



MSt Islamic Art and Architecture Course Handbook
Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
University of Oxford
Academic Year 2026-27 v.1

FACULTY OF
**ASIAN AND
MIDDLE
EASTERN
STUDIES**


UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD



Master of Studies in Islamic Art and Architecture

Course Handbook

Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies

Course Director – Dr [Umberto Bongianino](#)

THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook applies to students starting the course in Michaelmas Term 2026. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

The information in this handbook is accurate as of Michaelmas Term 2026; however, it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at [Changes to courses | Oxford University](#). 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 in 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: [Degree of Master of Studies in Islamic Art and Architecture \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)

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.

Comments and criticism of the handbook are always welcome; they should be sent to the Director of Graduate Studies or the Senior Academic Administrator.

STUDENT HUB

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

- Support and Welfare
- Student Representation and feedback
- Examinations and Assessment information including forms and exam conventions
- Graduate Supervision (GSR)
- Graduate teaching opportunities and PLTO
- Research Ethics and CUREC approval
- Travelling abroad for study

- Financial Support
- Support for unexpected circumstances, including applying for suspensions or extensions
- Researcher training and development

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

Version history

1	September 2026	Original publication
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INTRODUCTION TO THE MSt in ISLAMIC ART & ARCHITECTURE

This is a one-year taught course that combines the advanced study of Islamic material culture with intensive language training, object-based learning, and independent research. The MSt is designed for students who already possess the necessary qualifications in Arabic, Persian, or Ottoman Turkish to use primary sources in the original language for the study of Islamic art and architecture. It is suitable either as a stand-alone course or as a stepping stone towards doctoral research. A supervisor will guide your progress and will agree with you a programme of work and a timetable for each term of the course, including general skills and research specific training, formal teaching and instruction, attendance at lectures and seminars, and regular meetings for detailed discussions on your progress.

Outline

In Michaelmas Term, students will attend 8 History of Islamic Art and Architecture (I) lectures with discussion sessions, completing at least 2 short essays and their tutorials. They will also attend specialist lectures, seminars, and handling sessions as agreed with their supervisor. These may include 4 classes for their Portfolio of Practical Work (I), and/or an Option paper approved by their supervisor and the relevant course coordinator. Students will take two Thesis tutorials, and they will write and submit their first Extended Essay, should they choose to do so as part of the course assessment.

During the Christmas Vacation, students will complete their portfolio assignments for Michaelmas Term, should they choose to do so as part of the course assessment. They will carry out research for their Thesis where necessary, and write at least one Thesis chapter for submission to their supervisor.

In Hilary Term, students will attend 8 History of Islamic Art and Architecture (II) lectures with discussion sessions, completing at least 2 short essays and their tutorials. They will also attend specialist lectures, seminars, and handling sessions as agreed with their supervisor. These may include 4 classes for their Portfolio of Practical Work (II), and/or an Option paper approved by their supervisor and the relevant course coordinator. Students will take two Thesis tutorials, and they will write and submit their second Extended Essay, should they choose to do so as part of the course assessment.

During the Easter Vacation, students will complete their portfolio assignments for Hilary Term, should they choose to do so as part of the course assessment. They will also complete a first draft of the whole Thesis for submission to their supervisor.

In Trinity Term, students will attend 7 History of Islamic Art and Architecture (III) lectures with discussion sessions, completing at least 2 short essays and their tutorials. They will also attend specialist lectures, seminars, and handling sessions as agreed with their supervisor. These may include an Option paper approved by their supervisor and the relevant course coordinator. Students will be offered two additional tutorials to complete their Thesis, which is submitted by noon on Thursday of 6th Week. At the end of term (usually in 9th Week) students will sit their Final Examination, should they choose to do so as part of the course assessment.

