

Bachelor of Arts in Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies

Course Handbook

for students starting the degree in

2023

Faculty of Asian & Middle Eastern
Studies
Pusey Lane
Oxford OX1 2LE
<https://www.ames.ox.ac.uk/>

Faculty of Classics
Ioannou Centre
66 St Giles'
Oxford OX1 3LU
<https://classics.web.ox.ac.uk/>

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Dates of Full Terms

Michaelmas 2023: Sunday 8 October – Saturday 2 December 2023

Hilary 2024: Sunday 14 January – Saturday 9 March 2024

Trinity 2024: Sunday 21 April – Saturday 15 June 2024

Michaelmas 2024*: Sunday 13 October – Saturday 7 December 2024

Hilary 2025*: Sunday 19 January – Saturday 15 March 2025

Trinity 2025*: Sunday 27 April – Saturday 21 June 2025

Michaelmas 2025*: Sunday 12 October – Saturday 6 December 2025

Hilary 2026*: Sunday 18 January – Saturday 14 March 2026

Trinity 2026*: Sunday 26 April – Saturday 20 June 2026

* provisional

Disclaimer

This handbook applies to students starting the Bachelor of Arts in Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies in Michaelmas Term 2023 and sitting the final examination in Trinity Term 2026 (Asian & Middle Eastern Studies with Classics) or Trinity Term 2027 (Classics with Asian & Middle Eastern Studies). The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

The *Examination Regulations* relating to this course will be published at <https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk/>. 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 undergraduate@classics.ox.ac.uk.

The information in this handbook is accurate as at 26 September 2023, however it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at 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.

Course Details

Full Title of Award: Bachelor of Arts in Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies

Course Length: 3 or 4 years

FHEQ Level: 6

Quality Assurance Agency Subject Benchmarking Statements:

- Classics and Ancient History: [https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/classics-and-ancient-history-\(including-byzantine-studies-and-modern-greek\)](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/classics-and-ancient-history-(including-byzantine-studies-and-modern-greek))
- Languages, Cultures and Societies: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-languages-cultures-and-societies>

Useful Links

BA Classics & Asian & Middle Eastern Studies Course Page in Canvas:

<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/ba-classics-and-asian-&-middle-eastern-studies-overview>

Classics Faculty Undergraduate Information in Canvas:

<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438>

Asian & Middle Eastern Studies Faculty General Student Handbook:

<https://resources.orinst.ox.ac.uk/handbooks#collapse2222836>

Complaints and Appeals: <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/complaints-and-academic-appeals>

Data Protection: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/it/studentrecord/data>

Equality and Diversity at Oxford: <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/equality-and-diversity> and <https://orinst.web.ox.ac.uk/node/636321>

Examiners' Reports:

Classics: <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/greats-examiners-reports>

Asian & Middle Eastern Studies: https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/25465/pages/examiners-reports?module_item_id=235916

Examination Information (University website):

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams?wssl=1>

Joint Consultative Committee for Undergraduate Matters (Classics):

<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/jcc-for-undergraduate-matters>

Student Representation (Asian & Middle Eastern Studies):

<https://orinst.web.ox.ac.uk/node/636321>

Lecture Lists (Classics): <https://www.classics.ox.ac.uk/lecture-list-prospectus-entries>

Lecture Lists (Asian & Middle Eastern Studies): <http://intranet.orient.ox.ac.uk/roombooker/>

Prizes for Performance in Undergraduate Examinations (Classics):

<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/prizes-for-exceptional-performance-in-undergraduate-examinations>

Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/supportservice>

Information for Student Parents: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/childcare> and <https://www.oxfordsu.org/resources/0/Student-Parents/>

1. Introduction

This handbook offers advice and information on the **Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies** course, but the official prescription for this course is that found in *Examination Regulations*.

There are two versions of the course:

(a) **Classics with Asian & Middle Eastern Studies**, a four-year degree in which Classics is your main subject and you take up an Asian or Middle Eastern language in your sixth term; and

(b) **Asian & Middle Eastern Studies with Classics**, usually a three-year degree in which your main subject is drawn from Asian & Middle Eastern Studies and you take up Classics in your fourth term. For students taking this version of the degree with Arabic, Persian or Turkish, the overall course duration is four years, including a year abroad in your second year (the year abroad is optional for those taking Hebrew).

The two versions of the course are outlined in more detail in Sections 3 and 4 below.

