This is the beginning of a working guide designed to help social science and humanities scholars new to research in Oman get started. The introductory guide draws on approximately 15 years of experience working and researching in the country. Despite this, the guide should not be viewed as definitive. Conditions, locations, and requirements for visiting places, being a visiting scholar, or carrying out research evolve on a regular basis and are often subject to the interpretations of various bureaucrats, and/or university, archive, or ministerial officials.

**GENERAL ADVICE:**

- Be serious and respect people’s space and time. People are not just your private interlocutors, but human beings with lives, concerns, and time and other constraints just like everyone.
- Do your homework before going – know something about the history, peoples, cultures, environment even if it is not immediately evident that it is relevant to your study. Be aware that a lot of popular articles about the country are full of inaccuracies. Fact check everything.
- As you research, be conscious about your positionality. As everywhere in the world, it is not only your research interests that can impact your experience, interpretations, and the type of interactions others have with you. Your nationality, institution, seniority (both age and position at an institution), gender, race, as well as your connections/network in the country, may also influence and play differing roles in your access and experiences.
- If you promise to share your findings, or if interlocutors ask to read them, do share your publications with them. Do not forget the people that volunteer their hours, ideas, expertise, and information.
- Have copies of all your official documents with you.
- Research visa and stay regulations as they apply to you. These are subject to change, and vary by citizenship.
- Bring copies of a letter of introduction from your home institution. Have introductions, explanation, and ethics letters ready to share. Bring lots of business cards.
- A letter or official affiliation from a hosting Omani institution is helpful, but may be difficult and/or time consuming to secure. This is especially true if you expect said institution to sponsor a visa. Plan accordingly.
- Photo identification may be needed at archives or research centres.
- Weekends in Oman are Friday and Saturday. Government working hours start early (usually 7:30am), and also end early. Ramadan hours will be different.
- Have a driver’s license. Be ready to rent a car.
RESOURCES & ARCHIVES

• Oman Studies Centre Library, Sultan Qaboos University
  The OSC library offers a collection of books on Oman, an archive of theses and
dissertations written on Oman, a government publications collection, and a
manuscript collection.
  • **Location:** First floor of the Cultural Centre building on Sultan Qaboos
    University, main campus: [https://goo.gl/maps/Pt7nbc1LYSu](https://goo.gl/maps/Pt7nbc1LYSu)
  • **Operating hours:**
    o Academic year: Sunday – Thursday 7:30-18:00
    o Summer & intersemester period: Sunday – Thursday 7:30-14:30
    o Ramadan: Sunday to Thursday 8:00-13:00
    o Friday & Saturday: Closed
  • **Website:** [https://www.squ.edu.om/libraries/Oman-Studies-Center-Library](https://www.squ.edu.om/libraries/Oman-Studies-Center-Library)

• National Records and Archive Authority
  A growing archive of records from the early 1600s to 1970. There is an online
searchable data base which can give you a sense of what is available, but you must
arrive in person at the archive to access the collection. You can have access to digital
copies while at the archive, but can only take a limited number of pages from each
file each visit. Thus it may take time to collect records of all you need.
  • **Location:** Al-Athaiba, Muscat, Oman: [https://goo.gl/maps/93tSHBRzMP92](https://goo.gl/maps/93tSHBRzMP92)
  • **Hours:** Sunday – Thursday 8:00-13:30
  • **What to bring:** Bring ID with you. You will need to register and receive a pass
    before you can visit the archives.
  • **Contact Details:** Telephone: +968 24130383. Email: archive@nraa.gov.om
  • **Website:** [http://www.nraa.gov.om/arabic/](http://www.nraa.gov.om/arabic/)

