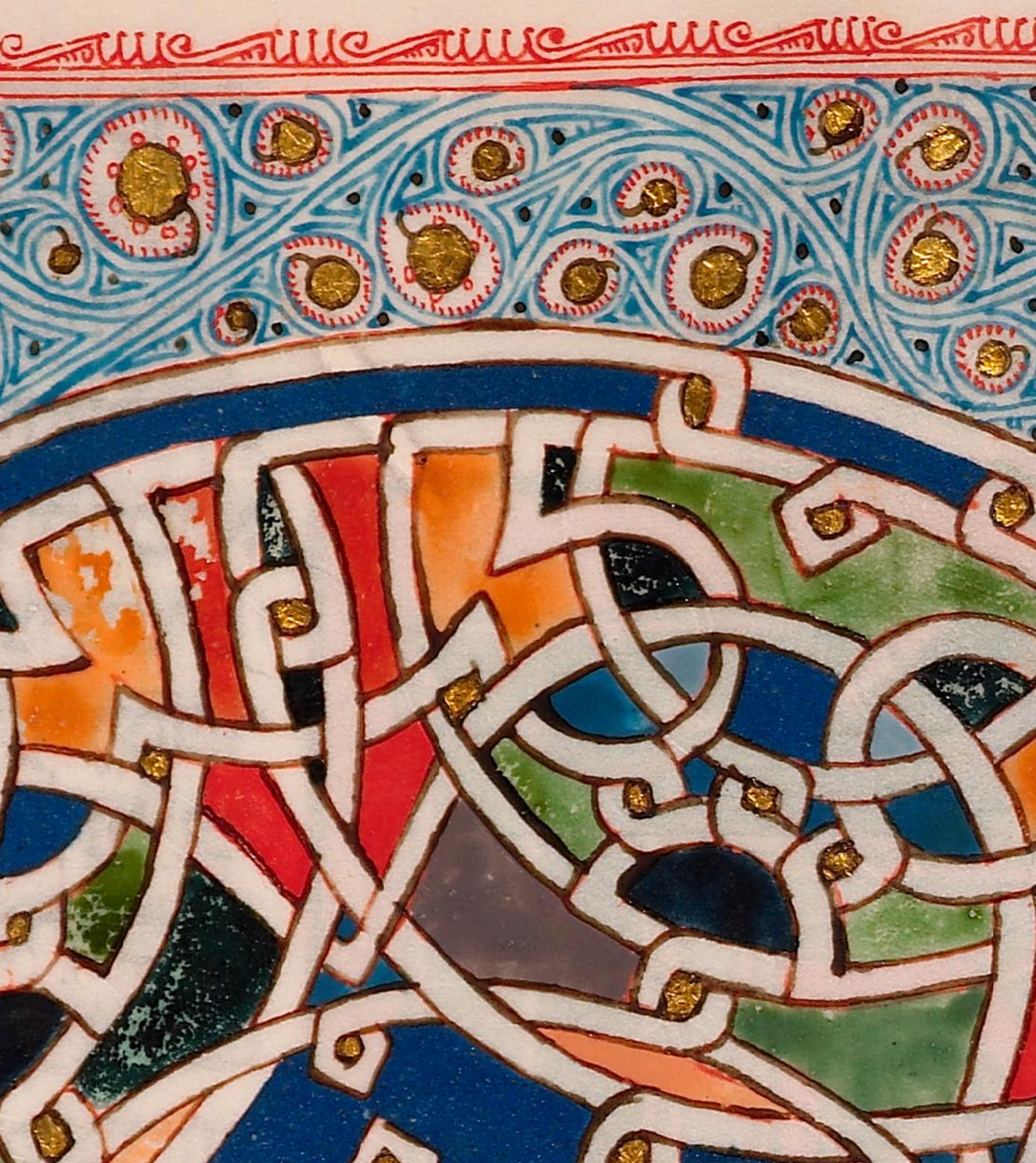




MPhil Eastern Christian Studies
Course Handbook
Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
University of Oxford
Academic Year 2025-26 v.1

FACULTY OF
**ASIAN AND
MIDDLE
EASTERN
STUDIES**



Master of Philosophy in Eastern Christian Studies

Course Handbook

Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Course Directors –Prof. [David G. K. Taylor](#)

THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook applies to students starting the course in Michaelmas Term 2025. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

The information in this handbook is accurate as at Michaelmas Term 2025; 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 faculty will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.

