MSt Jewish Studies Course Handbook

Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

University of Oxford

Academic Year 2024-25 v.2

FACULTY OF ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Master of Studies in Jewish Studies
Course Handbook

Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Academic Year 2024-25 v.2

Course Director – Prof. Zoë Waxman

THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook applies to students starting the course in Michaelmas Term 2024. 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 2024; 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 MSt Jewish 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: Master of Studies in Jewish 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 (Margaret Hillenbrand) or the Senior Academic Administrator.

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. Please check the information on the Student Hub in conjunction with this handbook. 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.

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May 2025	General Guidelines for Thesis Writers link updated

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INTRODUCTION TO THE MST JEWISH STUDIES

The course offers a broad and intensive approach to the study of Jewish history and culture from antiquity to modern times, combined with the study of Modern or Biblical Hebrew or Yiddish.

History

Oxford has been an important centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies since the 16th century. There are unrivalled collections of Hebrew manuscripts and printed books in the Bodleian Library. Outstanding scholars have held a number of different positions in Hebrew and Jewish Studies in the University and students from all over the world come to Oxford for both undergraduate and graduate studies. The Leopold Muller Memorial Library also contains invaluable Hebraica and Judaica collections. As the disciplines of Hebrew and Jewish Studies have developed, different approaches and fields of study have evolved, ranging from the study of the classical Hebrew language and the Hebrew Bible to rabbinic, medieval, early modern, and modern Jewish history, culture, and society.

Course Outline

Students will study either Biblical Hebrew, Modern Hebrew, or Yiddish at elementary, intermediate, or advanced level for all 3 terms. Students will either take options according Syllabus A or Syllabus B. For Syllabus A, students will take 2 options and submit a thesis. For Syllabus B, students will take 4 options.

Optional Papers

Options marked below with an asterisk will be examined by a 3-hour written examination at the end of Trinity Term. All other options will be examined by essay submissions. Students may choose from the following. **Options will be subject to the availability of teaching each year.**

Available in Michaelmas Term

Aramaic*

Available in Michaelmas Term
Prof. Alison Salvesen
Beginners may take the Aramaic classes at the Faculty and advanced students may prepare a selection of Aramaic texts in a tutorial. Beginning and continuing the study of Aramaic is of strategic value to Hebrew studies not only because the languages are closely related, but also because Aramaic exerted strong influence on Hebrew from the late biblical period onward.
This course will be examined by a written examination.

The Emergence of Modern Religious Movements in Judaism

Available in Michaelmas Term
Dr Miri Freud-Kandel
The many different labels used by contemporary Jews to characterise their Jewishness highlight the significant shifts that have developed in the modern period for conceptualising Jewish identity. This has seen the emergence of varied types of Orthodox, Progressive, cultural, and secular Jewish forms of identification. Alongside shifts towards post-denominationalism, which are gathering pace in certain sectors, this survey course will offer an opportunity to study aspects of the evolution of the

three major religious movements of Modern Judaism: Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox. This paper focuses on Judaism as a living religion, examining some of the theological constructions that have been proffered in an effort to champion Jewish religious identity. Using selected primary texts and identifying the ideas of certain prominent Jewish thinkers from the late eighteenth century onwards, the historical and theological development of Modern Judaism will be examined and assessed. Beginning with a study of the early emergence in Western Europe of distinctive religious positions, their subsequent development in the USA, in the different sociocultural, political, and historical environments encountered there, will be examined. A consideration of what makes British Jewry distinctive will also be incorporated into the course. Some of the issues to be studied will include the influence of Enlightenment thought, the appeal of fundamentalism, nationalism, and critical scholarship, the meaning of covenant, and the impact of feminism.
This course will be examined by essay submissions.

Holocaust: From History to Memory

Available in Michaelmas Term
Prof. Zoe Waxman
The main objective of this course is to teach the Holocaust in a way that explores the history of the events in tandem with an introduction to its historiography. This allows for students both to be introduced to one of the defining events of the twentieth century and also to some of its historical, ethical, and philosophical implications. A number of different sources will be explored, including testimony written in the ghettos of Eastern Europe, the rare testimony that survived the concentration camps, the memoirs of survivors, testimony of the perpetrators and 'bystanders', literature, and photographic and visual representations.
This course will be examined by essay submissions.

