

MSt Late Antique and Byzantine Studies



Course handbook 2017-18

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Disclaimer

Regulations relating to this course are available at <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>. 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 History Faculty Academic Office: current.graduates@history.ox.ac.uk.

The information in this handbook is accurate as at date of publication, however it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges. If such changes are made the department will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes. All students affected by the changes will be informed.

Welcome from the Director of Graduate Studies

As Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), I should like to extend a warm welcome to you, as you begin work on your Master's course. I hope that you will find postgraduate study enjoyable and rewarding, and I wish you every success in the months to come.

This handbook is intended to be a comprehensive guide to the teaching, assessment and administrative arrangements of the course; it also contains useful information on other aspects of life in Oxford as a postgraduate historian. You can find further information about graduate matters on our WebLearn pages (see <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/USVyy8>, and follow the links from there).

My colleagues and I are well aware that the transition from undergraduate to postgraduate life is not always an easy one, and we know that Oxford's ways of doing things can appear complicated or confusing. Supervisors, college advisers and other students can help you sort out questions and problems, but you're also very welcome to contact the Faculty's Graduate Office – in person, by phone (01865 [6]15002), or by email (current.graduates@history.ox.ac.uk). Members of staff will normally be available on Mondays to Fridays from 9.30am to 5pm (except during lunch time between 1pm and 2pm).

The History Faculty also has a well-established Graduate Joint Consultative Committee (GJCC), made up of academic staff and student representatives. It works in conjunction with the Oxford History Graduate Network (OHGN), a student-led forum which organises social and academic events, and raises matters of concern to postgrads. You can find more details of both these organisations below, and I would encourage you to think about getting involved; as a postgraduate student, you will probably be spending more time in independent study than you did as an undergraduate, and the company of other students can be an important source of support and also of intellectual stimulation.



Professor John Watts,
History DGS

1. Introduction

This handbook has been prepared for students starting the Master of Studies (MSt) in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies in Michaelmas Term 2017. We hope that it will be particularly useful to you when you first arrive in Oxford, but you are advised to refer to it throughout your course, as it will be of considerable help throughout the period of your study.

It contains information about the structure of the course, teaching and assessment deadlines; how to format and submit your work; and the exam conventions that set out how your work is marked. It also acts as a signpost to more general information, including useful contacts and locations around the Faculty and university.

Oxford University terms are named Michaelmas (autumn), Hilary (winter) and Trinity (spring). Introductory events often take place during Week 0 of Michaelmas Term. The term dates can be found here: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/facts-and-figures/dates-of-term> .

Other sources of information about your course

As well as this handbook, you will also find the other sources of information useful:

- The MSt Late Antique and Byzantine Studies WebLearn pages:
<https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/2AKJrv>
To submit your work online, and for information about the course options that are available this year, including reading lists.
- Examination regulations: <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>
The definitive rules that govern the course.
- Marking criteria and conventions in this handbook.
The rules by which your work is marked.

Your supervisor will review, monitor and comment on your academic progress using the Graduate Supervision System (GSS): <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/gss/>. You are also encouraged to submit comments on this system.

An introduction to Oxford for new students is available on the university website:
<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/new>.

Useful Contacts

This programme is convened and administered by the Faculty of History. If you need help or advice relating to your course, and can't find the answer in this handbook or on WebLearn <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/2AKJrv>, you should contact one of the following:

- Your supervisor(s)
- The Graduate Office (current.graduates@history.ox.ac.uk)
- The programme convenors: Professor Marc Lauxtermann (marc.lauxtermann@exeter.ox.ac.uk) [MT]; Dr Philip Booth (philip.booth@trinity.ox.ac.uk) [HT & TT]
- The Director of Graduate Studies: Professor John Watts (john.watts@ccc.ox.ac.uk)
- The Tutor for Graduates or Dean of Graduates at your college

Details of the administrative staff that support the Master's courses can be found on the Academic Administration page of the History Faculty website: <http://www.history.ox.ac.uk/academic-administration>.

If you have any comments or suggestions about the content of this handbook, please email them to current.graduates@history.ox.ac.uk.

2. Course content and structure

2.1 Overview

All course information can be found in WebLearn: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/2AKJrv>

The Master of Studies in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies has been devised as a multi-purpose introduction to the Roman world in Late Antiquity, to Byzantium, the medieval successor of the East Roman Empire, and to neighbouring peoples and their cultures.

It can be taken as a free-standing degree, or as the first step towards doctoral research. Students have the option of selecting a focus of study dependent on their knowledge of languages or on their primary interests in the field.

All students take the core paper on History and Art & Archaeology, or History and Literature, with an emphasis on either Late Antiquity (covering the Later Roman Empire and adjoining regions) or Byzantium (covering the Byzantine Empire and adjoining regions).

Two basic pathways lead into each field of study, and graduate students are expected, in consultation with their supervisor or the programme convenor, to choose between them at the beginning of the course:

Language pathway: This is the standard option for those new to this field of specialist study and offers intensive training in any one of the following ancient and medieval languages and their literatures: Greek, Latin, Slavonic, Armenian, Syriac, Coptic, Arabic.

The course extends over nine months and consists of three units:

- A core paper on History, Art and Archaeology, or History and Byzantine Literature
- A language paper
- A literature paper

Research skills pathway: This option is designed for those who already have considerable competence in their chosen language and are able to read the primary sources in the original. Students receive instruction in one or two Auxiliary Disciplines and engage with a Special Subject of their own choice.

The course extends over nine months and consists of three units:

- A core paper on History, Art and Archaeology, or History and Byzantine Literature
- One special subject
- Auxiliary discipline(s)

You MUST check all deadlines against the [Examination Regulations for your course](#)
If there are any discrepancies with what is published here, the official Exam Regs take precedence!