Like most undergraduate degrees at Oxford, the BA in Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies is divided into two parts, each culminating in a formal examination: the First Public Examination (known as “Mods” or “Prelims”) and the Final Honour School. All of the papers available to Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies students are shared with either the BA in Literae Humaniores or the BA in Asian & Middle Eastern Studies. Full descriptions of the papers available and of prescribed texts, as well as guidance and information on topics such as writing essays and commentaries, online study aids, libraries etc., may be found in the [Mods and Greats Handbooks](#) (“Greats” being the informal name for the Honour School of Literae Humaniores) and in the Asian & Middle Eastern Studies [Undergraduate Student Handbook](#).

If you are in doubt about the precise prescriptions etc., please consult your tutor. It is your responsibility to ensure that your choice of subjects conforms to the regulations. If through some mischance you submit an illegal combination of subjects for the final examination, your college may apply to Education Committee for permission for you to sit that combination, but such permission will not automatically be given.

It cannot be guaranteed that university lectures or classes or college teaching will be available in all subjects in every academic year; please consult your tutor if you have any concerns about the availability of teaching.

Also visit the Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies faculty websites for latest news and events, links to online resources for classicists and lecture information <http://www.classics.ox.ac.uk/> and <https://www.ames.ox.ac.uk/>

2. Aims and Objectives of the Course

Aims

The BA in Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies has the following general educational

aims:

- (1) To provide, within the supportive and stimulating environment of the collegiate university, education of excellent quality;
- (2) To attract the best possible students to come to study Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies and associated subjects at Oxford at an appropriate level, through a range of courses which offer admission to suitably talented and committed candidates from the widest possible range of backgrounds;
- (3) To build and encourage intellectual confidence and learning capacity in students, enabling them to work independently under appropriate expert guidance;
- (4) To offer students sustained, carefully-designed and progressively-structured courses which require independent effort and rigour from them and which yield consistent intellectual reward and satisfaction;
- (5) To produce graduates who are able to deal with challenging intellectual problems systematically, analytically, and efficiently, and who are suitable for a wide range of demanding occupations and professions;
- (6) To produce graduates, especially at postgraduate level, who will go on to promote the national and international well-being of Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies and associated subjects through teaching those subjects in schools or going on to further research and university teaching in those subjects.

Objectives

The BA in Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies seeks to achieve the following learning outcomes for students by the end of their course:

- (1) To have achieved a successful knowledge and understanding of some core areas and some of a wide range of options in challenging fields of learning within the Greco-Roman and Asian & Middle Eastern world, through intense independent study under expert guidance;
- (2) Where relevant, to have acquired the ability to read accurately and critically texts and documents in Latin and/or Greek and in an Asian or Middle Eastern language;
- (3) To have acquired the skills effectively to assess considerable amounts of material of diverse types, and to select, summarise and evaluate key aspects;
- (4) To have acquired the skill of clear and effective communication in written and oral discourse, and the organisational talent needed to plan work and meet demanding deadlines;
- (5) To have progressed successfully with the support of a teaching environment in which the key features are close and regular personal attention to individual students, constructive criticism and evaluation of their work, and continuous monitoring of their academic achievement;

- (6) To have made effective and successful use in their courses of study of the very wide range of research expertise in our faculty (the largest in the world) and the excellent specialist resources and collections available in the University.

3. Structure of the Course: Classics with Asian & Middle Eastern Studies

Classics with Asian & Middle Eastern Studies is a four-year course, in which you spend the first five terms working towards the First Public Examination, **Honour Moderations in Classics** (also known as “Mods”). There are five different versions of the course, depending on whether you have studied Ancient Greek or Latin to A-Level, Scottish Advanced Highers or equivalent school-leaving qualifications:

- Course IA, for students who have studied both Ancient Greek and Latin to A-Level or equivalent.
- Course IB, for students who have studied only Latin to A-Level or equivalent.
- Course IC, for students who have studied only Ancient Greek to A-Level or equivalent.
- Course IIA, for students have studied neither Classical language to A-Level or equivalent, and who choose to study Latin at Oxford.
- Course IIB, for students have studied neither Classical language to A-Level or equivalent, and who choose to study Ancient Greek at Oxford.

