

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

### FHS OF LITERAE HUMANIORES – COURSE I

<b>1. Awarding Institution/body</b>	University of Oxford
<b>2. Teaching institution</b>	University of Oxford
<b>3. Programme accredited by</b>	n/a
<b>4. Final award</b>	BA (Hons) – 4-year course
<b>5. Programme</b>	Literae Humaniores Course I
<b>6. UCAS code</b>	Q800
<b>7. Relevant QAA subject benchmarking groups</b>	Classics & Ancient History, Philosophy
<b>8. Date of programme specification</b>	December 2002, <b>revised June 2005 and May 2008</b>

#### 9. Educational aims of the programme

To provide, within the supportive, stimulating and diverse environment of the collegiate university, an education that encourages independent thinking and the critical use of material, through the development of different but complementary academic skills acquired by studying three or more disciplines with a common foundation in the Graeco-Roman world. The programme aims to enable students

- to acquire a thorough understanding of the Classical Greek and Latin languages and of key works of Classical literature, and to give them the ability to read texts accurately and critically in the original languages;
- to acquire the skills efficiently to assess substantial amounts of material of diverse types, developing a broad and complementary range of intellectual abilities – the course ensures that all students will study at least some Philosophy as well as Greek and Latin languages and literature, and will pursue at an advanced level the study of Ancient History, Philosophy, Philology and Linguistics, Art and Archaeology, or a combination of some of these;
- by writing regular and frequent essays for tutorial discussion, to acquire the skill of clear and effective communication in written and oral discourse, and the organisational talent needed to plan work and meet demanding schedules;
- to think coherently, to argue effectively, and to make the best use of large bodies of material to develop an argument or to test a theory.

Graduates find employment in government and in business, in the law, in the media, in teaching at school and at university, in museums, and in numerous other capacities. The programme aims to produce people whose skills are widely transferable in the sense of being highly appropriate for a great range of careers.

## **10. Programme outcomes**

### **A. Knowledge and Understanding**

- 1) of the Classical Greek and Latin languages; this may include acquiring one or other of those languages without having previously studied it at A-level (or its equivalent);
- 2) of the Classical World and its culture, its ways of thinking and acting, and their relationship to our own;
- 3) of Homer, Virgil, and a wide range of other Greek and Latin authors, with the option of studying Classical Literature in considerable depth;
- 4) of some introductory Philosophy, with the option of gaining a thorough education in modern as well as Classical Philosophy.

For those who choose the appropriate options the course also offers knowledge and understanding

- 5) of the History of the Graeco-Roman world, with the option of studying this subject in depth through the use of original texts, artistic works and archaeological discoveries;
- 6) of the Archaeology of the Graeco-Roman world, its relation to History, to Art, and to material culture;
- 7) of Philology and Linguistics, including General Linguistics and Indo-European Philology as well as the Philology of Greek and Latin.

- **Teaching/learning methods and strategies:**

For those who are learning a language they have not studied at A-level there is a series of intensive language classes in the first five terms of the course. Students are required to complete regular and frequent assignments for the classes. Otherwise teaching for each of 1 – 7 is by a combination of language classes, lectures and tutorials; tutorials are typically hour-long sessions of two students with a tutor. Each student is normally expected to write up to twelve tutorial essays of roughly 2000 – 2500 words in length, in each of the three eight-week terms of the academic year (though rather fewer when they are learning a language intensively). Tutorials may be supplemented by classes, in which larger groups of students are taught by a tutor, sometimes using a seminar format. The course is designed to give students a wide choice of options so that they can develop their interests, while retaining a core of basic material that must be studied. Individual initiative is encouraged wherever possible, and students who wish to may write a thesis on a subject of their own choice provided it falls within the general area of the course.

- **Assessment:**

Formative assessment takes place through feedback from tutors, given informally as the course progresses and also formally once a term. In addition students are assessed by regular examinations within their colleges, marked by their tutors, who again provide feedback on these. The first part of the course receives summative assessment through a written examination (Honour Moderations in Classics), which takes place at the end of the fifth term. This examination consists of ten or eleven three-hour written papers, and the results are classified. The final summative assessment takes place at the end of the fourth year, and consists of eight three-hour written papers (or seven plus a thesis or presubmitted essays), together with associated but shorter translation papers, and an optional thesis in addition. A student's results in Honour Moderations in Classics have no effect on the final class.

