



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

**FACULTY OF
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

**English Language and Literature
Prelims Handbook**

2025 - 2026

1. FOREWORD

1.1 Welcome

A warm welcome to your studies with the Faculty of English at Oxford. We are very proud of what we can offer you through your course. We have more tutors and students than any other faculty of English in the UK and we have been ranked first in the world in our subject for the last nine years. Our strength lies in the range of material we cover and the individual attention we can give you to help you find your way. We aim to spark your interest and develop your talents to make you the best critics you can be. Your studies here will be stimulating, testing, challenging, and fun, in equal measure. Oxford has extraordinary resources for the study of English literature and culture; it has outstanding libraries and museums and collections, both famous and little-known; a host of entertainment venues to expand your cultural horizons; beautiful and inspiring buildings; and lovely countryside within reach. There are countless opportunities to learn at Oxford and lots of willing brilliant minds to guide you through them. Do not be afraid to seize every chance and to ask questions. I wish you all the best for your time here.

Professor Simon Horobin

Magdalen College

Chair of the English Faculty Board

1.2 Statement of coverage

This handbook applies to students starting the course in Michaelmas Term 2025. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

1.3 Version

Version	Details	Date
Version 1.0	Published	October 2025
Version 1.1	Clarification on referring to the same author, or text, in more than one assessment; Minor change in marking criteria from “relevant awareness of literary history...” to “awareness of relevant literary history...”; Exam conventions mention AI; MCE exam conventions;	3 rd February 2026

	Referencing and recommended word length in timed exams.	
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1.4 Disclaimer

The Examination Regulations relating to this course are available at [2025-26, Preliminary Examination in English Language and Literature](#). 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 Academic Office in the English Faculty at undergrad@ell.ox.ac.uk.

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

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2. COURSE INFORMATION

2.1 Overview

This handbook covers the Preliminary Examination in English Language and Literature, the first year of BA (Hons) English Language and Literature award. Undergraduate awards are located at Levels 4, 5 and 6 of the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications. [The Subject Benchmark Statement for English can be found here.](#)

This handbook contains essential information about the faculty and the course that you will need to refer to on a regular basis throughout the next year. You can find further useful information on the faculty's [Canvas](#) pages for undergraduates (see section 5.4 for more information about Canvas).

The subject matter of period papers is described as 'Literature in English'. Although most of your work, and exam questions, will focus on authors from the British Isles, students are welcome to study texts written outside these countries, in consultation with their tutors. You might find that there is greater scope for studying non-British Isles authors on later period papers, where American and postcolonial texts are particularly important.

In some papers, you might like to write on texts which were not originally written in English. For all Prelims papers, apart from Paper 1b, the general rule is that you may write on such texts for no more than one-third of the paper. If discussing texts not originally in English, you should always assume that the examiner does not have knowledge of the original language.

Where authors' dates span the period paper boundaries, you should discuss with your tutor where their work more appropriately falls given your interests. In the examination, it is acceptable to discuss a cross-period author within either or both of the periods into which their work falls (as, for example, might be the case for the works of Milton). Whilst you may write about the same *author* more than once, you must not duplicate material on the same primary *text* across different essays or assessments, including Paper 6 and the dissertation. Passing references may be made to the same text in different parts of the examination without penalty.

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 section [4.1](#) of this handbook.

2.1.1. Note on content

The course explores potentially challenging topics. Literature and the other materials we study sometimes portray extreme physical, emotional and psychological states; depict, question, and/or endorse racist, misogynist and prejudiced views or language; and can include graphic representations of inequality and violence (of all kinds). As a faculty, we believe that one of the important roles of study in the humanities is to explore and challenge ideas that are shocking or uncomfortable, and to understand their origins, expression and influence. We also recognise that these texts will affect students differently

depending on their particular backgrounds and experiences. If anything about the material troubles you, please contact your tutors or welfare supporters.

2.2 Educational aims of the BA in English Language and Literature

The programme aims to enable and encourage its students to:

- i) read widely, acquiring knowledge of written texts in most or all periods of English literary history;
- ii) develop as independent learners and thinkers;
- iii) develop their critical, analytical and comparative skills by engagement with a wide range of texts written in English;
- iv) pursue a curriculum that is broad and balanced in respect of historical and generic range, analytical approach, depth, and conceptual sophistication;
- v) acquire knowledge and understanding of the expressive resources of the English language and the ways in which this relates to and impacts on the production of literary texts;
- vi) develop skills in the marshalling and deployment of evidence, and in the oral and written exposition of complex ideas through discursive analysis and argument;
- vii) develop understanding of the relationship between literary theory and practice, including an awareness of debates regarding the acts of reading and writing;
- viii) think critically and in an historicised manner about the complex relationship between literary texts and their social, political, cultural and other relevant contexts;
- ix) develop their understanding of the formal and aesthetic dimensions of literary texts;
- x) acquire intellectual and personal skills which are transferable to a wide range of employment contexts and life experiences;
- xi) select and analyse appropriate examples; weigh evidence; investigate, analyse, and assess competing historical and critical viewpoints;
- xii) engage and enhance their enthusiasm for the subject and their awareness of its social and cultural importance;
- xiii) be appropriately prepared for further academic work in English or related disciplines.

2.3 Intended learning outcomes

A. *Knowledge and understanding*

Students will develop a knowledge and understanding of:

- literature written in English between the early Medieval period and the present day;
- aspects of the use of the English language in literary and other texts in modern and / or earlier times, based on an appropriate level of theoretical understanding;
- the intellectual processes involved in the collection and deployment of primary evidence in literary criticism and scholarship;
- a precise and professional technical vocabulary, appropriately deployed;
- some aspects of literary theory, and of the history of literary criticism;
- processes of literary production and dissemination operative in different historical periods.

Related teaching/learning methods and strategies:

Teaching is by means of faculty lectures and classes, alongside tutorials and classes arranged by students' colleges. The general faculty lectures and classes (open to the whole University) offer instruction in and demonstrations of the application of critical method to literary materials. Faculty seminars are also the vehicle for delivering one of the third-year extended essay papers and are an opportunity for group analysis and discussion of a specific literary or linguistic subject area. College classes (typically about 8 students) may address contextual or textual issues and will encourage assimilation of material and oral analysis and exposition. The tutorial (typically 2 students) will focus on written essays and will often allow the student's own writing to set the intellectual agenda. The essay will form the basis for a wide-ranging discussion; it tests, on a regular (but non-examined) basis, the students' developing abilities in assimilation and analysis, presentation and persuasiveness.

Classes and tutorials, and preparatory work for them, require active learning from the student. The course requires students to read and analyse literature from a very wide range of historical periods and in most recognised literary genres. Cumulatively it allows students to develop their own intellectual archive of texts, approaches and contexts, and encourages them to synthesise,

historicise and compare writings across the complete history of literature in English while also allowing work in other Anglophone literatures. While not making obligatory any explicitly theorised syllabus content, the course expects all students to develop a sensitised awareness of theoretical

issues by exposure through lectures and other forms of teaching to a wide range of theoretical and ideological approaches to literary and cultural history. In Year 1 students study a core skills-led paper and three period-based papers. The skills-led paper is studied concurrently with, and supports, the period-based papers. The period papers' avoidance of set texts (except for commentary work in the Medieval Prelims and FHS papers) encourages wide reading, gives the students freedom to negotiate their own portfolio of authors and allows exploration and innovation alongside study of the 'canon', all within the parameters of guided tutorial work. Work in subsequent years completes the core of period papers and allows more specialised study of specific genres and authors, whilst also requiring compulsory work on Middle English language. Skills are developed cumulatively and are embedded in the assumptions and expectations of the syllabus.

Assessment:

Formally, aspects of the required knowledge and understanding are tested through written University examinations held during the course of the third and ninth terms, portfolios submitted in the third and eighth terms, and by two extended essays submitted in the seventh and eighth terms. At college level, extensive preparation for the organisation and communication of such knowledge and understanding is provided by highly personalised formative assessment offered in (typically) weekly tutorials and by practice examinations set and marked by college tutors. All colleges also have a regime of termly report writing that offers regular valuable feedback and formative assessment to the student.

B. Skills and other attributes

Students will have the opportunity to develop the following skills during the course:

i. Intellectual skills:

The ability to:

- listen and read with an open but critical mind;
- exercise critical judgment and undertake sophisticated synthesis, analysis and evaluation of varying kinds of evidence;
- read closely, analytically, and with understanding, texts from a wide range of historical periods and in many different styles and genres;
- argue persuasively and with appropriate illustration and evidence, both orally and in writing;

- approach literary texts and critical issues with imagination, sensitivity and creativity;
- develop independence of mind, including an ability to challenge received opinion.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies:

There is emphasis throughout the programme on the skills relevant to the careful and critical reading and exegesis of primary texts and of secondary studies. These include the ability to gather, sift, and assess evidence, and the development of sophisticated skills of literary criticism.

Faculty lectures will aim to demonstrate the professional deployment of these skills in high-level analysis of texts and contexts, ideas and ideologies. The skills of presentation and discussion are honed within the tutorial context, and in classes at college and faculty level. Student essays and presentations must demonstrate the ability to identify issues, and to marshal evidence and analysis in a logical and coherent way. These attributes, allied to the exercise of disciplined imagination, are regarded as essential if students are to comprehend the often disparate and unfamiliar values and expectations of past cultures and their texts. All learning strategies are designed to inculcate these skills of independent thought and expression, although they will be displayed and tested most obviously in college tutorials and classes.

Assessment:

The formative assessment provided by classes and tutorials is critical to the development and monitoring of the intellectual skills set out here. In tutorials, students are subjected to regular scrutiny on these skills through presentation and defence of written essay material in front of an established academic literary scholar and one or more of the student's peer group. In classes, presentations to a larger group of peers need to be thorough, professional, appropriately pitched, and critically and textually persuasive.

ii. Practical skills

- advanced literacy and communication skills (oral and written) and the ability to apply these for specific audiences and in appropriate contexts;
- the ability to acquire, process, order and deploy large quantities of information (literary, theoretical, contextual and critical);

- active learning;
- critical and self-reflective reasoning;
- research and bibliographic skills, developed through guidance and allowing independent critical working of a high order of reliability and accuracy;
- IT skills such as word-processing, and the ability to access, manipulate and assess electronic data;
- group working and presentation skills through seminar and class participation.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Classes and tutorials require constant verbal and written interaction with peers and tutors in differently constituted audiences. Longer extended essays require fuller documentation than timed examination papers. Guidance is given through faculty lectures on preparation for such long essays, and faculty handbooks and college guidance offer assistance with communication and study skills. There are induction sessions at faculty and college levels, covering both study skills and IT skills. There are regular opportunities for the development of new skills (e.g. through faculty and University IT training or the University Language Centre). The faculty's employment of different modes of assessment, and the imposition of regular long- and short-term deadlines throughout the course, demand a high level of time management and a commitment to managing personal learning.

Assessment

Formative assessment is offered both through the college tutorial, in which the tutor will give feedback on the weekly essays submitted, and through presentations given regularly in college and faculty classes. These enable continuous monitoring of the development of practical skills.

Summative assessment in the first year is by timed examinations and one portfolio of 4,000 words. Summative assessment in the final year is by timed examinations, one portfolio (of 6,000 words), a 6,000 word extended essay and an 8,000 word dissertation. Summative assessments require different strategies of learning and organisation, and encourage the development of a range of writing skills.

Termly tutorial reports identify points of excellence and of concern, e.g. the ability to present and defend an argument or thesis convincingly and cogently. College practice examinations ("collections") provide opportunities to assess and provide feedback on skills associated with timed written examinations.

iii. Transferable skills

At the end of the programme the student should be able to:

- find information, organise and deploy it;
- draw on such information and, with a trained analytical intelligence, explore complex issues in ways that are imaginative yet sensitive to the integrity of the materials under discussion and the needs of different target audiences;
- formulate opinions and argue these confidently, whilst remaining appropriately responsive to the ideas of others;
- work well independently, with a strong sense of self-direction, but with the ability to work constructively in co-operation with others;
- effectively structure and communicate ideas in a variety of written and oral formats;
- analyse and critically examine different forms of discourse;
- plan and organise the use of time effectively, particularly in relation to the weekly timetable of tutorials and associated essays;
- where relevant, make appropriate use of language and IT skills.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The programme requires:

- information retrieval and highly competent bibliographic work, including the informed use of IT. (This is integral to all aspects of the programme which, although providing guidance and reading lists, also requires students to exercise their initiative and research skills as active learners to explore available resources);
- the ability to present ideas effectively and to respond to the ideas of others constructively. (Tutorials, classes and lectures each require different forms of engagement with ideas and arguments);

- the ability to produce material within time constraints and against tight deadlines, whether within the framework of the written examination, in submitting the extended essays, or in the programme of tutorials and classes;
- independent work in preparing for tutorials and extended essays, and more collaborative work in classes organised by the faculty and within colleges;

Assessment

The transferable skills identified above are essential elements of the programme. As such their presence or absence is the focus of much of the regular comment provided by tutors in their contacts with students; and in the varying modes of formative assessment and formal feedback provided to students throughout the course. They are implicit in timed examination papers and highly relevant to the faculty's classification criteria.

