

Classical Archaeology and Ancient History Prelims Handbook

**For students taking Preliminary
Examination in Classical Archaeology
and Ancient History**

2026

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Dates of Full Terms

Michaelmas: Sunday 12 October – Saturday 6 December 2025

Hilary: Sunday 18 January – Saturday 14 March 2026

Trinity: Sunday 26 April – Saturday 20 June 2026

Disclaimer

This handbook applies to students starting Prelims in CAAH in Michaelmas Term 2025 and sitting the examination in 2026. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

The *Examination Regulations* relating to this course are available at <https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk/>. 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 undergraduate@classics.ox.ac.uk.

The information in this handbook is accurate as at 25 September 2025; 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.

Course Details

Full Title of Award: Bachelor of Arts in Classical Archaeology and Ancient History

Course Length: 3 years

FHEQ Level: 6

Quality Assurance Agency Subject Benchmarking Statements:

- Classics and Ancient History: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/sbs/sbs-classics-and-ancient-history-22.pdf?sfvrsn=9cb2dc81_6
- Archaeology: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/sbs/sbs-archaeology-22.pdf?sfvrsn=e2b1dc81_6

Useful Links

Classics Undergraduate Information Canvas site

<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/ba-classical-archaeology-and-ancient-history-overview>

Classics Faculty General Student Handbook: <https://www.classics.ox.ac.uk/general-student-handbook>

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

Data Protection: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/it/studentrecord/data>

Educational Recording Policy: <https://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/educational-recordings-policy>

Equality and Diversity at Oxford: <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/e-d-oxford>

Examiners' Reports: <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/caah-examiners-reports>

Examination Information (University website):

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams?wssl=1>

Joint Consultative Committee for Undergraduate Matters:

<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/jcc-for-undergraduate-matters>

Lecture Lists: <http://rbll.classics.ox.ac.uk/>

Prizes for Performance in Undergraduate Examinations:

<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/prizes-for-exceptional-performance-in-undergraduate-examinations>

Research Integrity: <https://www.classics.ox.ac.uk/general-student-handbook>

1. About this Handbook

The information in this handbook applies to those students beginning their course in October 2025. A Final Honour School Handbook will be issued in Hilary Term 2026, which will include information on second and third year options.

2. Summary of First Year and Vitally Important Deadlines

The following is a list of the most important deadlines that you **must** meet.

Note that the three terms of the academic year have the following names and abbreviations. Michaelmas Term (MT) = First term; Hilary Term (HT) = Second term; Trinity Term (TT) = Third term.

Year 1

Michaelmas Term

Week 0, Thu: Preliminary meeting for Greek Core class

Week 1, Mon: Lectures start

Week 3, Mon: Special subject choices to Academic Support Officer (email: undergraduate@classics.ox.ac.uk)

Hilary Term

Week 2 (approx.) Prelims exams entry (see <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/examination-entry>)

Week 3, Mon: Fieldwork or placement choices (form CAAH01) to Academic Support Officer (email: undergraduate@classics.ox.ac.uk)

Trinity Term

Week 3, Mon: Second and third year subject choices (form CAAH05) to Academic Support Officer (email: undergraduate@classics.ox.ac.uk)

Week 6, Mon: Fieldwork grant and risk assessment paperwork due

Week 9 Prelims exams

Forms are available in Canvas at <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/modules>

3. Statement of Aims and Objectives

Aims

The principal academic aims of the degree are to study and interpret the complex cultures of the ancient Mediterranean world through their extensive textual, material, and visual remains.

Its principal broader educational aims are as follows:

1. To stimulate and encourage intellectual confidence in students, working independently but in a well-guided framework.
2. To use the study of key texts, artefacts, images, and issues systematically to examine and compare other cultures in an interdisciplinary way.
3. To use such study to engender in students a thoughtful and critical attitude to major issues in their own cultures.
4. To deliver to students a sustained and carefully-designed course which requires effort and rigour from them and which yields consistent intellectual reward and satisfaction.
5. To train students in research and analytical skills to the highest possible standards.
6. To train students to think critically, to formulate good questions, and to recognise bias and angle in written and visual representations.
7. To produce graduates able to deal with challenging intellectual problems systematically, analytically and efficiently, suitable for a wide range of high-grade occupations and professions.

Objectives

The more specific objectives of the degree are as follows:

1. To provide expert guidance over a very wide range of options in challenging fields of study within the ancient Mediterranean world.
2. To give students the skills to assess, summarise, and select key aspects from considerable amounts of material of diverse types.
3. To develop effective skills in students' written and oral communication.
4. To foster the organisational skills needed to plan work and meet a variety of demanding deadlines.
5. To encourage the use and application of information technology to academic study at all levels.
6. To provide a teaching environment in which close and regular criticism and evaluation of the work of individual students and continuous monitoring of their academic progress are key features.
7. To make full and effective use in our courses of the wide range of expertise in our subject area and the excellent specialist resources and collections available in the University.
8. To encourage students in extra-curricular but course-related activities which set the subject in a broader context.
9. To produce graduates who will maintain and expand Oxford's international pre-eminence in the fields of Ancient History and Classical Archaeology.

4. Introduction to Classical Archaeology and Ancient History

This honours degree is for anyone interested in the challenge of studying the history, archaeology, and art of the 'classical world' in an integrated way, and is designed to make study of that world more widely accessible.

The course is concerned with the study of the societies and cultures of the ancient Mediterranean world through material, visual, and written evidence and has at its centre the cultures of Greece and Rome. Among the central themes are the dialogue of the Greek and Roman cultures with other Mediterranean and European societies and the endurance and transformation of classical cultural forms in new contexts far beyond their points of origin. The choice of special subject options encourages wide-ranging study, from the Bronze Age to the third century AD. The course does not require the study of ancient languages, but offers opportunities to use and learn them.

The University's resources for this combined subject are excellent, in terms both of library facilities – much of the Sackler Library collections are built around ancient history and classical archaeology – and in the range and number of faculty members in the two fields.

The degree is unique in offering parallel and integrated courses in both archaeological and historical approaches to classical Mediterranean cultures. While still deploying distinctive skills and bodies of evidence, the two disciplines have come increasingly to converge and to complement each other. Studied together, the two registers of evidence produce a richer, more broad-based account of ancient cultures and societies and of their distinctive characteristics. A feature of the degree's teaching is the 'knitted' classes led by two Faculty members, one archaeologist and one historian, designed to ensure a thorough interdisciplinary integration in papers that deliberately combine archaeological and historical questions and evidence – something of real value from the points of view both of the students and of the teachers.

The degree is administered from the Ioannou Centre (66 St Giles', OX1 3LU) and is overseen by a Standing Committee composed of members of the Classics Faculty.

5. Course Structure: An Outline

The degree is a three-year course, and is divided into a first year, whose end-of-year examinations are called the Preliminary Examination or 'Prelims', and two further years leading up to the Honour School Examinations or 'Finals'.

Prelims

In Prelims you take four papers. Two are core papers on relatively short but revolutionary periods, one Greek and one Roman, that integrate history and archaeology and introduce you to different approaches to the subject and to the different kinds of evidence and the questions that they can answer. Two further papers are special subjects, one archaeological and one historical, chosen from lists of options. In place of one of the special subjects you may take an option to learn either Ancient Greek or Latin. The examination conventions will be published at least one whole term before the start of the examination.

The structure of Prelims is as follows:

I-II. Two core subjects

- I. Aristocracy and Democracy in the Greek World, 550 - 450 BC
- II. Republic to Empire: Rome, 50 BC - AD 50

III-IV. Two papers from the following special subjects and languages

A. Special subjects in Archaeology

1. Homeric Archaeology and Early Greece from 1550 to 700 BC
2. Greek Vases
3. Greek Sculpture, c.600 - 300 BC
4. Roman Architecture

B. Special subjects in Ancient History

1. Thucydides and the West
2. Aristophanes' Political Comedy
3. Cicero and Catiline
4. Tacitus and Tiberius

C. Ancient Languages

1. Beginning Ancient Greek
2. Beginning Latin
3. Intermediate Ancient Greek
4. Intermediate Latin
5. Advanced Ancient Greek
6. Advanced Latin

Fieldwork

Fieldwork and training in excavation techniques and recording are a requirement fulfilled by participation in an excavation during the summer vacation after Prelims (see further below).

Final Honour School

In your second and third years, leading up to Finals, you build on the work done in Prelims and expand your range in time and theme. You take six papers, including at least one integrated history and archaeology class, and at least two core papers in Greco-Roman subjects, as well as writing a site or museum report (equivalent to one paper). Of the six options, at least two must be in ancient history and at least two in archaeology, unless you take further Latin or further ancient Greek, which can count towards either total. Different combinations allow emphasis, according to preference, more on Archaeology or on History, and on different areas and periods, while ensuring that breadth is maintained.