The handbook sets out the basic framework for the MPhil Eastern Christian Studies, and what to do should you encounter delays, setbacks, or need to make changes. It provides basic advice about writing your thesis and submitting it for examination.

The Examination Regulations relating to this course are available here: [Degrees of Master of Philosophy in the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)

You should consult the current edition of the Examination Regulations for information regarding your course. The information in this handbook should be read in conjunction with:

- the Examination Conventions and Rubrics;
- the Examination Regulations;
- the [University Student Handbook](#)
- your college handbook.

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, [Edmund Howard](#).

Comments and criticism of the handbook are always welcome; they should be sent to the Director of Graduate Studies ([Jim Mallinson](#)) or the Senior Academic Administrator.

STUDENT HUB

The Student Hub is an ongoing project to provide a live online version of the handbook. Please check the information on the Student Hub in conjunction with this handbook as it provides you with additional important information covering:

- Support and Welfare
- Student Representation and feedback
- Examinations and Assessment information including forms and exam conventions
- Graduate Supervision (GSR)

- Graduate teaching opportunities and PLTO
- Research Ethics and CUREC approval
- Financial Support
- Support for unexpected circumstances, including applying for suspensions, extensions
- Researcher training and development

You can also access the Student Hub through the 'Student Hub' button on the top bar of the Faculty Website. You may need to log in using your SSO details.

Version history

1	October 2025	Original publication
---	--------------	----------------------

Contents

THIS HANDBOOK	1
STUDENT HUB	1
Version history	2
INTRODUCTION TO THE MPhil EASTERN CHRISTIAN STUDIES	5
Introduction.....	5
Course Content.....	6
A. Greek (Patristic and Byzantine)	6
B. Armenian with Greek	6
C. Syriac with Greek.....	7
Teaching	7
Financial aid.....	7
Teaching Staff.....	7
Academic and Academic Administration Staff.....	8
EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE	8
Important dates and deadlines	8
Thesis	8
Approval of Thesis Subject/Title	8
Requesting a change	8
Word Limits.....	9
General Guidelines for Thesis Writers.....	9
EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE	9
Examination Regulations.....	9
Examination Conventions and Rubrics.....	9
Examination Entry, In-person and Online Examinations	10
Entering for your exams	10
Timetable	10
In-person Examinations	10
Online Examinations.....	11
Candidate number	11
Submissions via Inspira	11
Problems Completing Your Examinations and Assessments	11

Mitigating circumstances notices to examiners (MCE)	11
Vivas and Resits	12
Infringements for Examinations and Submitted Assessments	12
Examiners' Reports and Previous Exam Papers	12
GOOD ACADEMIC PRACTICE AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM	12
Plagiarism	12
EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	13
WELFARE AND SUPPORT	13
COMPLAINTS AND ACADEMIC APPEALS WITHIN THE FACULTY OF ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES	14
Complaints	14
Academic appeals	14
PROGRAMME AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR MPhil COURSES OF STUDY AT ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES	15
Educational Aims of the Programme	15
Assessment	16
Programme Outcomes	16
A. Knowledge and understanding	16
Related Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies	16
B. Skills and other attributes	16
1. Intellectual Skills	16
Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies	17
Assessment	17
2. Practical Skills	17
3. Transferable Skills	17
Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies/Assessment	17

INTRODUCTION TO THE MPhil EASTERN CHRISTIAN STUDIES

Introduction

The M.Phil. in Eastern Christian Studies is a two-year degree which is intended to give students experience in reading and interpreting a wide range of Eastern Christian texts in one of three options; A. Greek; *or* B. Armenian with Greek; *or* C. Syriac with Greek. All students also prepare a 30,000 word thesis. This degree can be a stand-alone qualification or preparation for doctoral research.

Christianity was formed and defined its core beliefs among the Greek, Syriac, Coptic, and Armenian speaking peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean, amongst whom there was great cultural and intellectual exchange – although this is often obscured as a consequence of subsequent doctrinal disputes and by narrow academic specialisations. This degree enables students to gain a broad understanding of the history of the Eastern Churches and of doctrinal development within them, up to AD 717, as well as a detailed reading knowledge of texts produced by ecclesiastical writers in Greek, or Armenian, or Syriac, and to produce a thesis on a more focussed subject within the field.