Introduction to Rabbinic Texts

Available in Michaelmas Term
Dr Benjamin Williams
The aim of this course is to introduce students to the Mishnah, Tosefta, Talmudim, and midrashic literature by studying selected texts. The first class will introduce the history of these corpora and, in subsequent classes, selected passages will be analysed with consideration of their content and literary structure, and in the light of secondary scholarship. The sources will be read in English translation, but the original Hebrew texts will also be made available.
The course will be examined by essay submissions.

Modern Hebrew Literature, 1900-Present

Available in Michaelmas Term
Tutor: TBC
From Psalm 137 to the contemporary graphic novel, constantly flowing and shifting affiliations of language, place and identity have shaped the development of Hebrew literature across centuries. Twenty-first century scholarship on Modern Hebrew literature has reconsidered the teleological "diaspora to nation" narrative that once dominated Modern Hebrew literary historiography, thereby opening its study to include a wider range of authors and a more expansive map of Hebrew literary circulation and reception. This course combines a chronological and thematic overview of Modern Hebrew literature from the early twentieth century to the present day and examines figures and themes of (linguistic, cultural, geographical) marginality in Modern Hebrew literature; the relation between Hebrew literature's "minor" status on the global literary map and its own politics of

inclusion and exclusion; as well as the ongoing discourse on "centres and peripheries" in Modern Hebrew literature. The course readings also address the politics of multilingualism and translation (with an emphasis on Yiddish and Arabic), the relation between nation and diaspora, and themes of trauma and displacement that continue to preoccupy Hebrew writers. Reading knowledge of Hebrew is not required but students who are able to read the original Hebrew are encouraged to do so. The course will be assessed at the end of the term by two 2500-word take-home essays. Throughout the course, students will complete assignments in consultation with the instructor. These will take the form of short written assignments as well as class presentations.
This course will be examined by essay submissions.

Septuagint and related studies*

Available in Michaelmas Term, requires students to have a strong command of Greek and Hebrew
Prof. Alison Salvesen
The texts are chosen for their exegetical and/or text-critical interest, and for their relevance to formative Judaism and Christianity. The course covers general issues of the historical origins of the Septuagint version in the Alexandrian Jewish Diaspora and its subsequent revisions in Palestine, the translation technique of the individual books studied, textual criticism and exegesis of the original Hebrew. Relevant texts in Hebrew and Greek from Qumran will also be taken into consideration. The aim of the course is to demonstrate the value of the Septuagint and the three later Jewish revisions (Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion) for textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible, and the importance of Greek renderings of the Hebrew Bible for Hellenistic Judaism and the Greek-speaking Church. Students are expected to have a good grasp of Greek and Hebrew, and to have prepared the texts in advance of each session, which will take the form of a 1-hour lecture on broad topics and a separate 1-hour class to examine the set texts in detail.
This course will be examined by a written examination.

Written Culture in the Medieval Jewish World

Available in Michaelmas Term
Prof Judith Olszowy-Schlanger
Jewish life in the Middle Ages was governed by writing. Books and written documents were essential for liturgy, professional business, law but also daily activities. Writing and reading skills were relatively well spread in medieval Jewish communities of the East and West. Books and documents in Hebrew script are also better preserved than other material remains of the communities and individuals of the past. Both the texts they transmit and their physical features are therefore an excellent source to reconstruct history and ideas. The aim of this course is to introduce students to the different aspects and methods of Hebrew manuscript studies, to familiarize them with the corpora of manuscripts from various parts of the medieval Jewish world (Iraq, Egypt, North African, Yemen, Italy, Iberian Peninsula, Germany, France and Eastern Europe). This will allow them to use the original sources for their further study of Jewish history, literature, linguistics or anthropology.
This course will be examined by essay submissions.

