

HISTORY AND ENGLISH AT CORPUS

A GUIDE FOR INCOMING STUDENTS ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆ 2018

Welcome to Corpus! When you come up in October, we shall give you a lot of guidance about the History course, including a handbook, which will tell you everything you need to know. At this stage, we just want to give you a rough outline, so that you can make some decisions about what you want to study in the first couple of terms and do a little preparatory work. If you want to know more, go to www.history.ox.ac.uk/joint-schools and scroll down to the section on 'History and English', where you can download last year's handbooks.

THE FIRST-YEAR EXAMINATION

There is an examination (called the Preliminary Examination, usually abbreviated to Prelims), at the end of your third term, and this shapes the work you do during the first year. There are four courses, or 'papers': two in History, two in English. One History paper must be an outline paper in British History: these are listed at 1, below. The other must be chosen from the different kinds of course listed at 2, below. For English, you will take the course listed at 3 and one of the options listed at 4.

1. The British History papers cover a variety of topics – political, social, economic, cultural, intellectual and so on – within the history of the British Isles during the specified periods. The options are History of the British Isles I (c.300-1100), II (1000-1330), III (1330-1550); IV (1500-1700); V (1688-1848); VI (1830-1951). You will probably begin work on this paper in your first term.
2. a History paper to be chosen from the following:
 - a) 'Approaches to History'. This looks at the ways in which historical writing has been influenced by other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. You will look at three of these 'approaches', to be chosen from Archaeology, Art History, Anthropology, Economics, Gender Studies and Sociology.
 - b) 'Historiography: Tacitus to Weber'. For this paper, you will study the development of historical writing and attitudes to history by looking at the works of major historians and setting them in context. The historians concerned are Tacitus, St. Augustine, Machiavelli, Gibbon, Ranke, Macaulay and Weber. You will look at three or four of them.
 - c) an 'Optional Subject'. These provide the opportunity to study a comparatively manageable period or problem in some depth, and from primary sources. A list of titles follows (you do not need to decide at this stage which option you wish to study, but you can find them listed here: <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/optional-subject>)
3. the English paper called 'Introduction to Language and Literature'
4. a second English paper, from the following:
 - a) Early Medieval Literature, 650-1350
 - b) Literature in English, 1830-1910 ('Victorian')

Before coming up in October, we would like you to choose your four papers, so that we can make arrangements for your teaching. As far as **History** is concerned, we think it is very important that you should begin your studies at Oxford by broadening your range; we will therefore expect you not to do in your first term the period of British history that you studied at A level. If you are deeply attached to that period, don't worry: you will be able to return to it in your second year. As for **English**, the most important thing is to make a serious start on the reading for your courses, using the reading-lists below. The pace here is very hot; it will perhaps be a shock, after the comparatively leisurely speed of A level, to have to cope with a major author or several texts in each week. You are strongly advised to read through as much as you can in advance.

Please inform the Academic Registrar, by 1st September, which papers you intend to take. You are welcome to consult any of the tutors for further advice if you feel you need it.

PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST YEAR'S WORK

History

We suggest that you do two kinds of introductory reading for History.

First of all, we would like you to read, and think about, the accompanying essays 'Time, Work- Discipline and Industrial Capitalism', by E. P. Thompson and 'Rice-Milling, Gender and Slave Labour in Colonial South Carolina', by Judith Carney. We will meet to discuss these essays during Freshers' Week. We do not expect you to know anything about the things the authors are discussing, but we would like you to think about their approaches, their arguments and their evidence. What do you find persuasive and interesting here? What does not convince you? What continuities and differences do you notice between the two pieces, written roughly thirty years apart? Our aim in asking you to read these articles, and in joining us to discuss it, is to draw you into some of the ways we work at Oxford. Your reactions to what you read are important. You'll get used to reading articles like this, as well as books, and to forming opinions about them. You'll also get used to exchanging those opinions with other students and tutors. And you'll get used to encountering unfamiliar material and having to come up with some ideas about it pretty quickly. We'd like to offer you a taste of that experience soon after you arrive.