Mods syllabus

You offer either seven or ten papers at Mods:

- Homer, *Iliad* (Course IA, IB, IC and IIB students only)
- Virgil, *Aeneid* (Course IA, IB, IC and IIA students only)
- Texts and Contexts: Essays
- Texts and Contexts: Translation
- Classical special subject (a choice of options in Ancient History, Classical Archaeology and Philology)
- Philosophy special subject (a choice of options in Ancient and Modern Philosophy)
- Greek Language (Course IA, IB, IC and IIB students only)
- Latin Language (Course IA, IB, IC and IIA students only)
- Greek Unprepared Translation (Course IA, IB, IC and IIB students only)
- Latin Unprepared Translation (Course IA, IB, IC and IIA students only)

For further details of these papers, please see the Mods Handbook for your year of examination at <https://classics.web.ox.ac.uk/handbooks>.

Finals syllabus

During the second part of the course (terms 6-12), you work towards the final examination, **Honour School of Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies**, in which you take five options in Classics and three in your Asian or Middle Eastern language. You may also offer a Special Thesis as an optional ninth subject.

At least two of your Classics options must involve the study of texts in Greek and/or Latin. The Classics text-based papers are marked with an asterisk in the list of Classics options in section 5 below. If you take Greek or Latin for Beginners (which consists of two written papers and counts as two options), you must take one text-based option in addition to this.

There are a few combinations that are not allowed because of timetabling or overlap: see the Greats Handbook or *Examination Regulations* for details. Otherwise, the choice is extremely free and you can choose to concentrate on Literature, say, or History, if you wish.

- **Greek/Latin Literature** (501-13, 515, 517-8, 524-5, 541-2, 581): you may offer up to five subjects. If you offer three or more, at least one of them must be Greek Core (501) or Latin Core (502).
- **Ancient History** (401-15): you may offer up to five subjects. If you offer two or three, at least one of them must be a period paper (401-6); if you offer four, at least two must be period papers; if you offer five, at least three must be period papers.
- **Philology and Linguistics** (551-4): you may offer up to two subjects.
- **Greek and Roman Archaeology** (601-5): you may offer up to two subjects.
- **Philosophy** (110-1, 115-6, 130-9): you may offer up to two subjects.

A list of the Classics options available at finals is provided in section 5 of this handbook. For full details of these options and the way they are assessed, please consult the Greats Handbook for the relevant year of examination (available at <https://www.classics.ox.ac.uk/handbooks>).

Below is a summary of the papers which you take in your Asian or Middle Eastern language at finals. Please see the Asian & Middle Eastern Studies [Undergraduate Student Handbook](#) for further details.

Akkadian

1. Translation paper (subsidiary language)
2. Prepared texts (subsidiary language)
3. Text edition essay (subsidiary language; a submitted essay or 'take-home paper')

You may, if you wish, replace either paper 2 or paper 3 with one of papers 4, 5 or 6 as specified for Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies as a main subject in the regulations for the Honour School of Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, subject to the approval of the Subject Group.

Arabic

1. Arabic prose composition and unprepared translation
2. Additional Arabic: literary texts
3. Additional Arabic: Islamic texts

Aramaic and Syriac

1. Syriac prose composition and Aramaic and Syriac unprepared translation

2. Aramaic prepared texts
3. Syriac prepared texts

Armenian

Either

1. Classical Armenian prose composition and unprepared translation
2. Prepared religious texts
3. Prepared historical and other texts

or

1. Modern Armenian prose composition and unprepared translation.
2. Prepared texts from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries.
3. Prepared texts from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Coptic

1. Translation paper
2. Prepared texts
3. Text edition essay (a submitted essay or 'take-home paper')

Early Iranian

You must offer at least one but no more than two from group (a).

(a) Old and Middle Iranian Language

1. Avestan texts
2. Old Persian texts
3. Middle Persian texts

(b) Religion and Philology of Ancient and Late Antique Iran

4. Zoroastrianism
5. Indo-Iranian Philology

(c) History of Ancient and Late Antique Iran

6. The Achaemenid Empire, 550-330 BC
7. The Sasanian Empire, 224-651 AD

(d) Early Iranian Texts and Topics:

8. Texts and Topics

For paper 8, candidates will choose two of the subjects 1 to 7 above. This will be assessed in one 3-hour paper comprising two equally-weighted sections. Candidates will answer questions on two sections, the titles/subjects of which will correspond to papers 1-7. Candidates may not choose under (d) a subject which they are also offering from groups (a)-(c), and in addition may not choose under (d) a subject from group (a) if they are already offering two subjects from group (a).

