Assessment in the Faculty of History, 2021:
Further Information for students taking History papers

This document supplements the descriptions of the Faculty's scheme of examination, which were issued on 9 October and 3 December 2020. Key points from those documents are included here, along with further guidance about assessments. This document should be read in conjunction with the [Faculty circular about Exam Mitigation measures 2 March 2021](#) (also summarized [here](#)).

Though primarily aimed at students on the Historical and History and Politics Triposes, guidance about the format of written examinations is relevant to students from any other Triposes, including History and Modern Languages, who are sitting History papers.

Examination Formats – *as announced in December, no change*

History

Part I, year 1	Preliminary examinations will take place as normal

HAP: Online, open book examination in a 6-hour window. All candidates answer one question. Upper word limit of 4,000 words per script.

2 papers: Online, open book examinations in 6-hour windows. All candidates answer three questions per paper. Upper word limit of 4,500 words per script.

Part I, year 2   Students will be assessed in all 6 papers

Themes and Sources: long essay (unchanged)

5 papers: online, open book examinations in 6-hour windows. All candidates answer three questions per paper. Upper word limit of 4,500 words per script.

Part II   Students will be assessed in all 5 papers

Historical Argument and Practice: online, open book examination in a 6-hour window. All candidates answer one question. Upper word limit of 4,000 words per script.

Special Subject:

(1) gobbets paper: online, open book examination in a 6-hour window. Upper word limit of 4,500 words per script.

(2) Long essay (unchanged)

Specified Subject / Political Thought papers: online, open book examinations in 6-hour windows. All candidates answer three questions per paper. Upper word limit of 4,500 words per script.

NB: Specified Subjects borrowed from other Triposes (i.e. Papers 7, 9, 10, 11, 15 and 18) may be assessed differently. If you are taking one of these papers, you should have been informed of arrangements directly by its 'owning' Faculty or Department. Please contact them if you have not.

Dissertation (unchanged)

Candidates in the first year of a 2-year Part II (Prelim to Part II):

Students will take HAP and two **Specified Subjects / Political Thought** papers, with formats as above under Part II

Candidates in the second year of a 2-year Part II:

In 2021, students will be assessed as Part II candidates, above, i.e. **only on papers studied during the academic year 2020-21**

Joint degrees in History & Politics and History & Modern Languages

All History papers that form part of these degrees will be assessed, using the formats stated above.

History and Politics bespoke papers: Evidence and Argument, HP2 and HP3: where assessed by long essay, arrangements will be unchanged

Part IA: Evidence and Argument written paper will be examined by an online, open book examination in a 3-hour window;

Part II: HP3 to be examined by an online, open book examination in a 6-hour window.

All three years: for details of the examination formats of your Politics (POL) papers, see the forthcoming statement from HSPS which will update that made by Dr Christopher Brooke, the Director of Undergraduate Education in POLIS, on 9 November.

History and Modern Languages: MMLL will communicate arrangements for Languages papers.

General points about the character and format of online exams

Exam windows

Papers will be downloaded and scripts uploaded through Moodle. Ahead of time, you will be provided with the information detailing how to find the appropriate page for your paper on Moodle. There will be a 6-hour window for each paper. This means that, when a paper 'goes live', you will have 6 hours to download the paper, write your answers, and upload your script. The specification of word limits means that in practice it may not be necessary or advisable to use all the time available. You will be free to organise your time as you see fit within the 6-hour window.

Students with approved exam access arrangements will be given additional time and/or rest breaks, with the effect that they will be given a longer window (up to 9 hours) in which to complete the examination.

Penalties for breaches of time

How much of the window you use will not be monitored, but there will be penalties for unexplained late submissions. Initially, the Exams Office (Student Registry) will liaise with the College to determine if the student had reported difficulties. **It is very important,** therefore, that you inform your DoS/Senior Tutor **immediately** if any unforeseen difficulties result in a breach of time.

Where there is no explanation, or the Exams Office is not satisfied with the explanation, the details will be passed to the Chair of Examiners. The tariff of penalties will be published before exams commence.

Writing your answers

The default option, which most, if not all of you will use, will be to write your answers in Microsoft Word. If you write your answers with a word processor, such as Microsoft Word, please write all your answers on the same document.

Clearly identify each question and write the question number before each answer. Write your candidate number (not your name) on the front page of the document you upload. All such relevant instructions will be clearly indicated on the front page of each paper.

Handwritten scripts: the University has advised that we may not make typing compulsory, so students will be permitted to handwrite their scripts if they prefer this to typing. We would, however, strongly advise against this, unless your handwriting is clearly legible. Any illegible scripts will be returned via your College for transcription, as they would in normal circumstances. You will be expected to scan your script and upload as a pdf file. Further instructions will follow closer to the time.

Word limits

Word limits are per script, rather than per answer, so in principle candidates have some flexibility in how they divide up the words available to them. Candidates should bear in mind, however, that on all papers where three questions must be answered, the overall mark is an average of the three marks awarded. Candidates are therefore advised to devote roughly equal amounts of time and space to each question, just as they would have for 3-hour handwritten exams prior to the pandemic. This point applies to the Part II gobbets exam as well as to other papers in which candidates must answer three questions. Thus each of a candidate's six gobbet answers (Questions 1 and 2) is likely to be around 500 words in total.