Michaelmas Term

Submit online assignment test (see Section 3)

Fri, Week 5 (5pm)

Hilary Term

Complete online exam entry

Fri, Week 4

Trinity Term

Submit core essays (see Section 3)

Mon, Week 6 (noon)

Submit special subject paper(s)

Mon, Week 6 (noon)

Attend examinations for auxiliary discipline (timetables will be available in Trinity term), except for Papyrology.

Week 9

2.2 Core paper on History, Art and Archaeology, or History and Byzantine Literature

Teaching

This module comprises two sets of weekly classes, taught during the first two terms of the academic year. Students select one of the following options:

- Core Paper on History, Art and Archaeology: Late Antiquity
- Core Paper on History, Art and Archaeology: Byzantium
- Core Paper on History and Literature: Late Antiquity
- Core Paper on History and Literature: Byzantium

Assessment & Submission

This module is assessed through the submission of two 5,000-word essays on topics of your choosing (subject to the approval of your supervisor). These must be submitted by the deadline in the table above. See Section 3 for guidance on submission and presentation of work.

2.3 Special subject

Teaching

There is a broad range of relevant language and literature and special subject papers available; please consult your supervisor or the programme convenor for advice on the choices which would be most suitable to your academic development.

There are no detailed descriptions for these papers, as much of the teaching will be tailored to the individual training needs and interests of students on the programme. The programme convenor and a candidate's individual supervisor will agree with the student a suitable programme of work at the start of the academic year.

Assessment & Submission

This module is assessed through the submission of either two 5,000 word essays or a 10,000 word dissertation. These must be submitted by the deadline in the table above. See Section 3 for guidance on submission and presentation of work.

2.4 Auxiliary discipline

Teaching

The following auxiliary disciplines are on offer: epigraphy, palaeography, numismatics, sigillography, papyrology and artefact studies (ceramics, metal ware, ivories, or carved marbles). The first four are half papers; the last two, full papers. The half papers are taken in pairs and count together as one Advanced Option.

Assessment

Except for Papyrology which is examined by two 5,000-word essays, the Auxiliary Discipline papers are

usually examined by unseen examination: 90-minute in the case of the half papers and 180-minute in the case of Artefact Studies.

2.5 Supervision arrangements

During the admissions process you were assigned a supervisor to direct your intended individual research. In the course of the first term, your research focus may change – and in some this may lead to a change in your supervision arrangements. If this happens, you should complete a GSO.25 form (change of supervisor or appointment of joint supervisor) and submit it to the Academic Office so that the student record system can be updated:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression>.

Your supervisor's primary responsibility is to advise you on the programme of work necessary to complete your dissertation or thesis. To this end, they should maintain a general overview over your course work and academic development. They should help you to identify and acquire the knowledge and skills needed to complete your dissertation or thesis, and to further your aims for study or employment, insofar as these build upon the programme of graduate study.

2.6 Seminars

The programme of teaching will be supported by regular graduate seminars, which run throughout the academic year and will be attended by graduate students and staff. Details can be found in the Lecture List (<https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/XYMINm>) but note that a weekly email alert will tell you about all the seminars, lectures and visiting speaker presentations organised by the Faculty of History.

3. Assessment guidance

3.1 Presentation of your work

Your documents should have margins of at least 2.5cm in a font size of 12 point or larger and a line spacing set at 1.5 or equivalent, except that free-standing quotations and footnotes should be presented single-spaced. Footnotes should be placed at the bottom of each page.

For further guidance on how to present your essay, including referencing styles, refer to the History Faculty's guidance on Conventions for the presentation of essays, dissertations, and theses on WebLearn: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/Lcbte2> (in Assessment and examining). The ability to conform meticulously to presentational guidelines is a professional skill, required, for example, from anyone submitting work for publication, and the examiners may lower your mark if you fail to observe the conventions specified.

Submitted essays should accord with the Faculty's conventions, and should include a bibliography of all the books and articles that you have either quoted or consulted. Any source that you have encountered through another source, but you have not seen at first hand, should not appear in the bibliography; any footnote reference to a source not directly consulted by you must make it unambiguously clear from what secondary source that you have consulted your knowledge arises (see Section 4.2 below).

Front page

To safeguard the anonymity of the initial assessment, do **not** write your name, student number, college, supervisor's name, or any other identifying information anywhere on your submitted work. The front page of your essay should contain the following information only:

- your **candidate number** on the top right-hand corner (note: this is different from your Student ID and University Card number; you find this number in your Student Self-Service record under the tab 'Assessment Information')
- the title of your essay
- the word count (excluding bibliography)
- the degree and term for which the work is submitted (e.g., 'Master of Studies in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies', Trinity Term 2018')

Word counts

Included in Word count:

- footnotes
- appendices
- images, figures, graphs, tables and their captions (but they should be necessary for the argument you are making)

Excluded from Word count:

- bibliographies
- title page content
- acknowledgments (if any)
- dissertation abstract

If you need an extension of the word limit, or need to add an appendix that is excluded from the word count, you can apply for this by using the 'Word limit extension form' in WebLearn (General Info).

Please note that word counts will be checked, and penalties will be applied by the exam board for over-length work. See the exam conventions for details.

3.2 Good academic practice and avoiding plagiarism

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. For more information, see the Oxford Student's guidance on plagiarism: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism.

The University provides a number of online transferable skills courses for graduate students to study at their own pace. The set of courses includes a course on Good Practice in Citation and the Avoidance of Plagiarism and all graduate students should complete this course as part of their graduate skills training portfolio: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/5jzUSE>. This online course can be accessed via the University's Skills Hub: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site/:skills>. If you are located outside the Oxford University computer network, you will need to set up access via the University's Virtual Private Network (VPN). Further information about how to do this is provided on the Skills Portal website.

The first time you take one of the online courses, you will need to create yourself a user account following the instructions provided on the right-hand side of the page in the box titled 'Is this your first time here?'. Once you have set up a user account you can login to all the online courses by entering the username and password you have set up in the boxes provided in the 'Returning to this web site?' section.

