



**MPhil Tibetan & Himalayan Studies**  
**Course Handbook**  
**Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies**  
**University of Oxford**  
Academic Year 2023-24 v.4

FACULTY OF  
**ASIAN AND  
MIDDLE  
EASTERN  
STUDIES**



UNIVERSITY OF  
**OXFORD**



# Master of Philosophy in Tibetan & Himalayan Studies

## Course Handbook

Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Academic Year 2023-24 v.4

Course Director – Professor [Ulrike Roesler](#)

### THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook applies to students starting the course in Michaelmas Term 2023. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

The information in this handbook is accurate as at Hilary Term 2024; 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 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 Tibetan & Himalayan 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: [2023-24, 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 Faculty's general Masters handbook;
- 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 ([Margaret Hillenbrand](#)) or the Senior Academic Administrator.

### Version history

1	September 2023	Original publication
2	February 2024	Updates to formatting, web links and student support information
3	October 2024	Updated location of examiners' reports and previous exam papers.

4	June 2025	General Guidelines for Thesis Writers link updated
---	-----------	--

## Contents

THIS HANDBOOK .....	1
Version history.....	1
INTRODUCTION TO THE MPhil IN TIBETAN & HIMALAYAN STUDIES .....	5
Outline .....	5
Year 1.....	5
Year 2.....	6
Theses.....	7
Teaching Staff.....	8
Examination and Assessment Structure .....	8
Important dates and deadlines .....	8
Thesis.....	9
Approval of Thesis Subject/Title .....	9
Word Limits.....	9
General Guidelines for Thesis Writers.....	9
Language Learning and Competency Standards .....	9
EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE.....	9
Examination Regulations.....	9
Examination Conventions and Rubrics.....	10
Examination Entry, In-person and Online Examinations .....	10
In-person Examinations .....	11
Online Examinations.....	11
Candidate number .....	11
Submissions via Inspira .....	11
Problems Completing Your Assessments.....	11
Mitigating circumstances notices to examiners (MCE) .....	11
Vivas and Resits .....	12
Infringements for Examinations and Submitted Assessments .....	12
Feedback on Learning and Assessment .....	12
Informal (Formative) Assessment .....	12
Formal (Summative) Assessment .....	12
Examiners' Reports and Previous Exam Papers (OXAM) .....	12
Good Academic Practice and Avoiding Plagiarism.....	13

Plagiarism.....	13
COMPLAINTS AND ACADEMIC APPEALS WITHIN THE FACULTY OF ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES .....	13
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 .....	16
Assessment.....	16
2. Practical Skills.....	17
3. Transferable Skills.....	17
Teaching/Learning Methods and Strategies/Assessment.....	17
STUDENT INFORMATION AND SUPPORT.....	17
Student Hub .....	17
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion .....	17
Welfare and Support .....	18

## INTRODUCTION TO THE MPhil IN TIBETAN & HIMALAYAN STUDIES

### Outline

This programme introduces Tibetan and Himalayan Studies to students who have not previously studied the subject. Emphasis is on teaching the Tibetan language (both spoken and literary). In addition to language classes and readings of original Tibetan texts, the course comprises lectures and tutorials in which students acquire a solid background in various aspects of Tibetan and Himalayan studies, including history, society, literature, and religions.

Throughout the course, attendance at occasional guest lectures and weekly presentations by graduate students of Tibetan Studies is strongly recommended. Students are also encouraged to attend other relevant events, such as the Faculty's methodology seminars, and guest lectures in Buddhist studies. These and other events will be announced in a weekly email by the course coordinator.

As a general guideline, students can expect to attend 5 hours of language and text classes, 2 hours of lectures, 1.5 hours of graduate seminars, as well as 1-hour tutorials as scheduled by the course director, with some variation according to the term and the stage in the course, and on how much language has already been acquired.

### Year 1

In Michaelmas Term, students will attend 5 hours of Tibetan language classes per week. The teaching will be based primarily on Nicolas Tournadre and Sangda Dorje's *Manual of Standard Tibetan* (Ithaca, Snow Lion Publications, 2003). It is expected that, within the first week, students will have grasped the essential features of Tibetan phonology, and learned the alphabet and the principles of syllable structure. The remaining weeks of term will cover lessons 1 to 10 of the *Manual*. Homework will consist of completing the grammar exercises that follow each lesson. There will also be a brief vocabulary and grammar test each week. Students will also be expected to read a number of English-language works by way of general background to the region, and to attend a series of weekly lectures on "Introduction to Tibetan History and Civilisation". They will also be encouraged to attend a series of introductory lectures on Buddhism. In consultation with their course director, students will write two tutorial essays this term, based on prescribed readings. Submission of the essay will be followed by a tutorial which involves discussing the sources, the content, and the arguments made in the essays.

