

# Course Handbook: Jewish Studies

Faculty of Oriental Studies

**Academic Year 2018-19**

*Version 2*

*The Examination Regulations relating to this course are available at <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>. If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination Regulations then you should follow the Examination Regulations.*

*If you have any concerns please contact the Senior Academic Administrator ([academic.administrator@orinst.ox.ac.uk](mailto:academic.administrator@orinst.ox.ac.uk)).*

*The information in this handbook is accurate as at Michaelmas Term 2018, however it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at [www.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges](http://www.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges).*

*If such changes are made the department will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.*

## Introduction

Oxford has been an important centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies since the sixteenth century. Outstanding scholars have held a number of different positions in Hebrew and Jewish Studies in the University and students from all over the world come to Oxford for both undergraduate and graduate studies. We boast unrivalled collections of Hebrew manuscripts and printed books in the Bodleian Library. The Leopold Muller Memorial Library of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, housed in the Clarendon Institute Building, also contains invaluable Hebraic and Judaica collections. Additionally, the archaeology and material culture of the land of Israel are strongly represented in the Ashmolean Museum.

Over the centuries the study of Hebrew has evolved to take account of new developments, most obviously the growth of literature in Modern Hebrew and major discoveries such as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Our courses therefore cover all the main phases in the long history of the Hebrew language in its historical, literary and cultural contexts. (It is also possible to study for a separate BA in Jewish Studies.) As the disciplines of Hebrew and Jewish Studies have developed, different approaches and fields of study have evolved, from the study of classical Hebrew and the Hebrew Bible to all other aspects of medieval and modern Jewish culture and society. The University's posts in the Faculty of Oriental Studies reflect that diversity, with expertise ranging from the study of Classical Hebrew, the Hebrew Bible, Second Temple and early Rabbinic periods, through rabbinical literature and medieval to early modern history and literature, to modern Hebrew and other Jewish literatures and modern Jewish history.

The undergraduate course in Hebrew Studies at Oxford embraces the study of the Hebrew language in all its major phases (Classical, Rabbinic and Medieval, and Modern). Some of the most important texts are studied in detail with attention not only to language but also to their literary, historical and religious significance. In order to set all this in context, students may choose also to study one or more periods of Israelite or Jewish history and can take papers on such wider literary topics as Biblical narrative or prophecy, Jewish Bible interpretation, medieval Hebrew poetry or prose, and modern Hebrew literature.

In recent years the particular interests of those who have taken the course have included Biblical studies, Jewish literature, modern Israel, the Ancient Near East, the New Testament and early Christianity, Semitic languages, and Rabbinic thought. The flexibility of the course can accommodate a wide range of interests and one of the hallmarks of the course is the individual attention that students receive.

### **First Year (First Public Examination)**

For those taking Hebrew or Jewish Studies, the first three terms of the course comprise intensive class instruction in the Hebrew language in all its main periods. The aim is to cover basic grammar in the first term and to consolidate this information in the second and third terms, when simple texts in each form of the language are also taught. This demanding objective is essential in order to achieve a level of reading proficiency that will stand you in good stead for the rest of the course. There are three class hours a week in both Classical (Biblical) and Modern Hebrew. Readings in Rabbinic, Medieval and Modern Hebrew texts are introduced in the second and third terms.

Students also prepare for a general paper which provides an introductory framework for the rest of the course. Outline surveys are given in lectures through the year, but the main form of teaching is in tutorials, for which there is recommended reading and an essay to be written.

Four papers are set for Prelims, taken at the end of the third term.

1. Hebrew Texts I: Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew.
2. Hebrew Texts II: Medieval and Modern Hebrew.
3. Grammar and Translation into Hebrew.
4. General Paper.

Candidates who perform exceptionally well in Biblical Hebrew in Prelims are eligible for the Junior Pusey and Ellerton Prize. In the unlikely event of failure, it is possible to resit the paper(s) in question later on. You must pass Prelims in order to proceed to Finals. All examinations are held at the end of Trinity Term.

## **Second and Third Year (Final Honour School)**

*a.* Students should select one paper from the following languages: Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew, Medieval Hebrew, Modern Hebrew, or Yiddish. Papers for Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew, Medieval Hebrew and Modern Hebrew are the same papers taken by those studying Hebrew as a subsidiary language.

These are:

- i) Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew: Prose composition and unprepared translation
- ii) Medieval Hebrew: Unprepared Translation
- iii) Modern Hebrew: Prose composition and unprepared translation

Teaching for some language options may not be available every year.

*b.* History, Culture and Society

*c.* Student should select five options, of which at least one must be chosen from each of sections I, II, and III. At least three must be chosen from papers that require a study of set texts in the original language. Not more than one paper may be chosen from section V.

