degree and for those who wish to spend only one year at Oxford.

The MSt in Modern Languages allows you to undertake advanced work in one or more languages and literatures, and as part of the faculty's dedicated comparative pathway. The Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages is one of the largest centres of its kind in the world and is consistently ranked highly in the QS rankings of Modern Languages departments. You will join a research community spanning medieval studies, early modern literature and culture, through to modern and contemporary literature, film, and cultural history.

The faculty has many links with universities in Europe, Africa, and the Americas. There is an active research culture and a commitment to integrating graduate students into research seminars. Workshops and conferences with Oxford-based and visiting academics are hosted by the faculty, which bring together students and faculty members in – and between – individual languages and disciplines.

The Modern Languages Graduate Network offers academic and social opportunities for graduate students, including graduate-led seminars, and a mentoring scheme is in place to help new graduates integrate into the Oxford academic community.

Areas of particular interest that span the faculty's different languages and period specialisms include:

- Cognitive Literary Studies
- Comparative Literature and Translation Studies
- Gender and Diversity
- Ecology and Environmental Humanities
- Medical Humanities and Life Writing
- Performance and Voice
- Postcolonial and Decolonial Studies

If you wish to proceed to a research degree, the MSt will allow you to work towards the identification of a precise thesis subject and to gather research materials. This degree is also suitable if you do not wish to proceed to a research degree, as it enables you to build upon your undergraduate studies and to reflect on the methods of literary and cultural analysis.

Course structure

The emphasis in the MSt course is on self-directed learning. You may choose to pursue a single language or study two literatures, including English, comparatively. You may also follow programmes in European enlightenment, cultural studies, or medieval literatures. The course provides a general framework within which you will be encouraged, in conversation with the faculty, to develop your own programme of study, culminating in the dissertation project to be submitted in the final term of the year. The degree comprises three components:

Special subject options

You will take two special subject options.

Courses are offered across different language strands and specialisms, subject to the availability of the relevant supervisors in any particular year. Each special subject runs across one of either Michaelmas or Hilary terms, and normally involves four meetings, which, depending on student numbers, may take the form of classes or tutorials. These meetings are normally fortnightly.

Popular language-specific options include:

- Conscience and Consciousness in French and Francophone Literature.
- Contemporary Brazilian Fiction
- Francophone Literature
- Late Soviet and Post-Soviet Russian Literature

- Latin American Cinema
- Literature and Culture of the Berlin Republic
- Lusophone Women Writers
- Modern Greek Literature in Comparative Frames
- Problems in Dante Interpretation
- Realism and Its Alternatives in Spanish American Narrative
- Women's Writing in Medieval Germany

You may also study cross-linguistic comparative options including European Enlightenment, Cultural Studies, Contesting Colonialisms, and Rethinking Subjectivity: Technology, Ecology, Critique, and Fictions. Full listings and further details of courses can be found on the faculty's website.

Theoretical or methodological component

The theoretical/methodological course runs across during Michaelmas and Hilary terms, and involves a series of hour-long lectures and, depending on student numbers, either seminars or tutorials, lasting up to two hours, in which you will give presentations to your tutor/s and peers. At the end of Hilary term, you will be required to submit an essay for assessment. Students can undertake one of the following courses:

- History of Ideas in Germany from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Centuries
- Key Questions in Critical Thought
- Palaeography, History of the Book and Digital Humanities

Dissertation

You will complete a dissertation project to be submitted in the final term of the year.

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 Medieval and Modern Languages will be based in the Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities, a brand-new building at the University of Oxford due 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. 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 Taylor Institution Library

In the Taylor Institution Library you will have an internationally renowned research collection at your disposal, which comprises well over 650,000 volumes, including 1,000 current periodical titles and approximately 58,000 pre-1801 titles, including 56 incunabula.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages 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 Medieval and Modern Languages. The frequency of your meetings with your supervisor will vary across the year, but you will see them on average at least once a fortnight.

Assessment

For your special subject options, you will complete an essay or portfolio of essays on a topic or topics related to each of the special subjects.

The essay or portfolio will be jointly marked by an examiner and your special subject tutor. Should there be any substantial disagreement between the two markers, an external examiner will adjudicate. The assessor(s) will take account of the fact that the essays were written in the first two terms of your course.

You will choose one of the Methods of Criticism or Scholarship seminars, and submit an essay at the end of the second term.

You will also submit a dissertation in the final term of study, with work on this project lasting over the duration of the whole academic 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	£16,900
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

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>).