Egyptian

1. Translation paper (subsidiary language)
2. Prepared texts (subsidiary language)
3. Text edition essay (subsidiary language; a submitted essay or 'take-home paper')

You may, if you wish, replace either paper 2 or paper 3 with one of papers 4, 5, 6 and 8 as specified for Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies as a main subject in the regulations for the Honour School of Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, subject to the approval of the Subject Group.

Hebrew

Candidates in the Honour School of Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies may offer either (a) Biblical and Rabbinic or (b) Medieval Hebrew.

(a) Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew:

1. Prose composition and unprepared translation
2. Prepared texts I: Biblical texts
3. Prepared texts II: Rabbinic texts

(b) Medieval Hebrew:

1. Unprepared translation
2. Prepared texts I
3. Prepared texts II

Pali and Prakrit

1. Unprepared translation from Pali and/or Prakrit literature
2. Prepared texts
3. Questions on Middle Indic language, literature, and culture

Persian

1. Persian Language.
2. Pre-Modern Persian Literature
3. Modern Persian Literature

Sanskrit

1. Sanskrit unprepared translation
2. Questions on Sanskrit language and literature
3. Prepared texts

Turkish

1. Turkish prose composition and unprepared translation
2. *Either* (a) Additional Turkish: Late Ottoman and modern Turkish literary texts
or (b) Additional Turkish: Modern Turkish literary texts
3. *Either* (a) Additional Turkish: Political and cultural texts, 1860 to the present
or (b) Additional Turkish: Political and cultural texts, 1920 to the present

4. Structure of the Course: Asian & Middle Eastern Studies with Classics

Asian & Middle Eastern Studies with Classics is either a three-year or a four-year course, depending on which language you choose. You will spend the first three terms working towards the First Public Examination, the **Preliminary Examination in Asian & Middle**

Eastern Studies (also known as “Prelims”). The language options for Asian & Middle Eastern Studies as a main subject are Arabic, Egyptology and Near Eastern Studies, Hebrew, Persian, Sanskrit or Turkish. If you study Arabic, Persian or Turkish you will spend your second year abroad. If you study Hebrew you may optionally spend a year abroad. Students spending their second year abroad will complete their degree in four years. If you study Egyptology and Near Eastern Studies or Sanskrit, you will not spend a year abroad, and you will complete your degree in three years.

For year abroad information, please visit the year abroad section of the [General Undergraduate Handbook for Asian and Middle Eastern Studies](#). There will also be compulsory briefing sessions for students planning their year abroad, and you will be contacted separately with dates and further information.

Prelims syllabus

Below is a summary of the papers which you take in your Asian or Middle Eastern language at Prelims. Please see the [Undergraduate Student Handbooks](#) for further details.

Arabic

1. Translation and précis into English
2. Comprehension, composition, and grammar
3. Oral/aural examination
4. Islamic history and culture

Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies

Either

1. Akkadian texts *and* 2. Akkadian grammar and unprepared translation
- or*
1. Egyptian texts *and* 2. Egyptian grammar and unprepared translation
 3. Civilizations of the Ancient Near East and Egypt
 4. History of the Near East and Egypt to 30 BCE

Hebrew

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

Persian

1. Translation from Persian and reading comprehension
2. Translation into Persian and essay
3. Islamic History and Culture

Sanskrit

1. Sanskrit I: Texts
2. Sanskrit II: Grammar
3. Sanskrit III: General paper

Turkish

1. Prepared texts and unseen translation from Turkish
2. Turkish grammar and translation into Turkish
3. Islamic history and culture

Finals syllabus

During the second part of the course (terms 4-9), you work towards the final examination, **Honour School of Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies**, in which you take three options in Classics and seven in your Asian or Middle Eastern language (five in the case of Hebrew). You may also offer a Special Thesis as an optional extra subject.

At least one of your Classics options must involve the study of texts in Greek and/or Latin. The Classics text-based papers are marked with an asterisk in the list of Classics options in section 5 below.

For Classics papers there are a few combinations that are not allowed, either because of timetabling or overlap: see the Greats Handbook or Exam Regulations for details. Otherwise, the choice is extremely free and candidates can choose to concentrate on Literature, say, or History, if they wish.

