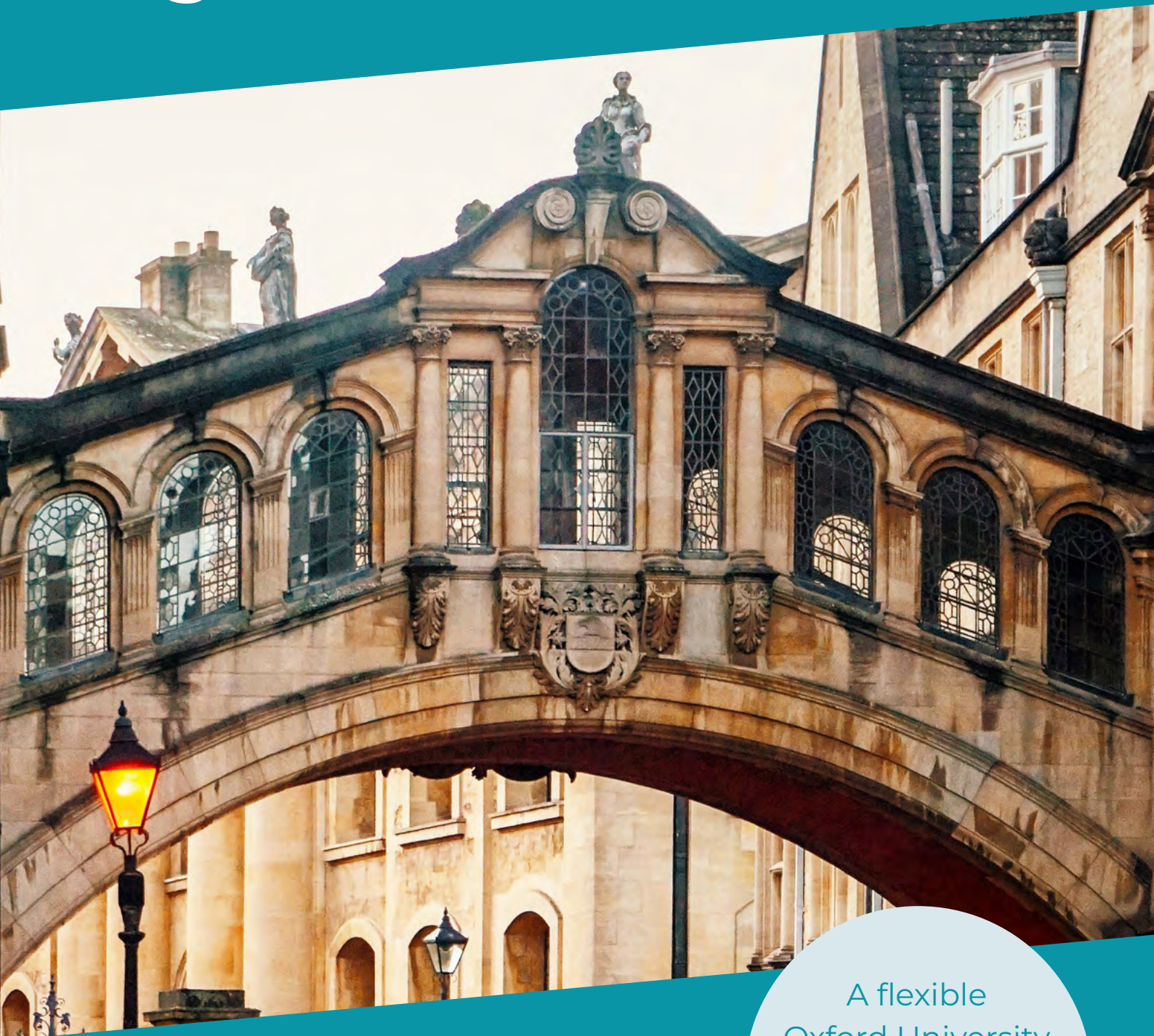


PART-TIME UNDERGRADUATE

Certificate of Higher Education



EXPLORE YOUR PASSION.
EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS.

A flexible
Oxford University
qualification,
designed around
your life

Welcome

Create your own Oxford learning journey – shaped by your interests, ambitions and commitments.

Delve into one subject. Engage across disciplines. Study your passion and discover new ideas with Oxford University's flexible, part-time Certificate of Higher Education – designed for learners who want to learn widely, deeply and on their own terms.



Dr Stephen Law
Course Director

"This programme gives students the freedom to follow their intellectual curiosity while building a coherent university-level qualification. With expert guidance, you can create a pathway that reflects your interests, develops your academic confidence and opens up possibilities for further study."



At a glance

The **Certificate of Higher Education** is a flexible undergraduate-level qualification that enables adult learners to specialise, explore and progress at their own pace.



