



**MPhil Islamic Art and Architecture Course Handbook**  
**Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies**  
**University of Oxford**  
Academic Year 2024-25 v.1

FACULTY OF  
**ASIAN AND  
MIDDLE  
EASTERN  
STUDIES**





# Master of Philosophy in Islamic Art and Architecture Course Handbook

Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Academic Year 2024-25 v.1

Course Director – Dr [Umberto Bongianino](#)

## 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](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 Islamic Art and Architecture, 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 ([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. 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.

Version history

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE MPhil ISLAMIC ART & ARCHITECTURE

This is a two-year course combining instruction in a language and in the history of Islamic art and architecture with research. The MPhil is designed for students with little or no background in Islamic art and architecture who also wish to learn Arabic, Persian, Ottoman Turkish or another language of relevance to the field. It is suitable either as a stand-alone course or as a stepping stone towards doctoral research.

### Outline

Students will study Arabic, Persian, Ottoman Turkish or another language of relevance to the field throughout the course. They will also attend lectures and seminars on Islamic art and architecture, write short essays and discuss them in tutorials given by the teaching staff.

### Year 1

In Michaelmas Term, students will attend language classes and 8 History of Islamic Art and Architecture (I) lectures with discussion sessions, completing 4 short essays and their tutorials. They will also attend the KRC Research Seminar every week, and any other lectures, reading groups, or handling sessions agreed with their supervisor.

In Hilary Term, students will attend language classes and 8 History of Islamic Art and Architecture (II) lectures with discussion sessions, completing 4 short essays and their tutorials. They will also attend the KRC Research Seminar every week, and any other lectures, reading groups, or handling sessions agreed with their supervisor.

In Trinity Term, students will attend language classes and 7 History of Islamic Art and Architecture (III) lectures with discussion sessions, completing 3 short essays and their tutorials. They will also attend the KRC Research Seminar every week, and any other lectures, reading groups, or handling sessions agreed with their supervisor. They will be offered two additional tutorials to discuss the topic of their Thesis and draft their Thesis prospectus. At the end of term (usually in 9th Week) students will sit their Qualifying Examination.

During the Long Vacation, students are expected to conduct research for their Thesis, including fieldwork, and attend a language course abroad with their language cohort.

### Year 2

In Michaelmas Term, students will attend language classes and 4 taught sessions for their Portfolio of Practical Work (I), held fortnightly. They will also attend the KRC Research Seminar every week, and any other lectures, reading groups, or handling sessions agreed with their supervisor. Either in Michaelmas or Hilary Term, students will take an option paper approved by their supervisor and the relevant course coordinator.

During the Christmas Vacation, students will complete their portfolio assignments for Michaelmas Term, carry out additional research for their Thesis where necessary, and write at least one Thesis chapter for submission to supervisor.

In Hilary Term, students will attend language classes and 4 taught sessions for their Portfolio of Practical Work (II), held fortnightly. They will also attend the KRC Research Seminar every week, and other seminars, reading groups, or handling sessions agreed with their supervisor. Either in Michaelmas or Hilary Term, students will take an option paper approved by their supervisor and the relevant course coordinator.

During the Easter Vacation, students will complete their portfolio assignments for Hilary Term, and complete a first draft of the whole Thesis for submission to supervisor.

In Trinity Term, students will attend language classes, submit their portfolio assignments, complete and submit the final version of their Thesis, and revise for their final exams. At the end of term (usually in 9th Week) students will sit their Final Examination.

### Two-Year Planner

<b>Year 1 Michaelmas Term</b>	History of Islamic Art and Architecture (I) lectures + four short essays and tutorials Language classes
Christmas Vacation	Language homework
<b>Year 1 Hilary Term</b>	History of IAA (II) lectures + four short essays and tutorials Language classes Discuss thesis topic with supervisor or thesis adviser
Easter Vacation	Language homework, preliminary reading for thesis
<b>Year 1 Trinity Term</b>	History of IAA (III) lectures + three short essays and tutorials Language classes Two tutorials for thesis prospectus <b>By Friday of 5<sup>th</sup> Week:</b> submit final version of thesis prospectus to supervisor or thesis adviser Qualifying Examinations – usually in 9 <sup>th</sup> Week
Long Vacation	Research for thesis, including fieldwork Language course abroad wherever necessary
<b>Year 2 Michaelmas Term</b>	Four classes for Portfolio of Practical Work Language and text classes Up to two thesis tutorials <b>By Monday of 6<sup>th</sup> Week:</b> submit application for approval of thesis title
Christmas Vacation	Language homework and additional research for thesis Complete first four Portfolio assignments Write at least one chapter of thesis
<b>Year 2 Hilary Term</b>	Four classes for Portfolio of Practical Work Language and text classes Up to two thesis tutorials

