

FAQ: MSt. in Modern Languages (German) at the University of Oxford – Student exchange edition

Health warning: Always check first with your own home university about application requirement and deadlines for the nomination process as they can provide the most relevant information for the student exchange programme!

These FAQs are designed to give you the Oxford-perspective and do not answer home university specific questions!

Applying via your home university:

⇒ Why are there different deadlines and requirements for the application?

There are two processes for the student exchange programme between the University of Oxford and its German partner universities:

1. The nomination process for the exchange programme at the German home university
2. The application process at the University of Oxford.

These two steps tend to have different requirements and have different deadlines! Always check the relevant deadlines and requirements.

⇒ Can I apply for the exchange programme while being in the last stages of my undergrad/first degree?

Please check with your home university whether or not that is possible. You should be able to hand in your B.A. degree later in the application process (you will be given a deadline for this!). You will need your first degree to actually start the Master course at Oxford.

⇒ Can I receive credit points for the course at my home university while studying at Oxford?

You should be able to use credit points from Oxford for your course at your home university, but please check with your home university whether or not that is possible and for which modules you can use them.

⇒ Will the exchange programme/my time at Oxford influence my designated period of study at my home university?

It might prolong your period of study at your home university, depending at which point you are in your course.

⇒ Is the exchange programme the only way for me to study at Oxford?

No! You can always apply for the MSt. in Modern Languages 'by yourself' (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/mst-modern-languages>).

In this case however, you must think about funding your tuition fees (which will only be paid for you if you are part of an established exchange programme).

There are several ways of funding your MSt. Have a look at funding opportunities offered by

1. The Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages (<https://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/graduate/how-to-apply>)
2. The University of Oxford (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/oxford-funding>)
3. Check out funding opportunities in Germany (DAAD, scholarships offered by different 'Stiftungen', etc.).

Attention: To be considered for an Oxford scholarship, whether or not that is offered by the faculty or the university (OUTSIDE OF THE EXCHANGE PROGRAMME), you have to apply at the University of Oxford by the second possible deadline in January! (This deadline is probably going to be earlier than the application deadline for the exchange programme nomination at your home university!)

~~Always be aware of these two separate routes to Oxford!~~

Entry requirements for the admission process at the University of Oxford:

- ⇒ Do I still need to apply at Oxford after being chosen for the exchange programme at my home university?

Yes! Even if you are chosen to take part in the exchange programme by your home university, it is a (formal) requirement to apply to Oxford! Exact deadlines to be confirmed

- ⇒ Do I need my English test for the application?

You will need to prove your English proficiency by handing in an English test. Your test must have been taken no more than two years before the start date of your course. If you do not have a test result yet, you do **not** have to take a test before applying.

You will be given a later deadline and can hand in your test results at a later point in time.

- ⇒ What aspects should my referees cover in their reference letters?

Please see the following guide for referees:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/applying-to-oxford/information-for-referees>.

- ⇒ Does the reference letter have to be in English?

In case your referees cannot provide a reference letter in English, get in touch with the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages' Graduate Studies Office (graduate.studies@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk). The language of the reference letters does not

necessarily have to be English but can be in the relevant language.

⇒ Not everything on my official English transcript issued by my home university is actually in English. Is that a problem?

No. As long as the overall 'frame' of the transcript is in English, your transcript should be accepted. It just has to be issued by an official institution of your home university.

⇒ I do not have two written works/essays regarding (German) literature. Can I hand in a different essay?

You are asked to submit two essays as examples of written work with your application. At least one piece of work should relate closely to the proposed area of study. If this condition is met, the other essay can cover a similar or related field other than German literature (i.e. literature in another foreign language, Rhetoric, etc.).

The course at Oxford:

⇒ Do I have to know what I want to do for my dissertation before coming to Oxford?

You are asked to name relevant research interests in your personal statement required for your application and to briefly outline an idea for your dissertation. But be assured, this is not binding and you will be able to formulate a completely new dissertation topic if you wish, once it becomes relevant! But still, as general advice: Do think about what you might want to do for your Special Subjects, your Method Option or your dissertation as early as possible and get in touch with relevant people to discuss your ideas.

⇒ What differences are there between seminars at German universities and at Oxford?

The course in Oxford is very writing intensive and you will spend most of your time for your Special Subjects preparing for your essay's submissions and discussing your ideas with your professor as well as with your peers. The group size will also be significantly smaller. Use the seminars as a way of getting feedback on your topic, your ideas, and your writing.

⇒ There are only two seminars per term (one of them could also be fortnightly). Will I only be sitting in my room? How could my week be structured?

It is mandatory to take two Special Subjects (one each of the first two terms) and a Theory/Method option (runs throughout the first two terms), which does not sound a lot compared to German timetables. But these two seminars per term will not be your only fixed appointments during the week: Graduate seminars are a great way for exchange and are offered for nearly every modern languages as well as every time period. Furthermore, there are dozens of reading groups, lectures, societies, and clubs (academic and non-academic) to get involved in. You will not be sitting in your room much! (Beware: You will most probably not be able to receive credit point for these 'voluntary' events for your course)

at your home university.) If you want to get an idea of the breadth of academic activities going on, sign up for one of the newsletters, e.g. of Oxford Medieval Studies <https://medieval.ox.ac.uk/about/> – you might even be able to join in online in a number of seminars and workshops before coming to Oxford. Have also a look at the TORCH (The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities) website: <https://www.torch.ox.ac.uk/>

⇒ Where can I get help if I have further questions regarding the exchange programme or the course?

Here are a few relevant homepages:

- <https://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/graduate/mst-modern-languages>
- <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/mst-modern-languages>
- <https://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/graduate/how-to-apply#funding>
- <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/applying-to-oxford/getting-started?source=coursepage>
- <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/applying-to-oxford/application-guide>

And useful points of contact:

- Modern Languages Year Abroad Office: year-abroad@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk
- German Year Abroad Officer: Prof. Henrike Lähnemann (Professor of Medieval German Literature and Linguistics, Director of Oxford Medieval Studies Programme and coordinator for the Method Option henrike.laehnemann@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk)
- Erasmus Office: Yelena Ablaeva and Elizabeth Ince: erasmus@admin.ox.ac.uk
- Graduate Studies Office (Modern Languages): graduate.studies@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk
- For more practical questions about the exchange: marlene.schilling@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk

Do not be afraid to get in touch and to ask questions!