At the end of each course, there is a quiz to test your knowledge; if successful you can save a certificate for your records.

3.3 Submission of work

You must submit your work online using the Assignment submission WebLearn site: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/mqYZjT>. You can also find this at the bottom of the left-hand menu of the Master's WebLearn site, and linked from your course home page. You must submit your work before the deadline listed in this handbook (and in the exam regulations), in UK time. All submissions are monitored by the Taught Degrees Team in Exam Schools, and any late submissions (without permission) will be reported to the Proctors.

Please note that it is your responsibility to remember the deadlines and you will not get an alert beforehand.

Before uploading your assignment, you must make sure it has a suitable coversheet containing the information outlined in Section 3.1. There is a blank coversheet template on the Assignments WebLearn page, which you may use if you wish. Neither the document itself, nor its file name should contain your name or student number. You should save your file as a PDF, and name your file according to the following convention:

[programme]-[assessment unit]-[candidate number].pdf
For example: MSt US History - option essay 1 - 123456.pdf

When in the Assignment submission site, click on 'Assignments' on the left-hand menu:

The screenshot shows the 'Assignment submission' page. The left-hand menu is expanded to 'Assignments'. The main content area is titled 'Assignment submission' and contains the following text:

Please click on Assignments in the left hand menu, select the assessment that you would like to submit, and follow the instructions.
Note - Assignments must be submitted by the deadline time according to the time in the UK.

Guidance notes

File format
Your assignment must be submitted as a PDF file. You can use any PDF converter software to create a PDF, such as Adobe Acrobat, or Microsoft Word 2010 (just go to 'Save as' then select 'pdf' from the drop-down menu).
If your work contains images, you should compress these to minimise the overall file size of your submission. For guidance on compressing images, please go to the [WebLearn Guidance site](#), and select 'How to guides' and then 'How to compress image file sizes'.

File naming
You should name your document as follows (without the square brackets): [programme]-[assessment unit]-[candidate number].pdf. For example:
MSt US History - option essay 1 - 123456.pdf

Cover sheet
Your essay should not contain any other pieces of information that could identify you to the marker of your paper. Find your candidate number by visiting the online Student Self-Service facility. This is different to your student number: your candidate number does NOT appear on your University Card. You may use this cover sheet template if you wish:
• [Cover sheet template \(.docx\)](#)

On the right, there is a 'RECENT ANNOUNCEMENTS' section with a link to 'Assignment: Open Date for "Test assignment submission"'.

Your assignment(s) will be listed here. When an upcoming assignment is open, click on the assessment title in the list:

The screenshot shows the 'Assignment List' page. The left-hand menu is expanded to 'Assignments'. The main content area is titled 'Assignment List' and contains the following text:

Select an assignment to view details, start working or edit your previous work.

Viewing 1 - 1 of 1 items

Assignment Title	Status	Open	Due (UK time)
Test assignment submission	Not Started	28-Sep-2016 21:35	11-Nov-2016 17:00

At the bottom, there are links for 'Terms & Conditions', 'Accessibility', 'Help', 'Acknowledgements', and 'Privacy'.

After checking you've followed all the guidance notes – particularly with regard to the naming conventions – upload your assignment. Make sure you check the 'Declaration of authorship' box before clicking 'Submit'.

Attachment

 [MSt Economic and Social History - test assignment - 123456.pdf](#) (84 KB; 28-Sep-2016 21:49) [Remove](#)

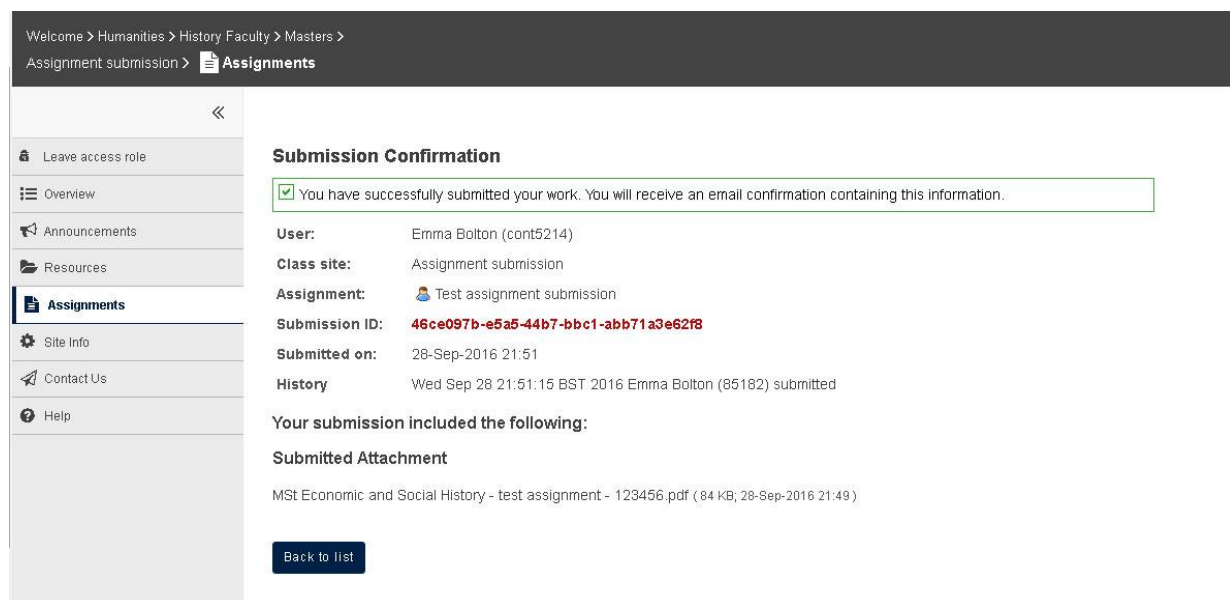
Declaration of authorship - I confirm the following:

1. I have read and understood the University's disciplinary regulations concerning conduct in examinations and, in particular, the regulations on plagiarism (The University Student Handbook, Section 8.8; at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/student-handbook>).
2. I have read and understood the Education Committee's information and guidance on academic good practice and plagiarism at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills?wssl=1>.
3. The [thesis/extended essay/project/other work] I am submitting is entirely my own work except where otherwise indicated.
4. It has not been submitted, either wholly or substantially, for another Honour School or qualification at this University, or at any other institution.
5. I have clearly indicated (with appropriate references) the presence of all material I have paraphrased, quoted or used from other sources, including any diagrams, charts, tables or graphs.
6. I have acknowledged appropriately any assistance I have received in addition to that provided by my [tutor/supervisor/adviser].
7. I have not copied from the work of any other candidate.
8. I have not sought assistance from any professional agency, nor provided material for other examination candidates at this University or elsewhere. (See <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/352-051a.shtml>).

(You must respond to submit your assignment.)

Don't forget to submit your work! A confirmation message will be displayed after submission.


After submitting your assignment, you'll get a confirmation message as below:



Welcome > Humanities > History Faculty > Masters >
Assignment submission > **Assignments**

Submission Confirmation

You have successfully submitted your work. You will receive an email confirmation containing this information.

User: Emma Bolton (cont5214)
Class site: Assignment submission
Assignment:  Test assignment submission
Submission ID: **46ce097b-e5a5-44b7-bbc1-abb71a3e62f8**
Submitted on: 28-Sep-2016 21:51
History: Wed Sep 28 21:51:15 BST 2016 Emma Bolton (85182) submitted

Your submission included the following:

Submitted Attachment

MSt Economic and Social History - test assignment - 123456.pdf (84 KB; 28-Sep-2016 21:49)

Test assignment submission

To give you the opportunity to familiarise yourself with the online submission system, you must submit a test assignment by the given deadline (see Section 2 above). All you need to do is create a Word file using the cover sheet template which is available from the Assignments home screen, or on the Test assignment course information. Complete the cover sheet using the details relating to your course. No additional content is needed. Save the file as a PDF following the naming conventions described in Section 3.3, and upload to the 'Test assignment submission' using the instructions above.

If you have any questions or problems, please just email current.graduates@history.ox.ac.uk.

NB: Your candidate number may not yet be available through student self-service. If this is the case, just use '123456' for the purposes of this test.

Submission and examination dates

Please see Section 2 for details of submission dates.

For more detail on exam timetables, see: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/timetables.

3.4 Examination conventions

The Examination Conventions are the formal record of the specific assessment standards for this programme. They set out how examined work will be marked and how the resulting marks will be used to arrive at a final result and classification of an award.

Rubrics for individual papers

Assessment of individual papers is based on pre-submitted essays and dissertations.

Marking conventions

University scale for standardised expression of agreed final marks

Agreed final marks for individual papers will be expressed using the following scale:

70-100	Distinction
50-69	Pass
0-49	Fail

Qualitative criteria for different types of assessment

For essays and dissertations markers will assess the submitted work according to the following criteria:

Engagement	Identification and definition of a problem Awareness of inter-disciplinary issues, if appropriate Location in a historiographical or other relevant scholarly context Range of issues addressed
Analysis and Argument	Analytical clarity and power Sophistication of conceptualization or framing Originality and coherence of argument
Use of Evidence	Range and relevance of evidence deployed Appropriateness of method or approach Depth, precision and accuracy of evidence cited
Organisation and Presentation	Clarity and coherence of structure Clarity and fluency of prose Correctness of grammar, spelling and punctuation Scholarly presentation of footnotes and bibliography

These criteria inform the following mark bands

Work of outstanding distinction quality: 80 and above	Work which engages decisively, imaginatively and originally with the problem identified, displays strong analytical and conceptual power, sustains a coherent argument, deploys primary evidence skilfully and effectively. Such work will be clearly and engagingly written and presented in an impeccably lucid, correct and scholarly manner. The examiners should feel confident that a thesis at this level might be published with minimal revisions in a good, refereed scholarly journal
Work of a consistently high distinction quality: 75-79	Work which demonstrates all of the qualities stipulated above, but which contains some relative weakness in one of the areas of coverage, originality, deployment of evidence, presentation or style.
Excellent work that achieves distinction standard: 70-74	Work which demonstrates outstanding qualities of intellectual engagement with primary and secondary sources, coherence and control of argument, and impressive scope but may show relative weakness in some areas of coverage, originality, evidence, presentation or style
Work of high standard: 65-69	The work will display some of the elements of 'distinction quality' work, but may be significantly flawed in <i>either</i> coverage <i>or</i> construction of argument <i>or</i> presentation. It will nonetheless engage well with the problem identified, display good analytical power, be well-argued and use evidence appropriately. Work at this level may entitle the candidate to a doctoral place
Work of a solid, scholarly standard: 57-64	The work will clearly identify some relevant problem and engage well with its context, display analytical powers, and make appropriate use of evidence but will display inconsistencies and imbalances in treatment. Work at this level has the qualities of a decent pass.
Work of adequate scholarly standard at master's level: 50-56	The work will display some analytical effectiveness and skill in constructing an argument, but this will be inconsistent, or marred by serious shortcomings in coverage, use of material, presentation or language. Work at this level is narrowly of pass quality.
Work which fails to reach the required standard: 49 and below	In the upper 40s the work will display some knowledge of the issues, but with serious omissions and inaccuracies. The work may fail to define a problem adequately and/or the level of analysis and argument may be poor. The presentation and use of English may be inadequate and/or careless. A dissertation may rely too heavily on secondary literature or fail to contextualize the research material adequately. All of these issues will become progressively more evident in work achieving marks of 45 and lower. Examiners who award marks in this band must be prepared to indicate, through feedback forms or in a final report, the improvements necessary to bring the work to pass level.