You will be responsible for providing a word count for every essay, and for the script as a whole. Note that this is also true for those candidates who choose to provide hand-written answers.

The word count must be strictly observed. **Examiners will deduct marks for work which exceeds the prescribed word limits.**

Marking criteria

Note that History's marking criteria for all examinations will remain essentially unchanged. While the format is online, the 2021 examinations are intended to assess your work on the same basis as our normal, pre-2020 examinations. You can find links to these documents here, in the Undergraduate Information Hub Moodle.

Rubrics for papers

The rubrics and instructions on the front of the examination papers will be different to those of previous years insofar as they will be adjusted to reflect the online, open-book, format of the examinations, and the extended time window. However, in all other key respects – i.e. in the number of questions to be answered, the use of A and B sections, etc. - they will remain unchanged.

'Open Book' examinations

As you know, the History Faculty is using 'open book' examinations. This means that you may have access to and make use of your notes, the internet, and any books during the course of the examination. Online lectures and Moodle content will remain available until the exam period and can be consulted during the examination. Candidates are not permitted to consult

with each other during the course of examination, nor are they permitted to request assistance from other candidates or any other third party. All work submitted for the online examinations must be the candidate's own. These principles are covered by the [Faculty of History's current statement on Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct](#), which all students have been asked to agree to via an online form in [Moodle](#). (If you have not yet completed this agreement, please do so as soon as possible.) All examination scripts will be screened by Turnitin text-matching software, and any breaches of the guidelines on academic misconduct will be investigated.

Use of footnotes / references

Footnotes or endnotes should not be used in online exam scripts. Instead, candidates should reference their work by other means in order to avoid unintentional plagiarism or poor academic practice. The most common method will involve attributing others' work in the text, e.g. by writing 'As Smith notes…', or 'A study by Brown has found that..', or inserting '(Smith)' following a statement or quotation. Ensure you do not reproduce any text or sustained argument without attribution. This will be easily detectable (notably via Turnitin), and might be identified as plagiarism. Further guidance will be provided in the forthcoming Faculty information sessions (see below).

Illustrations, tables, graphs, etc.

Illustrations, maps, tables, graphs, and charts may be included in scripts. Note, however, that graphs, tables and charts are included in the word count, as are the captions to illustrations and maps. For further details about what is included in the word count, see Section A of the [Faculty Style Guide](#), which also applies to examination scripts this year. Note that while use of illustrations etc. is permitted, candidates are not expected or required to include them.

Coursework and/or dissertations

Impact statement

As outlined in the University's package of mitigation measures circulated to students, and detailed here:
[Assessment mitigation 2020-21 | University of Cambridge](#)
you may submit a statement alongside a dissertation or submitted essay/coursework which will be taken into account by examiners. This statement should refer only to the impact of the pandemic on a student's ability to access resources. You must not include information on your personal circumstances or health issues - allowances for these reasons cannot be considered by the Examiners or Exam Board and must be referred to the EAMC. The impact statement form is available here: [Mitigation | Cambridge students](#)

The statement form will also be found in the particular essay/dissertation submission Moodle course, together with instructions about how to submit it. This course will appear on your Moodle dashboard when it is ready to view.

Extensions

You may request an extension of up to 14 days to essay/dissertation submission deadlines without going through the usual Examinations Access and Mitigation Committee process. The Chair of the relevant Exam Board will consider applications on grounds of medical or other grave cause, whether Covid-related or not, which are supported by your College tutor or DoS.

Students will not be expected to provide medical evidence for applications for extensions made on medical grounds.

Applications must be made using the Faculty form which is available to download in the appropriate essay/dissertation submission Moodle, briefly stating the reason and the length of extension required, and sent to either Angela Wilson (aw828@cam.ac.uk) (History) or Rachel McGlone (rm988@cam.ac.uk) (History & Politics) who will pass it on to the relevant Chair of Examiners for consideration.

You are asked to consider the knock-on effect that such an extension may have on preparation for other assessments (i.e. impact on revision time).

Applications for extensions for longer than 14 days should be made in the usual way, via the EAMC.

Further information

The Faculty will be offering two information sessions on 'Preparing for Tripos exams 2021'. These will take place on **15 March and 30 April** (both at 12.00), and will be recorded. They will cover revision, tackling open book exams, avoiding plagiarism, and related issues. They are open to all students taking exams in History papers. These are two different sessions, not repeated.

The links are below:

Mar 15, 2021 12:00 PM Faculty of History: Exams information session
Please click the link below to join the webinar:
https://cam-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/92856565412 <https://cam-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/92856565412>

Apr 30, 2021 12:00 PM Faculty of History: Exams information session
Please click the link below to join the webinar:
https://cam-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/99723517845 <https://cam-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/99723517845>

In addition, Dr Gareth Atkins is providing a **session for first years on 'Preparing for Prelims',** as part of the Transition training programme. This will take place at 3.15 p.m. on 15 March.

4 March 2021