Easter Vacation	Complete last four Portfolio assignments Complete first draft of whole thesis
<b>Year 2</b> <b>Trinity Term</b> N.B. You should plan to be in Oxford at least until 4 July 2026 for examinations, including a possible <i>viva voce</i> examination.	<b>By noon, Tuesday of 2<sup>nd</sup> Week:</b> submit Portfolio of Practical Work Up to three thesis tutorials Revise and complete final version of thesis <b>By noon, Thursday of 6<sup>th</sup> Week:</b> submit thesis Language and text revision Final examinations – usually in 9 <sup>th</sup> Week

### Core Teaching Staff

- [Umberto Bongianino](#) – Samir Shamma Associate Professor in Islamic Numismatics, Epigraphy and Material Culture
- [Alain George](#) – I.M. Pei Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture (on leave 2024–27)
- [Zeynep Yürekli](#) – Associate Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture (on leave 2024–25)
- [Günseli Gürel](#) – Departmental Lecturer in Islamic Art and Architecture

### Examination and Assessment Structure

At the end of the first year of the course, students will sit the Qualifying Examination, consisting of the following two elements:

1. A three-hour written paper in Arabic, Persian, Ottoman Turkish or another language of relevance to the field.
2. A three-hour written paper in History of Islamic Art and Architecture, c. 550 – c. 1900. Although sat at the end of the first year, this paper is included as part of the Final Examination.

The Final Examination will take place at the end of the second year of the course. It consists of the following four elements:

1. A three-hour written paper in Arabic, Persian, Ottoman Turkish or another language of relevance to the field.
2. An option paper to be selected by the candidate in consultation with their supervisor. This paper will be examined either as a written examination paper at the end of Trinity Term, or by means of a take-home paper (up to 5,000 words) at the end of the term in which the option is taught.
3. A portfolio of practical work completed during the year, according to the schedule in this handbook (see below, 2e). The portfolio must be submitted by Tuesday in the 2nd Week of Trinity Term.
4. A thesis of no more than 30,000 words (excluding bibliography and appendices), which must be submitted by Thursday in the 6th Week of Trinity Term.



## Important Dates and Deadlines

When			What	How/format
Year 1	Trinity Term	Week 9, day TBC	Qualifying examination I (Language).	In-person or online examination.
Year 1	Trinity Term	Week 9, day TBC	Examination II (History of Islamic Art and Architecture).	In-person examination.
Year 2	Michaelmas Term	Week 0	Sign up for option paper.	Email course director and paper convenor.
Year 2	Michaelmas Term	Week 6, Monday	Submit your approval of thesis subject/ title form.	The online form can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
Year 2	TBC	TBC	Option paper examination.	In-person or via Inspira.
Year 2	Trinity Term	Week 2, Tuesday, 12 noon	Portfolio <b>submission</b> .	Via Inspira.
Year 2	Trinity Term	Week 6, Thursday, 12 noon	Thesis <b>submission</b> . Word limit: 30,000.	Via Inspira.
Year 2	Trinity Term	Week 9, day TBC	Final examination (Language).	In-person or online examination.
Year 1	Trinity Term	Week 9, day TBC	Qualifying examination I (Language).	In-person or online 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.

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

### 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.**

### 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.

### Language Learning and Competency Standards

Though the Faculty works closely with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS) and support students with SpLD, 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 the Course Director in the first instance.

## SUPERVISION AND TEACHING

Amongst the staff who will teach you and be variously responsible for you during your studies are:

- The course director
- Your supervisor, who is primarily responsible for supervising your programme of studies
- Your thesis adviser, a role that is usually, but not necessarily, performed by your supervisor
- The various lecturers, tutors, and language instructors who deliver teaching and training besides your supervisor
- Your college adviser, who is responsible for your pastoral care

The key figure is your supervisor, since postgraduate study at Oxford largely depends upon the relationship between the supervisor and the student. While the nature of that relationship may vary considerably according to the supervisor, the student and the subject, the respective roles of the supervisor and the student should adhere to the points outlined in the Humanities Division guidelines:

<https://www.humanities.ox.ac.uk/files/codeofpracticeonsupervisionofgraduatestudentstht2022pdf>

The relationship between supervisor and student does occasionally prove difficult. Should difficulties arise, please try first to resolve the matter with your supervisor. Should that prove unsuccessful, please take up the matter with your College Advisor, the Tutor for Graduates in your college, or the Director of Graduate Studies in the Faculty.

Your supervisor is responsible for arranging all of your teaching (tutorials, language classes, etc.). You should not arrange teaching for yourself but must always apply through your supervisor.

You will attend language classes at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, and the information for these classes will be provided by the relevant language instructors.

The Canvas page for your course will provide the material you need for the Islamic art and architecture portion of the course. It will be updated at the beginning of each term and relevant material may be uploaded throughout the term, so remember to check it regularly:

<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/228771>

In addition to regular classes and lectures, the tutorial system of learning offers a wonderful platform for in-depth discussion of issues, concepts and methods of analysis. This gives Oxford students an opportunity for a greater understanding and confidence in their subject, which will - one hopes – show through both their written work and their approach to academic matters.