## **10. Programme outcomes (*continued*)**

### **Skills and other attributes**

#### **B. Intellectual skills:** the abilities

- 1 to think clearly, coherently, and with precision;
- 2 to argue critically, rigorously, and effectively, and to use the same critical rigour in the assessment of the arguments of others;
- 3 to command a range of techniques and methodologies;
- 4 to understand a range of viewpoints on problems of interpretation and evaluation, and to adopt a variety of critical approaches to them drawn from different disciplines within the subject area;
- 5 to reflect critically on the extent and limitations of how and what one has learned, discovered and understood;
- 6 to marshal a complex body of information, to extract key elements from complex data and to identify and solve associated problems using the most appropriate methodology;
- 7 to gather, memorise, organise and deploy evidence and information, and to appreciate the consequences of the unavailability of evidence;
- 8 to engage in analytical and evaluative thinking about texts, sources, arguments and interpretations, and to exercise critical judgement in the light of evidence and argument;
- 9 to work autonomously, to think creatively, and to judge independently;
- 10 to write effectively, deploying all the above skills.

#### • **Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Intellectual skills are developed through the teaching programme, and especially through the requirement to write frequent substantial tutorial essays and to discuss them with tutors and colleagues. Students are required to write essays and to debate the key issues relating to every part of their course; they have to analyse and interpret material, to be able to assess the interpretations offered in secondary literature, and to develop views of their own which they can support and defend. Skills 3 and 4 are particularly encouraged by a course like this that introduces students to disciplines that are at the same time closely related and very different in character and approach, though this is valuable in developing the other skills as well. Library and internet use, essential throughout the course, requires and develops IT skills. Students also learn how to balance competing demands on their time.

#### • **Assessment**

These skills are assessed in the first instance by those giving tutorials and classes, whose objective it is to develop them through direct and indirect feedback, and wherever possible by tailoring their demands so as to suit the needs of the particular student. The examinations are designed to test all of these abilities, and are effective in doing so.



## **10. Programme outcomes (continued)**

### **C. Practical skills: the abilities**

- 1 to read Greek and Latin easily and fluently, with some ability also to write in those languages;
- 2 to sift relevant from irrelevant information;
- 3 to use research materials, both IT-based and of a traditional kind, to advance knowledge and understanding;
- 4 to plan written work and to write it in a coherent and well-structured fashion;
- 5 to present material orally in a clear and effective manner.

#### **• Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

Language classes are provided as a part of the course. Students are instructed at the start how to use libraries, and for those who arrive without basic IT skills there are classes at which they can acquire them. They are given some initial instruction in how to write essays, but in practice learn more effectively from the experience of having to do it regularly, and receiving the comments of tutors and colleagues on their work. Skill 3 is furthest developed by those who take the opportunity of doing a thesis, where the tutor provides guidance and bibliographic help, but much depends on the student's own initiative. To a lesser extent, however, even those not doing theses need to go beyond the limits of a prescribed bibliography and to make use of research resources in preparing assignments. The effective use of libraries and the internet (including the university's VLE), essential throughout the course, requires and develops IT skills. Skill 5 is promoted by tutorials and class presentations.

#### **• Assessment**

Skill 1 is heavily tested in Honour Moderations in Classics, and in the translation papers for finals; some students opt for an additional language paper in Mods. All skills are assessed through the work done for tutorials and classes. The three-hour written examination or thesis provides a different but complementary assessment of these skills.

**D. Transferable skills.** Except for C 1 all the skills listed under B and C above are obviously transferable; C 1 is transferable too in that it increases a student's capacity to use English well. However one might summarily pick out the abilities

- 1 to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing;
- 2 to manage time and work to short deadlines in a sustained way over a period;
- 3 to write quickly, clearly, and fluently;
- 4 to work independently;
- 5 to be self-critical;
- 6 to participate intelligently and constructively in discussion.