What is the difference between formative and summative assessment?

Formative assessments provide an opportunity for students to practice their skills and receive feedback – they do not contribute to the final degree outcome.

Summative assessments must be passed in order to progress through the course, and (in most cases) contribute directly to the final degree classification.

At an undergraduate level, termly collections and weekly tutorial essays are examples of formative assessment; Prelims and Finals (FHS) are the summative assessments, although only Finals contribute to the degree classification.

2.4 Course structure

Four compulsory papers in year one.

<i>Year 1</i>			
Paper 1: Introduction to English Language and Literature			
Paper 2: Early Medieval Literature, c. 650 – 1350			
Paper 3: Literature in English 1830 – 1910			
Paper 4: Literature in English 1910 – present day			
Course I		Course II	
<i>Year 2</i>	<i>Year 3</i>	<i>Year 2</i>	<i>Year 3</i>
Paper 1: Shakespeare		Paper 1: Literature in English 650-1100	Paper 6: Special Options
Paper 2: Literature in English 1350-1550	Paper 6: Special Options	Paper 2: Medieval English and related Literatures 1066-1550	Paper 7: Dissertation
Paper 3: Literature in English 1550-1660	Paper 7: Dissertation	Paper 3: Literature in English 1350-1550	
Paper 4: Literature in English 1660-1760		Paper 4: History of the English Language to c. 1800	
Paper 5: Literature in English 1760-1830		Paper 5: Shakespeare OR The Material Text	

Details concerning Year 2 and Year 3 of the course are contained within the corresponding FHS handbook, and further information regarding teaching staff, lecture timetable and course resources can be found on the faculty Canvas pages.

2.5 Recommended pattern of teaching

Paper	English Faculty		College		Comments
	Lectures	Classes	Tutorials	Classes	
Paper 1: Introduction to English Language and Literature	16		4	8	There is a course of 16 compulsory core lectures which run weekly through Michaelmas and Hilary terms. Colleges
					supplement these by classes and tutorials spread over those two terms.
Paper 2: Early Medieval Literature, c. 650 - 1350			6	12	
Paper 3: Literature in English 1830 – 1910			6	4	
Paper 4: Literature in English 1910 – present day			6	4	

2.6 Paper 1: Introduction to English Language and Literature

This paper is intended to introduce you to English language and literature as a discipline, and to a variety of approaches to reading texts. It will introduce you to formal study of the English language, with particular reference to different contexts of use, whether social, cultural, political, persuasive, as well as its historical development and its use as a literary medium. The paper will also acquaint you with a wide range of theoretical issues and reading skills, but in doing so seeks to encourage you to think for yourself and to exercise critical scrutiny.

The English Faculty Library's Guide to Prelims 1: <https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/english-prelims-paper-1> contains direct links to an invaluable range of online and bibliographic resources for this paper.

There is a course of 16 core lectures which run weekly through Michaelmas and Hilary terms. The lectures in Michaelmas Term will cover topics relating to literature, and those in Hilary Term will cover language.

Colleges will normally supplement these by eight college classes spread over those two terms, and by four tutorials. This college teaching will give you the opportunity to practice written work for your portfolio examination, and to explore different types of texts and the analytical approaches that might be used.

NOTE: College tutors will not necessarily base classes and tutorials on the weekly lecture topics and the further reading that accompanies them. The lectures are designed to introduce topics and to suggest approaches to them. Your college work will supplement and challenge what you have learnt in lectures. You will be expected to make connections between and around the lecture topics, and you will want to think about how studying for this paper informs and enriches your first year work as a whole.

Assessment

Assessment for this paper will be by portfolio. The examination paper, consisting of a section on language and a section on literature, will be released by the faculty on Monday of week 4 of Trinity Term. Your portfolio will consist of two pieces of written work of between 1,500 and 2,000 words each (including footnotes but excluding bibliography and appendix). You may, if you wish, support your analysis with tables or figures, but these should be used sparingly, and any table contents and figure captions should be included in the total word count. You are required to choose one question from each of the two sections. Your portfolio must be submitted online on Thursday of week 5, Trinity Term.

Questions in the language section (1A) require an answer in the form of a commentary.

This commentary is based on texts or extracts of texts that you choose for yourself. A passage or extract of text is defined as a single continuous extract; brief ellipses in an otherwise continuous text may be acceptable, but it is not acceptable to take several separate extracts from the same work (e.g. the opening of a novel plus part of chapter 3).

You should be careful to select textual material that meets the precise terms of the question you have chosen to answer. Unless the question specifies otherwise, the texts you choose may be either literary or non-literary, and produced in any historical period (**NB**. If you are using a modern edition of a text written in an earlier period, e.g. a novel by Charles Dickens, you should also cite the original date of publication of the novel as well as the date of the modern edition). You may select texts that include visual images or graphics if you judge that to be appropriate in relation to a particular question, but language is expected to be the primary focus. You should **not** choose texts that contain no verbal material at all. Likewise, candidates should **not** attempt to make their own texts by e.g. transcribing oral material. The texts chosen for commentary must **not** be produced by the candidate.

Copies of your chosen extracts (either screenshots or photocopies) must be included as an appendix to the portfolio, with bibliographical details as appropriate. The combined length of the material you have used must not exceed 70 lines in total. You should indicate the total line length for the material you have used at the top of the first page of your answer. Texts should be clearly annotated with line numbers e.g. every five lines (it is fine to do this by hand). No other annotations should be made on the submitted extracted. Should retyping of your originals be judged necessary (e.g. because it is impossible to make a readable photocopy of your chosen text), it must follow the format of the source exactly (the source text should also be supplied). Photocopied or scanned material must be easily readable—

candidates should not submit copies that have been misaligned so that parts of the original are missing, or copies which are too small, too light or too dark to be deciphered.

Bibliographies should appear at the end of the answer to which they pertain rather than as a separate document.

In rare instances, a student may wish to discuss a text containing distressing or offensive language, but not to reproduce in full the words concerned (whether within their commentary, or in retyping an original text in the instances identified above, i.e. where that is judged necessary). If you want to do this, you may use a form of ellipsis mark and provide a note clarifying that this is what you are doing.

Questions in the literature section (1B) require an answer in the form of an essay.

You must avoid duplicating material used in this paper when answering other papers, ie. if writing on a text or extract from a text under this paper, you may not write on the same text under any other Prelims paper. In addition, you are not permitted to duplicate material between the two sections of the portfolio. For the literature section, note that the general rule prohibiting you from writing more than one third of your essay about texts not originally written in English is suspended. Here you may write on non-English primary and secondary texts. However, if you are discussing texts not originally in English, please provide a translation, which will not count towards the word count.

Information on presentation and referencing requirements for portfolio essays may be found in sections [3.3](#) and [3.4](#) of this handbook.

2.7 Paper 2: Early Medieval Literature, c. 650 - 1350

This paper introduces literatures characterised by astonishing invention and innovation. In 650 CE Britain and Ireland comprised numerous competing kingdoms. Christianity, introduced to England in the late sixth century by missionaries from the Roman and Celtic Churches, was assuming a dominant religious and cultural influence. Languages and cultures mingled and clashed, including early English dialects, Irish, Welsh, Pictish, Old Norse, Byzantine, and varieties of Latin. This is the time of the earliest extant English poem ascribed to a named author, *Cædmon*, yet the seventh century also produced, in Bede, the finest scholar in Europe at the time; in Aldhelm one of the most talented of poets (he wrote in Latin); and at Canterbury the best school in northern Europe, run by an abbot born in North Africa and an archbishop from Tarsus (in what is now south-east Turkey).

By 1350 England was a powerful nation with imperial ambitions, embroiled in wars with Scotland and France, but also ravaged by the Black Death of 1348. King Edward III and his court chroniclers and poets drew upon an extensive cultural and literary heritage, in which history and fiction blended, consciously emulating the legendary King Arthur, holding tournaments and festivals in celebration of court, knighthood and chivalry. And around the middle of the whole period comes the Norman Conquest of 1066 and the subsequent colonization of England and, in time, Wales and parts of Ireland. The Norman castles and cathedrals still prominent in many towns are only one kind of material legacy from 650–1350, in which the development of literacy, manuscript production, the

legal system, schools and universities including Oxford gave huge scope for artistic and literary creativity.

The Norman Conquest changed English language and literature profoundly, and helps mark a shift between what we call Old English (to c.1100) and Early Middle English (c.1100 to c.1300 or so). However, it was one of numerous moments of political and demographic change, starting with Germanic migration before this period begins, and including Viking and Danish raiders, settlers and rulers, religious and mercantile travellers, and a significant community of Jews, who became subject to persecution and were eventually expelled in the late thirteenth century. At the same time, successive attempts to capture and control contested holy sites such as Jerusalem fed the development of religious and racial, including racist, ideologies. Throughout this period, questions of identity and belonging are probed across a vast range of literary forms: lyric and epic; debate and dialogue; riddles; secular and saintly biographies; fable and vision; sermons and sagas; history and romance.

In the 3-hour typed invigilated examination you will write two essays, and will be able to choose between writing a critical commentary on a passage of either Old or Early Middle English. The passages set will be taken from the following recommended texts:

i. Old English (All in Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson, *A Guide to Old English* (Oxford, 2012), 8th edition.)

- *The Dream of the Rood*
- *The Battle of Maldon*
- *The Wanderer*
- an extract from *Beowulf* ('Beowulf's fight with Grendel', lines 702–897)

ii. Early Middle English

- *The Owl and the Nightingale*, an extract (in John Burrow and Thorlac Turville-Petre, *A Book of Middle English*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 2005), lines 1–390)
- *Lazamon's Brut*, an extract (in W.R.J. Barron and S.C. Weinberg, *Layamon's Arthur* (Exeter, 2001), lines 13971–14297)
- *Havelok*, an extract (in Ronald B. Herzman, Graham Drake, and Eve Salisbury, *Four Romances of England* (Kalamazoo, 1999), lines 2512–2855)
- *Ancrene Wisse*, an extract (in Robert Hasenfratz, *Ancrene Wisse* (Kalamazoo, 2000) Part 7, lines 1–194).

(Annotated editions of all of these texts and extracts are available via Canvas)

On the examination paper candidates will be able to choose from a total of four commentary passages each year (two Old English and two Early Middle English). You will be expected to comment on aspects of content and style and to show that you have a good understanding of either Old or Early Middle English as a literary language.

The essay questions will tend to be based on topics rather than individual authors. You can answer them with reference to either Old or Early Middle English literature, or by comparative consideration of the two. You are expected to focus closely on the recommended texts (Old and/or Early Middle English) in your work for this paper as a whole, but there is also scope to read beyond the recommended texts and to work more broadly on some of the major preoccupations of the literature of the period c. 650–1350. You may write an essay on the text on which you also write a commentary, but if you do so you must not repeat material. You must show substantial knowledge of at least **three** texts across the two essays. You may write on texts in languages other than English (e.g. Latin, Anglo-Norman, Middle Welsh, Old Norse) for up to one third of this paper (e.g. all of one essay, or a portion of both essays). However, you are required to show substantial knowledge of Old English and/or Early Middle English language in **both** Section A and Section B of the paper.

2.8 Paper 3: Literature in English 1830 – 1910

This paper examines literature in English from roughly 1830 to 1910, though you are permitted to look at material earlier and later than these boundaries in order to make sense of any particular writer's development. The essay questions in the examination tend to be based on topics, rather than authors. This gives you the opportunity to write across a range of authors, focusing on some of the major preoccupations, both thematic and stylistic, of the period. Alternatively, you may choose to focus each of your examination answers on the work of only one or two authors.