Average contact hours per week (subject to adjustments):

<b>Paper 1</b> 5 hours language classes	<b>Paper 4</b> 1 hour Tibetan Studies lecture; 1 hour lecture on Buddhism; 1.5 hours graduate seminar; 0.5 hours tutorial
--	--

At the beginning of Hilary Term, students will have a 1-hour collection (minor examination) to ensure that the lessons from Michaelmas Term have been retained. Collections will be

held at the beginning of every term hereafter. Language classes will continue as before, with the aim of completing lessons 11-15 of the *Manual*. In addition, students will read a number of short pieces or stories from different sources in modern and/or classical Tibetan. Students will also do exercises in spoken Tibetan with the Tibetan language lecturer. In addition to language classes, students will be expected to attend a weekly lecture on a selected topic of Tibetan culture, such as “The Literary Heritage of Tibet” or “Religions of Tibet”. Students are encouraged to attend further lectures on Buddhism. In consultation with their course director, students will be asked to write two tutorial essays this term.

Average contact hours per week (subject to adjustments):

<b>Paper 1</b> 5 hours language classes	<b>Paper 4</b> 1 hour Tibetan Studies lecture; 1 hour Buddhism lecture; 1.5 hours graduate seminar; 0.5 hours tutorial
--	---

In Trinity Term, the focus will be on essay writing. Four essays will be written on selected aspects of Tibetan history and civilisation. Alongside essays, students will continue work on the *Manual* up to lesson 20. Extracts from a range of texts will be read and knowledge of literary Tibetan grammar further developed. Students should start thinking about the topic of their MPhil thesis this term and discuss their ideas with their supervisor.

At the end of Trinity term, students will sit a three-hour written Qualifying Exam, which will consist of translation from and into Tibetan, as well as translation from the texts read during this and the previous term. They will also attend a 20-minute oral exam in which they will be called upon to introduce themselves and answer questions in spoken Tibetan.

If possible, the long summer vacation should be used to visit Tibetan-speaking communities (either in Tibet or in South Asia), and/or to attend a Tibetan language summer school to develop the language skills. The Faculty offers a grant of up to £500 towards the costs of Tibetan summer schools (claimed via the ‘Graduate language study application form’, [here](#)). Students should begin collecting materials for their thesis, including primary and secondary sources. An extended essay of max. 5,000 words will be due at the end of the summer vacations. This essay will be marked and will count towards the final examination.

Average contact hours per week (subject to adjustments):

<b>Paper 1</b> 5 hours language classes	<b>Paper 4</b> 1 hour tutorial; 1.5 hours graduate seminar
--	---

## Year 2

At the beginning of Michaelmas Term, there will be a 1-hour collection based on lessons 1-20 of the *Manual*. Chapters 21-25 will be covered during the course of the term. Students will read both classical and modern set texts in class. Tutorials will be held as required. The title of the thesis should to be decided and work on the thesis should begin.

Average contact hours per week (subject to adjustments):

<b>Paper 1</b> 2 hours language classes	<b>Paper 2</b> 1.5 hours classical set texts	<b>Paper 3</b> 1.5 hours modern set texts	<b>Paper 4</b> 1.5 hours graduate seminar
---	--	---	--

In Hilary Term, chapters 26-30 of the *Manual* will be covered. Language training and the reading of the classical and modern set texts will continue. Students should attend the lecture series this term, which will be on topics such as “Religions of Tibet” or “The Tibetan Literary Heritage” and complement the lectures attended in year 1. The title of the thesis will be submitted in 0<sup>th</sup> week for approval, and work on the thesis will continue throughout this term and during the spring break.

Average contact hours per week (subject to adjustments):

<b>Paper 1</b> 2 hours language classes	<b>Paper 2</b> 1.5 hours classical set texts	<b>Paper 3</b> 1.5 hours modern set texts	<b>Paper 4</b> 1.5 hours graduate seminar
---	--	---	--

In Trinity Term, revision sessions for chapters 1-30 of the *Manual* will be held, and the set texts and essay topics reviewed. Excerpts from a variety of texts will be read as practice for translating unseen text passages. More time will be devoted in this term to developing conversational skills. MPhil theses are to be submitted by Thursday of 2<sup>nd</sup> Week.

Average contact hours per week (subject to adjustments):

<b>Paper 1</b> Language revision as needed	<b>Paper 2 and 3</b> Text revision as needed	<b>Paper 4</b> Tutorial revision as needed
--	---	---

Written examinations will be held at the end of this term. They consist of the following 3 hour papers:

1. Tibetan language and grammar
2. Classical Tibetan prepared translation
3. Modern Tibetan prepared translation
4. History and civilisation of Tibet and the Himalayas

## Theses

The MPhil Thesis constitutes the individual research portion of the MPhil degree. In consultation with the course director, the thesis can be on any subject related to history, culture, language, or contemporary society in the Tibetan and Himalayan region. The research must be based, at least in part, on materials (written or oral) accessed in the relevant subject language (i.e. Tibetan). Some language assistance with such materials will, where possible, be provided by the Language Lecturer.