The backbone of the typical tutorial is normally a short essay that you will be required to write before each meeting. Your tutor will normally supply you in advance with either a specific question or a selection of questions. You will also be given a reading list, or perhaps advised where you may find relevant sources to read. Using the reading suggested you must then research the subject, taking notes as you read. It is the balance of these five elements – i.e. reading, note-taking, analysing the question, writing the essay and critical discussion of the subject with your tutor – that determines how much you take from the tutorial system. Some of your tutorials will prepare you for examinations. You will also have additional tutorials for discussing research strategies and readings for your extended essay and thesis.

Your teachers, whether tutors or language instructors, will expect you to attend tutorials and classes regularly, and will give you regular assignments of written work. They will report to your supervisor on your progress at the end of each term. Make sure that you agree clear plans of work with your various teachers and that you understand precisely what they expect from you. If in doubt, discuss this further with your teachers and with your supervisor. Should you have any concerns about any aspect of your teaching, please raise them at once with your supervisor.

You should not rely on your supervisor or tutors to ensure a high standard of written English in your material submitted for examination. For students who are non-native speakers of English, the Oxford University Language Centre offers a course in Academic Writing, which shows you how to attain a high standard of academic writing. If English is not your native language, we strongly encourage you to attend this course. As classes fill up quickly, you are advised to enrol in advance, ideally before coming to Oxford (Check <https://www.lang.ox.ac.uk/academic-english> for details).

### Language and Texts Classes

Before starting the course, you will agree with your supervisor which language you will study for the two years of your course. Language classes take place in the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and continue throughout the academic year. You are likely to attend these classes with students from other degrees at the Faculty. You will sit a language paper each for your qualifying (first-year) examination and your final (second-year) examination.

In the Michaelmas and Hilary terms of your second year, in addition to the language classes at the Faculty, you will also be taught weekly text classes in your chosen language at the KRC. You will be asked to work on an excerpt and prepare a translation before each class. You will then read, translate and discuss it with a tutor. The aim of these classes is to develop your skills of using primary sources thoroughly and critically, whilst giving you a chance to delve into texts related to your area of research. These skills will be examined with the Prepared Texts paper in the final examination.

### History of Islamic Art and Architecture

This is a team-taught series of lectures, discussion sessions and tutorials running throughout the first year of your course, to be examined with a timed paper in your qualifying (first-year) examination. You will be provided with a syllabus before each term. Please consult the Canvas page for your course regularly for the assigned readings and pre-recorded lectures which you should use when preparing for each class.

The syllabus for each term will also include a selection of topics and bibliographies for short essays. You are expected to write four short essays each in Michaelmas and Hilary terms, and three in Trinity (eleven in total), and have a tutorial with the relevant faculty member to discuss each essay.

Grasping new concepts and information can be difficult and at times overwhelming, however it is very important that you do this quickly and settle into a pattern of work. This will be helped immensely if you read the more basic, background texts concerning your subject matter in the vacations. For each short essay, it is important to read a wide selection of material from many sources - being aware of any bias that they may hold - and to ensure that this material is both relevant and up to date.

Your notes should also be relevant to the topic and should not consist of whole paragraphs simply copied from textbooks and other sources. They must be clear and focus upon the topic, as well as being comprehensible, as you will find them an invaluable aid when revising for your exams, and for this reason should not be focused too narrowly upon the actual essay question. Indeed these notes, alongside those taken in lectures, will form the main body of work from which you will revise - though including the details of the books used (title, author, library call-number etc) at the top of your notes will enable you to return to them later should this be necessary.

Having read, understood and made notes upon your assigned reading, you should then produce a final plan for your essay's structure and basic content, before you set about writing it. It is often a good idea to separate the drafting of a final plan from the reading, in order to organise all that you have read, and simply to have a break.

An ideal essay plan might be made up of the following elements:

- *Introduction* - set out your understanding of the question, including explanations of potentially ambiguous terms (but avoid mechanically defining each word).
- *Discussion* of the main issues behind the subject - if there are competing arguments, this may include a basic framework of your personal view.
- *Your answer* to the question within the framework that you have set out – this will involve a discussion of the available evidence, but make sure your line of argument is clear; it helps to refer frequently back to the question. One way to help your structure is to ensure that you make a theoretical or interpretative point that contributes to your argument, before backing it up with evidence. Make sure, if you use works that are not particularly recent, that you are aware of more recent developments in this area of study. It is of course essential that you back up any statements with evidence.
- *A discussion* of the potential problems with your answer or complications with the subject - if there is evidence that seems to contradict your argument, raise these points, and, if possible, try to reconcile them within your framework.
- *Conclusion* - restate your answer to the question, drawing together the lines of argument that you have presented in the essay. If possible, however, try to make it interesting and not just a repetition of your essay.