Issues that you might choose to cover could include (for example) the development of realism, responses to industrialism, women's writing, concepts of identity and selfhood, guilt and transgression, memory and uses of the past, verbal and metrical experimentation, attitudes towards nation, race and Empire, decadence, the roots of modernism, symbolism, science, religion, class, domesticity, writing for children and the treatment of childhood, romance, popular fiction, melodrama, the social problem play, drama and identity, theatre and performance issues, the relationship between literature and art. These are only some of the possible topics that might legitimately be studied for this paper; there is no set list of texts or topics you are expected to cover.

Among the authors you might consider studying are the following: Arnold, Braddon, the Brontës, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Robert Browning, Carlyle, Carroll, Clough, Wilkie Collins, Conrad, Dickens, Emily Dickinson, Frederick Douglass, Toru Dutt, George Eliot, Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Gissing, Hardy, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Hopkins, Harriet Jacobs, Henry James, Melville, Meredith, John Stuart Mill, Newman, Pater, Patmore, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Poe, Christina Rossetti, Ruskin, Olive Schreiner, Shaw, R. L. Stevenson, Swinburne, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Tennyson, Thackeray, Thoreau, Twain, H. G. Wells, Wharton, Whitman, and Oscar Wilde. However, you may also

choose to study groups of writers or particular genres, such as spasmodic poetry, melodrama, the Gothic, the dramatic monologue, elegy, and so on.

Candidates are encouraged to read widely within the period. You may discuss any literature written in the English language: there are no exclusions based on the author's citizenship, country of origin, or residence.

Structure of the examination

This paper is examined by a 3-hour typed invigilated exam. Students will be expected to answer three essay questions, and to show substantial knowledge of the work of at least three authors. You should **not** write more than one essay substantially on the same author. You may write on texts not originally in English for no more than one-third of the paper. If discussing texts not originally in English, you should always assume that the examiner does not have knowledge of the original language.

2.9 Paper 4: Literature in English 1910 – present day

This paper examines 20th and 21st century literature. The essay questions in the examination tend to be based on topics, rather than authors. This gives you the opportunity to write across a range of authors, focusing on some of the major thematic and stylistic preoccupations of the period.

Alternatively, you may choose to focus each of your examination answers on the work of only one or two authors.

Issues that you might choose to cover would include (for example) modernism, post-modernism, ideas of literary language, postcolonialism, literary experimentalism, primitivism, national (and other) identities, popular culture, concepts of literary value, journalism, gender, intertextuality, literature and other art forms, technology, innovations in modern theatre, war literature, and representations of the city.

Among the authors you might consider studying are Achebe, Atwood, Auden, James Baldwin, Djuna Barnes, Beckett, Bishop, Bowen, Kamau Brathwaite, Caryl Churchill, Coetzee, Conrad, DeLillo, Duffy, T. S. Eliot, William Faulkner, Forster, Friel, Greene, Heaney, Hemingway, Hill, Langston Hughes, Ted Hughes, Joyce, Larkin, Lawrence, Lessing, Mamet, Mansfield, Miller, Toni Morrison, Muldoon, Nabokov, Naipaul, Ondaatje, Orwell, Osborne, Pinter, Plath, the poets of the two World Wars, Pound, Roth, Rushdie, Shaw, Soyinka, Stein, Stoppard, Dylan Thomas, Walcott, Waugh, Tennessee Williams, Woolf, and Yeats.

Candidates are encouraged to read widely within the period. You may discuss any literature written in the English language: there are no exclusions based on the author's citizenship, country of origin, or residence. You may write on texts not originally in English for no more than one-third of the paper. If discussing texts not originally in English, you should always assume that the examiner does not have knowledge of the original language.

Structure of the examination

This paper is examined by a 3-hour typed invigilated exam. Students will be expected to answer three essay questions, and to show substantial knowledge of the work of at least three authors. You should NOT write more than one essay substantially on the same author.

3. EXAMINATIONS

3.1 Examination Conventions

Exam conventions are the formal record 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 your award. They include information on: marking scales, marking and classification criteria, scaling of marks, progression, resits, penalties for late submission and penalties for over-length work.

Examination conventions for ELL are reviewed annually by the Undergraduate Studies Committee.

3.1.1. Marking and classification criteria

The Preliminary examination is not classified, but has three categories: Distinction, Pass, and Fail. They are designed to ensure that students are sufficiently prepared to proceed to the Honours degree in the second and third years. To this end, all papers must gain a pass mark of 40 or above. If you do not achieve the pass mark for one or two papers you may re-take them at a subsequent examination, or if you do not achieve the pass mark for three or four papers you must re-take all papers at a subsequent examination.

These are the marks profiles for English Prelims:

Distinction	Two marks of 70 and above; no mark below 60; an average of 67
Pass	Marks of 40 and above on all papers

All papers are equally weighted, and an average is taken.

Please also find below the Humanities Division marking criteria and mark descriptors for assessed work.

3.1.2. Criteria for examination questions

These criteria will be used in marking all timed examination papers in both public examinations and in the marking of college collections.

Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- incisiveness of engagement with the question;- depth and sophistication of comprehension of issues and implications of the question;- awareness of relevant literary history and theory and critical traditions;- directness of answer to the question;- grasp and handling of critical materials.
Argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- coherence of argument;- analytical clarity and power;- intellectually incisive argument and sophistication of conceptualization;- independence of argument;- quality of critical analysis of text in the service of argument.
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- relevance of deployment of information;- depth, precision and detail of evidence cited;- accuracy of facts;- relevant knowledge of primary texts.
Organisation & Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- clarity and coherence of structure;- clarity, fluency and elegance of prose;- correctness of grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Criteria for portfolio essays

These criteria will be used in marking portfolio essays in English Preliminary public examinations.

Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- identification and clear delineation of a subject, appropriate to a 1,500-2,000 word essay;- close attention to the terms of the set theme or question;- for the commentary essay, appropriateness of choice of passages for commentary and the imagination and initiative shown in that choice;
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - awareness of relevant linguistic, theoretical and critical methods and traditions; - precise and appropriate deployment of linguistic terminology as appropriate; - depth and sophistication of comprehension of and engagement with issues; - grasp and handling of linguistic, theoretical and critical materials.
Argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - coherence of argument; analytical clarity and power; - intellectually incisive argument and sophistication of conceptualization; - independence of argument; - quality of linguistic, theoretical or critical analysis (as appropriate) of text in the service of argument.
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use of primary texts; - relevance of information deployed; - depth, precision, detail and accuracy of evidence cited; - relevant knowledge of primary texts.
Organisation & Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clarity and coherence of structure; - clarity, fluency and elegance of prose; - correctness of grammar, spelling, and punctuation; - correctness of apparatus and form of footnotes and bibliography.

Mark descriptors Numerical Marks	Category	Criteria: Examination scripts	Criteria: Portfolio Essays
86+	Distinction	Outstanding work of marked independence and sophistication.	Work of a very high standard, excellent handling of scholarly apparatus, wide-ranging research, command of a wide range of primary and secondary material. Excellent choice of subject and handling of arguments to suit the limits of a 1,500-2,000-word essay.
80-85	Distinction	Scripts will excel across the range of criteria.	Essays will excel across the range of the criteria.
75-79	Distinction	Scripts will excel in more than one area, and be at least highly competent in other respects. That is, they must be excellent for some combination of sophisticated engagement with the issues, incisiveness of argument and critical analysis, and quality of knowledge, as well as being presented clearly and coherently. Truly outstanding features may compensate for mere high-competence elsewhere.	Essays will excel in more than one area, and be at least highly competent in other respects. That is, they must be excellent for some combination of the quality of choice and delineation of an appropriate subject, incisiveness of argument and critical analysis, quality of primary evidence, textual and otherwise, on display, as well as being presented clearly and coherently. Truly outstanding features may compensate for mere high-competence elsewhere.
70-74	Distinction	Scripts will be at least very highly competent across the board, and probably excel in at least one group of criteria. Relative weaknesses in some areas may be compensated by conspicuous strengths in others.	Essays will be at least very highly competent across the board, and probably excel in at least one group of criteria. Relative weaknesses in some areas may be compensated by conspicuous strengths in others.

65-69	Pass	Scripts will demonstrate considerable competence across the range of the criteria. They must exhibit some essential features, addressing the question directly and relevantly, and offering a coherent argument substantiated with accurate and relevant evidence, the whole being clearly-presented. Nevertheless, additional strengths (for instance, the sophistication of the arguments, or the quality of literary analysis) may compensate for other weaknesses.	Essays will demonstrate considerable competence across the range of the criteria. They must exhibit some essential features, identifying a clear subject and offering a coherent argument based on accurate primary evidence and textual analysis, the whole being clearly-presented. Nevertheless, additional strengths (for instance, the sophistication of the arguments, or the quality of literary, linguistic or other analysis) may compensate for other weaknesses.
60-64	Pass	Scripts will be competent and should manifest the essential features described above, in that they must offer relevant, substantiated and clear arguments; but they will do so with less range, depth, precision and perhaps clarity. Again, qualities of a higher order may compensate for some weaknesses.	Essays will be competent and should manifest the essential features described above, but they will do so with less range, depth, precision and perhaps clarity. Again, qualities of a higher order may compensate for some weaknesses.
50-59	Pass	Scripts must show evidence of some solid competence in expounding information and analysis. But they will fall down on one or more criteria: ability to discuss the question directly; relevant citing of information; factual knowledge; knowledge of detail; organization and presentation; prose style. But they will be marred by a failure on one criterion or another: failure to discuss the question directly, irrelevant citing of information, factual error, lack of detail, or poor organization and presentation, including incorrect prose.	Essays must show evidence of some solid competence in research and analysis, but they will fall down on one or more criteria: clear argument; research and primary evidence (or relevance in its deployment); organization and presentation; prose style; adequate apparatus.
40-49	Pass	Scripts will fall down on a number of criteria, but will exhibit some vestiges of the qualities required, such as the	Essays will fall down on a number of criteria, but will exhibit some vestiges of the qualities required, such as the

		ability to see the point of the question, to deploy information, or to offer some coherent analysis towards an argument. Such qualities will not be displayed at a high level or consistently, and will be marred by irrelevance, incoherence, error and poor organization and presentation.	ability to identify a subject, to deploy evidence found in research, or to offer some coherent analysis towards an argument. But such qualities will not be displayed at a high level or consistently, and will be marred by irrelevance, incoherence, error and poor organization and presentation.
30-39	Fail	Scripts will display a modicum of knowledge or understanding of some points, but will display almost none of the higher qualities described in the criteria. They will be marred by high levels of factual error and irrelevance, generalization and lack of information, and poor organization and presentation.	Essays will display a modicum of knowledge or understanding of some points, but will display almost none of the higher qualities described in the criteria, and will not be based on any meaningful research. They will be marred by high levels of factual error and irrelevance, generalization and lack of information, and poor organization and presentation; and they may be very brief.
Less than or equal to 29	Fail	Scripts will fail to exhibit any of the required qualities. Candidates who fail to observe rubrics and rules beyond what the marking-schemes allow for may also be failed.	Essays will fail to exhibit any of the required qualities.

3.1.3. Verification and reconciliation of marks

- a) Each script, and each section of the portfolio, is marked independently by a single marker.
- b) An individual mark is given for each question (where there is more than one question) and an overall mark is given for each paper by averaging the component marks. The mark for each paper is expressed as a whole number, rounding up from 0.5 (e.g. a mark of 39.5 would become 40).
- c) For the two sections of Prelims Paper 1, the two marks are averaged to give the overall mark for the paper, rounding up from 0.5 to a whole number.
- d) The overall mark for Prelims is given by averaging the paper marks, unless an additional adjustment has been made e.g. for impressive (or limited) range. The overall mark is not rounded up, but is expressed as a decimal.

- e) All marks and classifications are determined without recourse to viva voce (oral) examinations.
- f) Any candidate whose average mark is within 0.25% of a higher classification will be considered to be “borderline”. The Board of Examiners will consider such candidates and may decide to take further action.
- g) All marks and classifications are agreed upon and verified by the Board of Examiners.

3.1.4. Scaling of marks

Runs of marks by individual markers are compared to ensure parity. If necessary, scaling may be used, and an explanation will be given in the Chair’s report.