Armenia lies at the cross-roads of the Near East. To the west were the great empires of the eastern Mediterranean (Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman), to the east those of Iran (Achaemenian, Sasanian, Safavid). A distinct Armenian people is attested from the sixth century BC; and with their conversion to Christianity at the beginning of the fourth century of our era the Armenians developed their own native literature. Armenians are thus heirs to many different cultures, and in their turn have made an individual contribution to numerous societies.

Syriac was the local Aramaic dialect of Edessa (modern Urfa, SE Turkey) which became the literary language of Aramaic-speaking Christians in the eastern Roman Empire and the Persian Empire, and spread with them from the Caucasus to Arabia and India, and from Syria to China, and is still spoken in classical and modern forms today. Syriac-speaking authors produced a rich variety of historical and theological texts, a selection of which can be read as part of this degree. Ecclesiastical and Byzantine Greek has been taught in Oxford almost since the foundation of the University, Syriac began to be taught in the 1570s, and Armenian from the mid-nineteenth century, with a full chair of Armenian (the only one in the UK) being endowed as the Calouste Gulbenkian Professorship in 1965.

Oxford University is a world-leader in the study of the history and culture of the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East, and the Caucasus, from the beginnings of civilization down to the present day. Within the faculties of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Classics, History, Theology, and Philosophy it has unparalleled numbers of scholars and research students working on the region, and bringing with them an extraordinary range of disciplines. This research has been further boosted in recent years by the founding of the Oxford Centre for Late Antiquity, the Khalili Research Centre for the Art and Material Culture of the Middle East, and the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies. It has excellent library holdings of original manuscripts and secondary literature in all of the ancient and modern languages of the region, including those of the Oriental Christian

populations, as well as in all major related disciplines. Further large manuscript collections are within easy reach in the British Library.

Course Content

Before arrival in Oxford students must choose to study for papers in **ONE** of the three following options:

- A. Greek (Patristic and Byzantine);
- B. Armenian with Greek;
- C. Syriac with Greek.

ALL STUDENTS prepare a thesis of not more than 30,000 words on a subject approved by the Faculty Board, to be submitted not later than noon on the Thursday of the second week of Trinity Term in the second year. Applications for approval of the thesis subject must reach the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, Monday Week 0 of Hilary Term in the second year of the course.

ALL STUDENTS also prepare for a written examination on the development of doctrine and the history of the Church in the Christian East to AD 717, to be sat in Trinity Term of the second year.

ALL STUDENTS prepare for THREE further written examinations (to be sat in Trinity Term of the second year) which involve intensive study of texts in the original languages, with choices dependent upon the language option taken (A., B., or C), as follows. (Texts are agreed with candidates at the beginning of the academic year, and a list of these can be obtained from the course director).

A. Greek (Patristic and Byzantine) - not currently offered

Students who opt for A. Greek, must choose THREE papers from the following options:

1. The philosophical background of the Greek Fathers.
2. The history of the Church in the Byzantine Empire, AD 717-886.
3. Byzantine ecclesiastical texts.

0. and 5. subject to the approval of the Faculty Board, (a) a different period of Greek church history to replace Paper 2; (b) a different selection of texts to replace Paper 3.

B. Armenian with Greek

Students who opt for B. Armenian with Greek, take the THREE following papers:

1. Armenian historical texts.
2. Armenian theological and ecclesiastical texts.
3. A translation paper from Greek ecclesiastical texts.

Papers (1) and (2) will include passages for translation and comment as well as general questions relating to the set texts.

Note. Candidates with sufficient knowledge of Greek may offer Paper A (1) in place of Paper B (3).

C. Syriac with Greek

Students who opt for C. Syriac with Greek, take the THREE following papers:

1. Syriac historical texts.
2. Syriac theological texts.
3. A translation paper from Greek ecclesiastical texts (= B.3).

Papers (1) and (2) will include passages for translation and comment as well as general questions relating to the set texts.

Note. Candidates with sufficient knowledge of Greek may offer Paper A (1) in place of Paper C (3).

TEACHING FOR THE M.PHIL. IN EASTERN CHRISTIAN STUDIES MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN EVERY YEAR. APPLICANTS FOR ADMISSION WILL BE ADVISED OF THIS.

