

Course Information Sheet for entry in 2025-26: MPhil in Russian and East European Studies



Course facts

Mode of study	Full Time Only
Expected length	21 months

About the course

The MPhil in Russian and East European Studies is a two-year course for graduates who are interested in gaining a deeper knowledge and understanding of Russia, Eastern Europe and Eurasia through the study of the region across a range of disciplines including history, economics, politics, international relations and sociology.

Course outline

In the first year of the course you will study the following three core courses, along with Research Methods for Area Studies and Russian Language.

- History of Russia, the USSR and Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century
- Contemporary Russian and East European Studies Part 1: Politics and international relations. Covering topics in the politics, security and international relations of Russia and Eastern Europe.
- Contemporary Russian and East European Studies Part 2: Sociology and economics. Covering topics in the economics and sociology of Russia and Eastern Europe.

Courses are taught through a combination of lectures and classes. You will be required to submit essays and make class presentations. Through the research methods course, you will receive training in relevant qualitative and quantitative methodologies to enable you to carry out research and writing for your 30,000-word thesis, while the Russian language course will deepen your connection with the region. It is a full time course with ample time for self study.

In the second year you will be able to specialise more narrowly through the choice of two option courses chosen from a list of options available for that academic year. Option courses include:

- Central Asia and the South Caucasus
- Ideology and Popular Culture
- Islam in the USSR
- Russian International Relations and Foreign Policy
- South East Europe Politics and European Intervention
- The Political Economy of Russia's Transformation: From Plan to Market and Back?

Russian language tuition will continue and you will work on completing your thesis which must be submitted during Trinity term.

Russian language tuition

Russian classes will focus on the development of language and communication skills relevant to research and study in the REES field. Students are required to pass the relevant Russian language exam as part of the MPhil programme. Leading up to the language examination, students will receive scheduled language tuition. Additional language learning is available through the Oxford University Language Centre.

Advanced research seminars and webinars

The programme hosts the famous 'Monday Seminar' for the wider Oxford and UK academic community, which takes place at St Antony's College. Student participation in research seminars is an important part of the programme, providing opportunities to see leading international scholars present their work and for networking and scholarly development.

Handwriting as a competence standard

Mastering the ability to handwrite in Russian has been identified as a competence standard for a mandatory core element of this course. This means that students will be required to produce handwritten work for assessment and it will not be possible to complete the assessment in an alternative format.

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 Bodleian Social Science Library (SSL) is the main library for Russian and East European Studies. The SSL is housed on the ground floor of the Manor Road Building, and is open seven days a week during term-time with reduced hours during vacation. The library offers a variety of study spaces including graduate study rooms, individual study carrels, and group discussion rooms.

The Russian and Eurasian Studies Centre Library at St Antony's College comprises approximately 24,000 volumes in Russian on Russian, Soviet and post-Soviet history, literature, politics, and economics. The holdings also include a number of Russian newspapers and periodicals covering a similar range of subjects.

Oxford School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA) IT Services runs courses on various computer programmes and can offer help and guidance.

Supervision

The allocation of graduate supervision for this course is the responsibility of the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA) 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 Oxford School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA).

In the case of students who require specific help to adjust to the programme in acquiring a new range of skills, the supervisor will work with them to ensure that they have additional support.

Most students have the opportunity to meet with their supervisor at least two to three times per term.

Assessment

In order to receive the MPhil degree, students must obtain pass marks in two, 3-hour written examinations (CREES 1, CREES 2), an extended essay (History), plus two option courses (methods of assessment vary). Students must also obtain a pass mark for their MPhil thesis.

In addition, students must also pass the Russian language exam and satisfy on a pass/fail basis each section of the Research Methods requirement (qualitative and quantitative). Whilst students must pass the Russian language and Research Methods components of the degree programme, any marks obtained are not part of the determination of the overall results and classification but are only recorded as pass/fail grades on the transcript. The skills learnt during the Research Methods training will be used in the development of the students' thesis work.

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	£18,430
Overseas	£29,350

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. The use of primary sources through fieldwork is not compulsory for successful completion of the MPhil thesis. Students who decide to undertake fieldwork as part of their research should note that they will ordinarily have to meet all of the costs themselves. These costs are likely to include, but may not be limited to, travel, subsistence, insurance, and, where appropriate, visa and medical fees (e.g. for vaccinations). As research sites are ultimately determined by the individual, costs can vary considerably according to the duration and location of the proposed fieldwork. Travel grants of up to £600 per year will be available as a contribution to the costs of conducting primary research activities connected with their thesis. You may also be able to apply for small grants from your college to help you cover some of these expenses. Standard travel insurance can be provided by the University. However, students may be required to pay any additional insurance premiums associated with travel to areas with an increased level of risk, and should factor this into their planning for fieldwork.

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>).