Available in Hilary Term

Main Themes in Israeli Society and Politics*

Available in Hilary Term
Prof. Yaacov Yadgar

The course looks at the complicated, unresolved relationship between what are commonly taken to be the distinct realms of "politics" and "religion" in Israel. It will do so while contesting the antimony alleged in the course's own title (i.e. the conceptual duality of "religion and politics", by which these are two ahistorical and cultural concepts designating coherent, separate realms of human activity, the interaction between which constitutes a "problem"; hence "Beyond Religion and Politics). Instead of this, the course offers a more nuanced, "post-secular" understanding of the theological or rather theopolitical underpinnings of the politics of the modern (allegedly secular) nation-state. In this light, the course also focuses on a new, political reading of Israeli Judaism. Among other issues, the course will ask what does it mean for Israel to be a "Jewish state"; how is the meaning of "Jewish sovereignty" constructed and understood in Israel; what ideological frameworks of Jewish nationalism has Zionist ideology constructed by way of reinterpreting Jewish tradition or "rebelling" against it; what are the implications of Israel's Jewish identity on non-Jews in Israel; and how does this supposedly "internal" Jewish-Israeli concern shape the politics of the Middle East. These matters will be preceded by an epistemological and methodological consideration of the very discourse of "religion and politics".
This course will be examined by written examination.

Modern Jewish History

Available in Hilary Term
Prof. Zoe Waxman
A survey course covering the period from the mid-eighteenth century to the Second World War. The course aims to provide an overview of the Jewish experience as a minority group in Europe and Russia, introducing students to the main themes, ideologies and movements of modern Jewish history. Among the topics examined are emancipation and the Enlightenment, Jewish politics, migration, antisemitism and the Holocaust.
This course will be examined by essay submissions.

On Sherd and Papyrus
(Jews in Ancient Documents from Hellenistic and Early Roman Egypt)

Available in Hilary Term, a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew is helpful but not required
Prof. Meron Piotrkowski
During the Hellenistic and early Roman periods, Egypt was one of the most important centers of the Jewish Diaspora. Egyptian Jews formed an important part of the local Graeco-Egyptian society and were deeply imbued in the local culture. They were high officials in the Ptolemaic court, important generals, ran their own temple (the so-called Temple of Onias), produced a multitude of literary works of various genres, and were responsible for the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, arguably their most stellar achievement. This course is designed to introduce students to the history and (religious) culture of the Jews in Egypt during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, relying on a body of sources that is surprisingly neglected in modern research: Jewish papyri. Studying literary and documentary papyri from Egypt, we will address and discuss topics ranging from the history of the Jews in Egypt to Jewish-Gentile (including Christians) relations, the civil status of the Jews in Egypt, their society, their religious customs, and their literature.
This course will be examined by essay submissions.

The Religion of Israel

Available in Hilary Term
Dr Deborah Rooke

This course covers the religion of Israel in the Iron Age, from c. 1200-500 BCE. In biblical terms, this is the period from the appearance of the Israelites in the land of Canaan, to the early post-exilic period. The course will explore major themes in Israel's religion, covering introductory questions of methodology, the relationship of Israel's deity to those of the surrounding cultures, covenant and law, prophets and prophecy, priesthood and sacrifice, the monarchy, major festivals, and personal piety.

This course will be examined by essay submissions.

Language Studies

Biblical Hebrew or Modern Hebrew or Yiddish will be studied throughout the three terms of the MSt course to enable students to acquire a solid foundation of vocabulary and general language facility on which they can build to read and understand complex texts in their target language and to translate basic sentences from English into their target language. This paper represents a competence standard in the chosen language and is compulsory.

Language training will be offered at two levels:

Level 1 will be for students who are complete beginners and for students who are false beginners but not up to the next level. Students are taught grammar, and reading, writing and translation skills.

Level 2 will be for students who have excelled at the beginner level. An assessment and further guidance will be given at the beginning of the academic year to students who are interested in this level.

Placement test

An assessment will be held during the induction week for students who think they might be appropriate for level 2. Students must achieve the required level in translation into English and grammar analysis to be admitted to the level 2 course.

Tips for language learning as part of the MSt course:

For many students on the MSt, learning language will take up the majority of your study time. Since few of you will have had experience learning a non-European language before, the amount of memorisation required is likely to be a particular challenge. Generally, speaking each hour of language teaching will require at least three hours of self-study. This will be in addition to the reading and essay writing you are doing for your other courses for the MSt.