3.1.5. Short weight convention and departure from rubric

‘Short weight’ is a failure to answer the required number of questions on a paper. Where required questions have not been answered marks will be deducted and notes will not be taken into account in lieu of completed essays. Where some attempt has been made to answer a question, the examiners will mark what is there. The maximum deduction is equal to the value of the unanswered question or questions.

Where there is an infringement of rubrics, the examiners will decide on an appropriate penalty.

3.1.6. Penalties for late or non-submission of portfolio essays

Late submission will incur accumulating automatic penalties which can result in the mark for the essay being lowered by a class or more. The Proctors have ruled that computer difficulties are no excuse for late submission.

Penalties for late submissions are as follows:

Late submission	Penalty
Up to one day <i>(submitted on the day but after the deadline)</i>	-5 marks
Each additional calendar day or part of a day <i>(i.e., two days late = -6 marks, three days late = -7 marks, etc.; note that each weekend day counts as a full day for the purposes of mark deductions)</i>	-1 mark
Max. deducted marks up to 2 weeks late	-18 marks

More than 2 weeks late	Fail
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Failure to submit a required element of assessment will result in failure of the assessment with any resit capped at the pass mark.

3.1.7. Penalties for over-length portfolio essays

Penalties for work that exceeds the stipulated maximum word length are as follows:

Percentage by which the maximum word count is exceeded:	Penalty (up to a maximum of -10)
Up to and including 5% over word limit	-1 mark
Up to and including 10% over	-2
Up to and including 15% over	-3
Each further 5% (or part thereof, if less than 5%) over	-1 more

3.1.8. Penalties for under-length portfolio essays

There are no formal penalties for under-length work, and candidates are reminded that word-limits are not a target, but a maximum. However, work that is significantly shorter than the maximum is likely to be inadequate in its coverage and content, and will be so marked. As a rough guideline, less than three-quarters of the maximum is likely to be inadequate.

3.1.9. Penalties for poor academic practice

Examiners may deduct marks for poor academic practice (lack of adequate referencing, poor use of citation conventions, failure to follow [Faculty policy on AI](#), etc.) of up to 10% of the marks available.

3.1.10. Penalties for non-attendance

Failure to attend an examination will result in the failure of the assessment. The mark for any resit of the assessment will be capped at a pass.

3.1.11. Resits

Candidates who have failed a paper may have one attempt to resit that paper over the long vacation. The mark for any resit of the assessment will be capped at a pass.

3.1.12. Mitigating Circumstances

Where unforeseen factors have impacted an assessment, a candidate may submit a mitigating circumstance notice to the examiners (MCE). A subset of the board (the 'MCE Subcommittee') then considers the MCEs.

The subcommittee will evaluate, on the basis of the information provided to it, the relevance of the circumstances to examinations and assessment, the strength of the evidence provided in support, and the extent of the impact. The subcommittee 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 board of examiners will separately consider whether and how to adjust a candidate's results as a result of the mitigating circumstances, taking into account both the subcommittee's considerations of the notice(s) and the scripts/submissions and marks.

Note that the mitigating circumstance process for exam boards may only be used where an exam was sat or a submission made to the deadline. If there was no submission or a late submission, or if the exam was not attended, then excusal for the non-attendance, late submission or non-submission may be sought by the College, on behalf of the student, from the Proctors. Exam boards do not have the power to excuse non-attendance, late submission or non-submission.

Further information on the procedure is provided in the [*Examinations and assessment framework \(EAF\)*](#), Annex E.

3.1.13. Details of examiners and rules on communicating with examiners

Candidates should not under any circumstances seek to make direct contact with individual examiners regarding the content, conduct, or outcome of an examination. Any queries should be addressed to the Chair of Examiners via the Examinations Secretary. If you are unhappy with an aspect of your assessment you may make a complaint or appeal (see Section 4.6).

The names of examiners are published in the Examiners' reports at the end of the academic year. Examiners' reports for past years can be found here: <https://oess.web.ox.ac.uk/examiners-reports>

3.1.14. Word length and referencing in timed exams

There is no lower or upper word-limit for essays completed in timed exams. A typical range, with appropriate scope and focus to exhibit the qualities named in the exam criteria, is between 900 and 1,700 words. No penalties are applied to essays outside this range, but please note that answers which are shorter or longer may struggle to show the depth, coherence, or incisiveness of argument named in the exam criteria.

Footnotes and bibliographies are not required for timed exams. Candidates must, however, include sufficient detail when referencing primary or secondary sources for the examiners to be able to identify those sources. The *name of the author* and the *short title* of each work (primary or critical) is usually a sufficient reference in the context of an exam.

Note that in this context long titles can be reduced: Julie Orlemanski's 'Between Voice and Name or, Chaucer Theorizes Literary Person-Making' can be given as Orlemanski, 'Between Voice and Name'; Diego Saglia's 'Walter Scott's Troubadours and Post-Napoleonic Europe in *The Talisman and Anne of Geierstein*' can be given as Saglia, 'Walter Scott's Troubadours'.

3.1.15. Old English and Early Middle English character protocol for typed work in timed exams

Most special characters for Old English and Early Middle English letters (æ, ð, þ) are available on Inspira by clicking the Special Characters button (Ω), or they can be copied and pasted from your computer into the Inspira submission box. Alternatively, candidates who are typing their exams for any reason can represent these characters as follows:

Ð or ð (eth)	dh
Þ or þ (thorn)	th
Æ or æ (ash)	ae
Ȝ (yogh)	3

For portfolios and dissertations (as opposed to timed exams) the faculty expects the correct characters to be used rather than the exam protocol, which is intended to aid rapid typing. Students choosing to use the Old English or Early Middle English characters rather than the conventions in an exam will not be penalised.

3.2 Good academic practice

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, as is the use of material generated wholly or in part through use of artificial intelligence.

Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence. **The Proctors regard plagiarism as a serious form of cheating for which offenders can expect to receive severe penalties.**

Resources

All students are required to watch the online English Faculty [video on avoiding plagiarism](#), by Professor Adam Smyth.

The University website has information about [what plagiarism is and how you can avoid it](#), as well as an extensive set of [resources to help you maintain good academic practice](#).

Guidance on good referencing practice can be found in section 3.4 of this handbook.

Further to this we would recommend all students use the online learning opportunities to develop their skills further.

There is an [online course](#) from the University, providing a useful overview of the issues surrounding plagiarism and practical ways to avoid it.

3.2.1 Auto-plagiarism

You must not submit for summative assessment work you have already submitted for a previous summative assessment (partially or in full), either for your current course or for another qualification of this or any other institution. This counts as “auto-plagiarism”. This means, for instance, that you should not cut and paste sentences or paragraphs from previously submitted essays, or include passages of identical or very similar analysis of the same or similar parts of primary texts.

Where earlier work by you is citable, i.e. it has already been published, you must reference it as normal.

3.3 Presentation and word limits of portfolio essays

Portfolio essays will be submitted online in PDF format. We recommended that the body of the text of your essays should be one and a half or double-spaced, in either 11 or 12 point of a formal and readable font (such as Times New Roman).

Quotations should not be italicized. Short quotations of a single sentence of prose, or less than three lines of verse, should be incorporated in the main text. Longer quotations should be set in a separate paragraph, indented and single-spaced. Do not indent the first line of the first paragraph, or the first paragraph of a new section of the essays. Indent all subsequent paragraphs. Please remember to number the pages of your essays. You may wish to split your essays into titled subsections; this is at your discretion (but remember that starting a new section is no substitute for having a coherent flow of argument).

Copies of the texts or passages used must be included as an appendix to the portfolio, and the combined length of all texts you have chosen must not exceed 70 lines in total.

3.3.1 Word limits and appendices

The word limits stated for portfolio essays, extended essays and dissertations include footnotes, headings, and captions, but exclude bibliographies, appendices, and the title of the essay/dissertation.

Word limits are applied strictly, and there is no acceptable “buffer” before a penalty is applied for over-length work.

The following information on a cover sheet is excluded from the word limit: your candidate number, the assessment, the title(s) of your submission (if applicable), and the word count(s). Any additional text included on a cover sheet will contribute to the word count.

Any text not explicitly excluded from the word limit is included in the word count. You are advised not to include a dedication, table of contents or an abstract, and warned that these will be counted within the word limit. Penalties will be imposed by the Examining Board should you exceed the maximum word limit.

Images, tables and figures are permitted where they may usefully illustrate the argument, and may be included without having to make a special request. Images of text may only be used where this is to illustrate a particular editing convention or visual feature of the manuscript, and may not be used to circumvent the word limit. Unless the visual appearance of the text is of primary importance, quotations should be made in textual, rather than image, format.

If your essay or dissertation requires extensive quotation from texts in languages other than English, translations into modern English must be provided. The translations should be supplied in the main text, in square brackets, and will not be included in the word count. You must specify both the word count of your essay and also the subtraction you have made for translations.

Appendices should only be included if you are referring to unpublished evidence of primary importance (especially if it is unlikely to be readily accessible to your examiners), or for images, tables and figures. The vast majority of submissions will not require an appendix. Where an appendix is deemed necessary, every effort should be made to keep it as short as possible, and candidates are reminded that no discursive argument can be placed there.

3.4 References and bibliography

The English Faculty does not impose a mandatory referencing system, though your tutors may communicate their own preferences to you in the matter of style. It is compulsory, however, to present your work in a form that complies with academic standards of precision, clarity, and fullness of reference. Whatever system you employ, please remember these three essentials:

i) Consistency

Ensure that you are using the same style and format for your references throughout your work.

ii) Clarity

Remember that references are included primarily as a guide for the reader. The more explicit you make your citations, the easier it is for anyone reading your work to find your sources.

iii) **Common sense**

You will at some stage have to deal with a citation or a reference from a source which does not easily fit into a prescribed system. On these occasions, employing your own judgement will probably enable you to generate a reference in line with the others in your document.

An introduction to a common referencing system, MHRA (Modern Humanities Research Association), is included below. This is intended for guidance only, and you are free to adopt other scholarly systems if you prefer. Paying close attention to the referencing systems used in the academic publications you read is another good way to familiarise yourself with habits of scholarly presentation.

A small sample bibliography of style handbooks is also given here, and you will find copies of these in the Bodleian and the EFL, as well as many other Oxford libraries. Style handbooks will go into much greater detail about formatting and writing habits than this faculty handbook, which only covers methods of referencing.

3.4.1 Sample bibliography of style handbooks

- * Details given here are of first editions except where noted; many of these guides have since been republished in new incarnations and you may like to seek out the most recent edition.

Gibaldi, Joseph, *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1998)

Gibaldi, Joseph, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1984)

Price, Glanville and Brian Richardson, *MHRA Style Guide: a Handbook for Authors, Editors and Writers of Theses* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2002)

- * This handbook is also available for free download from the MHRA website at <https://www.mhra.org.uk/pdf/MHRA-Style-Guide-3rd-Edn.pdf> *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edn (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2010)

Turabian, Kate L., *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, rev. by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory Colomb and Joseph M. Williams, 8th edn (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2013)

3.4.2 Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA) referencing

Below is a brief explanation of two MHRA approved referencing systems:

1. MHRA (general)
2. The author-date system

Both of the systems explained below have two points of reference. Firstly, each time you use a quotation, or any other information taken directly from your source, you must place a reference within the text (in parentheses) or in a footnote. Secondly, at the end of your work you will need to include a full bibliography detailing all sources. This is the case even for a system like the first which also provides full bibliographic detail within the text.

[A guide to drawing up your bibliography](#) is provided below. Because references in the text and in footnotes will count against the word limit, you might like to consider a system (like the author-date system) which reduces the number of words contained in the reference.

3.4.2.1 MHRA (general)

The general MHRA system requires that the first reference to every book, article or other publication in your document should be given in full. Thereafter, references to the same publication may take an abbreviated, but easily identifiable, form (see below, Abbreviated references).

Books

In general, a full reference to a book would appear in a footnote and be presented in the following order, with each piece of information separated from the next by a comma. (It may not be necessary to include all of this information for every book you refer to):

1. *Author*: in the form given on the title page, and with first name preceding surname. When referring to an edition of a primary work which contains the author's name in the title, as with *The Sermons of John Donne*, it is not essential to repeat 'John Donne' before the title.
2. *Title*: in full and in italics. The initial letters of all principal words should be capitalised.
3. *Editor / translator, etc.*: in the form 'ed. by', 'trans. by', 'rev. by'.
4. *Series*: if the book belongs in a series, give the series title and volume number.
5. *Edition*: if other than the first edition, specify '2nd edn', 'rev. edn' etc.
6. *Number of volumes*: if the work is in several volumes, state this in the form '4 vols'.

