

# Course Handbook: M.Phil. in Egyptology

Faculty of Oriental Studies

Academic Year 2017-18

*This handbook applies to students starting the course in Michaelmas Term 2017. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.*

*NOTE: The Examination Regulations relating to all Oriental Studies courses are available at <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>. If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination Regulations, you should always follow the Examination Regulations.*

*If you have any concerns please contact [academic.administrator@orinst.ox.ac.uk](mailto:academic.administrator@orinst.ox.ac.uk).*

*The information in this handbook is accurate as of 1st October 2017. However, it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at [www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges](http://www.graduate.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. Students will also be informed.*

# THE FACULTY OF ORIENTAL STUDIES:

## M.PHIL. IN EGYPTOLOGY

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### Introduction

This handbook gives outline information about the MPhil in Egyptology. It is intended to supplement and coordinate other documents you will be given. Numbers on the course are very small and you will see the teaching staff very often. You are free to come and discuss the course and your needs at any time. Because of this frequent and close contact, this document is kept quite brief. If you need to know more, come and see one of us.

### General

This course is intended for two purposes and is organised in two related syllabuses. It is presented formally in the *Examination Regulations*, what follows is intended to flesh out that description and, we hope, to clarify that document.

Syllabus A enables those with an Egyptology background to pursue their study of the subject to a higher level, to gain specialised expertise, and to begin fairly detailed research in an area of their choice. For example, students could undertake to specialise in demotic, hieratic, Coptic or other areas of the subject, including material culture studies, which they could not pursue at undergraduate level. Syllabus B enables graduates in another discipline to convert to Egyptology through a course at graduate level that offers a certain amount of specialisation, including a significant element of independent research. The thesis presented for examination with either syllabus can be revised and incorporated into DPhil or MLitt theses. Syllabuses and courses are tailored to individual students, so that a general description can cover only the structures and elements that apply to all. The guide that follows is essentially an explanation of the regulations and an indication of what stages students should expect to have reached by particular junctures in the course.

The MPhil is designed as a graduate course and is very intensive. Students must treat the university vacations as integral parts of their work time and are expected to take relatively limited holidays. From the start of their courses they should also think about whether they need to do fieldwork in Egypt or elsewhere and when this will best be done. (If possible, everyone who has not been to Egypt before should ideally visit there before the end of the course, even as a tourist). In the second year, students should expect to spend the Easter Vacation finishing their theses, which must be submitted half way through Trinity Term. Depending on the course design, there can also be a take-home examination at the beginning of Trinity Term of the second year, while essays that are to be revised and assessed for another element in the course must be completed and handed in during that term, at a date that varies

according to the options chosen. The final examinations are sat during and/or after the end of the term. Different examination provision may be made for some students who are taking options that are offered in other faculties such as Classics. In some cases the syllabus may be varied to enable students to take and be examined in options that are offered at the same time for other courses.

Teaching usually takes place in the Griffith Institute wing of the Sackler Library, on weekdays. Teaching can be either in the morning or afternoon, and lectures and tutorials are usually 1 hour; text classes can be 2 hours. Students have access to the facilities of the Griffith Institute, including the purchase of its publications at student rates. They may apply to their original funding bodies (if any), to their colleges, and to the Griffith Egyptological Fund (administered by the Faculty of Oriental Studies) for financial assistance with fieldwork or special expenses (such as, for example, obtaining photographs for study for a thesis).

A further vital University resource in Egyptology is the Ashmolean Museum. Students are strongly encouraged to make themselves familiar with the collections, both on display and in the stores. They may like to consider working with a specific category of material in the museum for a special field or thesis. It may also be possible to gain museum work experience on a voluntary basis in the Department of Antiquities. Artefact classes for Egyptology undergraduates (2 hours a week) are held in the museum, and MPhil students are strongly encouraged to attend these where possible. Another Oxford museum with an outstanding Egyptian collection is the Pitt Rivers Museum. Students may wish to explore the possibility of working with its collection, as well as those of other museums in the UK, such as the British Museum.