6. Your Tutor

You will be meeting your college tutor during the first few days. He or she will have made arrangements for your tutorials and the various classes you will be taking, and will discuss your options with you and your timetable for studying them. When you have concerns or doubts, particularly if they are of an academic nature, your tutor will normally be the first person to consult: you should not hesitate to do this.

Colleges have different rules about when term 'begins', but academic collections (i.e. a practice examination paper) are usually set for the Friday and Saturday of 0th week (the week before full term), so you should plan to be back by Thursday of 0th week at the absolute latest. You should try to ensure that by the Thursday you know who your tutors for the term will be, have met or corresponded with them, and have been set work and assigned tutorial times by them.

If you feel that you need a change of tutor, take the problem to someone else in your college - your College Advisor, the Senior Tutor, the Dean, the Women's Advisor, the Chaplain, or even the Head of College, if necessary. Most such problems arise from a personality clash that has proved intractable; but since in a university of Oxford's size there are likely to be alternative tutors for nearly all your subjects, there is no point in putting up with a relationship which is impeding your academic progress. In these circumstances you can usually expect a change, but not necessarily to the particular tutor whom you would prefer.

In the unlikely instance of any problems arising which you do not wish to discuss with your college tutor, you should get in touch with the Chair of the CAAH Standing Committee.

Most colleges have a system of feedback whereby you can comment on your tutorials (including your own performance within them) and your tutors: this is normally done by a written questionnaire, though the format varies considerably. Please do use these questionnaires: confidentiality can always be assured if you wish, and comments (even if made anonymously) are extremely useful both to the college and to the tutors themselves.

At the end of each term you can expect a formal report, perhaps with the Head of College and usually in the presence of your tutors. These are intended to be two-way exchanges: if you have concerns about your work or your tuition, do not hesitate to say so.

Both University and colleges also have networks of welfare and pastoral care: details are given in the University Student Handbook, and in the literature from your college.

7. Tutorials, Classes, Lectures and Collections

In preparation for Prelims, students can expect to have eight small classes on each of the Core papers and eight tutorials for the special subjects (or small classes if you take a language option instead - see below for number of classes) and at least one course of lectures on each of these papers will be laid on. One of the functions of your college tutor(s) is to advise you about how to maximise your learning from different formats, and how to use the teaching/instruction provided in each format in an integrated way.

One main focus of teaching throughout your time in Oxford will be tutorials. A tutorial is a meeting between the tutor and a single undergraduate, a pair, or a trio; a larger group is normally defined as a class. You can expect to have one or two of these tutorials each week with one of your college tutors, or somebody else chosen by them for the particular option you are studying. There is great variety in the ways that tutors approach tutorials, and that is a strength of the system.

Your core subjects in Prelims are team-taught in 90-minute-long classes of 6-9 students by an archaeologist and an ancient historian. You will have one of these classes each week in the first two terms, and you will be asked to produce written work and/or a presentation for them, as for a tutorial.

The more you bring to a tutorial or class, the more you will gain from it. Tutorials are an opportunity for you to raise the issues and ask the questions which are troubling you, and to try out your own ideas in discussion with someone of greater experience; classes are an opportunity to explore issues together.

Before starting tutorials on a particular paper you will need to do some preparatory reading. In addition to the guidance from your tutor, you should consult the Canvas site (<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/220219>), which contains bibliographies (with notes on preliminary reading) for each of these papers. Once you have finished a paper, you will also need to do some further work in the following vacation, normally in preparation for a collection.

For most tutorials and classes, you will be asked to produce written work, and a good deal of your time will be spent writing and preparing essays on topics suggested by your tutors. They will normally direct you towards some secondary reading. However, you should be careful not to let reading the bibliography detract from reading the primary texts and assessing the archaeological evidence, or to allow other scholars' writings to dictate the order of presentation of your own essays. The examination and the course are about the subjects and the works prescribed, not about the modern books in bibliographies.

Lectures for CAAH will be found on the Classics Lecture list. The most up to date version of this is at <http://rbll.classics.ox.ac.uk/>.

Your tutors will have advice on which lectures to attend, and if you are in doubt you should consult them before the lecture course begins.

Lectures start on Monday of First Week of each term. Make sure you know where those you should attend take place. The lectures for your core courses are **essential**, and you should also attend any introductory lectures offered on Ancient History and Classical Archaeology. You should also start attending lectures for the special subjects of your choice. Those taking a language would be well-advised to 'shadow' the lectures for a second special subject for the first few weeks in case they have a change of heart about studying the language (firm choices do not need to be declared until Third Week).

Do not expect lectures on a subject to coincide with the term in which you are writing essays on that subject. Important lectures may come a term or two before your tutorials; even so, you should read in advance any texts which are being lectured on. Equally, do not expect lectures to be repeated every year; In the first year, you should attend lectures in your first and second terms for the special subject you will be taking in your third term, and you should plan to attend lectures in your second year that are relevant to courses you will take in your third year.

Most colleges set at least one 'collection' at the beginning of each term; many set two, and some expect a vacation essay as well, particularly in the Long Vacation. Collections will normally be on the reading which you will have covered over the vacation. There may also be Faculty language collections.

It is reasonable to expect written comments on any work a tutor takes in; but it is rare for tutors to put marks on written work, except for collections. If you are left uncertain of the general quality of your work, do not hesitate to ask.

8. Language Classes

Beginning/Elementary Ancient Greek and Beginning/Elementary Latin

These are intensive elementary language classes running throughout the first two terms of Prelims for those wishing to begin Greek or Latin. The language teachers will be contacting those who have expressed an interest in 0th (the week before term) to let you know which group you are in and where and when to attend.

For your first two terms, you will have three hours of language teaching each week, and you will be expected to do a substantial amount of homework.

Advanced Ancient Greek and Latin

Students will take language classes of two hours per week during the year, and they will be expected to study independently in preparation for the next class.

The language teaching team will be happy to discuss any problems. Do not hesitate to consult them.

Faculty Language Collections

Those taking the elementary language classes will be set collections to test their progress on the Thursday of the week before the start of both Hilary and Trinity terms. You will be given details of these collections in due course.

9. Essays

Work on a class or tutorial essay involves library searches, reading, thinking, and writing. As your reading progresses, think up a clear structure for your essay. Use essays to develop an argument, not as places to store information. Include background material only when it is relevant for the question you have been asked. You will learn a lot if you share ideas with fellow students in class and tutorial discussions.

Remember that classes and tutorials are not designed as a substitute for lectures, or for accumulating information, but to develop an ability to articulate and the capacity to think on one's feet, and to tackle specific difficulties and misunderstandings.

Word processing makes one's notes and essays more 'inviting' to read later, and in writing an essay it becomes possible to postpone commitment to all the stages in an argument until the very end of the essay-writing process. On the other hand, there is a danger of getting out of practice in writing time-limited examinations, especially University examinations, in which word processing is not usually allowed.

Oxford trains you as a writer to deadlines, so equip yourself with a writer's tools – at least a dictionary, such as the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, and a thesaurus and a book such as H. W. Fowler's *Modern English Usage*. Spelling, punctuation, and literate English style do matter.

10. Bibliographies

Detailed faculty bibliographies are prepared regularly for most of the subjects on the course. You can download them from <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/118503/modules>.

The following sections describe in broad chronological sequence a number of varied events, obligations, and deadlines that you will have to meet during your first year, including information about your fieldwork requirement. They are summarised below.

11. First Year Teaching Structure

In your first year, the first two terms follow the same pattern. In Michaelmas, you do the integrated Archaeology-History Greek core class (8 joint-taught classes), and half of the teaching for one of your chosen special subjects (4 tutorials, unless you are taking an ancient language), usually in Ancient History. You will also have weekly stand-alone classes on Approaches to History, Archaeology and Ancient Greek in the first few weeks of term. In the Hilary term, you do the Roman core class (8 classes) and the second half of your first chosen special subject (4 tutorials). There will also be an Introduction to Latin to accompany the Roman Core class. Those doing a language instead of one of the special subjects will be doing it alongside the core classes in both these terms.

It is important for you and your college tutor to understand that this is your full workload in your first two terms and that you should not be doing further tutorials and/or essay-writing on top of it. Those giving the integrated classes will cover your academic development but will not be able to give individual personal guidance. You should arrange to see your college tutor at fairly regular intervals to discuss your progress and any difficulties you are having with the material and work from the core classes.