Year Planner

Michaelmas Term	History of Islamic Art and Architecture (I) lectures + 2 short essays and tutorials Four classes for Portfolio of Practical Work (I) and/or Option One Up to two Thesis tutorials By noon, Monday of 9th Week: submit Extended Essay 1
Christmas Vacation	Complete first set of Portfolio assignments (or Reports) Write at least one chapter of Thesis
Hilary Term	By Monday of 0th Week: submit application for approval of thesis title History of Islamic Art and Architecture (I) lectures + 2 short essays and tutorials Four classes for Portfolio of Practical Work (II) and/or Option Two Up to two Thesis tutorials By noon, Monday of 9th Week: submit Extended Essay 2
Easter Vacation	Complete second set of Portfolio assignments (or Reports) Complete first draft of whole Thesis
Trinity Term	History of IAA (III) lectures + two short essays and tutorials By noon, Monday of 2nd Week: submit Portfolio of Practical Work or Report(s) Up to two Thesis tutorials Revise and complete final version of Thesis By noon, Thursday of 6th Week: submit Thesis Final examinations – usually in 9th 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)
- [Juan de Lara](#) – Early Career Fellow in Islamic Art and Architecture
- [Günseli Gürel](#) – Departmental Lecturer in Islamic Art and Architecture
- [Zeynep Yürekli](#) – Associate Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture (on leave 2026–27)

Faculty Officers

- [Prof. Jim Mallinson](#) – Director of Graduate Studies
- [Prof. Henrietta Harrison](#) – Faculty Board Chair
- TBC, Faculty Equality and Diversity Officer
- [Thomas Hall](#) and [Edmund Howard](#) - Disability Coordinators
- [Edmund Howard](#) - Welfare Contact
- [Leyla Najafzade](#) - Harassment Officer

Other Faculty Officers and Committee Chairs are listed on the Faculty's [webpages](#).

Academic Administration Staff

- [Thomas Hall](#) – Head of Administration and Finance
- [Edmund Howard](#) – Senior Academic Administrator
- [Aalia Ahmad](#) – Academic Administrator (Undergraduate Studies)
- [Caroline Davis](#) - (MMES Programme Administrator)
- [Jane Kruz](#) – Academic Administrator (Graduate Studies)
- [Xiaobo Wang](#) – Academic Administrator (Examinations)

Other Professional Services staff are listed on the Faculty's webpages [here](#).

Examination and Assessment Structure

At the end of the year (usually in the 9th week of Trinity Term), all candidates must sit the Final Examination, consisting of the following four units:

UNIT 1: Thesis

Candidates shall submit a thesis of between 12,000 and 15,000 words in length (excluding bibliography), which should be equivalent to a substantial draft chapter or chapters of a proposed thesis for the M.Litt. or the D.Phil. The thesis must be submitted by Thursday of 6th Week of Trinity Term.

UNIT 2: Report or Portfolio of Practical Work

Candidates shall submit EITHER:

- 2A: a Portfolio of Practical Work completed during the year, according to the schedule in this handbook (see below). The portfolio must be submitted by Monday in the 2nd Week of Trinity Term. OR:
- 2B: a Report (or reports) on practical work completed on one or more objects, buildings or sites that will form part of a proposed thesis for the M.Litt. or the D.Phil., to be selected by the candidate in consultation with the candidate's supervisor. The Report must be submitted by Monday in the 2nd Week of Trinity Term.

UNITS 3 and 4: Option Papers and/or Extended Essays

Candidates shall take any one of the following:

- A: two Option papers, which may be any combination of language and non-language papers. When an elective paper is shared with another degree, the regulations for the paper follow that of the home degree.
- B: two Extended Essays of between 5,000 and 7,000 words in length, which may be any two of the following: (i) an essay on the theoretical issues raised by the subject which the candidate is proposing for the thesis for the M.Litt. or D.Phil. (ii) an essay on a topic relevant to the subject of the proposed thesis for the M.Litt. or D.Phil. (iii) an essay discussing the historical or literary background, or the source material, relevant to the proposed thesis for the M.Litt. or D.Phil.
- C: one Option paper under (A) above and one Extended Essay under (B) above. The Extended Essays must be submitted by Monday in the 9th Week of Michaelmas Term and Monday in the 9th Week of Hilary Term.

Option papers are examined either by take-home essays submitted in the 9th Week of the term in which the Option is taken, or by timed papers sat in the 9th Week of Trinity Term.

Examination Entries – Core and Option Papers

If you are taking examinations (sit-down examinations or submitted assessments) and you are required to select the options you wish to take, you will be invited by email to enter for your examinations in Student Self Service when the examination entry window for your examination opens. If your examination exists purely of core assessments, then your assessments will be visible in Student Self Service in due course. Any options requiring Faculty approval will need to be approved in order for you to enter for this examination on Student Self Service. Please use the relevant application form for approval of optional papers and for thesis subject/title approvals [here](#).