Undergraduate Certificate

FHEQ LEVEL 4



Study part-time

While working full-time



2-4 years

Starts September 2027



Locations

Oxford and online



Study format

Online and in person



9 subject areas

Choose one main specialism

Who is this course for?

This qualification is designed for adults who want to pursue an Oxford qualification while studying subjects they genuinely enjoy. No formal academic qualifications are required to apply. What matters most is curiosity, enthusiasm and the time and commitment to work towards a university-level award.

The programme can suit people returning to education, changing direction, developing skills for work or studying simply for intellectual fulfilment.



Eliana Servadei, UK
Specialised in
English Literature

*'The highlight of the course for me was undertaking the additional assignments. I found it satisfying and engaging to synthesise module subjects into essay topics, which allowed me to pursue some quite unusual – yet very interesting – theses. These included exploring comedy and the female experience in *Pride and Prejudice* and *The Wife of Bath* of *The Canterbury Tales*, as well as examining folklore and the formation of identity in *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*.'*

Read Eliana's story: lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/student-spotlights/eliana-servadei

What you'll gain

CREATE A PROGRAMME AROUND YOUR INTERESTS

Choose one of nine fascinating subject areas to specialise in, and combine your study with courses from other disciplines. See our range of subject areas [below](#).

BUILD UNIVERSITY-LEVEL SKILLS

Develop critical reading, academic writing, independent study and research skills.

EXPAND YOUR INTELLECTUAL HORIZONS

Study outside your main subject area and make connections across a wide range of topics, from literature, history and philosophy to mathematics, natural sciences, film, politics and psychology.

PROGRESS AT YOUR OWN PACE

Complete the qualification over two to four years, choosing a mix of learning formats that fits around work, family and other commitments.



GAIN CONFIDENCE FOR YOUR NEXT STEP

Work towards a recognised Oxford University undergraduate award and prepare for further study, professional development or a new intellectual direction.

How you'll study

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

To complete the Certificate, you will gain 120 CATS points through Oxford Lifelong Learning short courses. Between 60 and 80 points will be in your chosen main subject area, including a 10-point introductory course taken during your first year.

- **Archaeology:** Archaeology in Practice (flexible online course)
- **Architectural History:** Learning to Look at Western Architecture (flexible online course)
- **Art History:** Learning to Look at the Visual Arts (flexible online course)
- **Creative Writing:** Getting Started in Creative Writing (flexible online course)
- **Data Science:** Data Science: An Introduction (live online course)
- **English Literature:** Critical Reading (flexible online course) or Reading Literature Critically (in-person course in Oxford)
- **History:** The Making of Modern Britain (flexible online course)
- **Philosophy:** Introduction to Philosophy (flexible online course)
- **Political Economy:** Public Policy Economics (flexible online course)

ACADEMIC LITERACY MODULE (10 CATS POINTS)

You will also take the 10-CATS-point Academic Literacy online course, usually during your first term. This module is included in the programme fee and helps you develop the reading, writing and study skills needed for university-level work.

Find out more about the [Academic Literacy](#) module.

IN-PERSON STUDY (10 CATS POINTS)

Most of the programme can be studied online, depending on course availability. Every student must complete at least 10 CATS points in person in Oxford. This can be achieved through an eligible [weekly class](#), two five-week classes, or a course at the [Oxford University Summer School for Adults](#).

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is through coursework for each short course and three additional written assignments designed to develop a broader understanding of your main subject area. Two assignments are 2,500 words and one is 3,500 words. There is no final written examination.

Choose your main subject

Specialise in **one** subject you're passionate about, while keeping the freedom to explore beyond it.

You will gain between 60 and 80 of your 120 CATS points in your chosen main subject area. During your first year, your introductory course will give you a grounding in the ideas, methods and approaches used in that discipline. You can then shape the rest of your specialism from eligible Oxford Lifelong Learning short courses, studied online or in Oxford.



ARCHAEOLOGY

Investigate past societies through the material evidence they left behind. Develop skills in interpreting sites, objects and landscapes, and learn how archaeological questions are formed and tested.



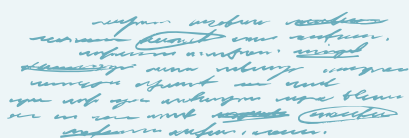
ART HISTORY

Explore works of art in their historical and cultural contexts. Learn to analyse images closely, recognise visual traditions and consider how artists, patrons, institutions and audiences shape meaning.



ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

Study buildings as expressions of design, technology, belief and social change. Develop the visual and historical skills to interpret architecture across different periods, places and building types.



CREATIVE WRITING

Develop your voice and craft through close reading, writing exercises and constructive feedback. Explore forms such as fiction, poetry, life writing and scriptwriting while building a sustained creative practice.