### **Section I**

- (*a*) Biblical History
- (*b*) Biblical Archaeology
- (*c*) Biblical Narrative
- (*d*) Biblical Prophecy

### **Section II**

- (*e*) Second Temple Judaism
- (*f*) Second Temple History
- (*g*) History of the Talmudic Period
- (*h*) Jewish Aramaic Literature

### **Section III**

- (j) Israel: History, Politics and Society
- (k) Modern Hebrew Literature

### **Section IV**

- (l) History of Jewish-Christian Relations
- (m) History of Jewish Bible Interpretation
- (n) Orthodox Judaisms

### **Section V**

- (o) Biblical Religion
- (p) Modern Jewish History
- (q) Modern Judaism

Special subjects may be offered subject to the approval of the Oriental Studies Board. Please consult your tutor.

*d.* A dissertation

Special subjects may be offered instead of one of the five options above, subject to the approval of the Oriental Studies Board.

***Some options may not be available in every year.***

## **Teaching Staff**

Undergraduates are taught by a large circle of specialists, university post-holders in closely related subjects, or post-doctoral researchers who may be in Oxford for a number of years. Those principally involved with teaching for the undergraduate course at present are:

- Dr Miri Freud-Kandel, Lecturer in Modern Judaism (Wolfson College)
- Professor Martin Goodman, Professor of Jewish Studies (Wolfson College)
- Professor Adriana Jacobs, Associate Professor of Modern Hebrew Literature (St. Cross College)
- Professor Jan Joosten, Regius Professor of Hebrew (Christ Church)
- Professor David Rechter, Professor of Modern Jewish History (St. Antony's College) (On leave: 2018-2020)
- Professor Alison Salvesen, Professor of Early Judaism and Christianity (Mansfield College)
- Professor David Taylor, Associate Professor in Aramaic and Syriac (Wolfson College)
- Mr Gil Zahavi, Instructor in Modern Hebrew (On leave: MT18-HT19)
- Ms Tali Kleinman, Modern Hebrew Language
- Dr Zoe Waxman, Modern Jewish History
- Dr John Screnock, Hebrew Bible

## Assessment

The latest information on assessments and submission details is listed in the University of Oxford Examination Regulations and can be found here:

<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>

**The Exam Regulations are revised and re-issued each year, and you must always consult the relevant issue in force. For example, if you matriculate your studies in Michaelmas Term 2017, for Prelims examinations you should refer to the Examination Regulations for 2017 -2018. For FHS examinations depending on the programme, please see the below:**

Year of Matriculation	Prelims Exams	FHS Exams	
		for 3-year programme	for 4-year programme
MT 2017	Prelims Exam Regs for 2018-19	FHS Exam Regs for 2019-20	FHS Exam Regs for 2020-21

## Important Deadlines

Monday 9th Week Trinity Term	Year 1	Provisional start date of the First Public Examinations.
Monday 0th Week Hilary Term	Year 3	Deadline for applications for approval of Special Subjects and dissertation titles. Forms available <a href="#">here</a> .
12 noon, Friday 10th Week Hilary Term	Year 3	Deadline for submission of dissertation.
10am, Monday 2nd Week Trinity Term	Year 3	Essays titles for Papers in Section V (refer to Examination Regulations) are available from the Faculty Office.
12 noon, Monday 3rd Week Trinity Term	Year 3	Deadline for submission of Papers in Section V (refer to Examination Regulations) at the Examination Schools.
Monday 7th Week Trinity Term	Year 4	Provisional start date of the Final Honour School examinations.

## Appendix

### Recommended Patterns of Teaching

Below is an indication of the type and number of teaching hours on this

course. **BA in Jewish Studies**

Summary

Each student receives to FHS:

Language instruction: 278 hours (maximum)

University lectures/classes: 67 hours

(minimum) Tutorials: 52 (maximum)

Dissertation supervision: 6 hours

Over 3 years this is an average of 134 hours teaching per year, or c. 5.60 hours per

week. **BA/Hebrew/Jewish Studies (Year I is combined)**

YEAR 1: FPE

4 Papers

(i) Hebrew Texts I : Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew

(ii) Hebrew Texts II: Medieval and Modern Hebrew

(iii) Grammar and Translation into Hebrew

(iv) General Paper

Teaching arrangements for the year per

Student language instruction: 182 hours

Lectures/Classes: 67 hours

Tutorials: 12 hours

**BA Jewish Studies: Years 2 and 3 FHS:**

7 Papers (includes a. language paper; b. paper on History, Culture and Society; c. five optional papers) plus dissertation

Papers:

1. Language paper
2. History, Culture and Society
3. Optional paper 1
4. Optional paper 2
5. Optional paper 3
6. Optional paper 4
7. Optional paper 5
8. Dissertation

Each optional paper: 8 hours of tutorials

Paper on History, Culture and Society: 4 tutorials

Dissertation: 6 hours of supervision

Language paper: 96 hours of language instruction (2 hours per week for 6 terms)

Teaching arrangements for FHS per student

Language instruction: 96 hours

Lectures/classes: may be provided for optional papers with set texts

Tutorials: 40 hours

Dissertation supervision: 6 hours

Paper	Language Instruction		Lectures/Classes		Tutorials		Supervision	
	Year 2	Year 3	Year 2	Year 3	Year 2	Year 3	Year 2	Year 3
1	48	48						
2						4		
3					8			
4					8			
5					8			
6						8		
7						8		
8							2	4