- Organise essays and preparation for other classes so that they fit round the schedule of your language learning. It is essential to continue studying your language according to a regular pattern every day, even when you are writing an essay or preparing for an exam. A good pattern might be to do an hour of language work in the morning before you start your other work and another hour in the evening after you finish.
- Attend class and submit your homework on time. It is your responsibility to do this without pressure from your teachers.

Teaching Staff

- Dr Miri Freud-Kandel – The Emergence of Modern Religious Movements in Judaism
- Dr Dorota Molin – Biblical Hebrew

- Prof. Judith Olszowy-Schlanger – Biblical Hebrew; Written Culture in the Medieval Jewish World
- Prof. Meron Piotrkowski - On Sherd and Papyrus: Jews in ancient documents from Hellenistic and early Roman Egypt
- Dr Deborah Rooke – The Religion of Israel
- Prof. Alison Salvesen – Septuagint and related studies
- Prof. Zoë Waxman – Modern Jewish History, Holocaust: From History to Memory
- Dr Haike Wiegand – Yiddish
- Prof. Yaacov Yadgar – Beyond Religion and Politics in Israel
- Miss Esther Yadgar – Modern Hebrew

Examination and Assessment Structure

At the end of Trinity Term you will sit an examination in your chosen language (Syllabus A and B).

You will also be required to sit either two options papers and submit a thesis (Syllabus A), or sit four options papers (Syllabus B). The options papers will be assessed by either essay submission or examination. Options examined by essay must be taken in Michaelmas or Hilary Term (Syllabus B).

Important dates and deadlines

Syllabus A (with thesis)

When		What	How/Format
Michaelmas Term	Week 8, Friday	Michaelmas optional papers: essay topics **published**.	Via Inspera.
Hilary Term	Week 0, Friday, 12 noon	Michaelmas optional papers: essays **submitted**. Word limit: 2,500	Submission via Inspera.
Hilary Term	Week 0, Monday	Submit your approval of thesis subject/ title form.	The online form can be found here.
Hilary Term	Week 8, Friday	Hilary optional papers: essay topics **published**.	Via Inspera.
Trinity Term	Week 0, Friday, 12 noon	Hilary optional papers: essays **submitted**. Word limit: 2,500	Submission via Inspera.
Trinity Term	Week 6, Friday, 12 noon	Thesis submission	Submission via Inspera.
Trinity Term		Language examination.	Written examination.
Trinity Term		Optional papers: examination.	Written examination.

Syllabus B (without thesis)

When		What	How/Format
Michaelmas Term	Week 8, Friday	Michaelmas optional papers: essay topics **published**.	Via Inspera.
Hilary Term	Week 0, Friday, 12 noon	Michaelmas optional papers: essays **submitted**. Word limit: 3,000	Submission via Inspera.
Hilary Term	Week 8, Friday	Hilary optional papers: essay topics **published**.	Via Inspera.
Trinity Term	Week 0, Friday, 12 noon	Hilary optional papers: essays **submitted**. Word limit: 3,000	Submission via Inspera.
Trinity Term		Language examination.	Written examination.
Trinity Term		Optional papers: examination.	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 Limit

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. The Bodleian Libraries also holds many MPhil theses and these can be searched for on SOLO. 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 MSt Jewish 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 (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 Inspera. 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 Inspera

Submissions are via the University's online assessment platform, Inspera. 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 Inspera 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 student 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 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 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 MST COURSES OF STUDY AT ASIAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

The MSt degree is awarded after a course of directed study leading to an examination. The course normally lasts one year. It is thus suitable both for students who have no more than one year available for study and for those who require a year of preliminary training in a subject before proceeding to research. A general MSt. in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies is awarded to those students who have undergone training in a subject for which no specific MSt. is available. The MSt. is at the FHEQ level 7.

The MSt is available in the following subjects:

- Bible Interpretation
- Classical Armenian Studies
- Classical Hebrew Studies
- Islamic Art and Architecture
- Islamic Studies and History
- Jewish Studies

- Jewish Studies in the Graeco-Roman Period
- Korean Studies
- Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
- Syriac Studies
- Traditional China

In general, the arrangements for supervision are similar to those for the MPhil, and in the case of some subjects the course offered is actually a reduced version of a corresponding MPhil course, with the language training omitted.

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.

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:

Hebrew, Jewish and Eastern Christian Studies 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, **Claire MacLeod** 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.