In Trinity, you study your other chosen special subject, usually in Archaeology, and revise the work you did in Michaelmas and Hilary for your Prelims exams. If you are doing a language and choose a History special subject rather than an Archaeology one, you will also do that special subject in Trinity term.

The long summer vacation after your first year is the time you fulfil your fieldwork requirement.

Summary of teaching structure for the first year

Michaelmas Term	Greek Core (8)	Special Subject 1 (4) or Language
Hilary Term	Roman Core (8)	Special Subject 1 (4) or Language
Trinity Term	Special Subject 2 (8)	Revision
Long Vacation	Fieldwork	

12. Integrated Class for Greek Core

The first, preliminary meeting for the joint-taught core class ('Aristocracy and Democracy in the Greek World, 550-450 BC') is essential and takes place before term proper starts, usually on Thursday of 0th Week. Look out for the circular telling you precisely where and when it takes place. **You absolutely must attend this meeting.**

Those of you doing a language should also check in 0th Week, through your tutor, what your class timetable will be and what the language teachers expect of you.

Alongside the Greek core class there will be weekly stand-alone sessions in the first half of term on the approaches to working with historical and archaeological material, and texts in the Greek language, which are intended to support your work in the class. The Greek session(s) will not require you to know – or learn! – the language in any depth, but are intended to give you some familiarity with the script and some tools to deal with the short words and phrases you will come across on vases, grave markers, and so on. These sessions are compulsory.

13. Special Subject Choices

Choose your first year Special Subjects, one in Ancient History, one in Archaeology, early. You must submit your Special Subject choices via the Microsoft Form CAAH08 (<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/ba-classical-archaeology-and-ancient-history-overview>) **by Monday of 3rd week of Michaelmas**. You should also start attending lectures for your special subjects in Michaelmas term. Please note these choices must be made with conversation with your tutor.

14. Fieldwork

Classical Archaeology and Ancient History students are required to attend for at least two weeks a field project approved by the Standing Committee. This fieldwork should be carried out in the first summer vacation after Prelims, that is, this coming summer. Proposals for underwater archaeology fieldwork will not be allowed by the Standing Committee. Requests to defer all or part of the fieldwork requirement will only be considered when circumstances beyond your control (e.g. illness, family bereavement, cancellation of project) have prevented

you from carrying it out in the summer after Prelims.

You need to have found your field project by **Monday of 3rd week in Hilary Term** - the date by which you must submit your choice of project to the Academic Support Officer (on form CAAH01) for approval by the Standing Committee.

Fieldwork opportunities

There are a number of Oxford-based archaeological projects that accept CAAH students as volunteers; these opportunities vary by year, so look out for more information nearer the time or ask your tutor, CAAH Standing Committee Chair, or Core Class teachers at the beginning of Hilary term. There are fieldwork possibilities, both in the UK and abroad, which are most easily explored first through their websites and the publications listed below. The most useful and comprehensive resources are: (1) Archaeology Abroad, published by the Council for British Archaeology, and (2) Archaeological Fieldwork Opportunities Bulletin, published twice a year by the Archaeological Institute of America.

The following are some of the most useful institutions, publications, and websites:

- **Council for British Archaeology:**
<https://new.archaeologyuk.org/>
- **American Institute of Archaeology:**
www.archaeological.org
Their Archaeological Fieldwork Opportunities Bulletin lists opportunities for fieldwork throughout the world at www.archaeological.org/fieldwork/afob.
- **Current Archaeology:**
www.archaeology.co.uk
The website of the publication *Current Archaeology* with links, articles, and a searchable database for excavations and fieldwork opportunities.

Fieldwork Grant

When you submit your fieldwork proposal, you will also be able to apply to the CAAH Standing Committee for a single grant of up to £1,000 towards the expenses related to your fieldwork project. You must provide a detailed breakdown of your expected costs. A brief statement of support and signature from your college tutor will also be required. You will only receive your grant once your risk assessment has been approved by the faculty.

You should also apply to your college for any travel funds available to undergraduates (look out for your college's deadlines for such grants).

Fieldwork Health and Safety

Information on the forms and approvals required will be circulated later in the year.

Fieldwork: Brief Reports and Directors' Reports

All students are required to send the Standing Committee a report on their fieldwork of 1,000 to 1,500 words, together with a satisfactory report on their work and progress from their field director or project director. These reports should be submitted on form CAAH03, which is

available in Canvas at <https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/ba-classical-archaeology-and-ancient-history-overview>.

In your report, you should devote most space to describing: (a) the nature of the site you went to, (b) the nature of the research project investigating the site and its main questions and most significant results, and (c) the role you played in the project and the work you did on the site. You should include a short bibliography of the most important publications of the project. You may also describe, more briefly, any particular good or bad things about the project that the Standing Committee and future students might usefully know.

Form CAAH03 should also be returned to the Academic Support Officer **by Friday of Week 0** of Michaelmas Term following the vacation in which the fieldwork was done. The reports will be read by the Standing Committee, and unsatisfactory reports will be returned for improvement. Although not an examined part of your degree, these reports are an integral part of your fieldwork requirement.

15. Language Options in Second Year and Summer Schools

If you think you would like to do one of the language options in the second year of the course, it is a good idea to prepare for it by attending a language Summer School in the long vacation. This should be discussed with your tutor, and the decision to take a language needs to be made in time to enrol for a Summer School by their deadline. The deadline for applications for the Language Summer Schools is usually in March.

16. Second and Third Year Choices

In your third term (Trinity Term) you need to have thought about your firm or probable choices for years 2 and 3, and you need to submit them via an online form CAAH05 (<https://canvas.ox.ac.uk/courses/42438/pages/ba-classical-archaeology-and-ancient-history-overview>) by Monday of Week 3 of Trinity Term. The Finals Handbook with details of the course and options is published in Hilary Term. Please note these choices must be made with conversation with your tutor. Submission of your options does not automatically sign you up for the courses, this sits with your tutor.

17. Course Descriptions

CORE SUBJECTS: Approaches to Classical Archaeology and Ancient History

These core subjects look at two periods of revolution and rapid re-orientation, one Greek, one Roman. The periods are approached simultaneously from historical and archaeological perspectives, and are designed to introduce the methods and materials available for the study of the ancient world and to cut across and between periods studied in Finals. Opportunity is taken to introduce the history of the two converging disciplines of ancient history and classical archaeology, and attention is paid to methodology and the complementary nature of written, material, and visual evidence. The broad subjects engaged are the effects of two quite different historical upheavals on the political, social, material, and visual environments of Early Greece on the one hand and Late Republican Rome on the other – as well as their effects on the forms and character

of the surviving historical and archaeological records of the two periods and the ways they can be studied. Both these courses are taught in small classes led by an ancient historian and an archaeologist together.

I. Aristocracy and democracy in the Greek world 550-450 BC

Exciting changes transformed the Greek world during the late archaic period. The most well-known of these, narrated by Herodotus, is that during the second half of the sixth century BC Persia emerged as a young, vigorous empire and clashed with the Greeks of the Aegean. This interaction had a profound impact on Greek politics and art, but there were other internal dynamics and changes taking place too with equally momentous results, especially in the articulation and renegotiation of power between different groups. The central theme of the classes is to bring out the different perspectives that may be gained on the period by using the archaeological and written evidence in isolation and in combination. Class topics: 1. Herodotus; 2: The Symposium; 3. Sparta; 4: Athens under the Pisistratids; 5: Persian Rule in Asia Minor; 6: Olympia and Athletes; 7: Democracy; 8: Death (Convenors: Prof. P. Thonemann, Wadham College, and Dr M. Melfi, New College and Ashmolean Museum).

II. Republic to Empire: Rome 50 BC to AD 50

The course studies the impact of the first emperors on the history and archaeology of Rome and its subject states in the period of revolution and transition from Late Republic to Early Empire. Some themes and topics are: Roman political culture in crisis, Republican war-lords to Augustan princeps; emperor, senate, and the evolving administration; the Julio-Claudian dynasty and court culture; the city of Rome, imperial building, and imperial representation; villas and villa culture – wallpainting, marbles, gardens and suburban parks; municipal culture - houses, amenities, tombs, and freedman art; land-use and the countryside – estates, vici, and centuriated settlement; manufacture, trade, and natural resources – coins, amphorae, and quarries; the archaeology of the frontier armies; traditional religion and emperor cult. Typically, there would be classes on 1. Caesar to Augustus and the refashioning of Rome; 2. Julio-Claudian dynastic representation; 3. Imperial cult; 4. Municipal culture and euergetism; 5. Sources of wealth; 6. Housing the elite; 7. Freedpeople and slaves; 8. ‘Romanization.’ (Convenor: Dr O. Elder, Oriel, and Dr J. Hanson, Wolfson)

SPECIAL SUBJECTS

You choose two special subjects, one from each group below, or one special subject from either group and an ancient language.

