

Geography BA at University of Oxford

- Our course provides a flexible degree allowing you to pursue your interests, whether they are in physical, environmental, or human geography or their intersection
- It is an interdisciplinary programme intersecting with a range of related disciplines
- It provides a wide range of transferable skills of value in the world of work
- And a pathway into postgraduate taught courses and research

Geography BA at University of Oxford

- Year 1 provides a single pathway with some scope for specialization within the Geographical Controversies course
- Year 2 students select any two out of three available Foundation courses: (i) Earth System Dynamics, (ii) Environmental Geography and (iii) Space, Place and Society
- Year 2 & 3 students select three options out of a large list;
 - They also design and execute their own research project
- Below we set out below two possible pathways through the degree, one oriented towards physical and environmental science and the other human or social science

A science-leaning pathway

- As a potential applicant for this course, you may be looking at BSc programmes specifications elsewhere
 - Why might this programme be for you?
- It provides the opportunity to specialize in the scientific elements and skill-sets of geography without committing at the start to doing so: see pathway below
- Skills such as graphicacy, numeracy, scientific literacy, statistics, laboratory and field techniques, coding, modelling, and computational geography

A 'physical geography' pathway through the Oxford Geography course

Year 1

Earth Systems Processes
Geomorphology, Climate,
Ecology

Geographical Controversies
Content includes: Nature of
scientific debate; science
case studies vary: may
include e.g. desertification,
mega-fauna extinction *

Geographical Techniques
Physical Geography Field
work in Dorset and Wytham
Woods, Oxford; Introductions
to Remote sensing, methods
in PG, statistics *

Human Geography
(Space and place, networks
and mobilities, power and
identity)

Year 2 core

Earth Systems Dynamics
*Foundation paper**
Long term environmental
change through
contemporary climate change
& geomorphological and
ecological elements

Environmental Geography
*Foundation paper**
Major environmental issues
approached through an
interdisciplinary lens,
involving both science and
social science

Geographical Thought
Compulsory paper
How geographers do and
how they approach their
work, including a focus on
scientific method and
application

* These Year 1 papers also
include social science topics

Years 2 & 3 optional

**Three optional papers are taken:
those with a largely science content
currently include:**
Conservation
Island Life
Climate Change and Variability
Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation
Desert Landscapes and Dynamics
The Quaternary Period: Natural and
human systems
Geographical Data Science & Complexity

Dissertation
**Original research project spanning 6
months in years 2 and 3 (worth two
papers)**
The topic is self-selected and often links
closely to optional subject interests

Residential Fieldcourse
In normal circumstances the
departmental provides a choice of two or
three field-courses, one of which is to
Tenerife, providing field and analytical
methods training in climate,
geomorphology and ecology

A social-science leaning pathway

- You may be more interested in human geography?
- If so, the Oxford course provides an excellent broad foundation in human and physical geography in year 1, with opportunity to specialize in diverse areas of human geography in years 2 and 3
 - Or to maintain an interdisciplinary mix, again encompassing a wide range of transferable skills including graphicacy, numeracy, coding, interview or archival research methods, etc.
 - See exemplar pathway below

A 'human geography' pathway through the Oxford Geography course

Year 1

Earth Systems Processes

Geomorphology, Climate, Ecology

Geographical Controversies

Controversies in human geography include topics to do with the nature of field work, exploration and contested space*

Geographical Techniques

Human geography field work in the Oxford area, statistics, methods in human geography *

Human Geography

(Space and place, networks and mobilities, power and identity)

Year 2 core

Environmental Geography *Foundation paper**

Major environmental issues approached through an interdisciplinary lens, involving both science and social science

Space, Place and Society *Foundation paper**

Topics such as inequality, development and consumption and globalization

Geographical Thought *Compulsory paper*

How geographers do and how they approach their work, including a focus on schools of thought and critical geographies

* These Year 1 papers also include science topics, as shown in earlier slide

Years 2 & 3 optional

Three optional papers

Those that are largely social science include:

Critical Development Geographies

Finance and Sustainability

Geography at War

Geopolitics in the Margins

New Approaches in Urban Geography

[For a full list, see the School's web site]

Dissertation

Original research project spanning 6 months in years 2 and 3 (worth two papers)

The topic is self-selected and often links closely to optional subject interests

Residential Fieldcourse

In normal circumstances the departmental provides a choice of two or three field-courses, one of which is to Berlin, focusing on topics in human geography

Geography at St Edmund Hall

- The Teddy Hall tutors provide guidance to students on course on the options and what they involve
 - But the mix you take is yours to choose
- Students may specialize towards the sciences, or the social sciences, or embrace an interdisciplinary or 'environmental geography' mix.
- Options are selected one term in advance, maintaining choice through the programme
- The options available do change over time and there is no guarantee you will get your first-choice option each option term, but there is always a good choice available
- Supervision of dissertations is provided by a mix of in-house tutors and other subject specialists depending on the topic students choose

Transferable Skills

- As listed above, such skills as graphicacy, numeracy, awareness of the importance of place, space and scale of analysis are inherent to geography
- A 'critical thinking' approach to information acquisition, sifting and synthesis is stressed throughout the degree
- Field, laboratory and computational skills acquired are shaped by student choices of options and dissertation projects
- Opportunities for debate, writing in various formats, presentation of work in class, and small group teaching are also fundamental to the Oxford system
- Development of time and project management skills are integral to the dissertation project and submitted work elements of the degree programme