Verification and reconciliation of marks

Extended essays and dissertations will be independently (double-blind) marked by either two members of the panel of examiners, or specialist assessors appointed in the subject area; neither of the markers must be either of the candidate's individual supervisors. The examiners aim at distributing the marking load in such a way that in the overall examination process at least three people are

involved in marking an individual student's submitted pieces and no individual examiner or assessor marks all three items of a given student's work.

Where their independent marks are less than 4 point apart, markers may elect to average their marks (rounded up to a full percentage point). If their independent marks are 4 or more points apart, markers are expected to reconcile their marks and submit a short explanation for their reconciliation for review by the board of examiners. Where markers are unable to agree a mark their reports and the submitted work are passed on to the external examiner for moderation. The external examiner and the chair of the board of examiners are entitled to arrange an independent third marking if they think that would be desirable.

The external examiner shall mainly act as a moderator and shall have a deciding vote in marking decisions where the full board of examiners cannot arrive at a decision by majority vote. From time to time the external examiner may be asked to blind mark some essays or dissertations in her or his area of expertise. The external examiner has the right to inspect pieces of work submitted for examination if she or he wishes to do so.

Scaling

As all assessment is based on submitted essays and dissertations on topics chosen by candidates it is not expected that circumstances would arise in which scaling would be appropriate.

Short-weight convention and departure from rubric

There are no formal penalties for short-weight in essays or dissertations, and candidates are reminded that the word-limits are not a target, but a maximum. However, dissertations and essays which are significantly shorter than the maximum are likely to be inadequate in their coverage and content, and will be so marked. As a rough guideline, a 15,000-word dissertation would likely to be judged inadequate if it were shorter than 12,000 words.

Any penalties are imposed by the Board as a whole, not by markers; and consideration is given to their effect on a candidate's overall classification.

Penalties for late or non-submission

The scale of penalties agreed by the board of examiners in relation to late submission of assessed items is set out below. Details of the circumstances in which such penalties might apply can be found in the Examination Regulations (*Regulations for the Conduct of University Examinations*, Part 14.)

Late submission	Penalty
Up to one day (<i>including submitted on the day but after the deadline</i>)	-1 mark (- 1 percentage point)
Each additional day (<i>note that each weekend day counts as a full day for the purposes of mark deductions</i>)	-1 mark (- 1 percentage point)

Max. deducted marks up to 2 weeks late	-14 marks (- 14 percentage points)
More than 2 weeks late	Fail

Penalties for over-length work and departure from approved titles or subject-matter

The Board has agreed the following tariff of marks to be deducted for over-length work:

<i>Dissertation</i>	<i>Extended Essay</i>	<i>Penalty</i>
1-500 words over	1-250 words over	-1 mark
501-1000 words over	251-500 words over	-2 marks
1001-1500 words over	501-750 words over	-3 marks
Each further 500 words over	Each further 250 words over	-1 mark
		<i>Up to a maximum of -10</i>

3.5 Progression rules and classification conventions

Qualitative descriptors of Distinction, Pass, Fail classifications

For qualitative descriptors please consult the mark banding descriptions in section 3.2 above.

Final outcome rules

In assessing a candidate's overall performance, the Examiners give equal weight to each component of the examination - namely pair of core essays, timed papers, and Special Subject dissertation (if any) or the two essays substituted for it.

An overall mark of 50 or higher is required for a pass. An agreed mark of 45 or lower on any component of the examination counts as a failure and cannot be compensated for in any of the other components. There are two routes to a Distinction: either two agreed marks of 70 or higher, and a third not lower than 57; or one agreed mark of 70 or higher, and two of 68.

Review of marks and classification are not mechanical processes, and in their final meeting the panel of examiners shall be bound solely by their academic judgement. Candidates who have initially failed any element of the examination will not be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Where appropriate the examiners will take account of external factors (such as a candidate's illness) if notified by the candidate's college through the proper channels of such circumstances.

Progression rules

Not applicable.

Use of vivas

Not applicable

Resits

A candidate who fails the examination will be permitted to retake it on one further occasion only, not later than one year after the initial attempt. Marks for any element that has been successfully completed at the first attempt may be carried forward, and therefore it will only be necessary for students to re-sit the failed element(s).

Factors affecting performance

Where a candidate or candidates have made a submission, under Part 13 of the Regulations for Conduct of University Examinations, that unforeseen factors may have had an impact on their performance in an examination, the board will discuss the individual applications and band the seriousness of each application on a scale of 1-3 with 1 indicating minor impact, 2 indicating moderate impact, and 3 indicating very serious impact. When reaching this decision, examiners will take into consideration the severity and relevance of the circumstances, and the strength of the evidence. Examiners will also note whether all or a subset of papers were affected, being aware that it is possible for circumstances to have different levels of impact on different papers. The banding information will be used at the final board of examiners meeting to adjudicate on the merits of candidates. Further information on the procedure is provided in the *Policy and Guidance for examiners, Annex B* and student guidance is provided at www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance.

3.6 Details of examiners and rules on communicating with examiners

Peter Heather (External examiner), Professor of Medieval History, KCL

Ida Toth (Chair), Ioannou Centre, University of Oxford

Mark Whittow, Associate Professor of Byzantine Studies, University of Oxford

Neil McLynn, Lecturer and Fellow in Later Roman History, University of Oxford

Ine Jacobs, Associate Professor of Byzantine Archaeology & Visual Culture, University of Oxford

Philip Booth, Faculty of Theology, University of Oxford

Candidates must not under any circumstances seek to make contact with individual internal or external examiners about matters concerning their examination. Any questions concerning their examination should be directed in the first instance to the History Faculty Graduate Office

4. Teaching and learning

4.1 Organisation of teaching and learning

Supervision

As outlined in Section 2, work towards the dissertation is based on one-to-one sessions with a

supervisor in which independent critical thinking and the cogent presentation and defence of argument can be developed. Your supervisor will review, monitor and comment on your academic progress using the Graduate Supervision System (GSS): <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/gss/>. You are also encouraged to submit comments on this system.