A. SPECIAL SUBJECTS IN ARCHAEOLOGY

The subjects are concerned with the most characteristic products of several broad periods – the Bronze and Early Iron Ages to 700 BC, the Archaic and Classical periods, and the Roman period. Any one of these courses provides a good foundation in the materials and methods of Classical Archaeology. You learn here how to interpret monuments, images, and artefacts, how to relocate them in their ancient contexts and their own evolving traditions, and how they can be made to do broad historical work. These subjects provide training in the handling of material and visual evidence.

A.1. Homeric Archaeology and Early Greece, 1550-700 BC

This subject comprises the archaeological history of the last centuries of the Minoan and Mycenaean world, and the first of the Greek Iron Age, the setting in which the Homeric poems were formed and which they reflect in various ways. This is where classical Greek culture and literature begin. The course covers the full range of material evidence and artefacts surviving from this period of which there is an excellent representative collection in the Ashmolean Museum.

An overall knowledge will be required of the archaeological evidence for the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age of the Aegean from 1550 BC to 700 BC. The examination will consist of one picture question and three essay questions. (Convenor: Dr L. Bendall, Keble).

A.2. Greek Vases

Painted vases give the fullest visual account of life and mythology in ancient Greece and provide important archaeological data for refining and adding to our knowledge of various aspects of ancient culture. The course looks at the techniques and functions of painted ceramics as well as their subjects and styles, from the eighth to the fourth centuries BC. The Ashmolean Museum has a fine collection of painted pottery of the period covered by the course, and examples are used in classes and lectures.

Knowledge will be required of the techniques used in making Greek pottery and in drawing on vases, also of the ancient names for vases and the shapes to which they refer. Candidates should study the subjects of the paintings and their treatment by painters as compared with their treatment by writers and should be familiar with actual vases, for example those in the Ashmolean Museum. The examination will consist of one picture question and three essay questions. (Convenor: Dr T. Mannack, Classical Art Research Centre, Ioannou Centre).

A.3. Greek Sculpture, c. 600-300 BC

Greek statues and reliefs in marble and bronze retain today a strong visual impact, and our knowledge of the subject is being constantly improved and revised by dramatic new discoveries, from excavation and shipwrecks. The course studies the emergence and uses of large marble statues in the archaic period, the development of bronze as a large-scale medium, and the revolution in seeing and representing that brought in the new visual system that we know as 'classical', in the fifth and fourth centuries. The Cast Gallery, located in the Ashmolean, has an excellent collection of plaster casts of major sculptures from this period. Practical classes are given in the Cast Gallery using the casts to illustrate ways of assessing and interpreting ancient statues and reliefs.

Candidates will be expected to show some knowledge of the external documentary evidence, such as literary and epigraphic texts, on which the framework of the subject depends, and to be acquainted with the major sculptures of the period represented in the Ashmolean Cast Gallery. The examination will consist of one picture question and three essay questions. (Convenor: Dr M. Stamatopoulou, Lincoln).

A.4. Roman Architecture

Architecture is the quintessential Roman art, and the well-preserved remains of Roman buildings dominate our vision of the Roman Empire. Alongside the temples and houses common to many

societies, the Romans developed a wide range of new forms to meet the increasingly sophisticated and diverse needs of their society, such as baths, amphitheatres, and basilicas. Roman architecture is famous above all for its technological innovations and achievements, which found their greatest expression in wide-span buildings such as the Pantheon or the Baths of Caracalla. They used arches and vaults widely from an early period, were highly skilled in timber construction, and developed concrete as a basic building material of wide-ranging application. The main evidence is the buildings themselves, many thousands of which survive to some degree, but ancient texts, especially the *On Architecture* of Vitruvius, and inscriptions provide much of the interpretative framework.

The course studies the materials, technology, and functions of the buildings as well as their appearance and effect, from the Early Republic to the time of Constantine, in Italy and the provinces as well as in Rome itself. The examination will consist of one picture question and three essay questions. (Convenor: Dr J. Hanson, Wolfson).

B. SPECIAL SUBJECTS IN HISTORY

B.1. Thucydides and the West

The course studies the history of the Greek cities of Sicily and South Italy and their relations with mainland Greek states in the fifth century BC through the lens of Thucydides' penetrating account of the Athenian expedition to Sicily in 415 BC. Topics include: the earlier diplomatic and military involvement of Athens in the west; Syracuse and Syracusan politics; the background in Athenian politics and religion and the affairs of the Herms and the Mysteries; and Thucydides' presentation of individuals, especially Nicias and Alcibiades, compared with their presentation in Plutarch. The prescribed text for study in translation is Thucydides VI and VII. Compulsory passages for comment will be set from these books. Candidates will also be expected to be familiar with Plutarch, *Nicias*. (Convenor: Dr K. Stevens, Corpus Christi).

Translation: Thucydides VI and VII: M. Hammond (tr.), *The Peloponnesian War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)
[Plutarch, *Nicias* (Loeb)]

B.2. Aristophanes' Political Comedy

The course studies Athenian politics and culture in the later fifth century BC as represented in the comedies of Aristophanes. Its subject is Old Comedy as a distorting mirror of the major events and currents of the day – the new-style politicians (Cleon and others), the new intellectuals (the 'sophists'), strains in traditional religion, the roles of women, the Peloponnesian War, and social conflict in the city and countryside. The prescribed plays are *Knights*, *Wasps* and *Lysistrata*. Compulsory passages for comment will be set from *Wasps* and *Knights*. Candidates will also be expected to be familiar with *Lysistrata* and the 'Old Oligarch' writing on the 'Athenian Constitution'. (Convenor: Dr B. Dignas, Somerville).

Translation: *Knights, Lysistrata, Wasps*: A. H. Sommerstein, Aris and Phillips.

The 'Old Oligarch': J. L. Marr, P. J. Rhodes (trans.), *The 'Old Oligarch': The Constitution of the Athenians Attributed to Xenophon*. Aris & Phillips Classical Texts. Oxford: Aris & Phillips, 2008

B.3. Cicero and Catiline

The course studies Catiline's conspiracy against the Roman state in 63 BC and Cicero's

controversial role in its suppression. Topics covered include the following: the social and economic problems in Italy, particularly from the period of Sulla onwards, that contributed towards support for the conspiracy; the political and ideological background, particularly the Sullan constitutional reforms and subsequent struggles over them; the more immediate political background, notably the careers of Pompey, Caesar, Crassus, and Catiline himself; the events of early 63; the relation of the revolutionary leaders to each other; the problem of the *senatus consultum ultimum* and the debate on the fate of the conspirators. The texts relating to the conspiracy are abundant and detailed but also biased and sometimes contradictory. Students learn the ways of Roman political and historical rhetoric. The prescribed texts are Sallust, *Catiline*; Cicero, *In Catilinam* I-IV, *Pro Sulla*; Asconius, *In orationem in toga candida* (in Asconius, *Commentaries on Speeches by Cicero*, ed. R. G. Lewis, Oxford 2006). Compulsory passages for comment will be set from these. (Convenor: Dr A. Clark, Christ Church).

Translations:

Sallust, *Catiline* (Loeb)

Cicero, *In Catilinam* I-IV (Loeb)

Cicero, *Pro Sulla* (Loeb)

Asconius, *In orationem in toga candida*, in Asconius, *Commentaries on Speeches by Cicero*, ed.

R. G. Lewis, Oxford 2006

B.4. Tacitus and Tiberius

Why did Tacitus, writing a century after the events he was describing, choose to begin his history of early imperial Rome with a long and jaundiced account of the grim Tiberius, rather than with the reign of the much-admired Augustus? The course studies Tacitus' representation of Tiberius against the background of surviving contemporary evidence, and particular emphasis will be given to official documents inscribed on bronze, such as the *Tabula Siarensis*, the *Senatus Consultum de Cn. Pisone patre*, and the *Senatus Consultum* from Larinum. Topics include the attitudes of both the Senate and Roman people towards Tiberius and to the imperial family as a whole. The prescribed text is Tacitus, *Annals* I and III. Compulsory passages for comment will be set from these books. Candidates will also be expected to be familiar with *Annals* II and IV-VI. (Convenor: Dr A. Clark, Christ Church).

Translations: Tacitus, *Annals*, I, III [and II, IV-VI]. A. J. Woodman, tr., *The Annals of Tacitus*, Indianapolis, Hackett, 2004

C.1. Beginning Ancient Greek

(This subject is not available to candidates with a qualification in ancient Greek above GCSE-level or equivalent.)