7. *Details of publication*: these should be enclosed in round brackets, and take the form (Place of publication: Publisher, Year).

8. *Volume number*: in roman numerals. Where necessary, include the publication date of the volume in brackets after the volume number.

9. *Page numbers*: preceded by 'p.' or 'pp.', unless you have included a volume number.

Here are some examples of first references to books under the MHRA system:

Edmund Spenser, *The Shorter Poems*, ed. by Richard McCabe (London: Penguin, 1999), p. 221

Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: the Church in English Society 1559-1625* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 7-12

Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, ed. and with introduction, notes and commentary by Michael Kiernan, The Oxford Francis Bacon, IV (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 66

The Book of Margery Kempe, ed. by Barry Windeatt (London: Longman, 2000), pp. 41 – 50

Paul Strohm, *Social Chaucer*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 47 - 83

Chapters or articles in books

Information about a chapter or an article published in a book should be presented in the following order:

1. *Author*.

2. *Article title*: in single quotation marks and not italicised.

3. *'in'*: preceded by a comma.

4. *Title, editor and publication details of the book* as described above.

5. *First and last pages of article*: preceded by 'pp.'

6. *Page number of reference*: in parentheses and preceded by 'p.' or 'pp.'

E.g.:

Mark Thornton Burnett, "'We are the makers of manners': The Branagh Phenomenon', in *Shakespeare After Mass Media*, ed. by Richard Burt (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 83–105 (p. 91).

Virginia Woolf, 'A Letter to a Young Poet', in *The Essays of Virginia Woolf: Volume 5, 1929-1932*, ed. by Stuart N. Clarke (London: Hogarth Press, 2009), pp. 306-323.

Journal articles

A reference to a journal article should be composed as follows:

1. *Author*.
2. *Article title*: in single quotation marks and not italicised.
3. *Journal title*: in italics.
3. *Series number*: in Arabic numerals, not Roman.
4. *Volume number*: in Arabic numerals, not Roman.
5. *Year of publication*: in parentheses.
6. *First and last pages of article*: without 'pp.'
7. *Page number of reference*: in parentheses and preceded by 'p.' or 'pp.'

E.g.:

Brean Hammond, 'Joseph Addison's Opera *Rosamond*: Britishness in the Early Eighteenth Century', *ELH*, 73.3 (Fall 2006), 601–629 (p. 616).

Sylvia Federico, 'Chaucer and the Matter of Spain', *The Chaucer Review*, 45.3 (2011), 299–320 (pp. 301–307).

Film

1. Title: in italics
2. Phrase 'dir. by' followed by the director's forename(s) and surname(s)
3. In brackets, name of distributor followed by a comma, followed by year of release

If recorded:

4. In square brackets, material type (e.g. CD, DVD)

OR

5. Type of source followed by a comma
6. Title of website followed by a comma
7. If available, date published/uploaded

E.g.:

Jacob's Ladder, dir. by Adrian Lyne (Tri-Star Pictures, 1990)

OR

Jacob's Ladder, dir. by Adrian Lyne (Tri-Star Pictures, 1990), streamed online, Paramount Plus,
2021**Episode of a Television Programme/Series**

1. In single inverted commas, title of episode followed by a comma
2. In italics, title of series/programme followed by a comma
2. Name of TV channel followed by a comma
3. Date of broadcast

If recorded:

4. In square brackets, material type (e.g. CD, DVD)

OR

5. Type of source followed by a comma
6. Title of database/website followed by a comma
7. If available, date published/uploaded

E.g.:

'The Renaissance Will Not Be Televised', *Cunk on Earth*, BBC Two, November 2022.

Online resources

An increasingly large amount of academic information can be found online. When choosing whether to use an online resource, you should use your judgement in determining the quality of the material. Who has created it, and why? Is it appropriate for academic citation?

When referencing an online source, you should keep as closely as possible to the guidelines given above for printed sources. Information should be supplied in the following order:

1. *Author*
2. *Title*
3. *Title of complete work / resource*: this might be the name of the website or an online database, or might be the bibliographic details for an online journal or text
4. *Publication details*: where known, supply the volume and date
5. *Full web address, URL or DOI* : in angle brackets < > . If you can find a stable URL or the DOI listed, this is better than the sometimes very lengthy web address you will have in your browser window. Avoid using TinyURL or similar for academic citation.
6. *Date of consultation*: in square brackets
7. *Location of reference*: for example, the paragraph number or page number where supplied. Include in parentheses.E.g.:

Rosemary O'Day, 'Family Galleries: Women and Art in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Huntingdon Library Quarterly* 71.2 (June 2008),

<<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/hlq.2008.71.2.323>>, [accessed 14 March 2011] (p. 332)

Hans J. Hillebrand, 'Reformation' in *Encyclopedia of Religion*,

<<http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CCX3424502608&v=2.1&u=oxford&it=r&p=GVRL&sw=w>>, [accessed 6 November 2010] (p. 7657)

Melvyn New, 'Sterne, Lawrence (1713 – 1768)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*,

<<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26412>>, [accessed 22 May 2011] (para. 12 – 16)

As more resources are accessed online, academic sites and databases regularly provide users with detailed bibliographic information about their content (often located at the very end of an article), which can be very useful when composing your footnotes.

Video games

References to software should provide the author or designer (if identifiable), the title in italics, the date, and the platform, e.g.:

Emily Short, *Galatea* (2000), Z-machine.

Id Software, *Doom* (1993), MS-DOS and subsequently other platforms.

Neil McFarland and Ken Wong for Ustwo, *Monument Valley* (2014), iOS and Android.

Abbreviated references

After your initial, full reference, you can save space in the rest of your document by using abbreviated references to repeated sources. These abbreviated references can either be included as further footnotes, or can be placed in parentheses in the body of your document. In addition, it is permissible to include all abbreviated references to primary sources in parentheses and all abbreviated references to secondary sources as footnotes if you so choose.

Abbreviated references will normally consist of the author's name followed by the page reference (and the volume reference where necessary) as: (Strohm, 91).

Where more than one work by an author has been cited, you may also need to include a short version of the title, in addition to author, volume and page:

MHRA discourages the use of 'op. cit.', 'loc. cit.' and 'ibid.'

If you are writing an essay which consistently refers to a set of primary texts by the same author, you may like to adopt a system of abbreviation. Following your first (full) citation of each text, you might say at the end of a footnote "All subsequent references are to this edition and incorporated into the body of the essay". Thereafter, you can place page numbers in parentheses within the text. If there is any ambiguity as to which primary text you are referring to, include a short title.

Alternatively, if you are consistently referring to a set of original primary sources such as manuscripts, or again, you are relying on a particular group of texts which you need to refer to repeatedly in your work, you may include a section in your bibliography that shows the

abbreviations you will use for each source. For example, if you were writing an essay about Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* and you were using the Michael Kiernan edition cited above as your primary text, you might enter it into your list of abbreviations as follows:

AL

Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, ed. and with introduction, notes and commentary by Michael Kiernan, *The Oxford Francis Bacon, IV* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000)

You would then label all references to the text with AL and the page number (again, you can do this in parentheses or in footnotes).

3.4.2.2 MHRA (author – date system)

This system can save you space when you are working to a word limit. Instead of including full references in the document, all source information is contained in a comprehensive bibliography at the end of your document. Such a bibliography would not be included in any word counts.

Your bibliography should be arranged in alphabetical order by author surname, and multiple works by one author should be arranged by date of publication. If two or more works by the same author share a publication date, you should distinguish between them by marking them e.g. '1995a' and '1995b'. The form of each entry should follow the guidelines below in the section on Bibliographies.

When you need to make a reference in your document, you should include it in the body of the text in parentheses. It should give the author's surname, the date of publication and the page reference, in the following form: (Colclough, 2001: 105). If your text already mentions the author's name, as in "Colclough suggests that...", you may omit the name from the reference in parentheses.

3.4.3 Citing the OED

OED Online (www.oed.com) is an online resource whose content changes every three months, when new and revised entries (along with other editorial and discursive material) are uploaded to the website. When you cite *OED Online* as your authority for a definition, or for any other information in an entry (etymology, pronunciation, range and date of illustrative quotations, etc), you need to specify two things:

(1) The date at which you accessed the website - simply attach the words 'accessed MONTH DAY YEAR' as appropriate to whatever information you cite from the dictionary (2) The date at which the content you cite was published.

Currently, every entry on the website is displayed with an additional central bar, bearing either red or blue rubric, which specifies the first date and origin of the entry. Blue rubric indicates the entry has been revised since 2000 and is up-to-date. Red rubric warns you that the entry was first inserted

in the dictionary many years ago and may not have been fully updated. The noun *relic*, for example, is accompanied by blue rubric stating 'This entry has been updated (OED Third Edition, December 2009)'. So it is a reliable up-to-date entry, and when citing it you should specify the word itself, its grammatical form, the date at which the entry was updated, and your date of access, along with (if relevant) the sense number of the definition you're referring to:

e.g. *relic*, n., sense 3d: 'An old, outmoded, or outdated person or thing; someone or something left over from an earlier era, or having the characteristics of a former time', *OED Online* (revised entry Sept 2009, accessed MONTH DAY YEAR).

You may also find it relevant to quote or otherwise take note of the accompanying label, in this case '*colloq.* (*humorous* or *derogatory*)'. Note that there is no need to cite the URL.

By contrast, *slang* n³ is marked with red rubric stating 'This entry has not yet been fully updated (first published 1911)'. This alerts you that the entry may be significantly out of date. The definition of sense 1 reads 'The special vocabulary used by any set of persons of a low or disreputable character; language of a low and vulgar type'. No dictionary of English published today would intentionally incorporate value judgements in its definitions, and this definition (and its vocabulary) is significantly out of line with current linguistic thinking about slang and its users. For an up-to-date definition of *slang* you need to use either a good quality recently published print dictionary or a reliable online equivalent (to find this via *OED Online* itself, see the link below the red rubric to *Oxford Dictionaries Online* (<http://oxforddictionaries.com>), which defines the word as follows: 'a type of language consisting of words and phrases that are regarded as very informal, are more common in speech than writing, and are typically restricted to a particular context or group of people'.

When citing red rubric entries you should be sure to specify the date of first publication, e.g.

slang n³, sense 1a: 'The special vocabulary used by any set of persons of a low or disreputable character; language of a low and vulgar type', *OED Online* (entry first published 1911, accessed MONTH DAY YEAR)

As before, there is no need to cite the URL.

Further information on the OED Online and how to cite material from it may be found on the faculty Canvas page.

3.4.4 Citation of objects in written work

Illustrations may be gathered in one place at the end of the work, or, if you prefer, incorporated with the text. Captions within the text, and 'List of Illustrations' at the end of the essay, should contain the same information but captions should minimally include the following:

1. artist/architect/maker /manufacturer (e.g. Meissen)
2. title of work/name of building/object description (e.g. teapot)
3. date of production (date range or century acceptable)
4. present location
5. brief reference for the source of the illustration

The 'List of Illustrations' should include the following information, in the recommended order:

1. artist/architect/maker
2. title of work/name of building/object description
3. size (metric)
4. medium (e.g. engraving; ceramic; textile; mixed media)
5. date of production
6. present location
7. brief reference for the source of the illustration (e.g., your own photograph, a museum photograph, copied from a book or the internet – if the last, give URL as you would for written work).

You should illustrate your work carefully since good illustrations can be vital to supporting your arguments. Wherever possible, you should use good quality, high-resolution illustrations of images, objects or buildings discussed at any length in the text. Illustrations can be in black and white; colour illustrations are only necessary if used to support a specifically 'colour-related' point in your argument or discussion. Captions can simply be numbered sequentially as Fig. 1, Fig. 2, etc., since the reader will be able to refer to the 'List of Illustrations' for the full information. Make sure you refer to your illustrations at appropriate points in your text and argument, with the relevant figure number in brackets, thus: (Fig. 10)."

Captions and lists of illustrations do not count as part of the overall word limit; neither do illustrations themselves.