Submissions

Submissions are via the University's electronic exams site, Inspera. Links and information will be sent by the Academic Administration office five weeks prior to the submission deadline.

Deadlines

Michaelmas Term	Week 2, Monday	Applications for approval of choices under Units 2, 3 and 4	Email completed form to the Exams Administration team
Michaelmas Term	Week 9, Monday, 12 noon	Submission of Extended Essay 1 (where applicable)	Via Inspera.
Hilary Term	Week 0, Monday	Application for approval of thesis title/subject	Email completed form to the Exams Administration team
Hilary Term	Week 9, Monday, 12 noon	Submission of Extended Essay 2 (where applicable)	Via Inspera.
Trinity Term	Week 2, Monday, 12 noon	Submission of Report or Portfolio for Unit 2	Via Inspera.
Trinity Term	Week 6, Thursday, 12 noon	Submission of Thesis	Via Inspera.

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.

Ethics Approval

The University is committed to ensuring that its research involving human participants is conducted in a way that respects the dignity, rights, and welfare of participants, and minimises risk to participants, researchers, third parties, and to the University itself.

As set out in [its research ethics policy](#), the University requires that all such research be subject to appropriate ethics review.

The Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) has overall responsibility for the development of this policy and for the University's ethics review process. The following [chart](#) will help you check whether you need to apply for ethical review here.

More information can be found at the [Research Ethics website](#) and the [Research Integrity core course](#) explains the key responsibilities you have as a researcher; identifies the challenges you could face in meeting those responsibilities; applies a range of strategies to deal with the challenges you may face.

It is your responsibility to ensure you obtain any ethics approval you may need before undertaking research. The application process can be lengthy, do not leave it to the last minute.

Requesting a thesis subject/title 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 Student Hub [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. Original language source text is not part of the final word count and quotations in the original language do not count towards the word count (but translations of these quotations do).

General Guidelines for Thesis Writers

The faculty has provided students with guidance and information about producing a thesis in the [General Guidelines for Thesis Writers](#) which covers:

- Planning and choice of topic
- Your thesis supervisor's role
- Hallmarks of a good thesis
- Format of your thesis (e.g., length, acknowledgements, contents, footnotes, references, bibliography, tables and illustrations)

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

Language papers represent competency standards and therefore cannot be replaced with easier language papers or non-language papers. These standards ensure that achievement in the degree programme represents consistent, significant competency in the language and field of study. The Faculty works closely with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS) and supports students with SpLD,

ensuring that assessments and assessment criteria are as inclusive and accessible as possible. 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 and tutors 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 Code of Practice:

<https://www.humanities.ox.ac.uk/graduate-supervision>

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>

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).

Option Papers

Before the start of your course, you may choose one or two Option papers from a list provided to you by the course director. The Options 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 – 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)
12. Representing Early Modern Istanbul and Istanbulites – Dr Günseli Gürel (take home paper)*

*If you take this option you will need to enter it as an 'approved subject' when the examination entry window opens.

Portfolio of Practical Work

As part of the course, you may opt to 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, textiles, metalwork, scientific instruments, 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.

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 it 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 KRC 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 a student of the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, and the Faculty (not the KRC) is responsible for the organisation of all teaching and examinations.

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

- Dr Umberto Bongianino, Samir Shamma Associate Professor in Islamic Numismatics, Epigraphy and Material Culture, Director of the KRC
- Dr Juan de Lara, Early Career Fellow in Islamic Art and Architecture
- Prof. Alain George, I.M. Pei Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture
- Dr. Günseli Gürel, Departmental Lecturer in Islamic Art and Architecture
- Dr. Zeynep Yürekli, Associate Professor in Islamic Art and Architecture

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/>

KRC Staff

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

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

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 we 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 16), 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 small travel and research grants from the KRC (up to £1,000 per year). Forms can be collected from the KRC Administrator and completed forms should be returned to the Administrator by the end of 3rd Week of each 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 be communicated 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 Examination Regulations relating to this course are available here: [Degree of Master of Studies in Islamic Art and Architecture \(ox.ac.uk\)](https://www.ox.ac.uk/examination-regulations)

If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination Regulations then you should follow the Examination Regulations.