The course will allow takers to read simple, if probably adapted, prose texts. Candidates will be required to show knowledge of some of the main grammatical structures of ancient Greek and of a small basic vocabulary. The paper will consist of prepared and unprepared prose translations, with grammatical questions on the prepared texts.

Course book: (parts of) J. Taylor, *Greek to GCSE: Revised Edition for OCR GCSE Classical Greek (9-1)* (latest edition, Bloomsbury 2016), two volumes - in addition to extra material supplied in classes.

You will have classes for 3h/week for two terms, and for 1h/week for the third term.

C.2. Beginning Latin

(This subject is not available to candidates with a qualification in Latin above GCSE-level or equivalent.)

The course will allow takers to read simple, if probably adapted, prose texts. Candidates will be required to show knowledge of some of the main grammatical structures of Latin and of a small basic vocabulary. The paper will consist of prepared and unprepared prose translations, with grammatical questions on the prepared texts.

Course book: Wheelock's Latin (7th edition), in addition to extra material supplied in classes.

You will have classes for 3h/week for two terms, and for 1h/week for the third term.

C.3. Intermediate Ancient Greek

(This subject is not available to candidates with a qualification in ancient Greek above AS-level or equivalent.)

Candidates will be required to show an intermediate level knowledge of Greek grammar and vocabulary (including all syntax and morphology, as laid out in Abbot and Mansfield, *Primer of Greek Accidence*).

The set texts for the course are: Xenophon, *Hellenica* I (Oxford Classical Text) and Lysias I (Oxford Classical Text). The paper will consist of a passage of unseen prose translation, three further passages for translation from the two prescribed texts, and grammatical questions on the prescribed texts.

Useful editions with commentaries:

Xenophon, Hellenika I-II.3.10, ed. P. Krentz (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1989);

Lysias: Selected Speeches, ed. C. Carey (Cambridge: CUP, 1989).

You will have classes for 3h/week for two terms, and for 1h/week for the third term; the classes will go through the set texts for your exams (or will anyway try and go through much of them). To prepare for these texts, you would ideally consolidate your language knowledge. Do use the books you have from school/ previous courses; Abbott and Mansfield is a good standard Greek grammar for revision, and Cheadle is a good (if small) standard word list.

C.4. Intermediate Latin

(This subject is not available to candidates with a qualification in Latin above AS-level or equivalent.)

Candidates will be required to show an intermediate level knowledge of Latin grammar and vocabulary (including all syntax and morphology, as laid out in Kennedy's *Revised Latin Primer*).

The set texts for the course are: Cicero, letters in D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Cicero: Select Letters* (Cambridge, 1980), nos 9, 17, 23, 27, 39, 42-3, 45; Tacitus, *Agricola* (Oxford Classical Text) 16-43; Pliny, letters in A. N. Sherwin-White, *Fifty Letters of Pliny*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1969), nos 25, 29.

The paper will consist of a passage of unseen prose translation, three further passages for translation from the prescribed texts, and grammatical questions on the prescribed texts.

Useful editions with commentaries:

Cicero: Select Letters, ed. D. R. Shackleton Bailey (Cambridge: CUP, 1980);

Cornelii Taciti, De Vita Agricolae, eds R. M. Ogilvie and I. Richmond (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967);

Fifty Letters of Pliny, ed. A. N. Sherwin-White, 2nd ed. (Oxford: OUP, 1969).

You will have classes for 3h/week for two terms, and for 1h/week for the third term; the classes will go through the set texts for your exams (or will anyway try and go through much of them). To prepare for these texts, you would ideally consolidate your language knowledge. Do use the books you have from school/ previous courses; Kennedy is a good standard Latin grammar for revision.

C.5. Advanced Ancient Greek

(This subject is available to candidates with a qualification in Latin above AS-level or equivalent.)

Candidates will be expected to be familiar with *An Anthology of Greek Prose* ed. D.A. Russell (Oxford University Press 1991), nos 17, 18, 23, 24, 33, 40, 44, 66, 78, from which a selection of passages will be set for translation, in addition to a passage for unseen translation.

Candidates will also be expected to translate from TWO of the following texts:

(i) Herodotus I.1-94 [ed. Wilson, OCT];

(ii) Plutarch, *Life of Antony* 1-9, 23-36, 71-87 [ed. Pelling, Cambridge University Press, 1988];

(iii) Euripides, *Bacchae* [ed. Allan and Swift, Cambridge University Press, 2024].

You will have classes for 2h/week in Michaelmas and Hilary terms, another 4 hours of class teaching at the beginning of Trinity term, and one or two additional reading classes (1h/week) in the first or third term.

C.6. Advanced Latin

(This subject is available to candidates with a qualification in Latin above AS-level or equivalent.)

This paper is designed for those with AS or A2 level Latin. Candidates will be expected to show an advanced level of knowledge of Latin grammar and vocabulary (including all syntax and morphology, as laid out in Kennedy's *Revised Latin Primer*). There will be one three-hour paper comprising passages for translation from set texts, grammatical questions on the prepared texts and unseen translation.

Candidates will be expected to be familiar with *An Anthology of Latin Prose* ed. D.A. Russell (OUP 1990), nos 7, 12, 22, 23, 34, 52 and 63, from which a selection of passages will be set for translation, in addition to a passage for unseen translation.

Candidates will also be expected to translate from TWO of the following texts:

(i) Cicero, *Pro Caelio* [ed. OCT].

(ii) Pliny, Letters 1.6, 9, 13, 19; VII.21, 24, 26, 29; VIII.16, 17; IX.6, 12, 15, 27, 33, 39; X.31, 32, 96, 97 (ed. M. B. Fisher and M. R. Griffin, CUP 1973)

(iii) Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 8 (ed. A. S. Hollis, OUP 1970)

You will have classes for 2h/week in Michaelmas and Hilary terms, another 4 hours of class teaching at the beginning of Trinity term, and one or two additional reading classes (1h/week) in the first or third term.

(Convenor for Ancient Language Courses: Ms J. Kerkhecker, Oriel).

19. Picture Questions: Guidelines

1. Introduction. There are compulsory picture questions set in your archaeology examination papers. These guidelines offer ways of approach, aspects that might be discussed, and a sequence in which they might be addressed. Others are possible.

2. Not primarily an identification test. A crucial sentence in the rubric governing all picture questions says they will be of things "of which you are not expected necessarily to have prior knowledge". In other words, the pictures may show familiar things that you may quickly recognise, or they may equally show things that you are unlikely to have seen before. There are so many objects that some candidates might have come across, others not, that Examiners are not thinking in terms of what should or should not be recognised. So: **Identification is not the main point of the picture question.** Examiners want to see you bring wide knowledge of the subject to bear in assessing a single specific example, and to see how you can use a specific example to make telling general points.

3. Aspects, headings. The following headings and aspects might be covered, some briefly, some more fully.

A: TITLE. Give a brief summarising title to your answer. If you recognise the item, give its **familiar title** and state quickly anything else you can remember of its material, subject, date, provenance, and current location: 'Artemision Zeus, over life-size bronze statue, ca. 470 BC, from Cape Artemision, Athens National Museum'. If you don't recognise the item, give a plain **descriptive title**, perhaps mentioning a preliminary assessment of its broad date and likely place of manufacture, if you know them, which you might come back to in your discussion: 'Athenian black-figure cup, 6th century BC'. 'Marble portrait bust of bearded man, 2nd century AD'. After the title, you might need to say **what kind of picture** you have been set: photo, photo detail, drawing, reconstruction. Drawings of sites and buildings are of course different: state plan, restored plan, elevation, section, reconstruction.

B: OBJECT (material, scale, function). What is it? What kind of object or structure is shown? What is it made of? Gold earring, silver drinking cup, bronze helmet, terracotta statuette, marble temple. What was its function, what was it for? Often this is self-evident (helmet, earring) or obvious enough to be quickly stated: 'black-figure krater for mixing wine and water', 'marble grave stele', 'amphitheatre for gladiatorial games and beast hunts'. Sometimes function requires discussion: a marble statue might be, for example, a cult, votive, or funerary figure, or a piece of Roman villa decor. Function might lead to discussion of contexts of use and to the effect of such an object in a sanctuary, cemetery, or villa.

C: SUBJECT (iconography). If the item is figured, what does it represent? Give a brief description of the subject, its iconography: pose, action, clothes, hairstyle, action, attributes of

a statue; the action, participants, subject of a narrative scene. How do you recognise the figure(s), what is the action, occasion, setting represented, how is the story told? For non-figured artefacts and structures, briefly describe their form and main components: a pebble mosaic floor with alternating black and white lozenge pattern, an engaged tetrastyle Ionic tomb facade with brightly painted red and blue pediment and akroteria.