Secondly, you may wish to do some preparatory reading for your History period paper, bearing in mind that it will be a period which you did not study at A level. These are books to be enjoyed, and you shouldn't read them as though getting them up for examinations, but to get the flavour of the period.

1. For **British History I**, we would suggest either of the following books, which are easily available in paperback:
 - J. Campbell, ed., *The Anglo-Saxons* (Penguin, London, 1991)
 - R. Fleming, *Britain after Rome* (Penguin, London, 2010)

2. For **British History II**, we would suggest one of the following books, which are easily available in paperback:
 - M. T. Clanchy, *England and its Rulers, 1066-1307*, 3rd edn. (Blackwell, Oxford, 2006).
 - J. Crick and E. Van Houts, eds., *A Social History of England, 900-1200* (Cambridge, 2011)
 - R. R. Davies, *The First English Empire, 1093-1343* (Oxford, 2000) (a thoughtful series of lectures, rather than an introductory work)

3. If you choose **British History III**, there is no introductory work that surveys the whole period, but the following are useful, and available in paperback:
 - W. M. Ormrod and R. Horrox, eds., *A Social History of England, 1200-1500* (Cambridge, 2006)
 - G. L. Harriss, *Shaping the Nation: England, 1360-1461* (Oxford, 2005)
 - C. Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses* (Cambridge University Press, 1997)
 - S. Brigden, *New Worlds, Lost Worlds: the Rule of the Tudors, 1485-1603* (Penguin, 2000)

4. For **British History IV**, you will find the following books helpful as an introduction; all of them are in paperback:
 - S. Brigden, *New Worlds, Lost Worlds: the Rule of the Tudors, 1485-1603* (Penguin, 2000)
 - A. Ryrie, *The Age of Reformation: the Tudor and Stewart Realms, 1485-1603* (Harlow, 2009)
 - J. Wormald, ed., *The Seventeenth Century, 1603-1714* (Oxford, 2008)
 - K. Wrightson, *English Society, 1580-1680* (Rutgers, NJ, 2003)

5. For **British History V**, the following books offer an excellent orientation:
 - P. Langford, ed., *Oxford History of the British Isles: the Eighteenth Century, 1688-1815* (Oxford, 2002)
 - Boyd Hilton, *A mad, bad, and dangerous people? England 1783-1846* (Oxford: OUP, 2006)
 - D. Hay and N. Rogers, *Eighteenth Century English Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).
 - L. Colley, *Britons. Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London: Pimlico, 1992).
 - J. Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination. English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Hammond: Harper Collins, 1997).

6. For **British History VI**, you will find the following books helpful as an introduction:

- Colin Matthew, ed., *The nineteenth century: the British Isles, 1815-1901* (Oxford: OUP, 2000)
- Peter Clarke, *Hope and glory: Britain 1900-2000* (London: Penguin, 2004).
- Martin Pugh, *State and society: British political and social history 1870-1992* (London: Hodder, 1999)
- Martin Daunton, *Wealth and welfare: an economic and social history of Britain 1851-1951* (Oxford: OUP, 2007).
- Ronald Hyam, *Britain's imperial century, 1815-1914: a study of empire and expansion* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

English

1. INTRODUCTION TO LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

This paper is intended to introduce you to the English language and to English literature as a discipline with its variety of approaches to reading literary texts and literary criticism. In Michaelmas the concentration is on language and its literary ways; in Hilary the concentration is more on approaches, theories and critical practices. There is a course of core lectures which run weekly through Michaelmas and Hilary terms. These are supplemented by College classes and tutorials.

Over the summer, please acquire a copy of:

- Sara Thorne, *Mastering Advanced English Language*, 2nd edition (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

This is a useful transitional textbook which will help you get up to speed at the start of the course, and will remain a convenient reference tool afterwards. Feel free to buy this book second-hand, but please make sure it's the 2008 second edition and not the 1997 first edition. **Please read the first chapter (pages 3–46) before our first class for this course.** You need not do the exercises included in the chapter, unless you want to tackle them simply as an aid to your reading.