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, 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

Information on the examinations and assessments process at the University is covered on the University's [Examinations and assessment](#) webpages from entering for examinations through to accessing your results.

Entering for your exams

You will be invited by email to enter for your examinations when the examination entry window opens and it is your responsibility to ensure that you are entered for the correct number of papers and correct options, please speak to your college's academic office or the [Exams Administration team](#) if you are unsure about what these are. If you do not enter by the required deadline for your programme then you will need to pay a late entry fee. Please check the University's [Examination entry](#) webpages for full examination entry and alternative examination arrangements.

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

The University's [Completing an exam](#) webpages provide practical information on how in-person exams will work, including In-person exams on a computer, what you should do in advance of the exams and what to expect on the day. Your in-person exam(s) will be either handwritten or typed and the majority of in-person examinations take place at either the Examination Schools or Ewert House.

Online examinations

Online exams are taken in Inspira and you must familiarise yourself with this platform prior to taking an online exam. The University's [Online exams](#) webpage provides guidance on completing your online exam including how to set up for your exam, the expectations regarding standards of behaviour and good academic practice for online open-book exams.

Online exams require you to adhere to the University's [Honour Code](#) for open-book and closed-book remotely invigilated online exams and you should read this in advance of any online exams.

Submissions via Inspira

Coursework submissions are via the University's online assessment platform, [Inspira](#). Ensure you are familiar with the online submission process in advance of any deadline. Full information is provided on the University's [Submission of coursework assessments](#) webpage. An Inspira link and information will be sent by the [Exams Administration team](#) prior to the submission deadline.

Your candidate number

A candidate number is created for examinations to ensure anonymity and you are responsible for ensuring you are not identifiable in all assessments either by self-referencing or including personal details such as your name or student number. The Exams Administration team will not do redaction for you if you identify yourself in your assessments.

You can 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.

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 and it is your responsibility to take action if you experience problems.

The University's [Problems completing your assessment](#) webpages provides a summary of the different processes that are available including:

- When you can't submit coursework on time (*self-certification, extensions, submitting late, incorrect submissions*)
- When you can't attend an exam
- Problems with online exams (*submitting late, replacing an incorrect exam response, online exams with typed answers only, starting an online exam late*)
- Mitigating circumstances notices to examiners (MCE)
- Academic appeals

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 situation.

Fixed Dates for the Consideration of Submissions with Extension

If you receive an extension which takes your submission beyond the standard Final Exam Board Meeting, you will need to wait until the next date your Exam Board meets for your final results and classification to be considered and released.

Typical dates are as follows:

Final Exam Board Meetings (standard dates)

- **MPhil and MSt courses ending in Trinity Term:** Trinity Term weeks 11 and 12.
- **MSc MMES ending in Long Vacation:** Late September.

Dates for consideration of late assessments (extensions):

- **Intermediate date:** Michaelmas Term week -3 (4th week before the start of Full Term).
- **Last date:** Michaelmas Term week 7.

Assessments received after this last date will be deferred for consideration until the next Final Exam Board meeting at the end of Trinity Term of the following year.

If you do apply for an extension, especially towards the end of your degree, please take note of this policy and the dates above as your date of final completion may have implications for your next steps after your course.

Please note that time is also required for marking assessments. For work received outside the normal assessment period (e.g. due to an extension), we cannot guarantee that submissions less than 3 weeks before the consideration date above will be ready to be considered on that occasion.

The faculty remains committed to supporting our students through challenging circumstances throughout their degree programmes. This policy does not affect the process for applying for an extension nor the support available. If you are struggling to complete your work, please do not hesitate to reach out to your tutor, college or the academic administration team.

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 resits.

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

Infringements for Examinations and Submitted Assessments

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

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

Examiners' Reports and Previous Exam Papers

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

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

Good Academic Practice and Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism

The University's definition of plagiarism is:

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

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

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

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

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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

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

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 Faculty's Disability Coordinators, Welfare Contact and Harassment Officers.

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

Complaints and Academic Appeals within the Faculty of AMES

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

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

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

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

Complaints

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

Complaints about 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 Administration or the Faculty Board Chair.

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's [Student Complaints Procedure](#).

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's [Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

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.