Teaching

In the first year teaching takes the form of (a) text-classes (usually 5 hours per week), for which students are expected to prepare; (b) seminars (usually one and a half hours per week): students are expected to prepare oral or written presentations on specified topics; and (c) lectures on the general background of Eastern Christian history and literature (normally one hour per week in Michaelmas term). The Greek set texts for papers B.3 / C.3 are normally left to the student to work through independently (though help will be given where required). In the second year students research and write their thesis (no more than 30,000 words, on a subject approved by the Faculty Board) with the help of regular supervision meetings with a research supervisor. The Theology Faculty provides open lectures on patristic theology in Michaelmas and Hilary terms, and there are also graduate research seminars with papers by invited speakers in related fields (Patristics, Byzantine Studies, Armenian, Eastern Christian Studies), which students are encouraged to attend.

Financial aid

The Nubar Pasha Fund can make small research grants to support Armenian research at Oxford. The Dolabani Fund can make small grants to students of Syriac from communities of Syriac or Assyrian origin, or Syriac ecclesiastical tradition. Neither of these funds are able to make grants sufficient to cover either fees or living costs.

Teaching Staff

- Prof. [Theo Maarten van Lint](#) - Calouste Gulbenkian Professor of Armenian Studies
- Prof. [David G.K. Taylor](#) - Associate Professor of Aramaic and Syriac

Academic and Academic Administration Staff

- [Jim Mallinson](#) – Director of Graduate Studies (except Trinity Term 2025, when the role will be filled by [Dominic Brookshaw](#))
- [Henrietta Harrison](#) – Faculty Board Chair
- [Thomas Hall](#) – Head of Administration and Finance
- [Edmund Howard](#) – Senior Academic Administrator
- [Xiaobo Wang](#) – Academic Administrator (Examinations)
- [Jane Kruz](#) – Academic Administrator (Graduate Studies)

EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Year 1

There will be no qualifying examination at the end of the first year.

Year 2

You will sit four three-hour written examination papers towards the end of the third term, Trinity Term; plus submit a thesis of not more than 30,000 words on a subject approved by the Faculty Board.

The use of Greek, Armenian, or Syriac dictionaries will not be permitted during these examinations.

Important dates and deadlines

When			What	
Year 2	Hilary Term	Week 0, Monday	Submit your approval of thesis subject/ title form.	The online form can be found here .
Year 2	Trinity Term	Week 2, Thursday, 12 noon	Thesis submission. Word limit: not more than 30,000.	Submission via Inspira.
Year 2	Trinity Term		Final examinations.	Written examination.

Thesis

Approval of Thesis Subject/Title

Departure from approved titles or subject matter will be penalised. The penalty applied will increase the greater the departure from the approved title or subject matter is.

Requesting a change

After your thesis subject/title is approved there may need to be changes made before submitting. These should be done in consultation with your supervisor and a request to change your thesis title should be emailed to [Exams Administration team](#), with your supervisor copied in for approval. **Changes cannot be made once your thesis is submitted.**

Examination-related forms, including thesis approval forms, are available on the Faculty webpage [here](#).

Word Limits

Your submissions should not exceed the word limit given in your Examination Regulations and rubrics. The word count includes text and footnotes/endnotes but excludes appendices and bibliography.

General Guidelines for Thesis Writers

Further guidance and more information about formatting can be found in the [General Guidelines for Thesis Writers](#). Examples of MPhil and MSt/MSc theses are available on the 'Exams and Assessment Information' site on [Canvas](#) or from the Weston Library and can be searched on [SOLO](#) (Search Oxford Libraries Online). Some theses awarded a distinction are eligible to be deposited to the Bodleian Library. Please check the Bodleian's information [here](#) to help you search for an Oxford thesis. Some theses awarded a distinction are eligible to be deposited to the Bodleian, and should your thesis be eligible, you will be contacted regarding the procedure after your results are released.

EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

Examination Regulations

Examination Regulations are the immutable framework of study and assessment of University degrees to which students must adhere. The regulations for the MPhil Eastern Christian Studies can be found [here](#).