3.4.5 Text analysis tools

When citing text analysis tools it is sufficient to simply state the tool which has been used, in the body of the text in parentheses.

For example: ...this passage has a Gunning Fog Index of 18.2 (LexTutor)

3.4.6 Bibliographies

As with referencing, the format of your bibliography may vary according to the system you employ. Again, the most important thing is to maintain consistency in the way you present your sources in your bibliography.

If you have been using the MHRA referencing system outlined above, each item in your bibliography can be presented in much the same way as for the first full reference. The principal difference is that it is general practice to reverse the author's surname and first name, as in the example below. When a work has more than one author or editor, you need only invert the first named author.

E.g.:

Berg, Christian, Frank Durieux, and Geert Lernout, eds., *The Turn of the Century: Modernism and Modernity in Literature and the Arts* (Antwerp: DeGruyter, 1995)

Caws, Mary Ann, ed., *Mallarmé in Prose*, trans. by Rosemary Lloyd and Mary Ann Caws (New York: New Directions, 2001)

Page numbers are not required in a bibliography unless you are listing an article or chapter that appears within another publication.

Your bibliography should be ordered alphabetically and thereafter by date of publication. Do not include full stops after each item in the list.

It is common, but not required, to divide your sources into primary and secondary works.

3.4.7 Online resources

The English Faculty Library (EFL) has produced an online guide covering referencing and bibliography. It should be used as a supplement to the information given in this handbook.

<https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/english/referencing>

The EFL also runs training sessions on referencing, which will be advertised.

4. ABOUT THE FACULTY

4.1 Key contacts and the faculty office

These notes of guidance will provide you with information about the English Language and Literature Prelims course, but if you do have any enquiries, the following people are available to assist:

- Your college tutors
- Lis Allen and Nina Crisp, Academic Administration Officers, 01865 2 71541, undergrad@ell.ox.ac.uk
- Andy Davice, Academic Administrator, Welfare and Disability Coordinator, 01865 2 71930, andy.davice@ell.ox.ac.uk
- Tom Manning, Academic Administration Assistant, fhs@ell.ox.ac.uk
- Zoe Hart, Education Manager, education.manager@ell.ox.ac.uk

- Professor David Dwan, Director of Undergraduate Studies, david.dwan@ell.ox.ac.uk
- Professor Kathryn Murphy, Director of Teaching, kathryn.murphy@oriel.ox.ac.uk
- Professor Sian Gronlie, Director of Diversity and Equality, sian.gronlie@st-annes.ox.ac.uk

The Director of Undergraduate Studies, Academic Administrator, and Academic Administration Assistant are also available and happy to be contacted should you have any concerns or feedback about the course.

Students with a disability, as well as students who develop any health issues during the course of their studies, are invited to contact Andy Davice, the Academic Administrator and Disability Coordinator, if they have any questions or concerns. The Disability Lead for the faculty is Professor Simon Horobin (who is also Chair of the Faculty Board).

Harassment

The faculty is committed to creating a happy and healthy working environment, where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. We do not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying.

Professor Andrew Klevan, andrew.klevan@st-annes.ox.ac.uk

Professor Rachel Burns, rachel.burns@ell.ox.ac.uk

The Harassment Advisors offer confidential support to all members of the faculty. Seeking support from one of our Advisors is not the same as making a complaint – this is an informal opportunity to seek confidential advice. In some instances this may be enough to resolve the issue. In other cases, should you decide to make a complaint, the Harassment Advisor can be a valuable source of support and guidance. Alternatively, if you do not feel comfortable talking to someone from within the faculty, you can access the University's anonymous Harassment Line.

Email: harassment.line@admin.ox.ac.uk

Telephone 01865 (2)70760

The University Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service provides a safe place for students to be heard – independent of their college or department, offering free support and advice to any student who has been affected by sexual harassment or violence.

The service supports students in all situations, whether the experiences of sexual harassment or violence happened in Oxford or elsewhere, and whether it was recent or in the past.

Email: supportservice@admin.ox.ac.uk

Further information: www.ox.ac.uk/supportservice

The English Faculty Office is located in the Schwarzman Building and will be able to assist with logistical queries about the [lecture list](#) and lecture room locations. During term-time (including week 0 and week 9) the office is open every weekday from 9.00 to 5.30 (4.30 on Fridays). In the vacations, the office is open 9.00 to 5.00 (4.30 on Fridays).

You can also call the office on 01865 271 055 or e-mail english.office@ell.ox.ac.uk.

Other useful contact numbers:

Faculty Library humlib@bodleian.ox.ac.uk	(2)71050
Bodleian Main Desk – reader.services@bodleian.ox.ac.uk	(2)77162
Schwarzman Building Reception (for lost property) enquiries@schwarzmancentre.ox.ac.uk	615501
Oxford University Computing Services – contact@it.ox.ac.uk	(2)73200
Oxford Student Union (Oxford SU) – advice@ousu.ox.ac.uk	(2)88452
University Counselling Service –	(2)70300
Nightline (student run service)	(2)70270
Samaritans (external number)	01865 722122

4.2 Committees and decision-making within the faculty

Senior members of the faculty (i.e. academic staff) are invited to attend meetings of the faculty (once a term), where key items are discussed. Strategic decisions are taken by the Faculty Board (which meets twice a term), in consultation with the faculty. All other committees report to the Faculty Board. The Board is made up of 15 individuals, who are elected from all members of the faculty, and includes a graduate and an undergraduate junior member.

There are a number of standing committees that report to the Faculty Board:

- Undergraduate Studies Committee, plus committees for each of the undergraduate joint schools
- Graduate Studies Committee
- Research Committee

- Planning, Personnel and Resources Committee
- Equality and Diversity Committee

There are also two joint consultative committees (made up of academics and students) where student representatives are given a chance to raise issues for the attention of the faculty. There is one joint consultative committee (JCC) for graduates and one for undergraduates. See section [4.3](#) below.

Changes to the courses are typically discussed at the Undergraduate Studies Committee, and then referred to the Faculty Board for approval (with consultation with the faculty, if necessary). All significant changes to courses must be agreed by the University's Education Committee, published in the *Gazette* and amended in the *Examination Regulations*.

On a day to day basis, the faculty is managed by the Chair of the Faculty Board and the Faculty Head of Administration and Finance. The academic officers are:

- Professor Simon Horobin (Magdalen), Chair of the Faculty Board
- Professor David Dwan (Hertford), Director of Undergraduate Studies
- Professor Kathryn Murphy (Oriental) Director of Teaching
- Professor Matthew Bevis (Keble) Director of Taught Graduate Studies
- Professor Sos Eltis (Brasenose) Director of Undergraduate Admissions
- Professor Rebecca Beasley (Queens College), Director of Doctoral Studies
- Professor Peter Boxall (New), Director of Research

4.3 The Undergraduate Joint Consultative Committee (JCC)

The Joint Consultative Committee meets once a term, on Wednesday of fifth week. The Committee comprises a number of faculty post-holders, including the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Chair of the Faculty Board, a library representative, and up to two undergraduate representatives from each college, chosen in Week 6 of Michaelmas Term.

The Committee considers all aspects of faculty activity that affects undergraduates, for example: syllabus, teaching and examining arrangements and library facilities (though there is also a committee for library provision which deals in greater detail with the latter). The JCC also provides members for the various other committees and bodies on which students are represented (the Faculty Board, Undergraduate Studies Committee, the joint schools' committees and the Committee for Library Provision in English). The iCC will have various items of discussion referred to it by Faculty Board and other committees for consideration, but iCC members, and the students whom they represent, can also ask for items to be put on the agenda for consideration. If you wish to serve on the iCC, you should talk to the senior English tutor in your college – they will usually be able to advise you on how nominations are made in your college.

4.4 Evaluation and feedback

The University, faculty and your college are always keen to receive comments (good or bad) about your experience of studying English at Oxford. You are welcome to discuss any problems with the Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Academic Office (undergrad@ell.ox.ac.uk). Alternatively, you can bring issues or suggestions to your iCC representative who will raise them at the next meeting of the Committee (see section 4.3). All items discussed at iCC meetings are seen by the Undergraduate Studies Committee and the Faculty Board.

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-surveys

Final year undergraduate students are surveyed instead through the National Student Survey. Results from previous NSS can be found at discoveruni.gov.uk/

4.5 The Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities

Information about the Schwarzman Centre can be found here: <https://www.schwarzmancentre.ox.ac.uk>

The English Faculty

- The English Faculty Hub is on the first floor.
- The Theatre for main sessions is in the basement.
- Rooms for individual course meetings may be spread around the building.

Access

- Access to the staff and student areas of the Centre is granted by use of your University card.
- Access to the upper floors is by card access only. There are access card readers (Salto) on the barriers to stairs, within the lifts and doors to the private areas of the building.
- Please carry your card with you at all times to facilitate access to the Centre and your workspace.
- If you forget your card please report to Reception.

Accessibility

- There is level access to all main entrances to the Schwarzman Centre. The north and south entrances have sensor activated powered doors.
- There are powered doors internally for all key entrances.
- There is ramped access, with visual contrast, within the Great Hall and some performance spaces
- There is visual contrast on internal doors.
- Induction loops are in place in all receptions, the café, bar, cloakrooms, performance spaces and teaching spaces.
- There are nine accessible parking bays to the north and south of the building, close to the main entrances.
- To book an accessible parking space please contact the Building Operations team.
- Each floor in the Centre has male, female and gender neutral toilets. Each floor also has an accessible toilet.

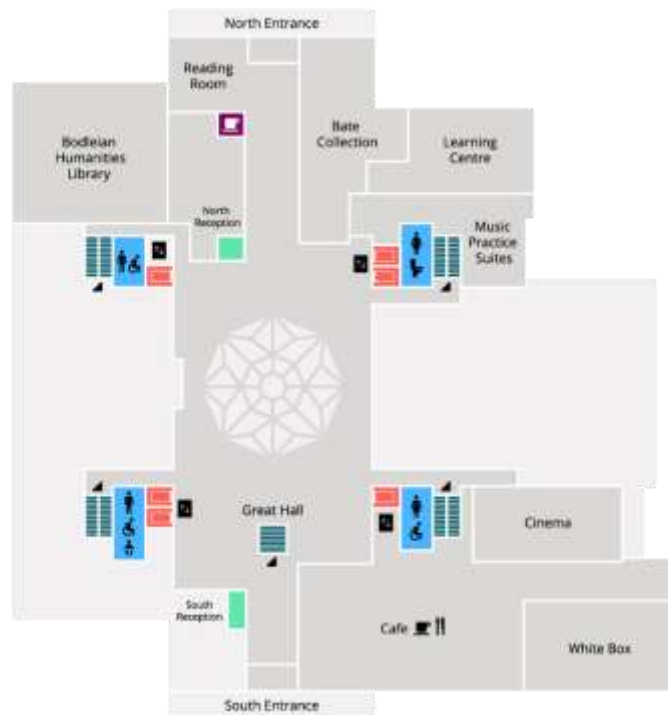
Accessibility information for the building can be found here:

<https://www.accessguide.ox.ac.uk/schwarzman-centre-for-the-humanities>

0

Ground Floor

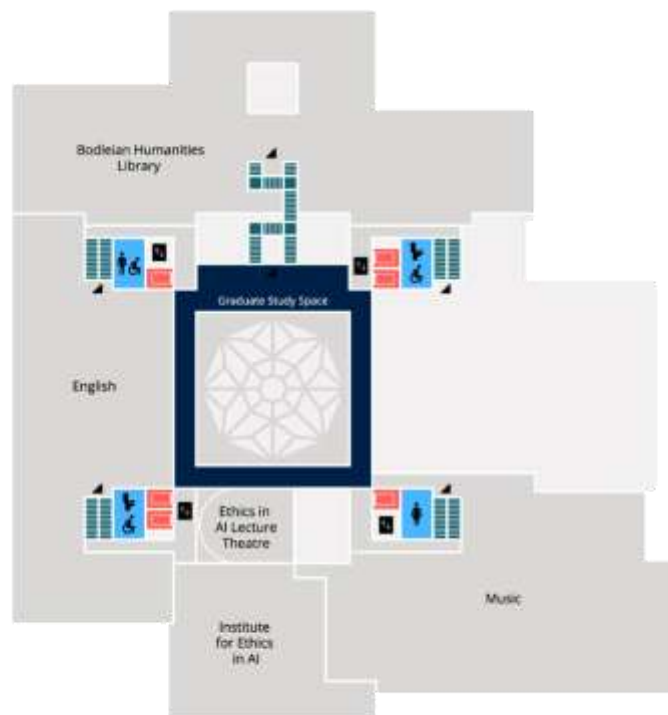
Great Hall
North Reception
South Reception
Bodleian Humanities Library
Music Practice Suites
Reading Room
Bate Collection
Learning Centre
White Box
Cinema
Cafe ☕
Coffee Bar ☕
Baby Change ♀
Toilets ♀♂
Stairs ⬆
Lift 🛗