#### **• Teaching/learning methods and strategies**

All of these are acquired through the need to prepare essays and to make oral contributions in tutorials and classes. Informally, these skills (and particularly skill 6) are developed by the atmosphere of discussion and debate between students that the college system encourages. Such informal discussions are very common and often interdisciplinary. Skills 2 and 3 are learnt early in the course, as the requirement to write substantial essays at frequent intervals throughout each eight-week term makes them indispensable.

## 10. Programme outcomes (*continued*)

- **Assessment**

The assessment of skills 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 is mainly informal, through the feedback provided in tutorials and classes. The assessment of skill 3 is both formal and informal, and the same applies to skill 1 so far as written communication is concerned. The abilities to write clearly and quickly, and to get one's point across effectively, are severely tested by the intense programmes of three-hour examinations both in Moderations and in finals.

## 11. Programme Structures and Features

The course is a four-year full-time course. The structure is not modular, and credit values are not assigned. Instead the course is divided into two parts. The first of these leads up to Honour Moderations in Classics (popularly known as Mods), a major examination that is taken at the end of the student's fifth term, i.e. two-thirds of the way through the second year. It involves ten three-hour written papers, with the option of doing an eleventh. Students who have an A-level (or equivalent) in only one of the languages will by this stage have learned the other language to a standard which will enable them in the second part of the course to tackle the same syllabus as those who came with A-levels in both languages. The second part begins in the sixth term and is examined at the end of the twelfth term. This final examination (known as Greats) consists of eight papers (or seven plus a thesis or presubmitted essays), with supplementary translation papers, and an optional thesis in addition.

Full details are set out in the *Classics Mods Handbook* and in the *Greats Handbook* (both are available on WebLearn); they are also to be found in the University's *Examination Regulations*. Results are classified: in Classical Honour Moderations candidates may be awarded First, II-1, II-2, or Third Class Honours, or in extremely rare cases may be granted a Pass. In Greats candidates may be awarded First, II-1, II-2, or Third Class Honours, or a Pass. The rare student who is given a Pass in Classical Honour Moderations is not necessarily permitted to continue for Greats, but the decision on this lies with the student's college rather than the University.

### Classical Honour Moderations

All students take two main papers on classical literature (papers requiring both translation and essays on Homer's *Iliad* and Virgil's *Aeneid*), and two papers on 'Texts and Contexts' (one essay paper with picture commentary and one translation paper). Students who have not studied Greek at the equivalent of A-level receive intensive language teaching in Greek; they are expected to cover much less Greek literature in the original language than those who knew the language before coming up, and the papers they take in Moderations reflect that different expectation. Similarly those who have not studied Latin at the equivalent of A-level receive intensive training in Latin, and are expected to do correspondingly less of Virgil and of 'Texts and Contexts' in the original language.

All students take two special subjects. These are divided into six groups. Each student must take one from the two Philosophy groups, and one from the remaining groups (*Greek; Latin; Art and Archaeology; Linguistics and Philology*); at least one of them has to be linguistically based. Because some students will be engaged in the intensive learning of either Latin or Greek, there are certain further restrictions on the choice of special subjects, and some papers are available in different forms to accommodate the different linguistic backgrounds.

## 11. Programme Structures and Features (*continued*)

All students take two papers of Unprepared Translation, one from Greek, one from Latin. They also take a further paper on the Greek Language and another on the Latin Language.

Students may do an optional eleventh paper on verse composition, or additional translation, or additional translation and metre.

### Finals (“Greats”)

Students normally prepare for two papers simultaneously in any one term. They do eight papers (or seven and a thesis), though some of the papers carry with them associated translation papers. All students must do at least four text-based papers, at least one of which must be in Greek and at least one in Latin. There are 37 text-based alternatives to choose from, 6 in Ancient History, 6 in Philosophy, 23 in Greek and Latin Literature, 2 in Philology and Linguistics. There is also a large number of non-text-based papers available.