During the first three terms students should establish which special field they wish to offer (see below under Syllabuses) and check with their supervisors whether it will be available. Applications for the approval of detailed options should then be presented, after consultation with the supervisor, to the graduate studies assistant in the Oriental Institute. They are due by Monday in the sixth week of Trinity Term at the end of the first year. They may be submitted by email; if this is done, it is essential that the student keep a record and also provide details to the supervisor. The following options are normally offered when teaching is available, and are taught with a mixture of text classes and essays as appropriate to the candidate and topic:

- Archaeology
- Art and iconography
- Christian Egypt
- Demotic
- Egyptian grammar
- Greco-Roman hieroglyphic texts
- Papyrology
- Hieratic texts
- Egyptian literary and/or religious texts
- Material culture
- Periods of history from the early dynastic to the Byzantine
- Egyptian society

The structure of the MPhil is kept under review; minor changes and improvements may be introduced during the course with the agreement of students. Feedback is welcomed, and you are encouraged to tell us if you see any ways in which the course or this handbook could be improved.

## The syllabuses

### SYLLABUS A

#### First year

Syllabus A is the more flexible of the two. Students will have chosen the course because they wish to gain expertise in specific areas of Egyptology. They will therefore mostly come with some idea of what kinds of classes they will wish to attend and what other work they will need to do. At the beginning of the course students discuss their plans with their supervisors. They establish whether they must acquire any basic skills; these are sometimes tested in a qualifying examination at the end of the first year. Such skills include the compulsory requirement of a reading knowledge of French and German needed for using secondary literature (in which courses and/or self-study options are available in the Language Centre), Coptic, and/or Greek (if needed for the options chosen). If hieratic or demotic is a special field (2-3 hours a week), either may require a qualifying examination. Whether or not you need to sit a qualifying examination should be discussed with your supervisor and other teachers during your first two terms.

In the first year students attend the classes they need in order to acquire particular skills. Some of these may be specially arranged for them, while others may be shared with other graduate students or may be undergraduate courses in fields they have not covered previously. Students should expect to attend at least two sets of classes, typically spending five or more hours per week in class, as well as research seminars, of which there are about five per term (held for the Egyptology and ancient Near East subject group as a whole). Language and text classes are usually 3 hours a week. The classes will involve substantial preparation time. Students should explore other possibilities and discuss with their supervisors whether any lecture courses or seminar series given outside the subject group, in the Oriental Faculty or other faculties, may be valuable for them. Graduate students sometimes organise seminars of their own in a group where they meet together without a teacher.

Another essential part of the first year's work is preparation for specialisation. Students must read independently and widely in the secondary literature, major general works of Egyptology, crucial articles and chapters, and more detailed publications in areas of particular interest. They should write a small number of essays, perhaps one or two per term, on the subjects of classes they are attending or on general and methodological topics; these are then discussed with supervisors or other tutors in meetings afterwards (usually 1 hour). Students can also meet with their supervisors to discuss the focus of these essays, bibliographies, and methods of work before starting work.

By the beginning of the sixth week of Trinity Term in the first year, students must have identified and agreed with their supervisors the subject for their thesis and the special field, or combination of fields, in which they will offer an examination paper, a take-home examination, and two extended essays for assessment. The three units of assessment will typically include one or two based on primary materials and at least one focused around essays. They must discuss these options with their supervisor(s), who will arrange appropriate teaching. In some cases such teaching may begin during the first year, but normally it is concentrated in the second year. The special field is taught with a mixture of text classes and essays as appropriate to the candidate.

Throughout the course students must maintain a broad reading ability in Egyptian language, in particular Middle and Late Egyptian; this is tested in an unprepared translation paper in the final examination. Classes in unprepared text reading are available every year, typically in Hilary and Trinity terms; some special tuition in this area, notably for phases of Classical Egyptian not covered in the BA syllabus, may be arranged during the second year.

## Second year

The second year is devoted primarily to work on the special field and the thesis. The amount of time spent in class in Michaelmas Term is similar to that in the first year, but classes diminish in number in Hilary Term; in Trinity Term they are confined mainly to revision work.

