

Visual, Material and Museum Anthropology

Resources

[The Balfour Library](#) at the Pitt Rivers Museum has special holdings in the areas of visual anthropology, material culture theory, museum history and praxis, and material culture in ethnographic contexts. VMMA students also use the Tylor Library at ISCA's main building, which focuses on general social anthropology, and the Social Studies Library, which provides broad social science coverage; both are part of Oxford's [Bodleian library system](#), one of the most comprehensive library systems in the world.

The Pitt Rivers Museum and its collections together comprise an outstanding resource for VMMA students. The Museum's historic appearance provides a reference point for the study of the history of and recent changes in ethnographic museums, and students are encouraged to draw on its rich collections in their research; accession information about the collections, including the photographic collection, is available [online](#). The Museum also houses the Department's video library, which contains over 200 titles, and is an invaluable resource for studying the history and development of ethnographic film.

As well as the common room and ITC facilities at 43 Banbury Road, shared with all School students, VMMA students have access to a dedicated student workroom in the Museum's Research Centre containing computers with still and video editing software.

Teaching in the programme emphasizes scholarly and professional skills development, including writing skills for different audiences, oral presentation skills and productive discussion techniques, critical textual analysis, and social science research methodologies (photo-elicitation, sound recording, participant observation, interview techniques, artifact and display analysis, provenance research, and the use of databases in research). This training is integrated with that provided by Oxford's Social Science Division's [Doctoral Training Centre](#), which coordinates research training for students going on to doctoral research. Additionally, the VMMA programme places especial emphasis on the understanding of ethical issues involved in aspects of ethnographic museum research and research-related image creation.