Students therefore have a considerable degree of choice, but it is subject to a number of constraints. In Ancient History certain of the papers are devoted to particular historical periods, and those who offer more than one Ancient History paper must offer at least one text-based; they can offer at most five Ancient History papers altogether. Those who want to study Philosophy can offer at most five philosophy papers (the options include a large range of modern philosophy papers). Up to five papers may be offered in Greek and/or Latin Literature, up to two papers and a thesis in Greek and Roman Archaeology, and up to two papers and a thesis in Philology and Linguistics.

Those who wish to may substitute a thesis for a paper in Ancient History, Philosophy, or Literature (subject to certain restrictions). The title and outline of the thesis require approval in advance, and the amount of teaching a student gets for a thesis is equivalent to the amount that would be received for a paper. Theses have a limit of 10,000 words, except in Philosophy, where the limit is 15,000 words.

In addition, any candidate may submit an optional thesis, whether or not they are also substituting a thesis for a paper. This is called a Special Thesis. The rules and length limits are the same for Special Theses as they are for other theses.

The **text-based subjects** are as follows:

### **(I) In Classical Greek:**

- I.1 Greek History I
- I.2 Greek History 2
- I.3 Greek History 3
- I.4 Roman History 4

- II.130 Plato, *Republic*
- II.131 Plato, *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*
- II.132 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*
- II.133 Aristotle, *Physics*
- II.134 Sextus Empiricus

- III.1 Greek Literature of the 5th Century BC
- III.3 Historiography
- III.4 Lyric Poetry
- III.5 Early Greek Hexameter Poetry
- III.6 Tragedy III.7 Comedy
- III.8 Hellenistic Poetry
- III.13 Euripides, *Orestes*
- III.15 (c) Byzantine Literature
- III.15 (d) Modern Greek Poetry

V.I Greek Historical Linguistics

**(2) In Classical Latin:**

I.5 Roman History 5

I.6 Roman History 6

II.135 Latin Philosophy

III.2 Latin Literature of the 1st Century BC

III.3 Historiography III.4 Lyric Poetry

III.7 Comedy

III.9 Cicero

III.10 Ovid

III.11 Latin Didactic

III.12 Neronian Literature

III.14 (a) Seneca, *Agamemnon*

III.14 (b) Catullus

III.15 (a) The Conversion of Augustine

III.15 (b) Medieval Latin

V.2 Latin Historical Linguistics

**I. GREEK AND ROMAN HISTORY**

Candidates may offer up to five subjects (or up to four if they are offering Second Classical Language in Course II). If they offer more than one subject, at least one must be taken from A below, together with associated translation paper or papers from D below; if they offer more than three subjects, at least two must be taken from A; if they offer five subjects, at least three must be taken from A.

**A. GREEK AND ROMAN HISTORY PERIODS**

I.1 The Early Greek World and Herodotus' Histories: 650 to 479 BC

I.2 Thucydides and the Greek World: 479 to 403 BC

I.3 The End of the Peloponnesian War to the Death of Philip II of Macedon: 403 BC to 336 B.C.

I.4 Polybius, Rome and the Mediterranean: 241–146 BC

I.5 Republic in Crisis: 146–46 BC

I.6 Rome, Italy and Empire from Caesar to Claudius: 46 BC to 54 AD

**B. ANCIENT HISTORY TOPICS**

I.7 Athenian Democracy in the Classical Age

I.8 Alexander the Great and his Early Successors (336–302 BC)

I.9 The Hellenistic World: Societies and Cultures, c.300–100 BC

I.10 Cicero: Politics and Thought in the Late Republic

I.11 Politics, Society and Culture from Nero to Hadrian

I.12 Religions in the Greek and Roman World (c. 31 BC – AD 312)

I.13 Sexuality and Gender in Greece and Rome

**C.**

I.14 Thesis in Ancient History: candidates who offer four subjects under A and B may also offer a thesis in Ancient History as a fifth subject. This may not be combined with any of II.199, III.12, IV.5 or V.5.

**D.**

Translation. Candidates are required to offer translations (a number of papers as appropriate) from the texts prescribed for all the period subjects which they offer under A as text-based.