DATA SCIENCE

Learn how data can be collected, explored and communicated. Build confidence with core analytical ideas and consider how evidence, models and visualisation can support better understanding and decision-making.



ENGLISH LITERATURE

Read literature with greater depth and confidence. Examine how language, form, genre and context create meaning, and develop the critical skills to construct persuasive interpretations of texts.

HISTORY

Examine change, continuity and competing interpretations of the past. Work with historical evidence, evaluate arguments and explore how political, social, cultural and economic forces shape human experience.



PHILOSOPHY

Engage with fundamental questions about knowledge, ethics, reality, mind and society. Learn to identify assumptions, assess arguments and express complex ideas with clarity, precision and intellectual independence.



POLITICAL ECONOMY

Explore how governments, markets, institutions and public policy interact. Consider how economic ideas influence political choices and how power, incentives and resources shape outcomes in society.

BREADTH BEYOND YOUR SPECIALISM

Short courses that can be taken outside your main subject area are available in a wide range of subject areas including archaeology, architectural history, art history, computing, data science, creative writing, economics, film studies, history, literature, local and social history, mathematics, music, natural sciences, philosophy, politics, psychology and counselling, religious studies and theology. Explore all short courses [here](#).

Your Oxford experience

A FLEXIBLE ROUTE INTO OXFORD STUDY

Build a genuine Oxford learning experience around your circumstances. Combine online study with time in Oxford and become part of a diverse community of adult learners.

LEARN FROM SUBJECT SPECIALISTS

Your short courses are taught by tutors selected for their knowledge, experience and commitment to adult education. You will receive subject-specific feedback and guidance throughout your studies.

PERSONALISED ACADEMIC GUIDANCE

Your Course Director and Subject-Area Specialist will help you review your progress, plan your route through the qualification and consider progression to higher levels of study.

ONLINE AND IN-PERSON RESOURCES

Access course materials through Oxford's virtual learning environment and use online assignment submission systems. In-person study also gives you the opportunity to explore Oxford's museums, galleries, libraries, concerts and theatre.

BREADTH, CHOICE AND DISCOVERY

The structure encourages you to move beyond a single discipline. Alongside your specialism, you can select from a broad range of eligible courses and discover subjects you may never previously have considered studying.



The Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford



Charles Bush,
United States

Specialised in
English Literature

"The Certificate of Higher Education changed my life. It armed me with the necessary tools to become a better writer, which were paramount in me achieving my dream of becoming a published author. Not only would I recommend the programme to anyone who is interested, but I would say you owe it to yourself to apply."

Read more: lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/student-spotlights/charles-bush



Éilís McIntyre,
Belfast

Specialised in
Philosophy

"If you are thinking about studying philosophy, there is a wide variety of philosophical topics on offer, and I cannot recommend the Certificate of Higher Education highly enough."

Read more: lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/student-spotlights/eilis-mcintyre

How to apply

APPLICATION DETAILS

For information about entry requirements and how to apply, please visit: www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/undergraduate-certificate-of-higher-education

Deadlines

12:00 midday UK time on:

- Thursday 11 February 2027
- Thursday 3 June 2027

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

There are no formal academic entry requirements. Applications are considered on evidence of interest, motivation, potential and suitability for university-level study. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an online interview.

Applicants whose first language is not English may need to demonstrate the University's higher-level English language scores.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- A 400-word statement explaining why you want to study your chosen main subject.
- A short piece of written work (1000 words) relevant to your selected subject area.
- Proof of English language ability, where required.
- Contact details for one referee who can comment on your ability, motivation and potential.



GET IN TOUCH

Academic enquiries: stephen.law@conted.ox.ac.uk

Applications, admissions and credit transfer:

certhe@conted.ox.ac.uk
+44 (0)1865 280372

Disability support and funding:

student.support@conted.ox.ac.uk
+44 (0)1865 280355

For more information, please visit:

www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/undergraduate-certificate-of-higher-education



Students at our annual Award Ceremony, Sheldonian Theatre, 2026



Oxford University Summer School for Adults students, 2024

Oxford Lifelong Learning

Oxford Lifelong Learning brings the quality of an Oxford University education within reach of everyone. We inspire people across the world to fulfil their potential – whether by studying for a qualification to change direction, enhancing their career with new skills, or learning simply to satisfy intellectual curiosity.

Our courses, provided in Oxford and online, are led by tutors selected for their expertise and dedication to the exceptional teaching you expect from a world-class university.

Offering a transformational learning experience, we encourage and empower our vibrant community to achieve their goals and make a difference by sharing their knowledge.



   @OxLifelongLearning
#OxfordLifelongLearning

All information is correct at the time of publication (September 2026). Please check our website for the most up-to-date information.