1

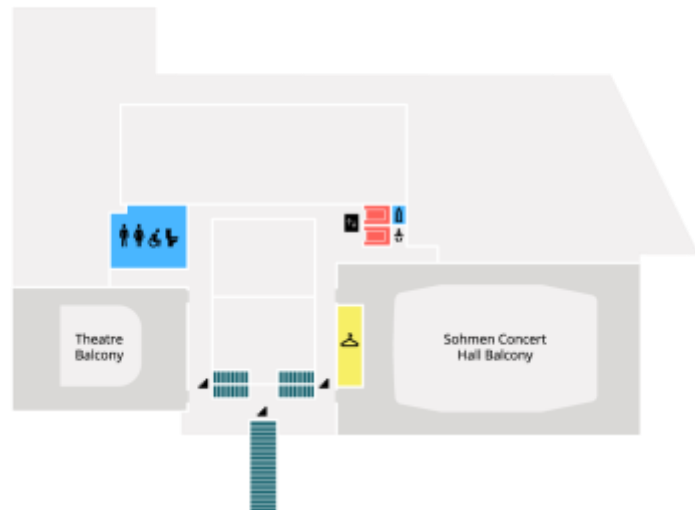
First Floor

Bodleian Humanities Library
English
Music
Institute for Ethics in AI
Ethics in AI Lecture Theatre
Graduate Study Space
Toilets ♀♂
Stairs ⬆
Lift 🛗



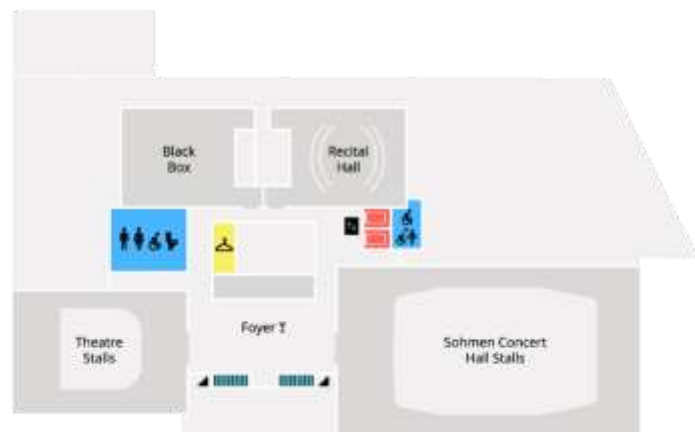
B1

Basement 1
 Sohmen Concert Hall Balcony
 Theatre Balcony
 Cloakroom △
 Nursing Room 0
 Baby Change +
 Toilets ↑ ↓ ♀ ♂
 Stairs ▲
 Lift ■



B2

Basement 2
 Sohmen Concert Hall Stalls
 Theatre Stalls
 Recital Hall
 Black Box
 Foyer Y
 Cloakroom △
 Toilets ↑ ↓ ♀ ♂
 Baby Change +
 Changing Places ♿
 Stairs ▲
 Lift ■



4.6 Complaints and academic appeals

The University, the Humanities Division and the English Faculty all hope that provision made for students at all stages of their course of study will result in no need for complaints (about that provision) or appeals (against the outcomes of any form of assessment).

If you have a complaint, 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 Student Union 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's committees.

Complaints

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by the faculty, then you should raise it with Director of Undergraduate Studies (Professor David Dwan). Complaints about departmental facilities should be made to the Departmental administrator (Sadie Slater). If you feel unable to approach one of those individuals, you may contact the Head of Faculty (Professor Simon Horobin). The officer concerned will attempt to resolve your concern/complaint informally.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may take your concern further by making a formal complaint to the Proctors under the University Student Complaints Procedure (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>).

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by your college, you should raise it either with your tutor or with one of the college officers, Senior Tutor, Tutor for Graduates (as appropriate). Your college will also be able to explain how to take your complaint further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of its consideration.

Academic appeals

An academic appeal is an appeal against the decision of an academic body (e.g. boards of examiners, transfer and confirmation decisions etc.), on grounds such as procedural error or evidence of bias. There is no right of appeal against academic judgement.

If you have any concerns about your assessment process or outcome it is advisable to discuss these first informally with your subject or college tutor, Senior Tutor, course director, director of studies, supervisor or college or departmental administrator as appropriate. They will be able to explain the assessment process that was undertaken and may be able to address your concerns. Queries must not be raised directly with the examiners. If you still have concerns you can make a formal appeal to the Proctors who will consider appeals under the University Academic Appeals Procedure

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

4.7 Career development

A number of English graduates (about 7%) choose to undertake research, while many more use the communication and analytical skills they develop at Oxford in a range of careers including advertising, acting, publishing, teaching, librarianship, public relations, journalism, the legal profession, management consultancy and finance.

The University Careers Service (www.careers.ox.ac.uk) is open to all students from the beginning of your study. The service is useful for identifying work experience or vacation jobs, and whether you have a clear idea of future career possibilities or not it is worth familiarising yourself with the wide range of advice and events on offer.

Supplementary talks and events at the faculty will be advertised as appropriate.

4.8 Prizes

The faculty runs a number of different prize competitions. Students are invited to interpret the title to produce work that they think addresses or unfolds it in interesting ways; literary and creative and analytic approaches – or a combination of all three – are equally welcome.

Full details, including the subjects of the prizes, can be found here:

<https://www.english.ox.ac.uk/prizes-and-studentships>

Shelley-Mills Prize

The purpose of the Shelley-Mills Prize is to promote the study of the works of William Shakespeare. This prize is open to all students of the University, who have not been a member of any other university for more than a year. A prize of £500 will be awarded, providing there is an entry of sufficient merit, for the best essay of about 5,000 words on the subject. The subject of the prize is listed on the [faculty website](#). Entries should be submitted by email with the subject "Shelley-Mills Prize"

to the [English Faculty Office](#), **not later than Monday of 8th Week, Hilary Term**. Authors should conceal their names and identify their entry documents with a motto. Please complete the [contact details form](#) and submit this alongside your entry.

Candidates must also submit a statement by the Head or Senior Tutor of their college that they have not been a member of any university other than Oxford for more than one year.

Chancellor's English Essay Prize

The Chancellor's English Essay Prize, the value of which is £500, providing there is an entry of sufficient merit, is open to students of the University who on the closing date for receipt of essays have not exceeded four years from the date of their matriculation. The subject of the prize is listed on the [faculty website](#).

Entries should be submitted by email with the subject "Chancellor's English Essay Prize" to the [English Faculty Office](#), **not later than Monday of 8th Week, Hilary Term**. Authors should conceal their names and identify their entry documents with a motto. Please complete the [contact details form](#) and submit this alongside your entry. Essays should not exceed 7,000 words in length (excluding bibliography) and may be considerably shorter than this. The prize will not be awarded twice to the same person.

Sir Roger Newdigate Prize

The Sir Roger Newdigate Prize is awarded for the best composition in English verse not exceeding 300 lines in length. The prize is open to current matriculated undergraduate students of the University. The value of the prize is £500. The subject of the prize is listed on the [faculty website](#).

Entries should be submitted by email with the subject 'Sir Roger Newdigate Prize' to the [English Faculty Office](#), **not later than Monday of 8th Week, Hilary Term**. Authors should conceal their names and identify their entry documents with a motto. Multiple entries should also be numbered. Please complete the [contact details form](#) and submit this alongside your entry.

Lord Alfred Douglas Memorial Prize

A prize of £500 will be awarded, providing there is an entry of sufficient merit, for the best sonnet or other poem written from 14 to 28 lines in length, written in English in contemporary diction and strict rhyming metre. Any member of the University, who is registered for a degree of the University, whether as an undergraduate or a graduate student, may enter for the prize. The prize shall not be awarded more than once to the same person. A copy of the winning entry shall be deposited in the Bodleian Library.

Entries should be submitted by email with the subject "Lord Alfred Douglas Prize" to the [English Faculty Office](#), **not later than Monday of 1st Week, Trinity Term**. Authors should conceal their

names and identify their entry documents with a motto. Multiple entries should also be numbered. Please complete the [contact details form](#) and submit this alongside your entry.

Sir John Rhys Prize

This prize, the purpose of which is to promote the study of Celtic Languages, Literature, History, and Antiquities, is administered by the Trustees of the Rhys Fund. The prize is open to members of the University who, on the closing date for entries, have not exceeded eight years from their matriculation. Finishing MPhil students and undergraduate finalists are very welcome to submit their entries. £500 will be awarded, providing there is an entry of sufficient merit, for the best essay on a subject relating to Celtic Language, Literature, History and Antiquities. Entrants may submit more than one piece. Candidates are free to choose their own subject. The judges have power to recommend to the trustees that grants be made out of the Rhys Fund towards the expenses of printing the whole, or parts, of any essay and/or to enable the successful candidate, or candidates, to carry on the work which has been the subject of the essay. The judges have power to recommend to the trustees that presents of books may be made to unsuccessful candidates whose essays have shown special excellence.

Entries should be submitted by email with the subject "*Sir John Rhys Prize*" to the [English Faculty Office](#), **not later than Friday of 8th Week, Michaelmas Term**. Authors should conceal their names and identify their entry documents with a motto. Multiple entries should also be numbered. Please complete the [contact details form](#) and submit this alongside your entry.

Examination prizes

[Passmore Edwards Prizes for Classics and English](#)

There are two prizes, each valued at £200. One will be awarded, if there is a candidate of sufficient merit, by the Examiner in the Preliminary Examinations in Classics and English to the candidate whose performance in that examination they judge the best.

The other prize will be awarded by the Examiners for the Final Honour School of Classics and English, to the candidate whose performance in that examination they judge the best. No special application is required for either prize.

The Mrs Claude Beddington English Literature Prize

The prize, value about £150, will be awarded, if there is a candidate of sufficient merit, by Examiner in the Preliminary Examinations in English Language and Literature in Trinity Term each year to the candidate

whose performance in that examination, or in part 2 of the Preliminary Examination in English and Modern Languages in the same term, they judge to be the best. No special application is required.

5. RESOURCES, FUNDING AND SUPPORT

5.1 Libraries

Oxford has excellent library provision at three levels: college, faculty and university:

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/research/libraries>

Approximately 23 libraries – not college libraries, but including the Bodleian Library and the Humanities Library – are part of a wider organisation called the Bodleian Libraries of the University of Oxford: <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>

i) College libraries

College libraries vary a good deal: some are extremely well stocked, while others are less well provided for. They are unlikely, wherever you are studying, to supply all the books that you will want to use, but they have certain major advantages: they are often open twenty-four hours a day, they provide a congenial working atmosphere, and you can borrow books from them for long periods. If your college library doesn't hold a particular book which is important to your work, ask your college advisor if it might be possible to order it; budgets differ, but most tutors and college librarians are receptive to useful suggestions.

ii) Humanities Library (<https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/libraries/humanities>)

The Humanities Library, newly opened at the Schwarzman Centre in September 2025, holds approximately 110,000 books on the open shelves, and this includes a substantial collection on English language and literature which supports teaching, study and research in the English Faculty. Most books in the Humanities Library can be borrowed, but there is a minority of library-use only material, often copies of titles in heavy demand. Print collections are complemented by extensive ebook provision (see below).

There is also a considerable audiovisual collection supporting film studies, and including Shakespeare productions and literary adaptations. This collection of physical format films supplements online access to filmed performances via platforms such as Drama Online, Digital Theatre+, and Box of Broadcasts.

The library also holds a rare books collection of approximately 7,800 pre-1850 volumes, and a significant collection of 19th-century journals; these can be requested via SOLO or in some cases more restricted access via library staff. The library has a special collection relating to Old Norse-Icelandic, accommodated in the Rare Materials Teaching Room within the library.