Learn and use the appropriate professional terminology – for example, for pot shapes or parts of classical buildings. This is not exclusionary jargon but a way of being accurate and concise. In describing a temple, 'amphiprostyle' is shorter and clearer (once you have learned it) than 'has columned porches on both short ends but no columns on the long sides'. If you do not recognise the subject or the building type, you will spend longer here providing a careful description of what you see. Remark on any interesting details: show you have **looked**.

D: STYLE (with technique, date, place). How is the subject represented, how is the figure styled, how was the object or structure made? This can be shorter or longer, but the key is to find good descriptive words and to find one to three parallels or comparanda between or beside which the item in question can be placed. From this process you should deduce a precise or broad assessment of its **place and date of manufacture**. Style and technique are usually among the most time- and place-specific aspects. Do not be more precise than you can sustain from your knowledge or than the category of object in question can sustain. Remember not all things can be dated or placed with equal precision. Sometimes we may say confidently 'Corinthian aryballos, c. 650 BC'. Other times we must be broad: 'marble statue, probably 4th century BC'. If unsure, give a broad specification.

Any points of interest that you know or can see in the picture that relate to **technique, craft, or manufacturing** aspects can be discussed with style. They are often closely connected to stylistic effect, and often carry indications of date. For example, white-ground lekythoi with 'second' white belong 480-450 BC. Roman portraits with drilled eyes belong after c. AD 130.

E: SIGNIFICANCE. If you have recognised the object or have been able quickly to diagnose its function, subject, date, and place, you will spend most time on this aspect. You will score higher the more you can make your points come out of observation or assessment of the specific item to hand. You might think about the object's significance in relation to one or more of the following overlapping questions.

How **typical or unusual** is it? How typical is it of other things like it? How does it fit in to a larger category? If not typical now, how unusual was it in antiquity? Remember few things that survive can have been unique. If we have one or two, there were once lots. So beware the charge – much levelled at data-rich classical archaeology – of taking what we have of antiquity as typical of what there once was (the 'positivist fallacy'). What was the **original effect** of the object compared to the state we see it in now? What needs to be restored – limbs, attributes, attachments, colours, pedestal, base, explanatory inscription? What were the **contexts of use** – public, private, political, religious, in public square, sanctuary, house, symposium room, bedroom, grave? How do the contexts of use affect our assessment of the object? Can we reconstruct any activities or rituals associated with it that gave the object its meaning?

What **aspects of life** in its place and period does it answer to – social, political, cultural, religious? What does this particular example add, if anything, compared to others like it? For

example, some pieces, such as the Riace bronzes, were typical (high-quality lifesize bronze statues), but for us add a level of production and startling effect we didn't have before. Other things can be simply typical of well-attested categories. A few things were genuinely unusual, such as the Vix krater and Trajan's Column.

What was the **social level** of the object, who commissioned and paid for it, with what target audience in mind? How would the object's social level affect our assessment? For example, classical temple projects were aimed at the whole community. Roman funerary monuments aimed often at a particular social group – fellow freedmen, for example. What **ideas, values, aspirations** did it articulate for its user group? What kinds of things would ancient viewers/users do or say around this object, image, or structure?

What kinds of **scholarly interpretation** have been proposed for this object or for the category to which it belongs? Do you agree with them, find them persuasive? What weaknesses do they have? Are other views possible, better? What do you think is the important point?

4. SAMPLE A: ITEM RECOGNISED.

Artemision Zeus, bronze statue, over-lifesize, ca. 460 BC, from the sea off Cape Artemision (N. Euboea), Athens National Museum.

The statue was probably a major votive in a sanctuary. It represents a naked and senior god, in striding pose, left arm held out, aiming, right arm bent holding a missile, now missing. The missile was either a trident (for Poseidon) or a thunderbolt (for Zeus). The best parallels in small bronzes from the late archaic and early classical periods (good example in Berlin) as well as the latest scholarship all suggest a thunderbolt and Zeus. The square head, regular features, and above all the long hairstyle wound in a plait around the head, visible in the back, indicate a senior god (rather than hero or mortal). The strong, simplified features, the hard-muscled body, and the organic pose and proportions all indicate a date in the 460s alongside the Olympia sculptures. The large eyes, now missing, were inlaid and were vital to the effect of the figure. The twisted left foot looks damaged and affects the fluency of the composition.

The statue belongs in the period after the Persian wars, when the hard, new realistic-looking style we know as 'Severe' was created in big votive figures like this one, set up in sanctuaries of the gods often as thank offerings paid for from Persian wars booty.

The figure is a powerful fifth-century-BC visualisation of a warring Hellenic divinity - imperious, all-seeing, potentially devastating. It belongs in the same environment as the Riace bronzes and the statuesque figures on the large pots of the Niobid Painter and his group.

5. SAMPLE B: ITEM NOT RECOGNISED.

Reconstruction drawing of terrace sanctuary. Probably central Italian. Probably later second or first century BC.

The drawing shows a huge raised platform (c. 130 by 70 m, according to scale), terraced against a steep slope that falls away to the left (north). The terrace is supported here on tall, buttressed sub-structures, which are cut away in the drawing to show they are made up of

parallel, no doubt concrete, vaults. The mouth of a tunnel emerges from the sub-structure at front left and is shown as a road or passageway (?) running under and through the substructures from front to back.

The terrace is enclosed on three sides by complex, triple-aisled, two-storeyed stoas or portico buildings. The drawing seems to show these stoas have three aisles at terrace or ground level, stepped back to two aisles in the upper storey with a flat roof/walkway (?) above the outer first-storey colonnade – an architectural configuration hard to parallel(?). The temple is shown as prostyle hexastyle (order not specified in drawing) set on a tall podium with a tall flight of steps at the front only, flanked by cheek walls to each side. The front (west) side, in front of the temple, is open and looks out over the surrounding country.

The massively engineered temple platform suggests a terrace sanctuary of the late Republic, like those at Praeneste and Terracina, built in central Italy in imitation of (and in competition with) Hellenistic terraced sanctuaries such as those at Kos, Lindos, and Pergamon. The scale, concrete vaulting, strict axuality of the plan, and the prostyle design of the temple are all typical Italian-Roman features – as also is the small theatre sunk into the front of the terrace. The money and ideas for such sanctuaries came from the new business and cultural opportunities opened by the Roman conquest of the Hellenistic east.

6. Conclusion. Your task is to use careful description and relative comparison to make the item shown speak or look as it did for its ancient audience and users. You need to use your knowledge of the subject to create a useful context for it and so bring out its significance. If you know what the item is, do not waste time pretending you do not recognise it! This will be counterproductive. If you do not know what the item is, do not guess – **look, describe, compare, deduce!**

20. Ancient History Text ‘Gobbets’: Guidelines

A gobbet is a passage of text on the content, the context and the significance of which you are asked to comment. At the core of the exercise is the illumination and interpretation of the particular passage in the light of your wider understanding and knowledge of the paper.

1. *Context.* This can have two parts. The first (always relevant) is where you locate the passage in the historical work in which it appears. (This shows an agreeable familiarity with the work in question.) The second (relevant if an event is at issue) is where you locate the episode in its historical context, with attention to chronology, geography, and the like. (This shows agreeable familiarity with the historical setting.)

2. *Content.* This is where you explain details necessary to the understanding of the passage, e.g. identify (briefly) named individuals, anyone or anything referred to by pronouns, any interesting places; explain constitutional details referred to and the like.

3. *Significance.* This is where you explain why and how this particular passage is interesting/important. The passage might reveal something about the method, or whatever, of the historian; it might offer interesting comparison with one or more other ancient accounts, inscriptions, monuments, or artefacts; it might contain material central to the

understanding or interpretation of the actions/policy/ of some or all of the characters involved; it might contain a chronological problem; it might well do more than one of the above or other similar things besides. In any case, what *difference* does this passage and its interpretation make to our understanding of something?

It is not expected that people will have extensive recall of all that is to be found in commentaries. This is not what is being looked for. What is being looked for is, rather, familiarity with prescribed texts and ability to deal, in an informed and perceptive way, with significant passages from those texts.

DO read the passage carefully. *DO* focus your response on the passage in question. *DO NOT* spend time simply paraphrasing the passage.

Specimen gobbet 1

In the meantime, following the advice of the Allobroges, I immediately sent that gallant man, the praetor C. Sulpicius, to get from the house of Cethegus any weapons that were there, and he brought out a very large number of daggers and swords.