**II. PHILOSOPHY**

Candidates may offer up to five subjects in Philosophy, from the list below.

If candidates offer one Philosophy subject only, they have a free choice apart from 199, Thesis.

If candidates offer at least two Philosophy subjects, they must select at least one subject in ancient philosophy, i.e. one of 115, 116, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134 and 135.

If candidates offer three or more subjects, they must also select one subject from 101, 102, 103 and 108. [NB paper 104 is no longer on this list, though taking paper 104 remains possible provided these rules are adhered to.]

To offer subject 199 (Thesis in Philosophy), candidates must also offer at least three other subjects in Philosophy.

### **Normal Prerequisites (indicated by NP)**

In what follows some subjects are named as 'normal prerequisites' for the study of others. For instance: 112 The Philosophy of Kant (NP 101) means that those studying 112, Kant, would normally be expected to have studied 101 (History of Philosophy from Descartes to Kant). In some cases alternatives are given as the prerequisite, e.g. 107 Philosophy of Religion (NP 101 or 102) means that those studying 107, Philosophy of Religion, would normally be expected to have studied either 101 (History of Philosophy) or 102 (Knowledge and Reality).

101 History of Philosophy from Descartes to Kant

102 Knowledge and Reality

103 Ethics

104 Philosophy of Mind (NP 101 or 102)

105 Philosophy of Science and Philosophy of Psychology and Neuroscience (**cannot be combined with 106 or 124**) (NP 101 or 102)

106 Philosophy of Science and Social Science (**cannot be combined with 105 or 124**) (NP 101 or 102)

107 Philosophy of Religion (NP 101 or 102)

108 The Philosophy of Logic and Language (NP Mods Logic)

109 Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Criticism (NP 101 or 102 or 103 or 104 or 115/130 or 116/132)

110 Medieval Philosophy: Aquinas

111 Medieval Philosophy: Duns Scotus, Ockham

112 The Philosophy of Kant (NP 101)

113 Post-Kantian Philosophy (NP 101 or 102 or 103 or 112 or 115/130 or 116/132)

114 Theory of Politics (NP 103 or 115/130 or 116/132)

115 Plato: *Republic* (in translation) (**cannot be combined with 130**)

116 Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics* (in translation) (**cannot be combined with 132**)

117 Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein (**cannot be combined with 118**) (NP Mods Logic)

118 The Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein (**cannot be combined with 117**) (NP 101 or 102 or 108)

119 Formal Logic (NP Mods Logic)

120 Intermediate Philosophy of Physics

122 Philosophy of Mathematics (NP 101 or 102 or 108 or 117 or 119 or 120)

124 Philosophy of Science (**cannot be combined with 105 or 106**)

\*130 Plato: *Republic* (in Greek)

- \*131 Plato: *Theaetetus* and *Sophist* (in Greek)
- \*132 Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics* (in Greek)
- \*133 Aristotle: *Physics* (in Greek)
- \*134 Sextus Empiricus: *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* (in Greek)
- \*135 Latin Philosophy (in Latin)

An \* indicates a text-based paper.

199 Thesis in Philosophy (cannot be combined with I.15, III.12, IV.5, V.5).

### III. GREEK AND LATIN LITERATURE

Candidates may offer up to a maximum of five subjects from 1-16 below. Candidates offering more than three subjects must offer both III.1 and III.2; candidates offering more than one must offer III.1 or III.2 (and may offer both).

- III.1 Greek Literature of the 5th Century BC
- III.2 Latin Literature of the 1st Century BC
- III.3 Historiography
- III.4 Lyric Poetry
- III.5 Early Greek Hexameter Poetry
- III.6 Tragedy
- III.7 Comedy
- III.8 Hellenistic Poetry
- III.9 Cicero
- III.10 Ovid
- III.11 Latin Didactic
- III.12 Neronian Literature
- III.13 Euripides, *Orestes*
- III.14 (a) Seneca, *Agamemnon*
- III.14 (b) Catullus
- III.15 (a) The Conversion of Augustine
- III.15 (b) Medieval Latin
- III.15 (c) Byzantine Literature
- III.15 (d) Modern Greek Poetry
- III.16 Thesis in Literature (not combinable with I.14, II.199, IV.5 or V.5).