Classes

Teaching of Core and Option classes is mainly by small, dedicated classes to allow flexibility of approach and regular interaction between students and teachers. Classes are the main form of course-specific interactive learning. Their function is to allow the students to investigate the assigned topics in an interactive forum, or to practise the skills (in the case of conceptual or practical skills) with staff moderation, guidance and supervision.

Lectures

The Faculty and University provide a substantial programme of lectures which are designed to 'package' large bodies of knowledge into a compact and coherent form that can be assimilated and usefully pursued by students. They provide examples of how complex materials can be organised into intellectually persuasive patterns, and enhance the development of intellectual and practical skills.

Research seminars

There are regular weekly staff-graduate research seminars in most areas covered by the streams of this programme, and they usually feature visiting and local speakers (staff members as well as advanced graduate students) for a one-hour presentation followed by questions and informal interaction. These showcases both work in progress and cutting-edge research results, and are intended to develop and enhance graduate students' research and communication skills by example.

If you have any issues with teaching or supervision please raise these as soon as possible so that they can be addressed promptly. Details of who to contact are provided in the History Faculty's Complaints and Appeals document: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/Lcbte2>.

4.2 Archival research and fieldwork

Some students may undertake archival research or fieldwork when preparing their dissertation. Necessity of fieldwork depends on the nature of a student's research, and funding to cover travel expenses is not automatically provided, although a limited number of small grants may be available (see Section 7).

If your research involves interviews, or confidential personal information such as medical records, you will need to seek approval from the Ethics Committee of the Social Sciences and Humanities Divisions (IDREC): <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/curec/apply/>. Students who intend to conduct interviews are also advised to attend the History Faculty's annual training workshop on oral history, usually scheduled for Hilary Term.

Safety and insurance

All students who wish to undertake fieldwork or archival work beyond the University must complete a Risk Assessment and take out University travel insurance. This applies even when students are travelling within the UK or travelling overseas to their country of origin. Forms for this can be found on WebLearn: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/YvCbYx>.

4.3 Expectations of study and behaviour

Expectations of study

Students are responsible for their own academic progress and are expected to attend all lectures, classes and tutorials as agreed with supervisors and course convenors, unless prevented from doing so by illness or another good reason. All graduate students are expected to apply themselves to academic work on a full-time basis throughout the duration of their course, both during university terms and vacations, except during public holidays outside term and when they take time off for personal holidays (perhaps to a total of six weeks during the year).

Students are expected to be resident in Oxford during term time. Tutorials, classes and seminars, and formal assessment will normally be scheduled only during full term or in Weeks 0 and 9. During university vacations students are expected to pursue independent study and research. Neither supervisors nor students will necessarily be in Oxford during vacations, but supervision meetings may be arranged if it is mutually convenient.

Students who may need to suspend their studies for health or other reasons should contact the Graduate Office. Longer term absences, for example due to maternity leave or unforeseen changes in personal circumstances, are permitted but the student must contact the Graduate Office to discuss this as soon as possible.

Any student who feels that their ability to study is impeded by health, disability, personal circumstances, financial issues etc. should contact the Graduate Office or their College Office or Tutor for Graduates: they will do their utmost to help.

Expectations of behaviour

All students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner befitting an Oxford University student. Fellow students and staff, and members of the general public in Oxford should be treated with respect at all times. Abusive behaviour, bullying or harassment will not be tolerated; discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, disability, age or personal circumstance is absolutely unacceptable and may lead to expulsion.

Any student who is experiencing difficulties of this nature is strongly encouraged to seek advice immediately (see contacts in Section 9).

Paid or voluntary work

Some students may wish to undertake paid or voluntary work during their course. Before doing so, please consult the paid work guidelines for graduate students:

www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/policyonpaidwork.

Students who hold a Tier 4 visa will have restrictions on the paid and voluntary work permitted under the terms of their visa.

5. Skills and learning development

5.1 Induction

Information on postgraduate History induction events is distributed to all new students before the start of their course.

5.2 Feedback on learning and assessment

Formative feedback

- small classes or tutorial groups, which allow constant monitoring of development
- submission of written work on a regular basis
- meetings with supervisors, which occur several times a term. The dissertation is guided and monitored on a regular basis by a specialist supervisor. As mentioned earlier, your supervisor should also submit termly reports on the Graduate Supervision System (GSS).

Summative feedback

Please note that we are not able to release any marks until after the final exam board at the end of the course. The procedures for summative assessment are outlined in the Examination conventions.

5.3 Learning development, skills and training

Training provision

All new students are invited to fill in a self-assessment training form before they start their course. This serves as a basis of discussion about training needs and skills with their supervisor in the first meeting. Also, the form gives an indication of what training provisions are available for History postgraduates.

Further information

Training sessions: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/Lcbte2> (History WebLearn > General Info)

Seminars: <http://www.history.ox.ac.uk/research-seminars> (also weekly email)

Lecture List: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/XYMINm> (History WebLearn start page)

Language training is organised through the Faculty (in conjunction with the Language Centre) at the start of the academic year, except where it is made clear to students that they need to organise their own tuition

A wide range of information and training materials are available to help you develop your academic skills – including time management, research and library skills, referencing, revision skills and academic writing - through the university website: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills.

5.4 Opportunities to engage in the faculty's research community

The Faculty offers a wide range of research seminars, often associated with particular Research Centres and Projects, which run during term-time throughout the academic year. These seminars are directed primarily at postgraduate students and Faculty members: www.history.ox.ac.uk/events.

Other opportunities for interdisciplinary engagement are available through The Oxford Research Centre for the Humanities (TORCH): www.torch.ox.ac.uk.