Once you have finished your plan, you must write it up as an essay. Essays should always be word processed unless it is absolutely impossible to do so, as this ensures both neatness and legibility, and offers more than one copy should loss or damage occur. It is also wise to use double spacing and to leave a reasonable border on each side of the page (e.g. at least 3 cm) in which your tutor can make comments upon your work.

While you must obviously draw upon them when writing, you must make every effort not to reproduce your original notes verbatim, as paragraphs straight out of textbooks (or Wikipedia) may

be regarded as plagiarism. Instead, you should take note of the question asked (this advice sounds simple, but it is frequently not followed) and try to set up a structured argument that runs through the composition.

Remember that, in the final exam, you will have no more than one hour in which to write an essay. You must assume that the reader is familiar with all aspects of the subject, excluding the one upon which the question is set. Your essay should ideally be between 1,500 and 2,000 words long, however, do not try to stretch it out to this length, instead ensure that it remains relevant throughout.

You should also include a bibliography at the end of your essay, detailing what texts and/or articles you have drawn upon and, if you have only used certain sections of a book, the page numbers of these sections. This enables your tutor to distinguish between the gaps in your knowledge, and what you had read but not quite understood. With this information he or she can tailor suggestions and explanations (both written and during the tutorial) towards the areas you are unsure of.

Before your tutorial you should re-read your essay and ensure that you are familiar with - and able to argue for - all of its points, and also aware of the topic as a whole. It may be useful to prepare a list of questions on matters you feel that you have not grasped, although this is not vital, as there will be plenty to discuss in the hour.

Essays should be submitted to the tutor by email at least 24 hours before the tutorial. The main text should be double-spaced and in font size 12, and full-sentence quotations and footnotes single-spaced. Quotations should be singled out in the main text by quotation marks and referenced with footnotes. Any established reference system may be used as long as it is used consistently and fully throughout the essay. (Guides to widely used reference systems can be found on the websites of publishers such as Blackwell's.) Figures may be included as needed. Each figure should be numbered and clearly identified with a caption that includes a full citation of the source.

During the tutorial, it is important both to listen and to contribute to the discussion. Some students find that this makes it more difficult to take notes in a tutorial than in a lecture, where you merely listen. Hence it is wise to limit your notes to brief comments, which you can then expand upon as soon after the tutorial as is possible while it is fresh in your mind. If any new issues do arise during the tutorial, you may well not have the time to deal with them immediately, however if you take note of them then you can remedy the situation during your revision.

### Option Paper

Before the start of the second year of your course you will choose an option paper from a list provided to you by the course director. The option can be taught by someone from the KRC academic staff or another faculty member, and it should be broadly relevant to the field of Islamic art and architecture and your thesis topic. You will attend lectures or seminars and write short essays as instructed by the option paper convenor. This paper will be examined either as a written examination paper at the end of Trinity Term, or by means of a take-home paper (up to 5,000 words) at the end of the term in which the option is taught. A provisional list of option papers and convenors include:

1. Hadith – Prof. Fitzroy Morrissey (take home paper)
2. Islamic Law – Prof. Fitzroy Morrissey (take home paper)
3. Persian Literature in Any Period prior to 1500 – Prof. Dominic Brookshaw (written examination)
4. Philosophy and Theology in the Islamic World – Prof. Nicolai Sinai (take home paper)
5. Pre-Islamic Poetry – Prof. Tahera Qutbuddin (take home paper)
6. Qur'an – Prof. Nicolai Sinai (take home paper)



7. Sufism – Prof. Fitzroy Morrissey (take home paper)
8. Topics in Medieval Middle Eastern and Islamic History – Prof. Christian Sahner (take home paper)
9. Arabic Palaeography and Codicology – Prof. Umberto Bongianino (take home paper)
10. Arabic Sources on Islamic Art – Prof. Umberto Bongianino (written examination)
11. Ottoman Manuscript Painting (15th-17th centuries) – Dr Günseli Gürel (take home paper)

### Portfolio of Practical Work

In your second year, you will attend eight fortnightly classes arranged over Michaelmas and Hilary terms, which will teach you practical skills for examining and documenting objects and buildings, as well as other skills that you may need as a scholar. The modules that we teach change from year to year, and may include architecture, manuscripts, coinage, ceramics, metalwork, scientific instruments, presentation skills, museum tour/critique, etc.

The schedule of classes will be available on Canvas at the beginning of each term, and relevant information and material will be uploaded before each class.

For each module, you will be given a written assignment to complete in your own time, applying the practical skills you have learnt in class. The word limit for each written assignment is 2,000 words. For certain tasks such as the documentation of a building, you will have to work as a team, but each student must complete the assignments individually. The completed assignments must then be compiled in the Portfolio of Practical Work.

### Thesis

In consultation with your supervisor, you should decide upon the subject of your thesis by the end of Hilary Term, Year 1. If your supervisor does not feel qualified to give detailed advice, he or she will put you in touch with a suitable thesis adviser. Your thesis adviser (who may or may not also be your supervisor) will advise on the choice of subject and give initial advice on background reading, and relevant sources and methods.