In addition to the examination papers in unprepared translation and in the special field, the final examination includes a general paper, which is shared between the two syllabuses, as is the unprepared translation paper. The general paper requires a broad knowledge of the field of Egyptology, of methodological issues, and of the history of the subject. Lecture and seminar attendance and reading are the basic prerequisites for this paper; there are normally classes in the final Trinity Term at which relevant methods are discussed. Students may wish to write some preparatory essays and to discuss approaches with their supervisor or another teacher. The best time for writing such essays is Trinity Term, quite close to the examinations, but earlier preparation and reading about issues of method and disciplinary history are essential. For examination conventions, see under Syllabus B below.

## SYLLABUS B

### First year

Syllabus B is taken by students who have little or no experience in Egyptology. Because they are starting the subject more or less from the beginning, the first year of their course is largely the same as the first year of the BA. More than BA students, MPhil students must work during their first two and a half terms on acquiring a broad and sophisticated grasp of the secondary literature; in particular they must study towards selecting the options they wish to take for the final examination. They therefore need both to attend classes and to read independently, intensively, and purposefully in Egyptology in order to make an informed selection of their special field in Trinity Term. They must also attend the graduate seminars, as well as the museum classes which are regularly offered to undergraduates (2 hours a week for two terms). The class load for the first year is typically nine or ten hours per week. Of these, three or four require extensive preparation and the remainder background reading and essay writing.

The classes for the first two terms are the elementary language class in Egyptian (3, occasionally 4 hours per week) and the lecture course in Ancient Near Eastern Civilisation and History (4 hours per week). MPhil students also attend the weekly lecture course on Egyptian art and architecture, which usually runs in the first two terms and part of the third (1 hour a week). Students must complete all the exercises for the language class. The grammar of Middle Egyptian is broadly covered in the first term, and in the second term an initial selection of texts is read (3 hours a week).

In addition, MPhil students write about three to four essays per term, mostly together with the undergraduates but sometimes on different topics. These are then discussed with supervisors or other tutors in meetings. Students can also meet with their supervisors to discuss the focus of these essays, bibliographies, and methods of work before starting work.

The text reading continues in the first half of Trinity Term. Both the lecture courses and language classes finish around its sixth or seventh week. Students must choose their special field and the selection of prepared texts they wish to offer, by the sixth week of Trinity Term of the first year. It is also important to decide a thesis topic at the same time so work for that can begin in the summer. In the ninth week of Trinity Term of the first year they sit a qualifying examination; this is the same as the two language papers of the First Public Examination for the BA in Egyptology.

As for Syllabus A, there is a compulsory requirement to possess the reading knowledge of French and German necessary for using secondary literature. Courses and/or self-study options for this are available

in the Language Centre. They may be required to sit a qualifying examination in these languages, often just before the start of Michaelmas Term of the second year, and so students may wish to develop any such competence that they do not already possess over the summer vacation.

## Second year

For the second year, Syllabus B includes work for: one final examination paper of prepared texts, in Middle and Late Egyptian; two topics in a special field; and a thesis.. The prepared texts normally constitute around half of the BA syllabus in Middle Egyptian and two thirds to all of that in Late Egyptian. The final selection of texts from complete lists is normally made when 'examination conventions' are released at the end of Hilary Term in the second year; a larger initial group is therefore generally presented near the end of the first year, when the choices of thesis and options are submitted for approval. One of the topics in the special field may be examined in a take-home examination in the first week of Trinity Term or as a sit-down examination toward the end of Trinity Term depending on the design of the degree overall (this is discussed in your first year). The second topic in the special field is examined by means of two assessed essays. A number of students have taken the course on Egyptian art and architecture, which is regularly available as a special subject for second-year undergraduates, as one of the two units in their special field. The special field is taught with a mixture of text classes and essays as appropriate to the candidate and topic.

There are generally a few introductory classes in Late Egyptian before the end of Trinity Term in the first year. These are intended to enable students to make a serious start with that phase of the language over the Summer Vacation. The vacation should also be used for as much preparatory work on the thesis as is practicable.