5.5 Course aims and learning outcomes

The programme is designed either to be taken in preparation for doctoral work, or to offer a terminal degree in preparation for professional work in which knowledge of this area of study may be an advantage.

5.6 Careers information and advice

Students are strongly encouraged to engage with the University Careers Service at the earliest opportunity: www.careers.ox.ac.uk.

6 Student representation, evaluation and feedback

6.1 Faculty representation

History graduates are represented in and through the Graduate Joint Consultative Committee (GJCC), a body which includes research student members from each core seminar or group of specialist seminars, and representatives of all master's programmes within the Faculty:

<https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/YvCbYx>.

The Oxford History Graduate Network (OHGN) organises the election of officers of the GJCC, and also assists with the recruitment of representatives from the various research areas and master's programmes: www.ohgn.org. The President and the Academic Affairs Officer of the GJCC are ex officio members of the Faculty's Graduate Studies Committee.

6.2 Division and University representation

Divisional representation

Students from the faculties and departments within the Humanities Division are also represented at Divisional committee level.

University wide representation

Student representatives sitting on the Divisional Board are selected through a process organised by the Student Union (OUSU). Details can be found on the OUSU website along with information about student representation at the University level: <https://ousu.org/representing-you/>.

6.3 Opportunities to provide evaluation and feedback

Faculty feedback mechanisms

The Director of Graduate Studies will be pleased to hear any feedback or comments you have about your experience of being a graduate student with the History Faculty. Verbal, informal feedback is always welcome; more formalised feedback can be provided through the channels below. Master's students receive an annual feedback form to fill in towards the end of their course.

Questionnaires on Faculty teaching

Questionnaires to provide feedback on lectures and classes are often handed out by lecturers at the end of lecture series, and students are encouraged to complete these and hand them to the lecturer before leaving the lecture room.

Graduate Supervision System (GSS)

Each term graduate students are given the opportunity to report through the Graduate Supervision System on their student experience. This is particularly relevant for their regular stock-taking on their individual research for their course dissertation. This opportunity for reflection is not only useful for students themselves, it also helps their supervisors and advisors, and the Director of Graduate Studies to gain an informed view of their progress, and to identify any additional support that might profit them.

University-wide feedback mechanisms

Students on full-time and part-time matriculated courses are surveyed once per year on all aspects of their course (learning, living, pastoral support, college) through the Student Barometer. Previous results can be viewed by students, staff and the general public at:

www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/student-engagement.

7. Student life and support

Details of the wide range of sources of support are available more widely in the University are

available from the university website, including in relation to mental and physical health and disability: www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare.

7.1 Useful Contacts

Personal and pastoral support

Students can sometimes find themselves faced with personal problems and need expert advice. Remember that a whole range of people – supervisors, college advisers, etc. – may be ready, not necessarily to solve your problem, but to advise you on where to turn to for appropriate help. So too, colleges may have a range of designated college counsellors. College chaplains, nurses, and doctors are also experienced in helping with student problems of many kinds.

The University Counselling Service (www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/counselling) assists students who are experiencing psychological stress. Appointments can be made either by calling (2)70300 or by calling in person at their offices (3 Worcester Street); you do not need a referral from your GP or anybody else. The office of the Service is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm throughout the year, except for short periods in the vacations which are publicised on their website well in advance.

Every college has its own systems of support for students: please refer to your college handbook or website for more information on whom to contact and what support is available.

Administrative support

The Faculty's Graduate Office aims to provide advice as well as administration for students on taught Master's courses and research programmes in all fields of history. Day-to-day responsibility for the running of the Graduate Office lies with the Graduate Officer (see the History Faculty website for details: www.history.ox.ac.uk/academic-administration), who also acts as the liaison officer to the University's Student Administration Section.

The overall supervision of the activities of the Graduate Office lies with the Director of Graduate Studies, who chairs the Faculty's Graduate Studies Committee and manages the development and implementation of policy on graduate matters. He is also available to offer confidential advice and assistance to graduate students, particularly on matters of teaching, learning and administration, and/or more sensitive difficulties.

Students should use the shared email address: current.graduates@history.ox.ac.uk or call 01865 615001.

General academic support

Advice for students is available through those teaching each course element and through the student's allocated supervisor. The latter will have been chosen on the basis of his/her expertise in the field in which the student wishes to pursue research and will provide specific in-depth advice on the research topic, but will also be able to give more general guidance about library resources.

The officers of the Faculty's Graduate Joint Consultative Committee (GJCC) and of the Oxford History Graduate Network (OHGN) are also happy to provide support through the organisation of academic and social events which bring you together with fellow students. See Section 6 for details.

All students are also based in colleges, where there is a tutor for graduates or dean of graduates, with special responsibility for graduate students, and a college adviser for each individual.

7.2 Complaints and appeals

Please see the Faculty's Complaints and Appeals document: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/Lcbte2>.

7.3 Student societies

See www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/clubs.

7.4 University policies and regulations

The University has a wide range of policies and regulations that apply to students. These are easily accessible through the A-Z of University regulations, codes of conduct and policies available on the Oxford Students website www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/regulations/a-z.

Please see the University Awards Framework (UAF) for information on the different qualifications that the University awards and explains how they relate to the national standards agreed for higher education qualifications: <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance/awardsframework/>.

Relevant subject benchmark statement: There is no [subject benchmark statement](#) for a History degree at Master's level.

7.5 Prizes and funding

The History Faculty is able to provide some support for student research through its trust funds (<https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/x/YvCbYx>), but you are expected to explore also other sources of support such as your college.

The Faculty also offers annual prizes for the best dissertations.

A central list of all University prizes is at: www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding/prizes-and-awards.

8. Facilities

8.1 Social spaces and facilities

The Joan Thirsk Common Room in the History Faculty is open to all graduate students from 8am to 9pm every day, except for some limited periods in vacations, or when the room is booked for conferences or workshops. There is a hot drinks vending machine and a water dispenser.

