

PART-TIME QUALIFICATIONS IN

History of Art and Design



EXPLORE THE VOICES, CULTURES
AND EXPERIENCES BEHIND
ART'S GLOBAL TAPESTRY.

Undergraduate
and
postgraduate
courses

Welcome

Discover the latest debates in the history of art.

Through flexible study and exclusive access to Oxford's world-class museums and collections, learn to interpret iconic artworks and develop your own insights into art's global histories. Our part-time structure means you can study wherever you live and fit learning around your life.



Dr Leah Clark
Director of Studies

'Our History of Art offerings are dynamic and wide-ranging, covering well-known topics such as Renaissance art or Impressionism but often taught with new perspectives or highlighting new discoveries. Our courses also offer unique global perspectives, examining art in all of its contexts, and asking critical questions of historic materials, demonstrating why studying art history is still relevant today. Whether it's a short course or a part-time master's, there is much to discover!'



www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/history-of-art-and-design

What you can study

THE PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

Our part-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the history of art recognise the globally diverse range of users, makers and viewers, offering you the chance to join a group of peers eager to learn more about multiple visual cultures, voices, and experiences.

FIND YOUR LEVEL

Certificate in the History of Art

Level	Length	Format
First-year undergraduate	2 years, part-time	In person and online

Discover global secrets behind the beauty of art. Taught through a combination of in-person teaching with online digital learning, the part-time Certificate teaches students about the production and provenance of works of art in museums. Students develop key skills such as how to view and describe works of art, and are introduced to issues of display, value, collections, categories of art and its institutions.

The Certificate provides a historical grounding, exploring the history of art from c500 CE to the present, engaging with art in its global contexts.

[Discover more](#)

Certificate of Higher Education (Art History)

Level	Length	Format
First-year undergraduate	2–4 years, part-time	In person and online

Are you interested in studying art history alongside other subjects you enjoy, such as literature, philosophy or creative writing? You build your qualification by choosing from a variety of short courses – studying online, in Oxford, or by attending the Oxford University Summer School for Adults in-person.

[Discover more](#)

Diploma in the History of Art

Level	Length	Format
Second-year undergraduate	2 years, part-time	In person, Oxford

Have you ever wanted to study a particular period of the history of art in more depth? Or have you ever wondered why the nude in Western art became and continues to be an important feature?

Starting in October 2027, our part-time Diploma allows you to acquire in-depth knowledge of specific artistic movements, artists, and themes by choosing particular period pathways for in-person teaching in Oxford, while the online units cover important themes, from the Body to Landscape.

[Discover more](#)



Megan McCarthy

Certificate in the History of Art

'As a solicitor apprentice, I am currently training to qualify as a lawyer while also completing my law degree. One of the reasons that I was drawn to undertake my apprenticeship with the firm I work for was due to its art-law practice. I decided to take the part-time Certificate in the History of Art to deepen my knowledge of the art world in a way that complements this step in my career, and I am excited to apply the things which I have learned from Oxford'



Master's in Literature and Arts (MSt)

Level	Length	Format
Postgraduate	2 years, part-time	In person and online

Unlock the essence of human thought and creativity across centuries, and journey through pivotal periods of British history. This master's degree has a twofold aim – to explore human thought and creativity from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, and to examine the historical conditions within which these intellectual and creative outputs were produced through interdisciplinary study.

Taught using a combination of residential and online units, the course welcomes applicants who are at different stages in their lives and careers and reside anywhere in the world.

[Discover more](#)

Master's in the History of Design (MSt)

Level	Length	Format
Postgraduate	2 years, part-time	In person and online

Are you interested in how ordinary things and places have become windows to captivating historical narratives? Taught through blended learning, online and in-person, this master's aims to provide students with a framework of interpretative skills helpful to understanding design historically.

Combining close visual and material analysis with archival research and historical methodologies, you'll explore the design of objects for use and environments.

[Discover more](#)



DPhil in Literature and Arts

Level	Length	Format
Postgraduate research	4-8 years, part-time	In person

This doctoral research programme encompasses the disciplines of literature, history, art and architectural history, and the history of ideas. Students carry out independent doctoral research on a subject linked to the British past, c1450-c1914. British history is interpreted in the broadest possible sense to include global and imperial connections.