• Hisn A'Shumookh Library
  This library is a hidden treasure in a beautiful, nearly empty, quiet space. Its location
in a royal palace means it is somewhat difficult to enter because security at the gates
is high (and when the Sultan is present, the palace will be closed to visitors). It has a
collection of resources on Oman, written in different languages, by Omani and non-
Omani researchers. It also has electronic access to more journals and collections than
most Omani education institutions.
  • **Location:** Hisn A'Shumookh palace library, Manah, A'Dhakhiliyah, Oman
    [http://www.hsl.om/about_library/2](http://www.hsl.om/about_library/2)
  • **What to bring:** You will need ID, and perhaps a letter from your institution, and
    fill in an application form in order to attain a visitor or membership card.
  • **Contact Details:** Telephone: +968 25413731. Email: hsl@rca.gov.om
  • **Website:** [http://www.hsl.om/](http://www.hsl.om/)
• Chamber of Commerce & Industry Library
The Chamber library has a record of publications, articles, documents, and rules associated with private sector establishments and the securities market. The time required may depend on who assists you in the library and their familiarity with the materials. It will also depend on how clear you are on what materials you wish to secure. You may find it time consuming to navigate the available materials, and you may find some records divided across different sections.
  • **Location:** Ruwi, Muscat, Oman [https://goo.gl/maps/NvJM64HhLBC2](https://goo.gl/maps/NvJM64HhLBC2) Across from the Capital Market Authority.
  • **Hours:** Vary within government hours. Mornings are best.
  • **Contact Details:** [https://chamberoman.om/ar/contact-us/](https://chamberoman.om/ar/contact-us/)

• Former Ministry of National Economy Library
As of summer 2018, the location of this library is in transition. The library hosts a record of development plans, reports, and studies on the national economy. It was last housed in Al Khuwair where the Ministry of National Economy was, and now the Supreme Council for Planning is, situated. It is temporarily housed in a government building in Al Ghala, and can be accessed by researchers between 7:00 and 14:00. The current plan is to move it to the building of the National Centre for Statistics and Information (below).

• National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI)
The NCSI has development reports, statistical reports (yearly, monthly), census, and (soon) other literature from the former Ministry of National Economy and its predecessors, including past development plans. There’s a digital archive of materials on their web site. At the NCSI you can request statistics, and apply to conduct statistical surveys. However, it is rare to receive approvals if you are not affiliated with a local institution.
  • **Location:** Al Althaiba
  • **Hours:** Sunday to Thursday, 7:30 – 14:30
  • **What to bring:** ID. Business cards.
  • **Contact Details:** +968 9145 9145 [https://ncsi.gov.om/Pages/ContactUsForm.aspx](https://ncsi.gov.om/Pages/ContactUsForm.aspx)
  • **Website:** [https://ncsi.gov.om/Pages/NCSI.aspx](https://ncsi.gov.om/Pages/NCSI.aspx)

• Ministry of Culture & Heritage Archives
The Ministry of Culture and Heritage has a collection of cultural heritage materials including manuscripts, and knowledgeable staff to guide you through them. They also have an online data request portal.
  • **Location:** Al Khuwair
  • **Contact Details:** +968 2464 1300 / mhc.web@mhc.gov.om
  • **Website:** [https://www.mhc.gov.om/](https://www.mhc.gov.om/)
OTHER
The archives and libraries above should be a good place to start for a lot of research topics. Naturally, depending on your topic, other ministries and organisations will be important. For instance, if you work on religion, you would certainly want to visit the Ministry of Awqaf. Likewise, if your study involves education, you would want to visit the Ministries of Education, Higher Education, Manpower (which oversees the Colleges of Technology), and Sultan Qaboos University.

- The Research Council https://www.trc.gov.om/
- Omani Economic Association: http://www.oea-oman.org/
- Environment Society of Oman: http://www.eso.org.om/
- Geological Society of Oman: http://www.gso-oman.org/
- Omani Society for Writers and Literati http://noonoman.com/ar/

OTHER USEFUL SITES
Qatar Digital Library: https://www.qdl.qa
The British Library and Qatar Foundation have digitized a vast amount of the India Office Records, among others.

GCC Stats: https://www.gccstat.org

Gulf Centre for Development Policies: https://www.gulfpolicies.com/