During term, the History Faculty Librarian will hold drop-in surgeries in the Common Room at least once a week. The times will be published on WebLearn.

Students are also welcome to use the History Faculty garden as a social space.

The History Faculty has a number of rooms that can be booked for meetings, classes, seminars, workshops, etc. Rooms must be booked in advance by calling Reception (01865 6 15000) or emailing board.admin@history.ox.ac.uk.

History graduates are also welcome to use library and common room in the new Social Sciences Centre at Manor Road.

The University Club in Mansfield Road (www.club.ox.ac.uk) provides social and sporting facilities for employees, graduate students, alumnae and visitors. There is no fee for graduate members. The Oxford Union Society in St Michael's Street (www.oxford-union.org) is more central and traditional. It offers not only a useful lending library, but also a dining room, games and television rooms, and a bar, but these are available to members only. Membership is by subscription. If you are interested you should make contact as soon as possible after you arrive in Oxford: substantial discounts are available for those joining early.

And finally, college Graduate or 'Middle' Common Rooms are often lively places, and offer a good opportunity for meeting people in other disciplines.

8.2 Workspace

The History Faculty does not provide dedicated workspace for Master's students in the building. Students are advised to ask whether their college has suitable facilities.

However, the Faculty's Joan Thirsk Common Room has Wi-Fi access and power sockets for the use of laptops, and students have found it appropriate for informal group discussions relating to class preparation. In addition, the Gerry Martin Room has a range of desktop computers which can be used by History students registered with the Faculty's IT Support whenever the room is not booked for teaching and seminars.

8.3 Libraries and museums

Libraries

There are several resources in Oxford that provide support for both taught and research elements of the course:

- The Bodleian Libraries. Under this heading come most of Oxford's libraries, including the main Bodleian Library and the Weston Library with its specialist collections.
- The Bodleian History Faculty Library collections are located in the Radcliffe Camera and Gladstone Link on the central Bodleian Library site. The Library houses the University of Oxford's main collection of undergraduate lending materials in both Medieval and Modern History, as well as in the History of Art and History of Science. Designed primarily to serve undergraduates reading for the Honour School of Modern History and associated joint schools in the University, as well as undergraduates in the Department of History of Art, it also serves as a lending resource for graduate students and Senior Members of the Faculty of History.
- The Taylor Institution Library with its extensive holdings in European languages and literature.
- The Radcliffe Science Library collection includes works on the history of science and medicine of all parts of the world.
- The Bodleian Law Library contains materials on Indian legislation, Indian law reports and textbooks on Indian law, and a basic collection of law reports for Pakistan.
- College libraries are usually open only to members of their own college, though access may be granted to other members of the University who can show academic need for consulting material only available in a particular college.

Museums

Students are strongly advised to familiarise themselves with the University museums, particularly those which hold items, or conduct research, relevant to their area(s) of study. These are likely to include:

- The Ashmolean Museum for Art and Archaeology (www.ashmolean.org)
- The Pitt Rivers Museum for Anthropology and Archaeology (www.prm.ox.ac.uk).
- The Museum of the History of Science (www.mhs.ox.ac.uk)
- The Oxford University Museum of Natural History (www.oum.ox.ac.uk).

8.4 IT

There is an extensive network of IT resources and support within Oxford. Colleges provide good IT resources, and Support Officers prepared to train and assist students. Oxford University IT Services also provides facilities for graduates and a variety of training programmes. The University holds site licences which allow access to a number of important English language research tools (e.g. corpora and the software which is used to work with them).

The History Faculty employs their own IT support staff, and each Faculty offers dedicated networked graduate workspace.

The Gerry Martin Room in the History Faculty is equipped with several desktop PCs and space for students using handheld devices. All teaching rooms and the Common Room have Wi-Fi access: students are encouraged to use OWL or Eduroam to log on.

IT training is provided by IT Services: an up to date list of courses can be found here: <https://www.it.ox.ac.uk/do/training-and-facilities>. Students can also buy a range of discounted software from the IT Services shop (<http://www.it.ox.ac.uk/want/shop/>).

9. Other useful information

9.1 Buildings, locations and accessibility

Key locations for this course are:

- The History Faculty (<https://goo.gl/maps/BBntwGne8h62>)
- The History Faculty Library in the Radcliffe Camera (<https://goo.gl/maps/EAcCSm4gi3T2>)
- The History of Art Department (<https://goo.gl/maps/D36rGSov89920>)
- The Sackler Library (<https://goo.gl/maps/BwxPziJeMS42>)
- Examination Schools (<https://goo.gl/maps/UP7AdWTWJR22>).

The location and accessibility of many University buildings are described in this online Access Guide: <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/access/>.

9.2 Other contacts

Course Convenor and class leaders

Professor Marc Lauxtermann (marc.lauxtermann@exeter.ox.ac.uk) [MT]; Dr Philip Booth (philip.booth@trinity.ox.ac.uk) [HT & TT].

Disability contacts

The Disability Co-ordinator for graduate students is Alex Vickers (alexandra.vickers@history.ox.ac.uk), and she can help with all general enquiries. Students can also contact Jo Innes, the Disability Lead and Chair of the History Faculty Disability Working Group (perry.gauci@lincoln.ox.ac.uk) or the Secretary to the Disability Working Group, Dr Jeannie Scott (jeannie.scott@history.ox.ac.uk).

Harassment advisors

The History Faculty Harassment Advisors are Dr Matthew Grimley

(matthew.grimley@merton.ox.ac.uk) and Dr Sloan Mahone (sloan.mahone@history.ox.ac.uk).

Students are welcome to contact them for a confidential discussion about any concerns.

Other useful History Faculty contacts

- Reception and general enquiries: board.admin@history.ox.ac.uk
- IT Support: itsupport@history.ox.ac.uk
- History Faculty Library isabel.holowaty@bodleian.ox.ac.uk