As further preparatory reading over the summer, we recommend one or more of these three titles:

- Ronald Carter and Walter Nash, *Seeing Through Language: a Guide to Styles of English Writing* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990)
- Jonathan Culpeper, *History of English*, 2nd edition (London: Routledge, 2005) (there are three editions of this—from 1997, 2005 and 2015—and, in this case, any edition will be useful; the third edition is just a bit more up-to-date with current scholarship)
- Annabelle Mooney and others, eds, *The Language, Society, and Power Reader* (London: Routledge, 2011)

Each of these relates to a different aspect of the paper.

In Hilary Term you will attend centrally taught interdisciplinary classes for the core teaching of Section B; these will introduce you to some of the key methodological issues and debates involved in an interdisciplinary approach. You should check the English Faculty Lecture List for the timing of these classes, with the majority taking

place in Hilary Term; the convenors for this section of the paper will also email you with details of reading and presentations once term starts. Written work will be set centrally, along with work for presentations and class discussion. Students will also find it useful to attend the 8 Faculty lectures for Section B which will be provided for single honour English students in Hilary term. In addition, you are also encouraged to attend the college classes and tutorials provided for the single honour school.

2. LITERATURE 1830-1910

If you choose this option the following authors will be studied in Michaelmas Term and the first half of Hilary Term.

This list is provided to guide your preparatory reading for the Victorian paper. There will be plenty to do and to delight in during your first term at Oxford, so read as much as you can before you arrive. Take notes as you read: these will serve as invaluable reminders for things such as themes, character names and major plot points, as well as a record of your own critical responses to a text. Be sure to mark passages that are of particular interest too, so that you can return to them easily.

It is important to use authoritative editions from now on. Oxford World's Classics, Penguin Classics, and Norton Critical Editions are all widely available, including from second-hand sellers. Please make sure you have a hard copy that you can bring with you to classes and tutorials.

Novels

(We will most likely focus on the starred items)

Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (1847), *Villette* (1853)*

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899)

Charles Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841), *Bleak House* (1853)*

George Eliot, *Adam Bede* (1859), *Middlemarch* (1872)*

Thomas Hardy, *The Pursuit of the Well-Beloved* (1892), *Jude the Obscure* (1895)

Henry James, *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881)*

Herman Melville, *Redburn: His First Voyage* (1849)*

Poetry

Pick up a good anthology of Victorian poetry – I would recommend *The New Oxford Book of Victorian Verse*, edited by Christopher Ricks. The Blackwell Annotated Anthology provides further details about the poets and poems it includes. We are likely to touch on poetry by the following writers at some point, but read as widely as you can:

Matthew Arnold, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Robert Browning, Emily Dickinson (see the Faber *Complete Poems*), Thomas Hardy, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Rudyard Kipling, George Meredith, William Morris, Edgar Allan Poe, Christina Rossetti, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Arthur Symonds, Alfred Tennyson, Walt Whitman (specifically *Leaves of Grass*)

Plays

Our studies of theatre and performance in the period will be wide-ranging. If you would like to read ahead, I would suggest focusing on plays by W.S. Gilbert, Henrik Ibsen, George Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde. I would also highly recommend a collection of plays published by Oxford entitled *The New Woman and Other Emancipated Woman Plays*, which is edited by Jean Chothia.

Nonfiction Prose

Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (1869)

Charles Darwin, *The Voyage of the Beagle* (1839)

John Ruskin, *Selected Writings* (Oxford)

William Morris, *News from Nowhere and Other Writings* (Penguin)

George Eliot, *Selected Essays, Poems and Other Writings* (Penguin)

Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (1873)

Useful Background Reading

You may find it informative to explore the following resources, which provide good introductions to the social and historical contexts of the period, as well as its literature and culture:

Colin Matthew and Christopher Harvie, *Nineteenth-Century Britain: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2000)

Sean Purchase, *Key Concepts in Victorian Literature* (Palgrave, 2006)

Josephine Guy and Ian Small, *The Routledge Concise History of Nineteenth-Century Literature* (Routledge, 2011)

The British Library has an excellent set of resources devoted to Romantic and Victorian literature: <http://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles>. Spend some time exploring the articles on nineteenth-century writing: they are all written by experts in the period and raise important and interesting ideas and issues you may wish to carry forward. You may also wish to explore the resources online at www.victorianweb.org.