### IV. GREEK AND ROMAN ARCHAEOLOGY

Candidates may offer **one** or **two** of the following subjects IV.1-4; they may also offer a thesis (IV.5).

- IV.1 The Greeks and the Mediterranean World c.950 BC – 500 BC
- IV.2 Greek Art and Archaeology, c.500 – 300 BC
- IV.3 Art under the Roman Empire, AD 14 – 337
- IV.4 Roman Archaeology: Cities and Settlements under the Empire
- IV.5 Thesis in Greek or Roman Archaeology (not combinable with I.14, II.199, III.16 or V.5)

### V. PHILOLOGY AND LINGUISTICS

Course I and Course II: Candidates may offer **one** or **two** of the following subjects V.1-4; they may also offer a thesis (V.5).

- V.1 Greek Historical Linguistics
- V.2 Latin Historical Linguistics
- V.3 General Linguistics and Comparative Philology
- V.4 Comparative Philology: Indo-European, Greek and Latin
- V.5 Thesis in Philology and Linguistics (not combinable with I.14, II.199, III.16, or IV.5).

### VI. SECOND CLASSICAL LANGUAGE

Available only in Course II.

## VII. SPECIAL THESIS

Candidates may offer, but are not required to offer, a Special Thesis, in addition to their other papers.

## 12. Support for Students and their learning

- Induction programmes are given in colleges, in the faculty, and in the Bodleian, Sackler and Philosophy Libraries.
- Written information about the course is provided in the Course Handbook and in *Examination Regulations*. The Course Handbook includes guidance on assessment criteria and informal descriptions of the objective and scope of the various papers, or reference to the website where such descriptions can be found. Further advice on what makes for good and bad answers can be gained from the detailed examiners' reports which, together with past papers, are available on WebLearn and in libraries. Faculty reading lists are also available from these sources.
- College subject tutors provide academic guidance, discuss options and paths, give and arrange tutorials, and give advice on study skills where appropriate. Their overall monitoring of academic progress includes setting college examinations ("collections"); these help students consolidate their learning and refine their examination technique, and provide students and tutors with information on academic progress. Through these, and through discussion of reports with students, there is a high level of feedback and continuous formative assessment throughout the course, affording effective early warning of problems.
- Personal tutors are also based in colleges, with the role of helping with personal problems and advising on pastoral issues. In some cases these personal tutors are identical with the subject tutors, in others not.
- Welfare arrangements are predominantly college based: those involved typically include the Head of the college, Dean, Senior Tutor, Tutor for Women, Junior Common Room Welfare Officers, Peer Support Groups, Senior Advisers, Chaplains, College Doctors and Nurse. There is a university-wide Counselling Service, and the Student Health, Hardship and Disability Committees are responsible for special provision where appropriate. Special arrangements are made for disabled or dyslexic examination candidates. The Student Union offers complementary welfare services.
- Outstanding library resources include not only the Bodleian but the Sackler Library (for Classics and Ancient History) and the Philosophy Library as well as the college libraries. Books can be borrowed from college libraries, from the Philosophy Library and from the Classics Lending Library; multiple copies are kept of books likely to be in demand. Some books can also be borrowed from the Sackler Library.
- Computing facilities are widely available, and the Computing Service provides classes at a variety of levels, for complete beginners through to those wishing to learn to use very sophisticated programmes and computing languages. The University's intranet makes available a great deal of textual material to students, including the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*.
- Opportunities to learn an additional language, from a wide range of Modern and Oriental languages, are available through the University's Language Teaching Centre.
- The Careers Service is very active, and very successful, in helping those who do not want to continue in academic work to find employment.

### **13. Criteria for Admission**

Except in special cases candidates for admission are expected to have AAA at A level or the equivalent (AAAAB or better in the case of Scottish Highers). The A-level in General Studies does not count for this purpose. Candidates should have A-levels (or the equivalent) in either Latin or Greek or both. For applicants with an International Baccalaureate, the entrance requirements will normally be a total of at least 37 points, with 6 or 7 for one or more subjects offered at the higher level.