Examination Conventions and Rubrics

These are the formal record and explanation of the specific assessment standards for the course or courses to which they apply. They set out how your examined work will be marked and how the resulting marks will be used to arrive at a final result and classification of an award. They are approved and published by the Faculty each year and include information on:

Conventions

- Marking conventions and scaling
- Verification and reconciliation of marks
- Qualitative marking criteria for different types of assessment
- Penalties for late or non-submission; for over-length work and departure from approved title/subject matter; for poor academic practice; for non-attendance
- Progression rules and classification conventions
- Use of viva voce examinations
- Re-sits
- Consideration of mitigating circumstances
- Details of examiners and rules on communicating with examiners

Rubrics

- type and structure of examination (e.g. in-person or online examination)
- submission instructions
- weightings of paper
- time allowed
- instructions on the use of dictionaries and other materials
- instructions on the use of different scripts
- instructions on word limits
- instructions on handwriting

The conventions and rubrics will be published on the '[Graduate \(Taught\) Examinations and Assessment](#)' page on the Student Hub not less than one whole term before your examination takes place or, where assessment takes place in the first term of a course, at the beginning of that term.

You should take careful note of the dates for submission of essays and theses laid down in the Examination Regulations, course handbook, setting conventions, or rubrics. It is the candidate's responsibility to comply with these dates. The University Proctors, who have overall control of examinations, will not give leave for work to be submitted late except for cases of exceptional circumstances.

If there is any discrepancy in information, you should always follow the Examination Regulations and please contact the [Exams Administration team](#).

Examination Entry, In-person and Online Examinations

Entering for your exams

You will be invited by email to enter for your examinations when the examination entry window opens. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are entered for the correct number of papers and correct options, but you can speak to your college's academic office or the [Exams Administration team](#) if you are unsure about what these are. Please refer to the Oxford Students website for full examination entry and alternative examination arrangements (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/examination-entry>).

Timetable

Your personal timetable showing your papers and the dates, times and location at which they will take place will be published online at least two weeks before your first examination. If you have not received your timetable, or discover any problems such as a clash of papers, contact your college as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to ensure that you sit the correct examination and misreading of information will not be considered an acceptable reason for non-attendance.

In-person Examinations

Practical information and support for sitting in-person exams is provided on the Oxford students website (<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance>). The majority of in-person examinations take place at either the Examination Schools or Ewert House.

Online Examinations

Online exams are taken in Inspira. You must familiarise yourself with the system prior to taking an online exam. There are a wide range of resources to help you on the Oxford Students website, including expectations regarding standards of behaviour and good academic practice for online open-book exams(<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/online-exams>).

Online exams require you to adhere to the University's Honour Code (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/open-book/honour-code) and you should read this in advance of any online exams.

Candidate number

A candidate number is created for examinations to ensure anonymity, and you'll find your candidate number on the Examination and Assessment Information page in Student Self Service or by looking on the top of your individual timetable.

Your candidate number is not your student number.

Do not put your name or student number anywhere on your submissions or written exams.

Submissions via Inspira

Submissions are via the University's online assessment platform, [Inspira](#). Ensure you are familiar with the online submission process in advance of any deadline. Full information is provided on the Oxford students website (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/submission).

An Inspira link and information will be sent by the [Exams Administration team](#) prior to the submission deadline.

Problems Completing Your Examinations and Assessments

There are a number of University processes in place to help you if you find that illness or other personal circumstances are affecting your assessments or if you experience technical difficulties with an online exam or submission. Full information is available on the Oxford students website (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/problems-completing-your-assessment).

If you experience unexpected circumstances that may affect your performance, you must discuss your circumstances with your College first as any application to the Proctors will come from them. They can advise on the best course of action for your circumstances.

Mitigating circumstances notices to examiners (MCE)

The form is designed so that you can make the Board of Examiners aware of any problems that occurred before or during your exams, or in relation to your submitted coursework, that seriously affected your performance. For further information about mitigating circumstances, please refer to the rubrics and to the [Oxford students website](#).

Vivas and Resits

You may be required to attend a viva voce examination after you have completed your written examinations. This is to enable your examiners to clarify any matters in your answers, and it gives you the opportunity to improve upon your performance, should that be necessary.

Information about when resits take place can be found in your Examination Conventions and you enter for resits in the same way as the first attempt. Please contact your College with any questions about your resits.

When making any travel arrangements for the post-exam period, it is your responsibility to bear in mind attendance at the viva and when resits may take place.

Infringements for Examinations and Submitted Assessments

Please refer to the examination conventions for penalties for infringements of word limit, late submission, plagiarism and non-adherence to rubrics.

Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies students should note that interpretation of the electronic word count is at the discretion of the Examiners, in view of the fact that most languages taught in the Faculty are not written in alphabetic scripts and the electronic word count may not be as accurate when taking these scripts into account.

Examiners' Reports and Previous Exam Papers

Examiners' reports from past exams are normally available from Hilary Term and will be uploaded to the '[Graduate \(Taught\) Examinations and Assessment](#)' page on the Student Hub. These reports give you an idea of how the exams were conducted and the performance of the cohort. Due to small class sizes for some degrees, it is not always possible to provide Examiners' reports for them. In these cases, please consult with your Course Director for some feedback.

Previous examination papers can be viewed on [Search Oxford Libraries Online \(SOLO\)](#), the online catalogue platform provided by the Bodleian Libraries.

GOOD ACADEMIC PRACTICE AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism

The University's definition of plagiarism is:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition. Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence.

It is important that you take time to look at the University's guidance on plagiarism here: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism>.

You should refer to the University's guidance on referencing (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/referencing>). If, after having done so, you are still unsure how to reference your work properly, you should contact your supervisor for guidance.

The University employs software applications to monitor and detect plagiarism in submitted examination work, both in terms of copying and collusion. It regularly monitors online essay banks, essay-writing services, and other potential sources of material.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

In accordance with our [Statement of Values](#), the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies is committed to creating a teaching, learning, and research environment in which every member of our community – at every academic level from undergraduate to senior academic, and among library and administrative staff – can achieve their full professional potential without discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender, marriage or civil partnership, nationality, pregnancy or parenthood, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

We welcome suggestions for making our courses more diverse and inclusive. In general, you are encouraged to tell us if you see any ways in which the courses or this handbook might be improved. Staff and students are welcome to contact the Equality and Diversity team with any suggestions or concerns:

Inner and South Asia Group Equality and Diversity Representative: [Zoe Waxman](#)

Faculty Equality and Diversity Officer: [Dominic Brookshaw](#)

WELFARE AND SUPPORT

Our community aims to encourage and support all students. The student experience at Oxford offers lots of opportunities for you to thrive, grow, and look after your own wellbeing, but we know that sometimes there can be stresses and challenges too.

We want to give you the agency to navigate welfare support, and to make your own decisions. This includes by:

- Keeping in touch with your College and Department, and letting them know if you need help
- Seeking support when needed
- Supporting your fellow students
- Registering with Disability Advisory Service for structured support if you have a disability

Should you have any concerns, or for guidance and support, please do not hesitate to contact the following people:

Disability Coordinators: [Thomas Hall](#) and [Edmund Howard](#)

Welfare Contact: [Edmund Howard](#)

Harassment Officers: [Leyla Najafzada](#) and [Laurence Mann](#)

Details of the range of sources of support available in the University are available from the [Oxford Students](#) website, including in relation to mental and physical health and disability.

COMPLAINTS AND ACADEMIC APPEALS WITHIN THE FACULTY OF ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

The University, Humanities Division, and the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies all hope that provision made for students at all stages of their course of study will make the need for complaints (about that provision) or appeals (against the outcomes of any form of assessment) infrequent.

Where such a need arises, an informal discussion with the person immediately responsible for the issue that you wish to complain about (and who may not be one of the individuals identified below) is often the simplest way to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

Many sources of advice are available from colleges, faculties/departments and bodies like the Counselling Service or the Oxford SU Student Advice Service, which have extensive experience in advising students. You may wish to take advice from one of those sources before pursuing your complaint.

General areas of concern about provision affecting students as a whole should be raised through Joint Consultative Committees or via student representation on the faculty/department's committees.

Complaints

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by the faculty/department, then you should raise it with the Director of Graduate Studies as appropriate.

Complaints about departmental facilities should be made to the Departmental administrator ([Trudi Pinkerton](#)). If you feel unable to approach one of those individuals, you may contact the Head of Administrator or the Faculty Board Chair. The officer concerned will attempt to resolve your concern/complaint informally.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may take your concern further by making a formal complaint to the Proctors under the University Student Complaints Procedure (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>).

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by your college, you should raise it either with your tutor or with one of the college officers, Senior Tutor, Tutor for Graduates (as appropriate). Your college will also be able to explain how to take your complaint further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of its consideration.

Academic appeals

An academic appeal is an appeal against the decision of an academic body (e.g. boards of examiners, transfer and confirmation decisions etc.), on grounds such as procedural error or evidence of bias. There is no right of appeal against academic judgement.

