

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025–26

Undergraduate Certificate in History

About the course

The two-year part-time Undergraduate Certificate in History is equivalent to the first year of a full-time degree in History at Oxford University.

Students are introduced to the study of history through extended surveys of periods of modern British and European history. Source-based optional subjects provide an opportunity to explore major topics in greater depth and to develop and refine the skills needed by the historian. Students are also encouraged to reflect upon the nature and purpose of history by tracing the development of historical writing and exploring cross-fertilisations between history and other academic disciplines.

The course is taught through a programme of weekly seminars, supplemented by tutorials. A variety of teaching methods will be used. In addition to lectures by the tutors, there will be the opportunity to work in small discussion groups and to give short presentations on prepared topics to the class.

There is also a non-residential study week, held in Oxford, between year 1 and year 2. The study week provides an intensive introduction to your chosen optional subject.

In addition to attending the Undergraduate Certificate's own weekly seminar programme, students are also entitled, for no extra payment, to attend the wide range of lectures and seminars organised by the University's Faculty of History.

As well as attending classes, you are likely to need to undertake at least 12 hours of independent study per week. This will involve reading, making notes, preparing for class, writing essays and revising for exams.

Most teaching events and the study week are usually held in-person, but may be moved online, rescheduled or revised if necessary e.g. as a result of a pandemic.

The Undergraduate Certificate in History course consists of five elements:

1. British History 1485-1603

The course also explores broad themes spanning the 'long sixteenth century'. These will include: religious reformations, political opposition and rebellion; changing attitudes towards family and women; town and city; population growth and the relief of poverty; and the use of culture to buttress the image of monarchy.

2. British History 1900-1979

During this period Britain experienced profound political and social change: the impact of two world wars, the introduction of universal suffrage, the sudden arrival of the Labour Party as a governing force, the creation of the Welfare State, and the retreat from Empire after 1945. The course

examines the nature of these changes, as well as examining the significant elements of continuity, such as the dominance of the Conservative Party in the inter-war years and in the 1950s.

3. European History 1815-1914

The nineteenth century saw the development of the European nation states amid other changes wrought by industrialisation, urbanisation and growing consciousness of class, gender and national identity. Beginning with the Napoleonic Wars, the course also encompasses the “long peace” of the 1820s and 1830s, the Revolutions of 1848, the unification of Germany and Italy, and the struggle for stability in the years before the First World War. Students are provided with a chronological framework for the period, but the main focus is on themes which span many decades and countries.

4. Approaches to History

The study of history has evolved over time. In year 1, the course examines the evolution of historical writing from early times to the modern day, with particular emphasis upon the development of history as a systematic academic discipline. Students consider the purpose of the study of history and learn how to evaluate the reliability of both the historical record and historical writing.

In year 2, students will examine recent developments in historical writing and explore the inter-relationship between history and other disciplines such as art history, memory and gender studies. Students explore a historical controversy, such as the study of the Salem Witch-Trials, and they are introduced to the differing approaches of landscape history, oral history and material culture.

5. Optional subject

The optional subjects offer the opportunity for more detailed study of a specific topic. Students work primarily from original source material, where necessary in translation or modern transcription, and learn to evaluate historical evidence in a practical setting. Options previously offered include: The Nobility and Gentry in England 1558-1642, The Spanish Civil War 1936-1939 and The Age of Bede.

Assessment

Assessment is by coursework and written examination.

- *Coursework*

Candidates are set the following coursework:

Year 1 Six written assignments, each of not more than 2,000 words.

Year 2 Five written assignments, each of not more than 2,000 words. Plus, one extended essay of not more than 4,000 words.

In each year the lowest mark for a written assignment is discounted, so that for Year 1 the five highest marks are carried forward and for Year 2 the four highest marks (and the mark for the extended essay) are carried forward.

- *Examinations*

At the end of each year, there will be two examinations.

Coursework assignments, including, in Year Two, the extended essay (which is double-weighted), shall count for 40% of the mark for each year; the examinations shall count for 60% of the mark for each year.

Attendance

Candidates are expected to attend a minimum of:

- 75% of the taught classes per year and
- 75% of the study week.

Changes to courses

The University will seek to deliver this course in accordance with the description set out in this course information sheet. 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. The safety of students, staff and visitors is paramount and major changes to delivery or services may have to be made in the circumstances of a pandemic (including Covid-19), epidemic or local health emergency. In addition, in certain circumstances, for example due to visa difficulties or because the health needs of students cannot be met, it may be necessary to make adjustments to course requirements for international study.

You can find full information under “Changes to Courses” (sections 30 to 39) in the [Terms and Conditions](https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/mnt/attachments/terms-and-conditions-non-matriculated-2025-2026.pdf) for this course (<https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/mnt/attachments/terms-and-conditions-non-matriculated-2025-2026.pdf>).

Expected length of course

2 years

Annual fees for entry in 2025–26

Fee Status	Annual Course Fees
Home (UK/Republic of Ireland/ Channel Islands & Isle of Man)	£3,865
Overseas	£6,625

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. For details, please see our [guidance on likely increases to fees and charges](#).

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 accommodation, residential costs or other living costs. They also do not cover any additional costs and charges that are outlined in the additional cost information.

Fee status

Broadly speaking, your fee status depends on your nationality, your immigration status in the UK, where you have been living and what you have been doing for the three years prior to the start of your course. Please refer to the [Undergraduate fee status](#) pages for more information.

Information for applicants from the EU, EEA and Switzerland

On 11 May 2021 the UK Council for International Student Affairs published [new regulations and guidance](#) to be used in assessing the fee status of students commencing courses in August 2021 and later. We will be using this guidance to carry out fee status assessments for students commencing courses in 2025–26, including students from the EU, EEA and Switzerland.

If you are an EU national and do not live in the UK, then you are likely to be charged Overseas fees. Students with settled and pre-settled status in the UK and some other categories of students who work in the UK can qualify for Home fee status as long as they meet the residence criteria.

Additional cost information

This course has a study week in Oxford so you will need to meet any travel, accommodation and other costs you may incur in attending this week.

You will also need a computer which meets our minimum specification, with access to the internet and various other software programs. Please see the [system requirements webpage](#) for full details.

Living costs

In addition to your fees, you will need to ensure that you have adequate funds to support your living costs for the duration of your course.

For the 2025–26 academic year, the range of likely living costs for full-time study is between c. £1,425 and £2,035 for each month spent in Oxford. Full information, including a breakdown of likely living costs in Oxford for items such as food, accommodation and study costs, is available on our [living costs](#) page. When planning your finances for any future years of study in Oxford beyond 2025–26, you should allow for an estimated increase in living expenses of 5% or more each year, although this rate may vary significantly depending on how the national economic situation develops.

The living costs above are based on single, full-time students living in Oxford. While it may be the case that, as a part-time student, you will not be based in Oxford during your studies, you will still need to cover your cost of living on a full-time basis. If this applies to you, you should calculate your living costs to be sure that you have sufficient funding to meet these costs for the duration of your course. In particular, part-time students who are not based in Oxford will need to calculate travel and accommodation costs carefully. Please note that living costs outside Oxford may be different from those shown above.

Document accessibility

If you require an accessible version of this document please contact undergraduate@conted.ox.ac.uk