(CICERO, *In Cat.* 3.8)

This extract comes from Cicero's speech to the people in the forum late in the afternoon of the 3rd December 63 BC. In this speech he reported the events of the previous night, when Volturcius was captured at the Mulvian Bridge while trying to leave Rome with the Allobroges, and of the meeting in the senate the following day, when the urban conspiracy was revealed thanks to the evidence of the Allobroges and Volturcius.

This passage describes how, on the morning of the 3rd December, while the senate was assembling ('in the meantime', l.1), Cicero instructed the praetor Gaius Sulpicius to search the house of C. Cornelius Cethegus. When challenged before the senate to explain the presence of so many weapons in his house, Cethegus supposedly claimed that he had always enjoyed collecting good metalwork. Apart from the letters from the conspirators to the Allobroges and Lentulus' letter to Catiline, this cache of arms was virtually the only hard evidence Cicero had for the urban conspiracy.

Cicero elsewhere describes Cethegus as violent and impetuous; he is said to have been appointed to oversee the massacre of the senate. Cicero also says that although the other conspirators wanted to wait until the Saturnalia before launching the massacre, Cethegus wanted to bring the date forward. He was one of the five conspirators executed on the night of the 5th December.

The Allobroges were a tribe from Transalpine Gaul. They were heavily in debt to Roman businessmen at this period, and the envoys appear to have been sent to Rome to petition the senate for debt-relief. If they hoped for more favourable treatment through their betrayal of the conspirators, they were disappointed; the following year the Allobroges were driven to open revolt by the pressure of debt.

It is interesting to find a praetor engaged in searching the house. Cicero made much use of the urban praetors in the course of his suppression of the conspiracy. Their main responsibility at this period was to preside over the law-courts, but they could also serve as the consul's

immediate 'enforcers' at a time of crisis. Cicero sent two praetors with an armed force to arrest Volturcius on the 2nd December, and at the start of November, as Sallust tells us, two more praetors had been sent out at the head of armies to quell unrest in other parts of Italy.

Specimen gobbet 2

In the meantime, following the advice of the Allobroges, I immediately sent that gallant man, the praetor C. Sulpicius, to get from the house of Cethegus any weapons that were there, and he brought out a very large number of daggers and swords.

(CICERO, *In Cat.* 3.8)

This passage is taken from Cicero's third speech against Catiline. His four surviving speeches against Catiline are our main contemporary source for the Catilinarian conspiracy. The speeches as we have them may not represent exactly what was said by Cicero at the time, since we have evidence for Cicero revising his speeches later for publication (as in the case of the *pro Milone*, as reported by Asconius).

Here Cicero describes how, on the information of the Allobroges, he sent the praetor C. Sulpicius to bring whatever weapons he could find from the house of Cethegus, one of the conspirators. He is said to have found a very large number of daggers and swords, proving that Cethegus was involved in the conspiracy and that a massacre was being planned at Rome. However, it is not certain whether Catiline was actually involved in this plot or whether this was an independent conspiracy, as Seager has argued.

Sulpicius is described as a 'gallant man'. Cicero must have been grateful to him for taking on this task, which might have been very dangerous. No-one knew how far the conspiracy went, and Cethegus could have tried to resist when Sulpicius searched his house.

The mention of the Allobroges is interesting. They were Gallic tribesmen whom Cethegus and others had tried to bring into the conspiracy. Their decision to betray the conspiracy to Cicero was crucial to the uncovering of the plot, and they were later rewarded for this.

Cethegus was convicted of involvement in the Catilinarian conspiracy, and was executed after the debate in the senate on the 5th December. The execution of Cethegus and the others brought Cicero great unpopularity in later years, since despite the passing of the SCU (*senatus consultum ultimum*) he was perceived to have acted unconstitutionally. This passage suggests that Cicero had some justification for his actions, since the cache of arms at Cethegus' house proved that a major plot against the state was underway.

Comments

Specimen gobbet 1 would normally expect to receive a good first-class mark; Specimen gobbet 2 a low-ish 2:2 mark. Why?

Paragraph 1. Both candidates provide general context. But Student 1 provides in the very first sentence four pieces of information which could not be gained simply by reading the passage: (1) to the people (2) in the forum (3) late afternoon [after the meeting of the senate] (4) 3rd Dec. 63 BC. In the rest of the paragraph, Student 1 accurately summarises enough of the

content of the speech to make sense of the passage at hand (uncovering of conspiracy thanks to Allobroges), and shows that she remembers the name of the crucial figure (Volturcius). Student 2, however, in her first sentence says nothing which couldn't be learned by reading the reference (CICERO, *In Cat.* 3.8) at the bottom of the passage. The second and third sentences look at first sight somewhat more impressive, but in fact could be used for *any gobbet from any part of the Catilinarians* - hence they get no credit.

Paragraph 2. Student 1 situates the passage precisely in time (reference of *interea*). Writing Gaius Cornelius rather than C. Cornelius takes half a second longer and shows that she knows what C. stands for. She remembers Cethegus' defence against the accusation of hoarding arms (shows pleasing knowledge of the rest of the speech). Student 2 summarises the whole passage, which Student 1 rightly doesn't bother to do. The final sentence of Student 2's paragraph 2, on Catiline and Seager, again looks superficially impressive, but is in fact completely irrelevant to the passage at issue (could be inserted into almost any gobbet on any of the Catilinarians!).

Paragraph 3. Student 1 tells us what else she knows about Cethegus. Not much detail, but that's ok: does at least show that she has read the sources carefully enough to remember who's who. Student 2 knows nothing else at all about Cethegus, so guesses (incorrectly) that the examiner might be interested in her views on the phrase *fortem virum*, which are all too obviously based on no knowledge whatsoever. This kind of 'arguing from first principles' is very characteristic of desperate exam candidates whose knowledge has run out two sentences into the gobbet...

Paragraph 4 in both cases is a bit pointless: with a richer gobbet to work with, you could omit this altogether. Once again, Student 1 provides relevant *argument* (why the Allobroges got involved in the conspiracy, and why they betrayed it); Student 2 provides *summary* of events (what the Allobroges did).

Paragraph 5. It doesn't matter that Student 1 can't remember any names here (an examiner would probably need to look them up too) - the point is that she shows she has been *paying attention* while reading the set texts. Student 2 has patently run out of information, and piles in some random information (the SCU, described in two different ways to fill space), before guessing at the 'significance' of the passage.

In general: Student 1 can do names, dates, places, content of the speech, what happens immediately before and immediately afterwards. Student 2 has absolutely nothing to work with but the passage itself and a broad and general knowledge of the conspiracy as a whole. Student 1 knows what a praetor is and does, and *worries* about whether praetors usually got involved in house-searches; this leads her on to speculate (relevantly!) about what the praetors' role might have been in the suppression of the conspiracy. Student 2 evidently thinks: praetor, quaestor, censor, proctor, whatever.

21. Plagiarism

1. Plagiarism is the use of material appropriated from another source or from other sources with the intention of passing it off as one's own work. Plagiarism may take the form of unacknowledged quotation or substantial paraphrase. Sources of material include all printed

and electronically available publications in English or other languages, or unpublished materials, including theses, written by others. You should be aware that there are now sophisticated electronic mechanisms for identifying plagiarised passages. The Proctors regard plagiarism as a serious form of cheating for which offenders can expect to receive severe penalties, possibly including disqualification from the examination process. Plagiarism in tutorial essays or other work which is not formally examined is a disciplinary matter for Colleges, who may choose to apply a range of severe penalties, including rustication or even sending down. You should also be aware that anyone writing a reference for you in the future, who is aware that you have plagiarised work, may feel obliged to mention this fact in their reference.

Unintentional plagiarism, that is improper or sloppy working practice which leads to failure to acknowledge properly the sources of your ideas or information, may also be penalised by the Examiners. 'Unintentional plagiarism' is recognised as a specific offence by the Proctors.

2. Your work will inevitably sometimes involve the use and discussion of critical material written by others with due acknowledgement and with references given. This is standard critical practice and can be clearly distinguished from appropriating without acknowledgement material produced by others and presenting it as your own, which is what constitutes plagiarism.

3. A thesis or report is essentially **your** view of the subject. While you will be expected to be familiar with critical views and debates in relation to the subject on which you are writing, and to discuss them as necessary, it is your particular response to the theme or question at issue that is required.

4. When you read the primary texts, it is a good idea to find **your own examples** of episodes, themes, arguments, etc in them that you wish to discuss. If you work from your own examples, you will be much less likely to appropriate other people's materials.