In addition candidates are expected to submit two, preferably marked, essays or commentaries in areas relevant to their proposed course. Candidates who are invited to come to Oxford for interview will be required to sit written tests, designed to assess linguistic competence. Each written test will normally last one hour. The use of dictionaries will not be permitted. Those who are taking A-levels (or equivalent) in both Latin and Greek will take a test in each language at A-level standard. Those who are taking an A-level in only one Classical language will take a test in that language at A-level standard, and may also sit a GCSE-standard test in the other Classical language.

Details about interviews, and about other aspects of the admissions procedure, can be found in the *University of Oxford Undergraduate Prospectus*, or at [www.admissions.ox.ac.uk](http://www.admissions.ox.ac.uk). The Classics admissions procedures and criteria are given at: <http://www.classics.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/criteriaclas.asp>.

### **14. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning**

Students are asked each term to fill out questionnaires for the lecturers, asking for their (anonymous) comments on the lectures. In colleges also students are asked to fill out similar forms commenting on the tutorials they have received. Action is taken by the relevant college officers, usually the Head of the College and the Senior Tutor.

The course itself is under constant review by the Classics Faculty (and for the Philosophy element, by the Philosophy Faculty). Changes are made each year, and the Course Handbooks are updated accordingly.

The reports of external examiners are considered by Standing Committee for Mods and Greats, and then by the Sub-Faculties and by the Faculty Boards for Classics and Philosophy. They are then passed to the Humanities Divisional Board, along with notes of action taken or proposed, and also to the University's Educational Policy and Standards Committee. The Educational Policy and Standards Committee is the ultimate authority, within the University, for overseeing matters of educational policy, for ensuring the maintenance of the highest standards, and for enforcing such action as may be necessary to achieve these ends.

Internal examiners' reports are very full and detailed. They are designed to be of assistance to students in future years, and are made available on WebLearn.

There are undergraduate Joint Consultative Committees in Classics and in Philosophy. These each consist of about half a dozen academic staff, and undergraduate representatives from each college whose students elect one. They meet termly and discuss any of the issues that are relevant to teaching and learning, to the syllabus or to the ways in which it is examined. Two representatives of the Joint Consultative Committees attend Faculty or Sub-faculty meetings as observers.

New academic staff attend courses to train them in how to teach; these are organised by the Institute for the Advancement of University Learning, which has been set up within the University to carry out research into the training of university teachers as well as to implement that research by employing the most effective methods of training. The Institute also runs courses to train graduate students who undertake some undergraduate teaching. More information about it can be found at [www.learning.ox.ac.uk](http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk).

Each new member of staff is assigned a mentor, who is responsible for giving advice and guidance. Formal staff appraisal of all academic staff by a nominated peer appraiser takes place annually, with a five-yearly

interview (or more frequently if requested by appraiser or appraisee). The emphasis of the University's recently reviewed appraisal scheme is on reflection and self-assessment.

### **15. Assessment: determining the final class**

- The relevant faculty boards are responsible for establishing and approving any changes to examining conventions for the courses under their control. The faculty boards also nominate the internal and external examiners on the Examination Boards for each of their degree courses, subject to approval by the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors on behalf of the University.
- Boards of Examiners, under their elected Chairs, are responsible for setting all papers, and marking the scripts of the examinees. They may appoint Assessors to assist in the setting and marking of the more specialist papers. After scripts have been marked, the Board of Examiners meets to classify the students in accordance with the rules established by the relevant faculty board.
- External Examiners are appointed in order:
  1. To verify that standards are appropriate to the award, in part by comparison with the standards of comparable institutions, and to ensure that the assessment procedures and the regulations governing them are fair and otherwise appropriate.
  2. To ensure that the conduct of the examination and the determination of awards has been fairly conducted, and that individual student performance has been judged in accordance with the regulations and conventions of the Examining Board. This will entail signing the Class List as an endorsement that the processes of examination and classification have been fairly conducted.