During Michaelmas and Hilary terms work is also done on the two units in the special field (as against three for Syllabus A); work on the thesis continues. Teaching for the special field varies considerably: it is in whatever form is appropriate for the topics selected. Because topics are broad and the areas that can be covered are difficult to predict, the final selection of material for examination in prepared texts and special topics is normally made during Hilary Term, and is presented to each student in the form of 'examination conventions'.

The 'examination conventions' are gathered in a document which describes the number and range of questions that will be set and must be answered in each paper in the examination, along with any omission of material from the lists prescribed when the special field and lists of prepared texts were first selected. The document also notes any departure in a particular year's examination papers from the practice of earlier years. Except for options that are being examined for the first time – as is relatively common because the range of options is wide – such innovations are minor: significant changes can only be introduced through alterations in the printed *Examination regulations*, and for these a notice of at least a year is required. You can therefore be confident that there will be no unpleasant surprises.

To summarise:

### Syllabus A

Unprepared Translation (sit-down examination)

General paper (sit-down examination)

Special field 1 (take-home paper)

Special field 2 (assessed essays)

Special field 3 (sit-down examination)

Thesis (30,000 words)

## Syllabus B

Unprepared Translation (sit-down examination)  
General paper (sit-down examination)  
Middle and Late Egyptian texts 1 (sit-down examination)  
Middle and Late Egyptian texts 2 (sit-down examination)  
Special field 1 (a take-home paper or sit-down examination)  
Special field 2 (assessed essays)  
Thesis (20,000 words)

## Examinations and Assessments

The latest information on the assessments and submission details can be found in the *Examination Regulations*: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/>

The Exam Regulations are revised and re-issued each year, and you must always consult the issue in force at the time of your admission. For example, if you matriculate your studies in Michaelmas Term 2017, you should refer to the Examination Regulations for 2017 -2018 for the whole duration of your course.

Year of Matriculation	MSt and MPhil Qualifying Exams	MPhil Final Exams
MT 2017	Exam Regs for 2017-18	Exam Regs for 2017-18

Lists of prepared texts for examinations are devised individually for students and are normally agreed in Trinity Term in the first year or Michaelmas Term in the second year. For Syllabus B they overlap with the texts prescribed for the BA, a list of which is kept and revised from year to year; this may be had on request. Sample lists for Syllabus B are given below.

'Conventions observed in setting papers' is a document describing the format of examination papers, circulated at the end of Hilary Term of the second year; updated for each candidate or group of candidates who take the final examination. This is posted on the faculty website.

Increasingly, syllabus materials and similar information is placed on Weblearn, the University's web-based teaching site: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/humdiv/orient/eanes/egyptology>  
The present document is currently available on the faculty's website, currently at: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/humdiv/orient/orientals>

## Set Texts

A final list of set texts will be made available, not later than Friday of 8th week, Hilary Term of the second year, for the final examination. Below are earlier lists, as used in the academic year 2013.

### SAMPLES: Prescribed (Set) Texts for Examination in the FHS in Egyptology, and for Final Examination MPhil Egyptology in Trinity Term 2013

\* Texts that may be set in photographic or line facsimile.

#### Middle Egyptian

As the order of the texts read in class cannot be fixed in advance, the following list is identical with the one for the FHS in Oriental Studies (EANES). But only those texts that have been read by the end of Hilary Term 2013 will form part of the examinations.