More information about the English literature and language collections of the Humanities Library can be found here: <https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/libraries/humanities/collections-and-resources>

If you have suggestions about books, journals or e-resources you think should be purchased for either the Humanities Library or the Bodleian Library, contact Helen Scott, the English Subject Librarian for the Bodleian Libraries (helen.scott@bodleian.ox.ac.uk).

Library staff provide induction sessions for new students, including an introduction to the Bodleian Libraries and its services, and introductory tours of both the Humanities Library and the Bodleian Library. During the year, Humanities Library staff will offer sessions looking at useful resources for particular undergraduate papers. Details of these sessions will be advertised by email.

iii) Bodleian Library (<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk>)

The Bodleian is a nationally and internationally renowned research library. It has been a legal deposit library since 1610, acquiring copies of everything published in the UK since then, which makes it possible to discover all kinds of writing in its collections whether well-known or obscure. Its budget doesn't stretch to buying every book published overseas, but it makes extensive acquisitions of materials published abroad. Most of the Bodleian's collections are kept in the Bodleian Offsite Storage facility and need to be requested via SOLO (the library catalogue, see below) and called to a library reading room. Collections on the open shelves of the Bodleian Library are non-lending, as are the many of books in the Bodleian Offsite Storage.

To get into the Bodleian's various buildings you will need your University Card, which you should have received from your college secretary.

English literature books and journals are held in several different locations:

- on the open shelves in the upper reading room (Upper Camera) of the Radcliffe Camera (mainly critical works relating to the undergraduate syllabus and postgraduate taught courses: shelfmark SE);
- in the Upper Reading Room of the Old Bodleian (primary works, bibliographies, and bibliographical and book history journals: shelfmark A.2, etc.);
- in the Lower Gladstone Link, which houses Bodleian Library high-use Humanities material in an interdisciplinary sequence. The GL also houses an interdisciplinary collection of Humanities print journals (shelfmark PERHums);
- in Duke Humfrey's Library in the Old Bodleian and in the Weston Library Reading Rooms;

- many books and back runs of print journals are held offsite in the Bodleian Offsite Storage and need to be ordered in advance, so planning your work is essential.

iv) Online catalogue (<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk>)

Most books and journals in Oxford's many libraries (including most college libraries) can be found through SOLO (Search Oxford Libraries Online), which incorporates the online catalogue as well as providing links to Oxford University e-Journals and Databases (see below).

v) Electronic resources (<https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/az.php>)

Computers in all Oxford libraries provide access not only to the catalogue SOLO but to Databases A-Z, the Bodleian Libraries platform for major e-resources, through which you can access the huge range of electronic resources subscribed to by the Bodleian Libraries, including databases, electronic reference works, e-journals, and e-book collections. You can also access thousands of full text journal articles electronically via OU e-Journals.

Please note that everyone is welcome to ask library staff for further help and to attend any training sessions. An online guide to SOLO is available here:

<http://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/SOLO>

5.2 Computing facilities

When you study at Oxford, you need to be aware of the print and online resources available to you through the various libraries, and of useful academic information available electronically, including student handbooks, lecture lists, reading lists, information on faculty members' research interests, and concordance programmes, for example.

- i) The Humanities Library has a number of PCs that readers can use to work on. Please note that you cannot save work on these public PCs, so any work you do should be saved to a memory stick. You will need to log in using your Bodleian Libraries username and password, which is not the same as your Single Sign On account.

For details, see: <https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/services/library-account>

Library staff will be happy to help if you have any problems with logging on. If you wish to print from these or other Bodleian Libraries PCs, you will need to use the PCAS system which allows you to send print jobs to any of the photocopier/printing machines in any of the Bodleian Libraries, including the EFL

For further details, see: <https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/services/pcas>

5.3 IT resources

The Databases A-Z gateway is the link to networked electronic resources. It can be accessed by clicking on the Databases A-Z link on the SOLO front page, or directly at <https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/az.php>. You will need your Single Sign On to access many of the resources from off-site.

5.4 Canvas (intranet system)

Canvas is the intranet for the faculty; it contains information and resources for current students and staff. It includes reading lists for the various courses, the current Lecture List, Guide and Timetable, details of research seminars in the faculty, and information/papers from the faculty's key committees. You can access the site at <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk>

You will need your Single Sign On username and password to access the system. Your username is issued to you via your college on registration.

If you have any problems accessing the site, or any queries regarding the content, please contact the Undergraduate Studies Office (undergrad@ell.ox.ac.uk).

5.5 Language Centre

The University of Oxford Language Centre provides a wide range of general and specialised courses in foreign languages and Academic English. See <https://www.lang.ox.ac.uk/>

It specialises in the teaching of languages for practical purposes. Teaching is offered across 11 modern languages and Academic English - from intensive short courses to in-depth three-term programmes, and from daytime to evening to suit your schedule.

The library contains materials in 200 languages, including a large collection of audio material for those wishing to improve their English. It has lending books, sound recordings, videos, newspapers and online resources. It includes all the languages taught at the Language Centre, other languages, indigenous and heritage languages, less commonly taught languages, pidgins and creoles, as well as material in some endangered languages.

For further information see <http://www.lang.ox.ac.uk/>. To register, you should visit the Centre as early as possible during the first week of your course.

5.6 Careers Service and employment

Graduate students are advised to give early consideration to their employment prospects when they leave Oxford. The Careers Service of the University, with offices at 56 Banbury Road, can help graduate students to evaluate their prospects of finding employment, both academic and non-academic.

It is open on weekdays from 9am to 5pm. It provides a service for both undergraduates and postgraduates which you are very welcome to use, whether you are contemplating a career within or outside of the academic world. There is a well-stocked information room, and details are kept of a large number of specific job vacancies. Specialist careers advisors are available to offer personal assistance. Amongst other things, they can help you to assess your main strengths and weaknesses, and point you towards the type of job that would suit you best. You are encouraged to arrange an interview with the advisor for your subject area at least a year before the end of your course, so that you can make the most informed choice about your future career.

Their website is available at: <http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/>

6. APPENDICES

6.1 Equality and Diversity at Oxford

“The University of Oxford is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected. We recognise that the broad range of experiences that a diverse staff and student body brings strengthens our research and enhances our teaching, and that in order for Oxford to remain a world-leading institution we must continue to provide a diverse, inclusive, fair and open environment that allows everyone to grow and flourish.” University of Oxford [Equality Policy](#)

As a member of the University you contribute towards making it an inclusive environment and we ask that you treat other members of the University community with respect, courtesy and consideration.

The Equality and Diversity Unit works with all parts of the collegiate University to develop and promote an understanding of equality and diversity and ensure that this is reflected in all its processes. The Unit also supports the University in meeting the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people with and without the ‘protected characteristics’ of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and/or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Visit our website for further details or contact us directly for advice: edu.web.ox.ac.uk or equality@admin.ox.ac.uk.

The Equality and Diversity Unit also supports a broad network of harassment advisors in departments/faculties and colleges as part of the Harassment Advisory Service. For more information on the University’s Harassment and Bullying policy and the support available for students visit: edu.web.ox.ac.uk/harassment-advice

There are a range of faith societies, belief groups, and religious centres within Oxford University that are open to students. For more information visit: edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/religion-and-belief-0

6.2 Student Welfare and Support Services

The Disability Advisory Service (DAS) can provide information, advice and guidance on the way in which a particular disability may impact on your [student](#) experience at the University and assist with organising disability-related study support. For more information visit: www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/das

The Counselling Service is here to help you address personal or emotional problems that get in the way of having a good experience at Oxford and realising your full academic and personal potential.

They offer a free and confidential service. For more information visit:

www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/counselling

A range of services led by students are available to help provide support to other students, including the peer supporter network, the Oxford SU's Student Advice Service and Nightline. For more information visit: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/peersupport>

Oxford SU also runs a series of campaigns to raise awareness and promote causes that matter to students. For full details, visit: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/student-life/do-what-you-love/campaigning>. There is a wide range of student clubs and societies to get involved in - for more details visit: www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/clubs

6.2.1 Preventing and responding to harassment and sexual violence

The University of Oxford is committed to fostering a safe environment in which all students can thrive. Harassment and sexual misconduct in any form are not tolerated here. Please find further information here: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation/harassment-and-sexual-misconduct>

6.3 Lecture recording

The University Educational Recordings Policy is located here: academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/educational-recordings-policy

Please note that lecture recordings and all attendant online materials may be used only for your personal and private study, and must not be passed on to any other person (except for transcription purposes, if required due to the nature of a disability, in which case they can only be provided to the transcriber), nor reproduced or published in any form (this includes, but is not limited to, the internet and hard copy publication). Any breach of this agreement or the University's policy on the recording of lectures and other formal teaching sessions will be regarded as a disciplinary offence.

The faculty supports the primary function of the lecture as a live teaching and learning event, and recognizes that the presence of the lecturer and students together has clear pedagogical benefits. For this reason, lectures are (with very occasional exceptions) delivered as live, in-person events, and students are encouraged to attend in person.

For access and inclusivity, lectures will normally be recorded (unless lecturers have requested to opt out of recording for pedagogical reasons) and made available to all students for a period of two weeks, after which they will be taken offline.

An important exception to this is where students require lectures to be recorded as part of their Student Support Plan (under the Equality Act). In these cases, the recording is available to the individual student, who can view it via Canvas until the start of the following term. All previous lectures are deleted on Friday of 0th week.

Other forms of teaching, including classes, tutorials, seminars etc. will not normally be recorded.

Students are forbidden to download, share, copy, record, or otherwise re-broadcast a recorded lecture. The lecturer retains intellectual property rights.

6.3.1 EULA (End User Licencing Agreement)

6.3.1.1 About this licence

This user licence sets out the terms on which you may use a recorded lecture made available via Canvas on the English faculty Panopto pages (the **service**). By continuing to view lectures recorded and provided by the English Faculty, you are agreeing to this user licence and its conditions.

6.3.1.2 Permitted use

All rights in a lecture made available on or through the service are reserved. You may access recorded lectures only for the purposes of your own private study and non-commercial research, provided you acknowledge any use of the lecture in accordance with academic custom and any rules or guidance issued by the University. You must not download, broadcast or copy any lecture, or make copies or access details available to another person, or make an adaptation of a lecture, unless specifically authorised in writing or permitted under applicable intellectual property laws.

No other personal recording of lectures is permitted except by authorisation of the lecturer, or by recommendation in a Student Support Plan (SSP) from the Disability Advisory Service.

6.3.1.3 Disclaimer

The views expressed in any lecture are those of the people making them, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the University or the English Faculty. The English Faculty does not guarantee that the service, or any content on it, will always be available or be uninterrupted. Access to the service is permitted on a temporary basis. The English Faculty may suspend, withdraw, discontinue or change all or any part of the service without notice. The English Faculty will not be liable to you if for any reason the site is unavailable at any time or for any period.

If you have any questions or concerns about this licence, please contact lecture.list@ell.ox.ac.uk

6.3.2 Notice of recording

Please be aware that lectures may be recorded in audio format. These recordings may be used by the Faculty of English and accessed via Canvas by students.

At no time will audience members be intentionally recorded, but recordings will generally start and stop automatically on the hour – so conversations held next to the desk, immediately before or after a lecture, may be picked up. Audio pickup is limited by the reach of the microphone at the desk; this may include some questions from the audience.

No other personal recording of lectures is permitted except by authorisation of the lecturer, or by recommendation in a Student Support Plan (SSP) from the Disability Advisory Service.

For more information about lecture recording at the Faculty of English, please contact lecture.list@ell.ox.ac.uk

6.4 EMERGENCY INFORMATION

If the fire alarm sounds, walk immediately to the nearest fire exit. Do not run, or stop to collect possessions. Do not attempt to re-enter the building until authorised to do so by faculty staff.

In the unlikely event of an armed incident, leave the area as quickly as possible. The key advice is to:

- RUN - to a place of safety. This is better than trying to surrender or negotiate.

HIDE - it is better to hide than confront. Barricade yourself in, turn phones to silent and use only when it is safe to do so.

- TELL – the police by calling 999.

6.4.1 Oxford University Security Services

OUSS Website: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ouss/>

General Enquiries (24 hours) & non-emergency incident reporting: (0)1865 (2) 72944

Emergency (24 hours): (0)1865 (2) 89999

Email: security.control@admin.ox.ac.uk