- **Greek/Latin Literature** (501-13, 515, 517-8, 524-5, 541-2, 581): if you offer three of these subjects, at least one of them must be either Greek Core (501) or Latin Core (502).
- **Ancient History** (401-15): if you offer two or three of these subjects, at least one of them must be a period paper (401-6).
- **Philology and Linguistics** (551-4): you may offer up to two subjects.
- **Greek and Roman Archaeology** (601-5): you may offer up to two subjects.
- **Philosophy** (110-1, 115-6, 130-9): you may offer up to two subjects.

A list of the Classics options available at finals is provided in section 5 of this handbook. For full details of these options and the way they are assessed, please consult the Greats Handbook for the relevant year of examination (available at <https://www.classics.ox.ac.uk/handbooks>).

Below is a summary of the papers which you take in your Asian or Middle Eastern language at finals (paper numbers as specified in the Examination Regulations for the Honour School of Asian & Middle Eastern Studies). Please see the [Undergraduate Student Handbooks](#) for further details.

Arabic

1. Arabic unprepared translation into English and comprehension
2. Composition in Arabic
3. Oral
4. Arabic literature

5. Islamic history
6. Islamic religion
10. Dissertation

Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies (Egyptian or Akkadian)

1. Translation Paper (either Akkadian or Egyptian as first language)
2. Prepared Texts (either Akkadian or Egyptian as first language)
3. Text Edition Essay (either Akkadian or Egyptian as first language): a submitted essay (take home paper)
4. A Special Option, to be chosen from a list of topics published at the beginning of Michaelmas Term each year by the Subject Group for examination in the following academic year. You may instead propose your own Special Option, which must be approved by the Subject Group by Friday of 0th week of Michaelmas Term of the candidate's final year.
5. Selected Egyptian and/or Ancient Near Eastern artefacts together with essay questions on material culture.
6. A General Paper on either Ancient Near Eastern Studies or Egyptology.
7. A dissertation on a topic to be approved by the Subject Group, of a different character from the topic chosen for paper 4.

You may, subject to the approval of the Subject Group, replace paper 4 with Paper 8. Egyptian Art and Architecture.

Hebrew

1. Hebrew composition and unprepared translation
2. Prepared texts I: Biblical texts
3. Prepared Texts II: Rabbinic and Medieval Hebrew Texts
4. Prepared Texts III: Modern Hebrew literature
8. Dissertation

Persian

1. Unprepared translation from Persian
2. Translation into Persian and essay
3. Oral
- Two of papers 4, 5 and 6:
 4. Persian literature: 1000 – 1400
 5. Persian literature: 1400 – 1900
 6. Persian literature: 1900 – the present
7. Themes in Iranian history
10. Dissertation

Sanskrit

1. Advanced Sanskrit unprepared translation
2. Essay questions on classical Indian literature, history and culture
3. Ancient Indian linguistics
4. The historical philology of Old Indo-Aryan, with particular reference to: selected sūktas from the Ṛgveda Saṃhitā and/or the Atharvaveda Saṃhitā and/or selected passages of prose from the Yajurveda Saṃhitā and/or Brāhmaṇas, and/or from the early Upaniṣads.
5. Chosen area of Sanskrit studies, to be approved by the Subject Group. Applications for approval must be submitted by Monday of Week 6 of Trinity Term in your penultimate year.
6. A special subject, as approved by the Subject Group

7. Dissertation

Turkish

1. Unprepared translation from Ottoman and modern Turkish
2. Translation into Turkish and essay in Turkish
3. Oral
4. Ottoman historical texts
5. Turkish political and cultural texts, 1860 to the present
6. Modern Turkish literary texts
10. Dissertation

5. Choosing your Classics options

In choosing your options for the Final Honour School, it is vital that you discuss the question with your tutors. The syllabus allows you a very wide diversity of choice, even within each of the sub-disciplines, and you need to choose your papers with care if you are to make the most of what is on offer. For a joint school like Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies it is especially important to realise that different subjects involve quite distinct ways of thinking. Most people find that they only get fully conversant with a particular way of thinking when they have done a couple of papers that require the same sort of thinking. So, while you should not be afraid to try something new, you must look for groups of papers that cohere and support one another.