Typically, exploratory research for the thesis, including identifying suitable sources, will begin during the long vacation after the first year of the MPhil course. Exploratory translations of relevant materials would typically begin in Michaelmas of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

Appendices (which do not count towards the final word count) may be used to provide the Tibetan text of materials presented, more extensive translations, or other necessary reference materials. **Length** - max. 25,000 words (including footnotes, excluding bibliography and appendices).

### Teaching Staff

- [Ulrike Roesler](#) – Professor of Tibetan and Himalayan Studies
- [Lama Jabb](#) – Lecturer in Tibetan Language

### Examination and Assessment Structure

*Qualifying examination:* At the end of Trinity Term of Year 1, students will sit one written examination on Tibetan language and grammar and attend one oral examination. Both examinations must be passed for students to progress onto Year 2 of the course.

*Final examination:* Students are required to submit a take-home essay of up to 5,000 words which they will usually work on during the Long Vacation, and which counts towards the final examination.

In Trinity Term of Year 2, students will take four written examinations. Students will also submit their thesis.

### Important dates and deadlines

When			What	
Year 1	Trinity Term	Week 8, Friday	Take-home essay: <b>topics published.</b>	Submission via Inspira.
Year 1	Trinity Term		Qualifying examinations.	Written examination.
Year 2	Michaelmas Term	Week 0, Friday, 12 noon	Take-home essay: <b>submission. Word limit: 5,000</b>	Submission via Inspira.
Year 2	Hilary Term	Week 0, Monday	Approval of the thesis subject/thesis title.	Email <a href="#">Exams Administration team</a>

Year 2	Trinity Term	Week 2, Thursday, 12 noon	Thesis <b>submission.</b> <b>Word limit:</b> 25,000	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. If you realise after submission of the title that you need to make changes to the title, this can be done in consultation with your supervisor, and you will need to email a request to change your thesis title 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 – including text and footnotes but excluding 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. Should your thesis be eligible, you will be contacted regarding the procedure after your results are released.

### Language Learning and Competency Standards

Language learning is a core part of the course. Though the Faculty works closely with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS) to support students with SpLD (Specific Learning Difficulties), language papers represent competency standards and therefore cannot be replaced with easier language papers or non-language papers. If you have any questions or concerns relating to this please speak with your course director or the Director of Graduate Studies.

## 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 Tibetan &

Himalayan Studies can be found here [2023-24, Degrees of Master of Philosophy in the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)

### Examination Conventions and Rubrics

These are the formal record and explanation of the specific assessment standards for the 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
- Weighting of papers
- 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 'Exams and Assessment Information' site on [Canvas](#) 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

You will enter for examinations through your College. 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. Your timetable will be available approximately five weeks before your first exam. Please refer to the Oxford Students website for full examination entry and alternative examination arrangements ([www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams)). Formal University examinations are normally sat in the Examination Schools or other approved locations.

### In-person Examinations

Practical information and support for sitting in-person exams is provided on the Oxford students website ([www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance)).

### Online Examinations

Online exams are taken via the online platform 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 ([www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/online-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](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/open-book/honour-code)) and you should read this in advance of any online exams.

### Candidate number

Your candidate number for the examinations will be provided by your college. You can also locate it 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.**

### 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](http://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 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](http://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.

### Feedback on Learning and Assessment

#### Informal (Formative) Assessment

Informal assessment, also known as formative assessment, is provided by tutorial feedback and interaction with the Supervisor and/or tutor, by the discussion of prepared class-work or the results of class tests (especially for language classes), and by the Supervisor's termly online report, which may be discussed with the student in the Faculty and separately in the College.

#### Formal (Summative) Assessment

Formal assessment, also known as summative assessment, is provided by qualifying examinations in the first year and by one or more of written examinations, submitted essays, portfolio, and a thesis or dissertation at the end of the course.

### Examiners' Reports and Previous Exam Papers (OXAM)

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.

## 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 (Oxford University Student Union) 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 ([Margaret Hillenbrand](#)) 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 ([Thomas Hall](#)) or the Faculty Board Chair ([David Rechter](#)). 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.

## STUDENT INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

### Student Hub

The [Student Hub](#) is an ongoing project to provide a live online version of the handbook, together with more detailed course information and further resources such as forms and exam conventions, as well as archived documents from previous years. You can also access the Student Hub through the top bar of the Faculty Website, through the **'NEW Faculty Intranet'** button. You will need to log in using your SSO.

### 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:** [Christopher Fleming](#)

**Faculty Equality and Diversity Officer:** [Richard Parkinson](#)

## 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 Najafzade](#) and [Zeynep Yürekli](#)

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.

More information about the support and resources available can be found in the general Undergraduate Handbook and on the Faculty and University websites.