External Examiners are expected to report to the Vice-Chancellor in each year in which they act. Their reports are expected to cover all the following points

- the standards demonstrated by the students
  - the extent to which standards are appropriate for the award
  - the design, structure and marking of assessments
  - the procedures for assessment and examinations
  - whether or not external examiners have had sufficient access to, and the power to call upon, any material necessary to make the required judgments
  - students' performance in relation to their peers in comparable courses
  - the coherence of the policies and procedures relating to external examiners and their consonance with the explicit roles required of them
  - the basis and rationale for any comparisons made
  - the strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort
  - the quality of teaching and learning which may be indicated by student performance
- The Report is addressed to the Vice-Chancellor, and will be considered by the relevant divisional board, the faculty/department and by the University's Educational Policy and Standards Committee.
  - Where an external examiner's report contains particular suggestions or criticisms, it is the responsibility of the faculty/department to ensure that full consideration is given to these, to institute further discussion or action, and to inform the external examiner within a reasonable time of what is done

Classification depends on the marks given to the papers in finals. A student's results in Honour Moderations in Classics have no effect on the final class, nor do the informal formative assessments made during the course.

The marks on the eight main papers, or seven papers and thesis, are the main determinant of the result, together with the mark given to the additional optional thesis if one is submitted. In general each question in a paper is given equal weight: exceptions to this rule are clearly specified in a Circular issued to candidates well in advance of the examination. Tutors can generally also give advice on such matters.

The mark for a Special Thesis (i.e. an optional thesis offered in addition to the eight main papers) will replace the candidate's lowest mark on the main papers, if that is to the candidate's advantage.

In Literature marks for translation count directly towards the overall mark for the relevant paper. In History and Philosophy they are treated separately: poor translation serves to limit the overall mark for the paper, and the final mark cannot be more than 20 points above the mark for the associated translations. A performance of below 40 in the translation element of a Philosophy paper or in the translation papers for Ancient History, will incur an additional penalty. A mark of 20 or below on a compulsory translation question in any paper (history, philosophy or literature) can have serious consequences; it may lead to a pass mark only or even a fail mark on the relevant main paper. In History and Philosophy extra credit will be given for translations scoring 70 or above. Translation papers or elements cannot score more than 85.

The Course Handbook sets out the criteria examiners have in mind in assigning classes, and passing and failing marks, to examination papers. It also spells out in detail the rules for determining how the marks on individual papers are put together to determine a candidate's class. These are as follows:

**First Class:** A First can be achieved EITHER by an average mark of 68.5 or greater, with at least two marks of 70 or above and no mark below 50 OR by three marks of 75 or above, and none below 50, and an overall average of 65.

**Upper Second Class:** A candidate not getting a First will be given an Upper Second if his/her main papers average 59 or above, with at least two marks of 60 or above and no mark below 40.

**Lower Second Class:** A candidate not getting a First or an Upper Second will be given a Lower Second if his/her main papers average 49.5 or greater, with at least two marks of 50 or above and no mark below 30.

**Third Class:** A candidate not getting a Lower Second or better will be given a Third if his/her main papers average 40 or above with not more than one mark below 30.

**Pass:** A candidate not getting a Third or better will be given a Pass if his/her papers have an average mark of 30 or greater, with not more than two marks below 30. An overall average for translations of less than 30 might also prevent a candidate from obtaining more than a Pass.

**Fail:** A candidate not getting a Third or better will normally fail if his/her main papers average below 30, OR if three or more main papers have a mark of less than 30.

## 16. Indicators of quality and standards

The last QAA subject reviews for Classics and Philosophy were both held in Autumn 2000. In both cases 24 points were awarded out of a maximum of 24. Classics received a 5\* rating in the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise.

The following reference points were used in designing this programme:

- university teaching and learning policies
- university publications, including *Oxford University Undergraduate Prospectus*, *Examination Decrees and Regulations*, the Course Handbooks for Classics Mods and for Greats, and the Self-Assessment Document for the Philosophy Subject Review. Much material has been reproduced from these, as also from QAA subject benchmark documents for Classics & Ancient History and for Philosophy.