The options within each Asian & Middle Eastern subject are in most cases firmly prescribed, so it may be best to start from those, and then think about which Classical options would go with them. There are no link papers for this Joint School, but there are ways of constructing bridges between your two subjects. For example, someone doing Arabic will be studying Islamic texts or religion, and this might be helpfully informed by study of the Ancient History paper *412 Religions in the Greek and Roman World (c. 31 BC to AD 312)*, which in turn links with *406 Rome, Italy and Empire 46 BC to AD 54*, for which any of the following would be a good partner: *510 Ovid*; *512 Neronian Literature*; or *604 Art under the Roman Empire*. Similar observations would apply to *Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew*. On the other hand, those doing Sanskrit regularly take advantage of their knowledge by doing a Philology paper, in particular *554 Comparative Philology: Indo- European, Greek and Latin*. And Egyptologists often do a Classical paper that allows them to explore the Greek world's interactions with Egypt, such as *508 Hellenistic Poetry* and *409 The Hellenistic World*; and for someone doing five Classics papers, those would link well with, say, *404 Polybius, Rome and the Mediterranean: 241 BC to 146 BC*, *502 Latin Core*, and *511 Latin Didactic*.

Another thing to think about if you did Mods Course I is whether or not you wish to carry on with both Greek and Latin. Given that you are going to be learning a new language, it will require considerable effort to keep both Greek and Latin going at a good level, and concentrating on one language can help focus your choices. But you may wish to continue exploring the link between the two literatures, and regard the Asian or Middle Eastern Language as an essentially separate part of your studies.

The following would be an example of a combination which seems unlikely to be advisable, whatever your Asian or Middle Eastern Language: *501 Greek Core*, *509 Cicero the Orator*,

553 *General Linguistics and Comparative Philology*, 605 *Roman Archaeology: Cities and Settlement in the Roman Empire*, 134 *Knowledge and Scepticism in Hellenistic Philosophy*. On the other hand any two or three of these could appear in a coherent group of classics papers, e.g. 501 *Greek Core*, 402 *Thucydides and the Greek World: 479 BC to 403 BC*, 405 *Republic in Crisis: 146 BC to 46 BC*, 509 *Cicero the Orator*, 601 *The Greeks and the Mediterranean World*: any of the historical and archaeological papers would also allow a student to do some work on places and cultures of the Eastern Mediterranean and their contact with the Greeks or Romans.

When you have made a preliminary selection of papers, discuss it with your tutors. As well as having views about good combinations of papers and about your particular academic strengths, they will know what the timetabling constraints are (some papers are taught in University Classes and so can only be taken in particular terms). The normal pattern for someone who has done Mods is to do two Classics papers in the Trinity Term after Mods, with one carrying on into the Michaelmas, and the other postponed for later completion. In Michaelmas study of your Asian or Middle Eastern Language will begin in earnest (you may have done some introductory work beforehand, e.g. by going to a summer school). And thereafter the two sides will mainly operate in tandem. Make sure you know before you go down for the Easter vacation which two papers you will be working on during the Trinity Term so that you can start adequately prepared. Whatever your choice of papers, Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies is a very challenging degree; and to ensure that it is exhilarating and not just gruelling, it is vital to get off to a flying start.

List of Classics Options

[* = text-based paper]

There are a few restrictions on the combinations of papers which you may offer; please see the [Examination Regulations](#) for details.

A. Subjects in Greek and Latin Literature

- *501: Greek Core
- *502: Latin Core
- *503: Historiography
- *504: Lyric Poetry
- *505: Early Greek Hexameter Poetry
- *506: Greek Tragedy
- *507: Comedy
- *508: Hellenistic Poetry
- *509: Cicero the Orator
- *510: Ovid
- *511: Latin Didactic
- *512: Neronian Literature
- *513: Euripides, *Orestes*: papyri, manuscripts, text
- *515: Catullus: manuscripts, text, interpretation
- *517: Byzantine Literature
- *518: Modern Greek Poetry
- *524: Seneca, *Medea*: manuscripts, text, interpretation
- *525: Latin Literature from Titus to Trajan
- *541: Homer, *Iliad*

*542: Virgil, *Aeneid*

*581: The Latin Works of Petrarch

B. Subjects in Greek and Roman History

*401: Archaic Greek History: c. 750 to 479 BC

*402: Thucydides and the Greek World: 479 to 403 BC

*403: The End of the Peloponnesian War to the Death of Philip II of Macedon: 403 to 336 BC

*404: Polybius, Rome and the Mediterranean: 241–146 BC

*405: Republic in Crisis: 146–46 BC

*406: Rome, Italy and Empire from Caesar to Claudius: 46 BC to AD 54

407: Athenian Democracy in the Classical Age

408: Alexander the Great and his Early Successors (336 BC -302 BC)

409: The Hellenistic World: Societies and Cultures c.300–100 BC

410: Cicero: Politics and Thought in the Late Republic

411: Politics, Society and Culture from Nero to Hadrian

412: Religions in the Greek and Roman World (c.31 BC – AD 312)

413: Sexuality and Gender in Greece and Rome

*414: The Conversion of Augustine

415: The Achaemenid Empire, 550-330 BC

C. Subjects in Philology and Linguistics

*551: Greek Historical Linguistics

*552: Latin Historical Linguistics

553: General Linguistics and Comparative Philology

554: Comparative Philology: Indo–European, Greek and Latin.