### Prospectus

During the Easter Vacation, Year 1, you should undertake background reading for your thesis. You should ideally give your adviser a rough draft of your thesis prospectus at the start of Trinity Term. Early in Trinity Term, Year 1, you will have a tutorial in which you will discuss the prospectus. By Friday of 5th Week of Trinity Term, you should complete the final version of your thesis prospectus and submit it to your adviser. You will have the opportunity to discuss your prospectus in a second thesis tutorial to be held later in the term. Your adviser will also advise on primary and secondary sources, and on the research to be conducted during the Long Vacation.

Although the thesis prospectus is not examined, it is an essential component of the course. It is meant to enable you to define your research before embarking on it during the summer vacation. The prospectus should be approximately 2,000 words in length. You should state the topic and boundaries of the thesis, and identify the most important problems to be addressed. The prospectus must include a brief analysis of existing scholarship on the topic. You should state your methodology clearly, summarise the nature of the available sources and provide a tentative outline. You should also append a preliminary bibliography of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources should be listed with as much information as possible, and divided into categories of archival, manuscript and printed material wherever relevant, and other categories as requested by your adviser.

Here is an outline for a typical thesis prospectus (section headings may change, and new subheadings may be added in consultation with your adviser):

- Synopsis
- State of Research on the Topic
- Methodology and Sources
- Tentative Outline
- Expected Outcomes
- Bibliography (primary and secondary sources)

## Research

You should complete most of the research for the thesis, and must complete any fieldwork, during the Long Vacation. As this will be the biggest chunk of time you will have for research for your thesis, you need to plan it in advance.

Fieldwork may include photographic documentation, museum and library visits, and archival research as agreed with your adviser. You should aim to acquire some first-hand specialist knowledge of the material you will examine in your thesis, and read the relevant primary and secondary sources before the start of Year 2. Any outstanding research may be completed in Michaelmas Term, Christmas Vacation and Hilary Term of Year 2, but other work for your Final Examination will inevitably occupy most of your time.

During the Long Vacation, your adviser may, but will not necessarily, be available for advice on research; the only practicable method of communication may be by email.

## Writing

Soon after you come back for Michaelmas Term of your second year, you should discuss the progress that you have made on research for your thesis with your thesis adviser.

You can have up to two thesis tutorials in Michaelmas Term. Your adviser may arrange for reading classes for the primary sources you will use and ask you to attend lectures and seminars that are relevant to the subject of your thesis. By the end of Michaelmas Term, you should submit a detailed outline and bibliography to your adviser. The outline should include at least one paragraph for each chapter, sub-section and appendix, explaining its subject matter and relevance to the questions set out in the prospectus.

By Monday of 6th Week of Michaelmas Term, applications for approval of the title of the thesis should be submitted to the Faculty Office.

During the Christmas Vacation, you should write a draft of at least one chapter of your thesis and submit it to your thesis adviser by the start of Hilary Term. In Hilary Term, you will have two more tutorials to discuss your thesis, typically one at the beginning of term to discuss the comments of your supervisor/adviser upon the draft material submitted thus far, one later in the term to discuss further progress made on your research in the course of the term.

During the Easter Vacation, you must complete a draft of the whole thesis, including notes and bibliography, to submit to your thesis adviser. He or she will provide you with detailed comments upon your draft at a tutorial early in Trinity Term, and will offer you up to three further tutorials to discuss points of detail, but will not be able to read further drafts of the thesis as a whole.

The thesis must be your independent work. You should therefore not rely too heavily on your thesis adviser. Her/his role is to guide your research and provide feedback on your progress during the process, but it is your responsibility to ensure the quality and integrity of the final product. Your

adviser will read and comment upon only one complete draft, and only if it is submitted before the end of 1st Week of Trinity term.

For further information on what constitutes a good thesis and the expected format, see the Faculty's 'General Guidelines for Thesis Writers' appended as Annex 1 below.

You must submit the completed thesis by noon, Thursday of 6th Week in Trinity term.

## THE KHALILI RESEARCH CENTRE

All students in this course are offered workspace in the Khalili Research Centre for the Art and Material Culture of the Middle East (KRC) on the condition that they read and sign an undertaking to abide by the rules set out in the 'Information for Room Holders' document, which is revised and circulated by the KRC Administrator at the beginning of each academic year.

Allocation of spaces is reviewed at the end of each academic year. You must make regular use of your workspace. If you do not wish to work in the KRC, please tell the KRC Administrator at once, so that your space may be reallocated to someone who will make full use of it. If you do not make use of your workspace, you will receive one written warning, after which it may be assigned to someone else.

### General Information

The KRC is the University of Oxford's centre for research and teaching in the art and material culture of the Islamic societies of the Middle East and of their non-Muslim members and neighbours. It is part of the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, and is administered by a Director and a Management Committee appointed by, and answerable to, the Board of the Faculty.

