Pre-Master's Course FAQs

1. Who is the 'typical' Foundations of Diplomacy Course student?

Students on the Foundations of Diplomacy Course are all graduates. Many, if not most, also hold Masters degrees. They come from a wide range of backgrounds; some are young serving diplomats, others come straight from undergraduate and postgraduate studies and others are graduate professionals looking for a career change.

2. What is the average age of students on the course?

The majority of our students tend to come from the 21 to 35 age range.

3. Which countries do ‘Foundations of Diplomacy Course’ students come from?

Most recently, we have welcomed students from Brazil, Canada, China, DR Congo, Finland, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Latvia, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Russia, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, the UK and the USA.

4. What is the average class size?

For academic seminars, the maximum class size is normally 20. Please note that, in some years, this number may be lower or a little higher. For English language classes, the maximum class size is normally 8.

5. I have no experience of diplomacy or international relations; can I still apply for a place on the course?

Absolutely. Although some of our students have previously studied international relations, the Foundations of Diplomacy Course assumes no prior specialist subject knowledge of the area. In the past, our students have come from a wide range of backgrounds with degrees in engineering, law, English language and literature, art history, politics and sociology.

6. What do students do after completing the Foundations of Diplomacy course?

In the past year, our students have returned to their Ministry of Foreign Affairs, have gone on to Master's degree courses at leading universities in the UK, or have joined their country's diplomatic service. This year, we also have students who intend to work for major international organisations upon course completion.

7. Will taking this course improve my chances of being accepted for a Master's degree course at the University of Oxford?

You should note that successful completion of the pre-Master’s course does not guarantee progression to Master’s degree courses at Oxford (or at any other university), for which separate application is necessary.
However, many of our students who have successfully completed the course have subsequently been accepted onto a Master’s programme at leading Universities in the UK and here at Oxford.

8. I've already completed a Master’s degree. May I still apply for a place on this course?

Yes. Many of the students on the Foundations of Diplomacy course already hold Master's degrees.

9. Can you give me advice on visas?

We regret that we are unable to provide advice on individual visas. Students are advised to consult their closest British Embassy, Consulate or High Commission for the most up-to-date advice.

Students should also refer to the University's Visa & Immigration team at https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa?wssl=1 or alternatively via email at: student.immigration@admin.ox.ac.uk

10. How many contact hours each week will I have?

The Foundations of Diplomacy Course is highly intensive. You should expect to receive a minimum of 15 contact hours each week. Additionally, you will also receive an individual academic writing tutorial.

11. Who will my tutors be?

You will be taught by former British ambassadors (diplomatic studies and practical diplomacy), subject specialist academics (politics, international relations), and specialist English language tutors.

12. What is included in the total fees of £16,899?

All course tuition. Also included are all key course textbooks, study materials, UK field trips and weekday morning refreshments (tea/coffee).

13. Do you provide any scholarships for the course?

We are, unfortunately, unable to offer any scholarships for the Foundations of Diplomacy Course 2022-23 at present.

14. Would accommodation be included in my course fees?

Your course fees do not include accommodation. As a Department, we are not in a position to offer accommodation for the duration of the course, and students should be aware that it is ultimately their own responsibility to secure accommodation.

However, we are happy to provide students with advice on finding suitable accommodation in Oxford.

15. What is a College attachment?

A College attachment or associate student membership allows students to experience the entirety of University life (social and cultural). It offers students the opportunity to socialise with their British and international peers and also to benefit from the academic, sporting and recreational activities of one of the University of Oxford’s graduate colleges. This will incur an additional fee of £2,500, and please note that your college fees do not include accommodation or meals.
16. Is a College attachment compulsory?

No. A non-residential college attachment is available those students that wish to have one, however the choice is yours.

17. How do I arrange a college attachment?

Successful applicants can request a College attachment on their application form which the course administrator arranges on your behalf. Please note that we are unable to consider requests for attachments to a specific college. If you initially decline the offer of a college attachment and later decide you would like an attachment you must let us know before the start of the course. We cannot arrange a college attachment for you once the course has started.

18. Which qualifications do you accept as proof of English language proficiency?

We accept the following international tests:

- IELTS Academic (Minimum overall score of 6.5)
- Cambridge ESOL CAE (Minimum of B pass)
- TOEFL iBT (Minimum overall scores of 76)

Please note that the above list is not exhaustive. If you have taken and passed another officially-recognised test of English (or are unsure which tests are officially-recognised for course application purposes), please contact us for further details.

19. I am a native English speaker / I have recently completed a course taught entirely in English / I live in a majority English-speaking country and speak English at work, do I still need to submit an English language test score and take the English language module?

You can apply for a waiver of the requirement to provide an English language test score under the following circumstances:

1. You may apply for a waiver if you have completed, or are currently completing, a degree-level course that is:
   - full-time
   - at least nine months in duration
   - undertaken at a recognised institution where teaching and assessment throughout the course is undertaken entirely in English; and
   - has been completed within 2 years of the start date of the course to which you are applying.

2. You may also apply for a waiver based on substantial professional experience if:
   - you have worked for a minimum of two years in a majority English speaking country where the main language for the role was English;
   - your role involved daily professional use of each of the four language components (reading, writing, listening and speaking);
   - you worked in an appropriately technical context to demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in an academic environment; and
• your role has ended no more than two years before the start date of the course to which you are applying.

20. Can I pay my course and college fees in instalments?

Yes. Please contact the course administrator for details: ipfd@conted.ox.ac.uk

21. How long will it take for the result of my application to be known?

We accept applications on a rolling admissions basis, so you can apply for admission at any time before the deadline. We begin processing your application as soon as we receive all the documentation we list on the course website. We will then let you know whether you’re invited to the next stage of the selection process, an informal 30-minute Skype interview. You should expect to learn the outcome of your application within seven working days of your interview.

22. What type of certificate will I receive?

Students who successfully complete the course will be awarded a University of Oxford certificate of course completion. You will also receive a transcript showing the grades achieved for your individual assignments.

23. What will my student status be? Will I be considered a full-time student?

Your status with the wider University will be that of a Departmental Visiting Student, and you will be considered a full-time internal student at the Department for Continuing Education. This status will grant you access to the facilities and collections of the Bodleian libraries, the various lectures and talks held around the university and other events. Please note that as the course is a non-matriculated course you would not have access to the university’s career service and alumni office.

24. I’ve already completed a Master’s degree. May I still apply for a place on this course?

Yes. Many of the students on the Foundations of Diplomacy course already hold Master’s degrees, either in a subject related to the course or in another subject.

25. I am currently enrolled on another full time / part time course, can I still enroll on the Foundations of Diplomacy Pre-Master’s

We strongly advise that you do not consider the course if you are currently enrolled on another programme. The course is intensive, with a large amount of self-study expected outside of class as well as the all-day field trips.