Finally, you may find it helpful to consult general introductions to literary forms: the novel, poetry, drama. These will be instructive beyond your studies in this period. Here are some useful examples:

James Wood, *How Fiction Works* (London: Vintage, 2009)

James Fenton, *An Introduction to English Poetry* (London: Penguin, 2003)

Terry Eagleton, *How to Read a Poem* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007)

Martin Meisel, *How Plays Work: Reading and Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)

3. INTRODUCTION TO MEDIEVAL STUDIES: EARLY MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

As part of the Early Medieval Literature, 650-1350 paper, you will be taught both the language and the literature of the Anglo-Saxon period, beginning with Old English language classes in Michaelmas and continuing with classes and tutorials in Hilary term. Below is a preliminary reading list providing details of the recommended books.

Language:

Although Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson's *A Guide to Old English* (below) is the standard language workbook for Old English, the *Cambridge Old English Reader* ed. Richard Marsden (Cambridge, 2004) is also useful.

Mitchell, Bruce and Fred C. Robinson, *A Guide to Old English*, 8th ed. (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012)

Historical and Literary/Cultural Background:

Campbell, James (ed.), *The Anglo-Saxons* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991)

Robin Fleming, *Britain after Rome: The Fall and Rise, 400-1070* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2010)

Malcolm Godden and Michael Lapidge (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*, 2nd edition (Cambridge University Press, 2013)

General

IT

The use of a tablet, PC or lap-top is now routine, and you should expect to use one frequently, as you probably already do. The ability to touch-type will be a real advantage. Wi-Fi is available throughout the College and there are also network connections in student rooms on the main College site. The University Computing Service has a shop where you can purchase consumables, software at discount prices, and hardware - also at advantageous prices.

Study Skills

You may like to look at one of the guides to studying at university, some of which are listed below. University work presents new challenges (and excitements), and it raises different issues and problems. No-one will be 'teaching' you in quite the way you have been taught before: it will be up to you, to a much greater extent, to organise your time and to plan your studies; and the standard university diet of lectures, classes and tutorials differs from the kind of teaching that is usual in sixth forms. You will not find it hard to adapt to the style and content of university education, and you will certainly develop your own personal strategies for meeting the demands placed upon you; but, even so, these guides often contain useful advice, and reading one of them may give you a better idea of what sort of things to expect when you come to Oxford in the autumn. All are available in paperback at reasonable prices.

- E. Chambers and A. Northdege, *The Arts Good Study Guide*, 2nd edn (Milton Keynes, 2008)

- M. Abbott, ed., *History Skills*, 2nd edn (London, 2009)

- L. Marshall and F. Rowland, *A Guide to Learning Independently* (Open University Press, 1993)

- P. Dunleavy, *Studying for a Degree in the Humanities and Social Sciences* (Macmillan, 1986)

The next two guides focus particularly on the sorts of writing skill which may be required for university work. If there are aspects of English style, grammar and syntax which you are not

sure of, now might be a good time to tackle them. Do you know how to use a colon, for example? Or a semi-colon?

- G. J. Fairbairn and C. Winch, *Reading, Writing and Reasoning. A Guide for Students* (Open University Press, 1991)
- D. Collinson, et al., *Plain English* (Open University Press, 1992).

For a classic short guide on the importance of writing clearly and how to do it, see George Orwell's 'Politics and the English language' (1947) in his *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters. IV. In Front of Your Nose* (Penguin paperback).

Do not forget to inform the Academic Registrar by 1st September about the courses you have chosen. If you miss this deadline, we may not be able to arrange the teaching you want.

Once we know what you want to do, we shall be able to tell you about the order in which you will be doing it. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to write to us. More detailed information about courses and examinations (for all three years) will be made available to you when you arrive in Oxford in the autumn.

HELEN MOORE (medieval and early modern English literature)

DAVID RUSSELL (modern English literature)

MICHAEL JOSEPH (modern history)

KATHERINE PAUGH (modern history)

JOHN WATTS (medieval history)

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