The KRC Management Committee meets once a term, on Wednesday of 5th Week. A student representative is a full member of the committee for the discussion of unreserved business. A student representative should therefore be elected by Wednesday of 5th Week, Michaelmas term. All business for the Committee (including applications for travel grants, etc.) should be submitted to the Administrator by Monday of 4th Week.

Although much of the instruction and teaching that you receive will take place in the KRC, and will be delivered by members of the KRC, you are students of the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, and the Faculty (not the KRC) is responsible for the organisation of all teaching and examination.

The KRC houses the following academic staff members of the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies:

- Umberto Bongianino, Samir Shamma Associate Professor in Islamic Numismatics, Epigraphy and Material Culture, Director of the KRC
- Teresa Fitzherbert, Faculty Tutor in Islamic Art
- Alain George, I.M. Pei Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture (on leave 2024–27)
- Zeynep Yürekli, Associate Professor in Islamic Art and Architecture (on leave 2024–25)

The KRC is located at 2-4 St John Street. Its buildings comprise:

Offices for the Director, the Administrator and the IT Officer

Study/tutorial rooms for faculty staff

Project and research rooms for research associates

Open plan work area for postgraduate students

Lecture room with audio-visual IT equipment

Common room for KRC staff and students

Self-contained accommodation for visiting scholars

It adjoins the Art, Archaeology and Ancient World Library with its extensive holdings of books and journals on Middle Eastern art and visual culture. The KRC also adjoins the Ashmolean Museum, with its superb collection of Islamic art.

For more information, see: <https://krc.web.ox.ac.uk/>

**Kate Kwok** is the KRC Administrator. She is generally available Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Should you need to discuss any important matter at length, please make an appointment with her in advance.

Office location: Ground floor

Phone (external): +44 (0)1865 278222

Phone (Internal): 78222

Email: [kate.kwok@ames.ox.ac.uk](mailto:kate.kwok@ames.ox.ac.uk)

**Daniel Burt** is the KRC IT Officer. Should you wish to discuss any IT matters, please email Dan in advance to make an appointment.

Office location: Basement

Phone (external) +44 (0)1865 288355

Phone (Internal): 88355

Email: [daniel.burt@ames.ox.ac.uk](mailto:daniel.burt@ames.ox.ac.uk)

## Facilities

Your workspace will consist of a desk or workstation in the students' room on the third floor. You will also have access to a communal black-and-white printer. The students' room has two telephone lines on which you can make or receive calls within the University system. The numbers are 88352 and 88356. External calls are barred.

There is a common room for the use of all KRC staff, researchers and students, as well as a kitchen equipped with tea/coffee facilities, a small fridge where you can store small perishables and a microwave.

Students can book the KRC Lecture Room (for instance, to rehearse or record a talk) via the KRC Administrator.

The KRC also has image digitisation equipment which students can book via the IT Officer.

It is not possible for students to receive post at the KRC.

More detailed information can be found in the 'Information for Room Holders', which is revised annually.

## IT Information

Please arrange an IT induction session with the KRC IT Officer when you first arrive at the KRC, so he can introduce you to the IT facilities, set up your computer for network access, advise on anti-virus practices, data protection, and backup options. All KRC students are encouraged to have their own page on the KRC website, and the IT Officer will discuss the arrangements with you.

The KRC IT Officer can help to set up your personal laptops or tablets for use on the University network. If you need a new laptop, he can advise you what to purchase, and are able to offer discounted rates on Apple Macintosh laptops, tablets, and desktops.

You are strongly advised to keep regular backups of all important documents, by using at least two external hard drives or USB sticks, and/or by emailing backup files as attachments to yourself. If you wish to investigate other methods of backing-up your work, please ask the IT Officer. For further information about backing up your work, see the following links:

<http://help.it.ox.ac.uk/topics/data-backup-archive>

<http://researchdata.ox.ac.uk/home/managing-your-data-at-oxford/storage-and-backup/>

Additional IT support may be provided by the OUCS Help Centre (tel: (2)73200, visit:

<http://help.it.ox.ac.uk/help/request>) or through your college's IT services.

Finally, please ensure that you abide by the University's rules and regulations for IT use, which can be viewed at: <https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/governance-strategy-and-policies>

More detailed information can be found in the 'Information for Room Holders', which is revised annually.