N.B. It is not certain whether paper 553 General Linguistics and Comparative Philology will be on offer to students sitting finals in 2026 or 2027. Some of its component parts have been integrated into the other Philology papers.

D. Subjects in Greek and Roman Archaeology

601: The Greeks and the Mediterranean World c.950 BC – 500 BC

602: Greek Art and Archaeology, c.500–300 BC

603: Hellenistic Art and Archaeology, 330-30 BC

604: Art under the Roman Empire, AD 14-337

605: Roman Archaeology: Cities and Settlement under the Empire

E. Subjects in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy

110: Aquinas

111: Duns Scotus, Ockham

115: Plato, *Republic* (in translation)

116: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (in translation)

*130: Plato, *Republic* (in Greek)

*131: Plato on Knowledge, Language, & Reality in the *Theaetetus* & *Sophist* (in Greek)

*132: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (in Greek)

*133: Aristotle on Nature, Life and Mind (in Greek)

*134: Knowledge and Scepticism in Hellenistic Philosophy (in Greek)

*135: Latin Philosophy (in Latin)

*136: Knowledge and Scepticism in Hellenistic Philosophy (in Latin)

- 137: Plato on Knowledge, Language, & Reality in the *Theaetetus* & *Sophist* (in translation)
138: Aristotle on Nature, Life and Mind (in translation)
139: Knowledge and Scepticism in Hellenistic Philosophy (in translation)

F. Other Subjects

- 566 & 568: Greek for Beginners ("Second Classical Language" in Literae Humaniores)
567 & 569: Latin for Beginners ("Second Classical Language" in Literae Humaniores)

Paper Descriptions

Descriptions of all of the above papers are available in the Greats Handbook, with the exception of:

541 Homer, *Iliad*: This paper will be as specified for the Homer, *Iliad* (IA/IC) paper in Honour Moderations in Classics. Please refer to the [Mods Handbook](#) for your academic year of examination for further details.

542 Virgil, *Aeneid*: This paper will be as specified for the Virgil, *Aeneid* (IA/IB) paper in Honour Moderations in Classics. Please refer to the [Mods Handbook](#) for your academic year of examination for further details.

581 The Latin Works of Petrarch, with special study of *Africa* (ed. N. Festa, Florence, 1926), Books I, II, V, VII, IX. Candidates will also be expected to have read *Vita Scipionis* (in *La vita di Scipione L'Africano*, ed. G. Martellotti, Milano-Napoli, 1954), and to show acquaintance with Petrarch's major Latin works, e.g. *Rerum memorandarum libri* (ed. G. Billanovich, Florence, 1945), *De Secretis conflictu curarum mearum*, *De Vita solitaria*, *Epistolae familiares* (in F. Petrarca, *Prose*, ed. G. Martellotti, P.G. Ricci, E. Carrara, E. Bianchi, Milano-Napoli, 1955). Petrarch was the major cultural and intellectual figure in mid-fourteenth century Italy, and his pioneering role in ushering in the new age of Humanism and the Renaissance made him famous throughout Europe. The works which articulated his new ideas and established his reputation were mostly in Latin (the vernacular poems of the *Canzoniere* and *Trionfi* represent only a small part of his output). Sensing more accurately than his predecessors the distance that separated his time from the classical past, he was the first writer to revive major classical genres such as epic (*Africa*), biography (*Vita Scipionis*), the dialogue (*Secretum*) and letter-writing (*Epistolae Familiares*). Petrarch's Latin works shed invaluable light on his views on history, morality, the role of the intellectual, literary creativity and imitation, as well as helping to understand more fully his vernacular poetry.

In the examination candidates will be required to comment, without translating, on one passage (from a choice of three, each of around 35 lines) from the prescribed books of the *Africa*, and to answer two essay questions (from a choice of about ten; the essay questions will cover all the prescribed works, including the *Africa*).