If you have any concerns about your assessment process or outcome it is advisable to discuss these first informally with your subject or college tutor, Senior Tutor, course director, director of studies, supervisor or college or departmental administrator as appropriate. They will be able to explain the assessment process that was undertaken and may be able to address your concerns. Queries must not be raised directly with the examiners.

If you still have concerns you can make a formal appeal to the Proctors who will consider appeals under the University Academic Appeals Procedure (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>).

PROGRAMME AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR MPhil COURSES OF STUDY AT ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

The MPhil is a degree awarded on the successful completion of a course of directed study leading to an examination, which is normally taken after two years; as part of their coursework students normally also submit a thesis, the regulations for which are specified under individual subject headings in the Examination Regulations.

In addition to this the Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Board is jointly responsible for the MPhil in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies (with options in Arabic, Armenian and Syriac) and for the MPhil in Judaism and Christianity in the Graeco-Roman World. The MPhil is at the FHEQ level 7.

Students enter for the MPhil Qualifying and Final examinations through their College. Students who wish to defer taking the examination beyond the two years must apply for permission to the Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Board.

The MPhil is available in the following subjects:

- Buddhist Studies
- Classical Indian Religion
- Cuneiform Studies
- Eastern Christian Studies
- Egyptology
- Islamic Art and Architecture
- Islamic Studies and History
- Jewish Studies
- Jewish Studies in the Graeco-Roman Period
- Modern Middle Eastern Studies
- Tibetan and Himalayan Studies
- Traditional East Asia

Educational Aims of the Programme

The programme aims to enable its students to:

- Develop the practice of analytical enquiry;
- Achieve a high level of competence in a relevant language where a study of language is part of the course;

- Achieve a good level of competence in the textual and historical analysis of texts in the relevant language;
- Gain a wide-ranging critical knowledge of relevant secondary literature and of current developments in the field;
- Reflect on relevant issues of method;
- Develop skills in written and oral communication, including sustained argument, independent thought and lucid structure and content;
- Develop the ability to identify, understand and apply key concepts and principles
- Where appropriate, prepare students for further research in the field.

Assessment

Formative assessment is provided by tutorial feedback and interaction with the Supervisor and/or tutor, by the discussion of prepared class-work, and by the Supervisor's termly report, which is discussed with the student in the Faculty and separately in the College

Summative assessment is provided at the end of the course by written examinations, submitted essays, portfolio, a thesis and *viva voce*, depending on the course.

Programme Outcomes

A. Knowledge and understanding

On completion of the course students will have:

- Acquired relevant linguistic and textual knowledge;
- Acquired some specialist knowledge of relevant primary and secondary literature;
- Gained enhanced understanding of how primary evidence is employed in philological, textual, historical and literary analysis and argument.

Related Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies

The main learning strategy is that a student should practise the relevant skills under close supervision, receive constant feedback, and have the chance to see the same skills practised by acknowledged experts in a manner which can be emulated. The methods used to achieve this aim include:

- Language and/or text-reading classes, for which students are expected to prepare
- Lectures
- Seminars with peers and senior academics
- Tutorials (individual) for which students prepare a substantial piece of written work for discussion with their tutor(s)
- Museum classes (small-group), held in the Ashmolean Museum and designed around object handling – for Egyptology

B. Skills and other attributes

1. Intellectual Skills

The ability to:

- Exercise critical judgement and undertake sophisticated analysis
- Argue clearly, relevantly and persuasively
- Approach problems with creativity and imagination
- Develop the exercise of independence of mind, and a readiness to challenge and criticize accepted opinion

Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies

As above.

Assessment

As above.

2. Practical Skills

All practical skills acquired are also transferable skills; see below.

3. Transferable Skills

The ability to:

- Find information, organise and deploy it;
- Use such information critically and analytically;
- Consider and solve complex problems with sensitivity to alternative traditions;
- Work well independently, with a strong sense of self-direction, but also with the ability to work constructively in co-operation with others;
- Effectively structure and communicate ideas in a variety of written and oral formats;
- Plan and organise the use of time effectively, and be able to work under pressure to deadlines;
- Make appropriate use of language skills;
- handwrite in non-Roman script.

Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies/Assessment

Since all these skills are essential elements of the course, they are taught and assessed in the same ways as at A above.