## TRAVEL AND FIELDWORK

For all travel on University business or for your course you must complete the Faculty's travel and risk assessment form (<https://resources.orinst.ox.ac.uk/forms>, form 17), and get appropriate travel insurance. The University provides travel insurance free of charge for employees, students and volunteers travelling within the UK or worldwide on University business. In order to be covered by this insurance, you need to register the details of your travel in advance:

<https://finance.admin.ox.ac.uk/how-to-arrange-insurance>

The University has recently adopted a new travel policy encouraging sustainable travel:

<https://travel.admin.ox.ac.uk/business>

### KRC Travel and Research Grants

In addition to grants available through the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and the colleges, you can apply for a small travel and research grant KRC. Forms can be collected from the KRC the Administrator and completed forms should be returned to the Administrator by the end of 3rd Week of term. Any applications that miss the deadline will be held over until the following term. You will be expected to demonstrate that you have also sought funds from other sources (e.g. the Faculty and your college) and, in the expectation that matching funds will be found from elsewhere, any grant made by the KRC will normally be no more than 50% of the total budget. The outcome of applications will not normally be communicated until after the Committee meeting in 5th Week of each term.

### Fieldwork Safety

The following training is offered by the University Safety Office and, where appropriate, grants to support travel and fieldwork will *only* be made if you can provide evidence that you have completed the relevant training courses.

- Fieldwork and overseas travel risk assessment for fieldworkers and travellers
- Fieldwork safety overseas



For further details of these and other safety training courses, see:

<https://safety.admin.ox.ac.uk/training-a-z>

## 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 Islamic Art and Architecture 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 [Academic 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](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

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

Submissions must be made online following the guidelines here:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/submission>

Ensure you are familiar with the online submission process in advance of any 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.

## Vivas and Resits

Vivas may be required by the examiners; please refer to the Examination Conventions and Rubrics when they are released. 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. When making any travel arrangements for the post-exam period, it is your responsibility to bear in mind attendance at the viva.

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.

## 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.

### 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 Faculty facilities should be made to [Trudi Pinkerton](#).

Complaints about Khalili Research Centre facilities should be made to [Kate Kwok](#).

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 in the first instance. 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>).



## ANNEX 2: GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THESIS WRITERS

These guidelines are for assistance only, they are not exam regulations. If your tutor or supervisor has given you alternative guidelines, then you should follow those instead.

### **Status of the thesis within the degree course**

It is imperative to recognize that the writing of a thesis involves quite as much work as for a paper, and that the work differs from conventional study in shape and demand. The subject of your thesis may, but need not, overlap with a subject or period covered by one or more of your other papers, but you must not repeat material used in your thesis in any of your papers, and you will not be given credit for material extensively repeated.

### **Planning and Choice of Topic**

You should discuss the topic of your thesis in the first instance with your course coordinator or supervisor. If your course coordinator or supervisor does not feel qualified to give detailed advice they will put you in touch with someone suitable to supervise a thesis in the chosen area. You should do so as early as possible:

- For undergraduates, Trinity Term, Year 1 is probably the best time for preliminary discussions. In no case should you leave the choice of a subject for your thesis later than the beginning of Michaelmas Term, Year 3.
- MSt/MSc students should discuss the possible subject of your thesis in the first instance with your supervisor during the first four weeks of Michaelmas Term.
- MPhil students should discuss the possible subject of your thesis with your supervisor before the end of Michaelmas Term, Year 1.

### **The Thesis Supervisor's Role**

The supervisor of your thesis will assist in the choice of a topic and give initial advice on relevant sources and methods. They will advise on sources and presentation and assist with bibliographical advice; they will certainly expect to read draft chapters or sections. They may, but will not necessarily, read and comment on a complete first draft. But a thesis must be your own work.

### **Theses - Good and Indifferent**

The hallmark of a good thesis is that it contains a consecutive argument or set of arguments on its topic. Apart from showing a sound grasp of the secondary literature on the subject and/or period and an awareness of the problems of the topic, you should deploy the evidence of the sources to support the elements in your general argument. It should be made clear how you have approached the subject, what conclusions you have reached and, if appropriate, how your approach and conclusions are related to the views of other scholars.

The work should be well-written and properly presented, with footnote references in orderly, consistent and unfussy shape and a sensibly-selected bibliography. Good presentation, in the experience of many examiners, is usually combined with high quality of analysis.

Conversely, careless or unclear writing, uncorrected mis-spellings, typing errors and plain misquotations often go with an uncertain or myopic focus on the subject.

Authors sometimes become so interested in their topic that they overlook the need to provide at least a brief introduction to it and to set it in its broader historical context or contexts. (An introductory section to a thesis may often usefully include a survey of the existing literature on a topic and 'pointers' to its particular interest and problems.)

While reading and research are being carried out, you should also be planning how to shape materials into an argument. Research, while sometimes frustrating, is intensely stimulating; it can also become a beguiling end in itself. Laboriously collected materials are worthless unless they contribute to a coherent argument. For this reason, you should begin to plan the structure of your argument as early as possible; some plans may need to be discarded until the most feasible one has been found.

It is a reasonable assumption that writing the thesis will take longer than expected: a good thesis will certainly require more than one draft of parts if not of the whole. Plenty of time should be allowed for getting the final typed version into presentable form without disrupting work for other papers or revision.

### **Format of the Thesis**

#### *a. Length*

Your thesis should not exceed the word limit given in the Exam Regulations (Grey Book) or in your course handbooks, including text and notes but excluding appendices and bibliography (see below).