6. Theses in Classics and Special Theses

You may offer a Thesis in Classics as one of your main papers and also, as an optional extra subject, a Special Thesis in Classics, or in Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, or in a subject linking Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies. In the examination, any mark for a Special Thesis may, if it is to the candidate's advantage, be substituted for another, lower,

main mark, provided that the mark that is replaced is not lower than 30. The resulting combination of papers must conform to the rules concerning text-based papers (i.e. papers 130-6, 401-6, 414, 501-13, 515, 517-8, 524-5, 541-2, 551-2 and 581).

If you offer a thesis but are subsequently prevented e.g. by illness from sitting the examination and wish to submit the thesis for examination in the following year, you must resubmit the title in the usual way in the following year.

Thesis proposals (including a title and a 100-word outline) should be submitted on a form which is available in Canvas: <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/ba-classics-and-oriental-studies-overview>. The completed form should be emailed to undergraduate@classics.ox.ac.uk.

The deadline for applying for approval of a thesis topic is Wednesday of first week of the Michaelmas Term preceding your examination. However, you may wish to submit your thesis proposal during the first half of Trinity Term in your penultimate year in order to obtain early approval of your topic, enabling you to spend time in the long vacation reading widely and developing your ideas.

The word limit for theses is 10,000 words, excluding bibliography but including notes and appendices. In the case of a commentary on a text, any substantial quoting of that text need not be included in the word limit.

The deadline for submitting your thesis to the University's online exams platform, Inespera, is noon on Friday of 0th week of your final Trinity Term. Late submission will incur accumulating automatic penalties until two weeks after the submission deadline, at which point the examination will be considered as failed. The Proctors have indicated that under no circumstances will they accept computer problems or postal delays as a justification for late submission. (If you are prevented by good cause from submitting your thesis on time, consult your Senior Tutor immediately.)

Further guidance on writing and presenting theses is available in the Greats Handbook.

7. Teaching Provision

Information about the teaching provision for individual Classics papers may be found in the [Mods and Greats Handbooks](#).

Information about the teaching provision for individual papers in Asian and Middle Eastern languages may be found in the Asian & Middle Eastern Studies [Undergraduate Student Handbooks](#).

8. Examination Conventions

The Examination Conventions for students sitting the Honour School of Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies in 2026 or 2027 will be published at least one full term before your first submission deadline or written exam in the examination at:

<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/ba-classics-and-asian-&-middle-eastern-studies-overview>.

9. List of Faculty and Sub-Faculty Officers

This list gives the names of the various members of the Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies Faculties who are holding major administrative jobs as of October 2023, some of whom are referred to in this handbook.

Faculty of Classics

Chair: Dr Llewelyn Morgan (Brasenose)

Head of Administration: Mrs Hayley Merchant (Ioannou Centre, 66 St Giles')

Academic Administrative Officer: Mr Andrew Dixon (Ioannou Centre, 66 St Giles')

Sub-Faculty of Classical Languages and Literature

Chair: Professor Constanze Güthenke (Corpus Christi)

Secretary and Lecture-List Secretary: Professor Armand D'Angour (Jesus)

Sub-Faculty of Ancient History and Classical Archaeology

Chair: Professor Josephine Quinn (Worcester)

Secretary and Lecture-List Secretary: Professor Peter Thonemann (Wadham)

Faculty of Asian & Middle Eastern Studies

Chair of the Faculty Board: Professor David Rechter (Brasenose)

Director of Undergraduate Studies: Professor Adriana Jacobs

Senior Academic Administrator: Mr Edmund Howard

Head of Administration: Mr Thomas Hall

Chair of Standing Committee for Classics and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies

Professor Constanze Güthenke (Corpus Christi)

Harassment Officers

Classics: Dr Laura Swift (Magdalen); Dr Ed Bispham (Brasenose)

Asian & Middle Eastern Studies: Professor Zeynep Yürekli (Wolfson)

Librarians

Classics (for Bodleian and AA&AW Libraries): Dr Charlotte Goodall

Asian & Middle Eastern Studies: Ms Lydia Wright

Contact details for academic staff may be found at www.classics.ox.ac.uk/faculty/directory and <https://www.ames.ox.ac.uk/article/our-staff>. Email addresses and telephone numbers for the whole University are available at www.ox.ac.uk/contact.

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The Faculty of Classics
Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies
66 St Giles'
Oxford
OX1 3LU
Email: undergraduate@classics.ox.ac.uk