[Discover more](#)



Caitlin Murphy-Hurrell,
Master's in
Literature and Arts

'Coming back into a university setting after being out of it for some time can take some time to adjust. However, the tutors and lecturers are so willing to help you adjust and provide guidance that soon you're right back into it and writing essays becomes just that little bit easier.'



Bior Elliott,
Master's in
History of Design

'The most enjoyable part of the course is engaging with the amazingly varied lecture content and learning unexpected things from my equally varied cohort. Being surrounded by herbalists, architects, scientists, business executives and curators has definitely widened my outlook and provided inspiration.'

Short courses and events

Explore a new topic or revisit a favourite subject over the course of a day, a few weeks or a term. Our short courses and events run in person or online, with some offered in both formats – so you can choose the best format for you.

Delve into different historical periods, regions and art forms, and learn to interpret major works and develop skills to create fresh perspectives on art and its global histories.

[www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/
history-of-art-and-design](http://www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/history-of-art-and-design)

What you will gain

Develop your understanding, perspective and confidence in art history.

- **Gain a global perspective of the history of art**, investigating this rich and dynamic discipline including multiple historic periods, regions and art forms from the Italian Renaissance and French Impressionism to the contact zones of India and the Mediterranean.
- **Get up to speed with the latest debates and methods** to interpret works of art, particularly in the areas of politics, society, gender and identity, material culture and decolonising practices.
- **Share your experiences and learn from others** in a collaborative environment of fellow students, our experienced faculty and industry experts, to improve your interpretative skills across a range of cultural, societal and political examples of art through the ages.
- **Gain practical knowledge and develop your interpretative skills** through museum and gallery visits in Oxford and London, offering you a rare chance to gain first-hand experience of the visual arts.
- **Fit study around your commitments and responsibilities** through combining online digital learning with in-person teaching, in a student-focused, supportive, and transformative learning environment.



Certificate in the History of Art student, Ashmolean Museum, October 2025



Certificate in the History of Art students, Ashmolean Museum, October 2025

The Oxford experience

GLOBAL REPUTATION FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The University of Oxford has over 800 years of being a leader in education. The strength and breadth of the research and teaching is world renowned. The University benefits from global scholars bringing unique insights and perspectives for deeper conversations.

Our faculty brings a rich tapestry of global perspectives and expertise, offering unparalleled insight across disciplines, from contemporary art, photography, and print culture to the timeless beauty of Italian Renaissance art.

LEARN FROM EXPERTS

Taught by research-intensive academic staff pursuing cutting-edge knowledge relating to the history of art. Our teaching and research engages with materials, objects, and collections that cut across geographies and chronologies.

OXFORD COLLEGE AFFILIATION

For our matriculated postgraduate degree students, you will become a member of one of the University's multidisciplinary colleges, enabling you to encounter new perspectives in your field or learn more about many other different subjects from fellow college members.

The collegiate system makes studying at Oxford a truly special experience. Oxford colleges are friendly and diverse communities, where you could find yourself absorbed in fascinating conversations with students and academics from a variety of disciplines at college seminars, dinners, and informal occasions.



LIBRARY FACILITIES

For both our undergraduate and postgraduate students, you will have access to the electronic online resources of Oxford University's Library Services, including the Bodleian Library, and all other University libraries. Students, using their University card, can also use the in-person facilities of the Bodleian Libraries.

AWARD CEREMONIES

Students who successfully complete a course will be invited to celebrate their achievements at the Sheldonian Theatre.

Students completing non-matriculated award-bearing courses are invited to attend these Award Ceremonies, held in March and May, which mark the culmination of their studies, and many travel from around the world to take part in this occasion.

Matriculated students receiving master's or doctoral degrees attend a degree ceremony organised through their college, which also takes place at the Sheldonian Theatre.

Find out more and start your journey:
[www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/
history-of-art-and-design](http://www.lifelong-learning.ox.ac.uk/history-of-art-and-design)



Certificate in the History of Art students, 2025



Ashmolean Museum, October 2025

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



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