#### *b. Pagination*

Pagination should run consecutively from beginning to end and include any appendices etc. Cross references should be to pages and not simply to any sectional divisions.

#### *c. Order of Contents*

After the title-page (N.B. This must bear your candidate number but not your name) there should normally be:

- i. A table of contents, showing, in sequence, with page numbers, the subdivisions of the thesis. Titles of chapters and appendices should be given; titles of subsections of chapters may be given.
- ii. A list of illustrations (if appropriate)
- iii. A list of tables (if appropriate)
- iv. A list of abbreviations, cue-titles, symbols etc.
- v. A brief introduction in which the examiners' attention is drawn to the aims and broad argument(s) of the work, and in which any relevant points about sources and obligations to the work of other scholars are made.
- vi. The thesis itself, divided into chapters. The chapters should have clear descriptive titles.
- vii. A conclusion, consisting of a few hundred words which summarize the findings and briefly explore their implications.
- viii. Any appendices (which are likely not to count towards the word limit)
- ix. A bibliography. This is essential, and should be sensibly selective, omitting nothing which has been important in the production of the thesis. Works which are not specifically mentioned in the text may be included, but it is not necessary to include everything that may have been read or consulted. Works should be listed alphabetically by surname of author.

#### d. Footnotes, References, and Bibliography

Footnotes (except for references) should be as few and as brief as possible: they count towards the overall word-limit. The practice of putting into footnotes information which cannot be digested in the text should be avoided. Notes should be printed, single-spaced, at the foot of the page. Footnote numbers should be superscript (not bracketed) and run in a continuous sequence through each chapter. In subject areas where standard abbreviations for much quoted books and periodicals are in common use, these abbreviations may be employed in text, footnotes, or bibliography; they should be listed separately after the table of contents.

When reference is given for a quotation or for a viewpoint or item of information, it must be precise. But judgment needs to be exercised as to when reference is required: statements of fact which no reader would question do not need to be supported by references.

It is recommended that references be given in footnotes by means of author's name and/or full or abbreviated title. For example: 'Beeston, Arabic Language, 72' or 'Beeston (1970), 72'. All works referred to in this way must be listed in full at the end of the text in alphabetical order by author's name. Your bibliography might take the following form; you do not have to follow exactly this format, but whichever you do adopt must be equally clear, precise and consistent.

##### i. Books

Beeston, A.F.L., *The Arabic Language Today*, London, 1970.

**or**

Beeston, A.F.L (1970), *The Arabic Language Today*, London.

##### ii. Contributions to Books

Beeston, A.F.L, 'Background topics', in A.F.L. Beeston, T.M. Johnstone, R.B. Serjeant, and G.R. Smith (eds), *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, Cambridge, 1983, pp. 1-26.

**or**

Beeston, A.F.L. (1983), 'Background topics', in A.F.L. Beeston, T.M. Johnstone, R.B. Serjeant, and G.R. Smith (eds), *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, Cambridge, pp. 1-26.

##### iii. Journal Articles

Beeston, A.F.L., 'A Sabean penal law', *Le Muséon* 64 (1951): 7-15.

**or**

Beeston, A.F.L. (1951), 'A Sabean penal law', *Le Muséon* 64: 7-15.

#### e. Tables, Photographs, Maps, Graphs and Drawings

You are encouraged to employ tables, illustrations and graphs on any occasion when an argument can be more clearly and elegantly expressed by their employment. If they are not your own work, their original source must be acknowledged.

These should be used only to convey essential data that cannot be elegantly subsumed within the body of the text. They are particularly appropriate for material which does not count within the word limit of the thesis, such as transcriptions of texts, or catalogues of data.

#### f. *Italics*

These should be used for: titles of books and periodicals; technical terms or phrases in languages other than English (but not for quotations in foreign languages); for abbreviations which are abbreviations of foreign words (e.g., *loc. cit.*). Most such abbreviations are best avoided altogether.

*g. Capitals*

These should be used as sparingly as possible. They should be used for institutions and corporate bodies when the name used is the official title or part of the official title.

*h. Emphasis.*

Avoid the use of bold, italics, underline, exclamation marks, etc. for emphasis. It's ***rude*** to shout!!!

*i. Spelling*

English not American spelling should be used, e.g. 'colour' not 'color'. When in doubt, consult the OED, not your spell-checker.

*j. Transliteration*

Transliteration must be systematic, and follow a standard scholarly method. You should consult your supervisor as to which system is most appropriate to your subject. One system is that adopted by the International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES).

*k. Submission*

The thesis must be typed double-spaced with margins not less than 2.5cm (1"). The gutter margin must be at least 3.5cm. It is recommended that you use 12-point type. Do not justify the text.

### ANNEX 3: PROGRAMME AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR MPhil COURSES OF STUDY AT THE FACULTY OF 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.

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.

## 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:

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.