5. When you are taking notes from secondary sources,

- a) Always note author, title (of book or journal, and essay or article title as appropriate), place of publication (for books), and page numbers.
- b) If you copy out material word for word from secondary sources, make sure that you identify it as quotation (by putting inverted commas round it) in your notes. This will ensure that you recognise it as such when you are reading it through in preparing your thesis.
- c) At the same time always note down page numbers of quoted material. This will make it easier for you to check back if you are in doubt about any aspect of a reference. It will also be a necessary part of citation (see 6 below).

6. When you are writing make sure that you identify material quoted from critics or ideas and arguments that are particularly influenced by them. There are various ways of doing this, in your text and in footnotes. If you are substantially indebted to a particular scholar's arguments in the formulation of your materials, it may not be enough to cite his or her work once in a footnote at the start or the end of the essay. Make clear, if necessary in the body of your text, the extent of your dependence on these arguments in the generation of your own – and, ideally, how your views develop or diverge from this influence.

You should also take care to allow readers / examiners to form a judgement as to the full extent of your engagement with particular sources or published discussions. In other words,

you should flag the point at which your discussion begins to depend heavily on a published work, and the point(s) at which you introduce ideas or hypotheses derived from different published material. For example, you if you have a five-page discussion which is based on, or engages with, Source A, you should indicate this at the start of, and where appropriate, during, those five pages; it is misleading to cite Source A only at the end of the discussion based on it.

In addition, it is not sufficient to simply to lift citations of relevant earlier literature from a recent discussion, and is a form of plagiarism to give the impression that you have read a number of scholarly items when you have only lifted them from a footnote in the text you are using. You need to go and investigate them yourselves. Equally you should not cite publications unless you have read them. It is acceptable to refer the reader to the existence of older literature, or literature in a language other than English, which you have not read, as long as you make it clear that you have not read it (this can be denoted by saying 'not seen', or in Latin, 'non uidi'). It is acceptable to say, for example, "the first significant discussion of the relationship between the consuls and the Senate was by Th. Mommsen (1887)"; but not to cite Mommsen's discussion as if you have read it, e.g. "the Senate was very much as an advisory body to the consuls (Mommsen 1887)".

7. Example:

This is a passage from P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 1988), pp. 210-11, discussing the sculptural programme in the Forum Augustum:

‘But the most original and suggestive aspect of the whole program was that the counterpart to this Julian family portrait gallery, to the right of the temple, was a row of carefully selected great men of Rome (summi viri: Historia Augusta Alexander Severus 28.6). These stood beside Romulus and the kings of Rome in the opposite colonnade. The juxtaposition of the two portrait galleries thus justified the position of the princeps’ family in the new Rome by proclaiming its unique historical importance. The reality of competition between Rome’s leading families stretching back for centuries, all the ups and downs, and the relative insignificance of the Julii from the fourth to the second centuries B.C. were all thereby utterly obscured. In this version, the Julii had always been Rome’s most important family, for this family would produce her savior. A similar interpretation was already to be found in the poetry of Virgil.’

A. Plagiarism:

‘Augustus’ sculptural programme in his Forum is very interesting. Along the colonnade to the left of the temple were statues of Augustus’ ancestors, the Julian family. The most important aspect was that a row of carefully selected great men (summi viri) were placed opposite the statues of the Julian family, in the colonnade to the right of the temple. Next to them were Romulus and the kings of Rome. This juxtaposition justified the position of the princeps’ family in the new order by proclaiming its unique historical importance. The line of statues of the Julian family made it look as though Augustus came from a line of important historical figures going right back to Aeneas, even though some of them had really been insignificant; they were instead equated with the great heroes of Roman history. Virgil’s poetry shows a similar view of history.’

This version adds almost nothing to the original; it mixes direct appropriation with close

paraphrase. There is no acknowledgement of the source; the writer suggests that the argument and the development of it is his or her own.

B. Legitimate use of the passage:

‘The sculptural programme in the Forum Augustum played an important part in Augustus’ self- projection aimed at legitimating his rule. At one end of the Forum stood the Temple of Mars Ultor; the flanking colonnades held lines of statues and the exedrae within them contained statues of Romulus and Remus to the right of the temple, and Aeneas and Ascanius/Iulus to the left. Zanker points out that the juxtaposition of the ancestors of the gens Iulia on the left side and the line of Rome’s past heroes or summi viri on the right set up a historical equation for the viewer, suggesting that all of Augustus’ ancestors were themselves great men and that the gens Iulia was always the leading family of Rome.¹ But the programme does more than merely proclaim the greatness of Augustus’ ancestors within the context of a history stretching back to the mythical past; as with the Fasti triumphales and Fasti consulares, it emphasises Augustan continuity with the history of the Republic, supporting Augustus’ claim to have restored the Republic and glossing over the transition to monarchical rule. In Virgil’s *Aeneid* (Book VI, lines 756-853) Anchises shows Aeneas an analogous parade of the great men of Roman history, from mythical figures through the great Republican heroes up to Augustus and other members of his family. Virgil died in 19 B.C. and the Forum was not dedicated until 2 B.C.; conceivably therefore the sculptural programme could have been directly inspired by the *Aeneid*, but it is perhaps more likely that both the *Aeneid*’s procession of heroes and the Forum Augustum reflect a common ideology developed in circles close to Augustus.’

¹ P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor 1988): 210-11.

This version uses an acknowledged paraphrase of part of the passage in forming a wider argument, with some fresh ideas and developing the point about Virgilian poetry which Zanker made only in passing. (The footnote is sound scholarly practice, but its omission would not be a matter of plagiarism, as the source is indicated in the text.)

For further help and information, see

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism>.

22. Teaching Provision

The table below shows the typical teaching provision for CAAH Prelims.

Please note that it may occasionally be necessary to make changes to the teaching provision for a given option, and that teaching may take place in a different term from the one shown below.

Papers	Faculty teaching provision (hours)						Typical college teaching provision (hours)	
	Lectures			Classes			Tutorials	Classes
	MT	HT	TT	MT	HT	TT		
Aristocracy and democracy in the Greek world 550-450 BC	14			12				
Republic to Empire: Rome 50 BC to AD 50		12			12			
Homeric Archaeology and Early Greece, 1550-700 BC	8	8					8	
Greek Vases	8	8					8	
Greek Sculpture, c. 600-300 BC	8	8					8	
Roman Architecture	8	8					8	
Thucydides and the West	8						8	
Aristophanes' Political Comedy	8						8	
Cicero and Catiline	8						8	
Tacitus and Tiberius	8						8	
Beginning Ancient Greek				24	24	16		
Beginning Latin				24	24	8		
Intermediate Ancient Greek				24	24			
Intermediate Latin				24	24			
Advanced Ancient Greek				16	16	16		
Advanced Latin				16	16	16		

23. List of Officers

This list gives the names of the various members of the Faculty who are holding major administrative jobs, some of whom are referred to in the course of this Handbook.

Standing Committee for Classical Archaeology and Ancient History

Chair: Prof. Maria Stamatopoulou

Sub-Faculty of Ancient History and Classical Archaeology

Chair: Prof. Peter Thonemann, Wadham

Secretary and Lecture-List Secretary: Dr Anna Clark

Harassment Officers

Dr Thomas Mannack, Classics Faculty

Mrs Juliane Kerkhecker, Oriel

Equality and Diversity Officer

Prof. Llewelyn Morgan, Brasenose

Schools Liaison Officer

Dr Olivia Elder, Oriel

Contact details for academic staff can be found at

<https://www.classics.ox.ac.uk/faculty-members>.

Email addresses and telephone numbers for the whole University are available at

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/staff>.

24. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement

The Oxford Classics Faculty is committed to working together to ensure that we are inclusive and welcoming to all. We aim to provide an environment 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 to assist them in reaching their full potential. The Classics Faculty's EDI webpages and contact details for the Faculty's EDI Officer and Harassment Advisors can be found here: <https://www.classics.ox.ac.uk/edi-policy-classics>

The following is a University statement, which the Faculty strongly endorses:

"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

Student Welfare and Support Services

The University's unique and close-knit collegiate system provides a wealth of pastoral and welfare services for students to support engagement with studies and University life, promoting student wellbeing by providing opportunities for social interaction and sport and arts. Additionally, the central Student Welfare and Support Services department offers professional support that complements provision in colleges and departments. More detail can be found in the University's Common Approach to Support Student Mental Health.

The Disability Advisory Service (DAS) can provide information, advice and guidance on reasonable adjustments to teaching and assessment, and assist with organising disability-related study support. For more information visit: www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability

Corrections to the Handbook

<i>Date</i>	<i>Vsn</i>	<i>Page(s)</i>	<i>Description of change</i>
6 Oct 2025	1.2	5	Update of due dates

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