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## History of Art Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025

Anything designed by human beings exhibits visual and material qualities that are specific to the place and period in which it originates.

History of Art aims to arrive at an historical understanding of the origins, meanings and purposes of art and artefacts from a wide range of world cultures. It asks about the circumstances of objects' making, their makers, the media used, their functions, their critical reception and their subsequent histories.

A degree in History of Art educates students in the historical interpretation of art in its cultural contexts. It also provides skills in the critical analysis of objects through the cultivation of visual literacy, as well as encourages students to analyse critically related texts and documents.

The acquired skills have broad applicability in a wide range of professional settings, as well as providing personal enlightenment and enjoyment.

The University's collections, including the famous [Ashmolean](#) and [Pitt Rivers](#) museums, provide objects for first-hand study under the supervision of those entrusted with their care. The historic architecture of the University, the city of Oxford and its environs supplies a rich source of study in its own right.

The Oxford degree is designed to provide innovative insights into a wide range of world art, drawing its expertise from various University faculties and the staff of University collections, as well as from the department itself.

There is a strong emphasis on how primary visual and written sources from various periods and places can be analysed in relation to works of art and architecture. Students are also encouraged to explore what it means to call something a work of 'Art' and to consider images and objects that may not necessarily conform to traditional definitions of 'Art'.

### A typical week

Each week you will have around two lectures, and a weekly tutorial.

Teaching usually takes place in the department or in a college, as well as in one of the Oxford museums and galleries where tutors often lecture in front of actual works of art. Visits to exhibitions or historical buildings will also be part of the course.

Outside the classroom most of your time will be spent preparing essays for your tutorials and working in libraries, archives or museums on longer research papers.

Tutorials usually comprise between one and three students and a tutor. Class sizes may vary depending on the options you choose, but there would usually be no more than around 16 students, and often significantly fewer.

Most tutorials, classes, and lectures are delivered by tutors or curators. Many are world-leading experts with years of experience in teaching and research. Some teaching may also be delivered by postgraduate students who are studying at doctoral level and have normally received formal training in teaching undergraduates.

To find out more about how our teaching year is structured, visit our [Academic Year](#) page.

## Course structure

### YEAR 1

#### COURSES

Four elements are taken:

- Core course: Introduction to the History of Art
- Core course: Art, Design, Architecture: Meaning and Interpretation
- Core course: Challenging Antiquities
- Supervised extended essay on a building, object or image in Oxford.

Students also undertake a French, German or Italian for Art Historians course through the University's Language Centre.

No previous experience or qualifications are required for the language courses and they are not formally assessed.

#### ASSESSMENT

First University examinations: three written papers and one extended essay.

### YEARS 2 AND 3

#### COURSES

Seven elements are taken:

- Core Course in Years 2 and 3: Approaches to the History of Art
- Further Subject in Art History in Year 2 - options may include:
  - Anglo-Saxon Archaeology
  - The Carolingian Renaissance
  - Culture and Society in Early Renaissance Italy
  - Flanders and Italy in the Quattrocento
  - Court Culture and Art in Early Modern Europe
  - Intellect and Culture in Victorian Britain
- Two courses in Year 2 in Modern art and Medieval/Ancient or non-Western art - options may include:
  - Egyptian Art and Architecture
  - Greek Art and Archaeology

#### ASSESSMENT

Final University examinations: four or five written papers, one or two extended essay(s) and one thesis.

## YEARS 2 AND 3

- Art under the Roman Empire
  - Encountering South Asian Sculpture
  - Gothic Art through Medieval Eyes
  - Understanding Museums and Collections
  - Literature and the Visual Arts in France
  - Topics in Islamic Art
  - European Cinema
  - Modernism and After
  - The Experience of Modernity: Visual Culture, 1880–1925
  - American Art
  - Inventing Photography: a History of Origins
  - Visual Culture in Contemporary East Asia
- Special Subject and Extended Essay in Art History in Year 3 - options may include:
    - Art and Culture in Renaissance Florence and Venice
    - Art and Culture in the Dutch Golden Age
    - English Architecture
    - Art and its Public in France, 1815–67
    - Pop and the Art of the Sixties: Global Perspectives
    - Art and Politics: Class and Power in Chinese Art
  - Undergraduate thesis completed in Year 3.

Students also have the opportunity to undertake a placement in one of the University museums, libraries or college collections in their second year. This is not formally assessed, but provides valuable experience in the museum and heritage sectors.

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 registration. For further information, please see the University's [Terms and Conditions](#).

## Fees

These annual fees are for full-time students who begin this undergraduate course here in 2025.

## UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS AND OUTREACH

University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JD



Information about how much fees and other costs may increase is set out in the University's Terms and Conditions.

Please note that while the University sets out its annual fees as a single figure, this is a combined figure for both your University and college fees. More information is provided in your [Terms and Conditions](#).

Fee status	Annual Course fees
Home (UK, Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands & Isle of Man)	£9,535
Overseas (including most EU students – see Note below)	£41,130

**Note:** Irish nationals living in the UK or Ireland, EU, other EEA, and Swiss nationals who have been granted settled or pre-settled status in the UK under the EU settlement scheme are eligible for 'Home fee' status and student loan support, subject to meeting residency requirements. We will contact you directly if we need further information from you to determine your fee status.

Please refer to the [Undergraduate fee status](#) pages for more information.

### Living costs

Living costs for the academic year starting in 2025 are estimated to be between £1,425 and £2,035 for each month you are in Oxford. Our academic year is made up of three eight-week terms, so you would not usually need to be in Oxford for much more than six months of the year but may wish to budget over a nine-month period to ensure you also have sufficient funds during the holidays to meet essential costs. For further details please visit our [living costs webpage](#).

### Living costs breakdown

	Per month		Total for 9 months	
	Lower range	Upper range	Lower range	Upper range
Food	£330	£515	£2,970	£4,635
Accommodation	£790	£955	£7,110	£8,595
Personal items	£200	£335	£1,800	£3,015
Social activities	£45	£100	£405	£900
Study costs	£40	£90	£360	£810
Other	£20	£40	£180	£360
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,425</b>	<b>£2,035</b>	<b>£12,825</b>	<b>£18,315</b>

In order to provide these likely living costs (which are rounded to the nearest £5), the University and the Oxford SU conducted a living costs survey to complement existing student expenditure data from a variety of sources, including the UK government's Student Income and Expenditure Survey and the National Union of Students (NUS).

The current economic climate and high national rate of inflation make it very hard to estimate potential changes to the cost of living over the next few years. When planning your finances for any future years of study in Oxford beyond 2025-26, it is suggested that you allow for potential increases in living expenses of around 4% each year – although this rate may vary depending on the national economic situation.



### [Additional Fees and Charges Information for History of Art](#)

There are no compulsory costs for this course beyond the fees shown above and your living costs.