K. Sethe, *Ägyptische Lesestücke* (2nd ed.), nos. 15a\*, 17, 18\*, 23, 26\*, 29, 34\*.

R. Anthes, *Die Felsinschriften von Hatnub*, no. 14.

W. Helck, *Historisch-biographische Texte der 2. Zwischenzeit und neue Texte der 18. Dynastie*, no. 98\*.

P. Lacau, *Stèles du Nouvel Empire*, pls. ii–iii\*.

K. Sethe, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*, 645–67.

W. Helck, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*, 1276–83, no. 372.

R. Koch, *Die Erzählung des Sinuhe*, 1–59, line 5.

A. M. Blackman, *The Story of King Cheops and the Magicians*.

R. O. Faulkner, *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 42 (1956), 22–6 (Dispute of a man with his *ba*).

G. Posener, *L'Enseignement Loyaliste*, 51–139; K. Sethe, *Ägyptische Lesestücke*, no. 13\* (Loyalist Instruction).

A. de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, vii, sp. 1130.

J. Assmann, *Der König als Sonnenpriester*, 17–19.

E. Naville, *Das ägyptische Todtenbuch der XVIII. bis XX. Dynastie*, i, pl. xv; ii, 22–8; J.

J. Assmann, *Liturgische Lieder an den Sonnengott*, 405–11.

E. Hornung, *Der ägyptische Mythos von der Himmelskuh*, verses 1–202.

#### Late Egyptian

A. H. Gardiner, *Late-Egyptian stories*, no. iv (Horus and Seth); no. v (Wenamun).

A. H. Gardiner, *Late-Egyptian miscellanies*, 12 no. 1 (with 40–41 no. 10); 25 no. 5; 28–9 no. 9, 44–5 no. 14 (with parallels); 45–6 nos. 15–16; 60 no. 5; 85–6 no. 9.

M. V. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the ancient Egyptian love songs*, 378 (11) – 380 (9).

*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 22 (1936), pls. xii–xvi.

J. Černý, *Late Ramesside letters*, nos. 4, 15, 16, 21, 35.

A. H. Gardiner, *Ramesside administrative documents*, no. xxiv.

*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 31 (1945), pls. viii–xii.

A. H. Gardiner and Kurt Sethe, *Egyptian letters to the dead*, pls. vii–viii.

Alan H. Gardiner, *Hieratic papyri in the British Museum, third series: Chester Beatty Gift*, pl. 8, ll 10–19 of the first column of text on the plate.

I.E.S. Edwards, *Oracular amuletic decrees of the late New Kingdom*, pls. 1–3a (L1 = pBM EA 10083) OR pls. 18a–21 (T1 = pTurin 1983).



Middle Egyptian texts prescribed for Moderations (EANES)  
and Qualifying Exams MPhil Egyptology (syllabus B)

Texts marked \* are often not read. Only texts that have been read in class will form part of the examination. One or two texts are alternatives; again, among these only texts that have been read in class will form part of the examination.

Adriaan de Buck, *Egyptian Readingbook* (Leiden: Nederlandsch Archaeologisch-Philologisch Instituut voor het Nabije Osten 1948):

- p. 46 (Canal inscription of Thutmose III, Coronation decree of Thutmose I);
- pp. 48-53 (Punt inscriptions of Hatshepsut)\*;
- pp. 53-6 (Poetical stela of Thutmose III).

Kurt Sethe, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie I* (2nd edition; edition; *Urkunden des Ägyptischen Altertums IV*; Leipzig: Hinrichs 1930):

- pp. 1-11 (Biography of Ahmose son of Ibana);
  - pp. 111-23 (Biography of Paheri)\*;
  - pp. 130-3 (Inscription of Djehuti);
- vol. III (1907), pp. 889-97 (Biography of Amenemhab).

Kurt Sethe, *Ägyptische Lesestücke zum Gebrauch im akademischen Unterricht* (2nd edition; Leipzig: Hinrichs 1928):

- no. 12, pp. 65-7 (Hymns to Sesostris III);
- no. 14, pp. 70-71 (Stela of Ikhernofret);
- no. 17, pp. 76-7 (Stelae of Amenisonbe);
- no. 27, p. 87 (Harper's songs);
- no. 28 a-i, pp. 87-9 (Appeals from funerary inscriptions);
- no. 32, pp. 96-7 (Temple documents from Illahun);
- no. 33, p. 97 (Letters from Illahun).

A. M. Blackman, *Middle-Egyptian Stories* (Brussels: Fondation Egyptologique Reine Elisabeth 1932), pp. 41-8 (The Story of the Shipwrecked Sailor).

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