

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS 2020: HISTORY AND MODERN LANGUAGES TRIPOS PARTS IA AND IB

Earlier this week you will have received the message from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education explaining the University's principles and policies for the modified assessments that are being put in place as a result of the coronavirus crisis. We are writing now with further information about the plans for alternative assessments in the History and Modern Languages Tripos, which have now been approved by the University's General Board Education Committee. Thank you for your patience while these plans have been drawn up and approved. The plans have been developed through conversations between staff of the Faculties of History and MMLL. We have also tried to take account of a wide range of comments expressed in messages from students in formulating plans that we hope are as flexible, accommodating and deliverable as possible, and give consideration to the practical and psychological impact of the pandemic on students and staff (administrative and academic).

NB the following should be read alongside the 'COVID-19 Undergraduate Examination Arrangements in MMLL' document issued by MMLL on 31 March.

As you will have seen from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor's message, across the University first and second year undergraduates will undertake modified assessment, and no first or second-year assessment will be classed. **In both years 1 and 2 HML**, this modified assessment will be **formative**. This means that students will get marks for their work, but, because of the extraordinary circumstances in which the assessment is taken, marks will not be recorded on transcripts and no class will be awarded.

In the Part I scheme below, **which applies to both years of HML**, assessment has been modified in order to reflect the disruption to learning and exam preparation caused by the Covid-19 crisis. The scheme is as follows:

First-year students:

MML papers: you will only take one content paper and no language papers as per the MML arrangements, i.e.:

- You will take one scheduled paper (or A3 paper – e.g. FR1, or SPA3) as a take-home assessments in May/June. All scheduled papers (plus A3 papers) will be released at the same time, and you will have several days to complete your paper(s). For traditional three-essay-style papers, you will have a choice of answering three short essays (1,200-1,500 words) or a single longer essay (3,000-3,500 words). For other exam formats, you may still choose the long essay option if the paper has essay-style questions. Some questions that are not suitable for the longer essay option will be clearly marked as unsuitable.
- There will be no language assessments, oral or written, in May/June.
- You will take part in a language Certification exercise in your language at a later date (not during the May/June exam period). The current intention is to complete this before you start your second year in the autumn.

- You will receive marks and feedback, but you will not be classed (formative assessment).

History papers:

You will choose **one** History paper for assessment. This will be assessed by by a **portfolio of 2 supervision essays**, which students will be permitted to revise lightly, in line with the arrangements for History Part I students. There is no expectation that extensive further reading will be undertaken for these essays, and they need not be footnoted and referenced to the same level as submitted coursework such as Long Essays and Dissertations. There will be an upper word limit of 3,000 words for each essay. The essays should be selected by the student independently without consulting with their supervisors, and no revision supervisions will be provided for these papers. The essays must be the student's own work, and all candidates will be required to submit a declaration to that effect. These essays will be submitted via Moodle Assignment, run through Turnitin and distributed to markers electronically. The deadline for the submission of the portfolio of essays will be announced shortly. You will receive marks on this work, but no feedback.

You will receive marks on this work, but no feedback. You do not have to decide immediately which paper you wish to be examined on. Further guidance will follow. You may ask your Director of Studies for advice on this.

Second year students

MML papers: If you are a second-year student, you will take all the non-oral/AV papers that you studied, but with a reduced number of answers per content paper. We give the full stipulations here, but not every HML student will be taking all these options, so you will take whatever you studied, viz:

- There will be no oral exam and no AV exams.
- Long Essays will be submitted and examined as usual.
- You will take (if applicable) B1, B2, B3 (without AV) papers as take-home assessments in May/June (all language papers will be released at the same time, and you will be asked to work on them over a few days before scheduled papers are released). All translation questions (both ways) will be supplemented by a short commentary task in English to explain your translation choices (a sample, provisional wording is below, and teaching preparation will be offered).
- You will take any ML scheduled papers as take-home assessment in May/June. All scheduled papers will be released at the same time, and you will have several days to complete your paper(s), with staggered deadlines designed to help you complete each paper in the order you wish, On these papers you will have a choice of writing either **two** answers of up to 1,500 words (instead of the standard three essays on most papers) or **one** longer answer of up to 3,000 words. (Papers with non-essay components or different numbers of answers will arrange equivalent reductions.) Some questions that are not suitable for the longer essay option will be clearly marked as unsuitable.

- You will receive marks and feedback, but you will not be classed (formative assessment).

History papers:

You will only be examined in the papers taken in the current academic year; second-year HML students are **not** examined in any of the History papers they offered last year (you already had your exam on those last year).

You will submit assessments on all the History papers studied in the current academic year, i.e. one or two papers, depending on what you have taken. All second year papers will be assessed by a portfolio of two supervision essays, as described above.

Information to follow: As soon as possible we shall circulate information about the timings of assessments; we are currently awaiting finalization of the University examination timetable. First years will in due course be asked which paper they wish to have assessed. Further guidance about the portfolio of essays will also be issued as soon as possible.

Further information: for further information on assessment, see the Pro-Vice-Chancellor's message, and the FAQs on the students' pages at <https://www.cam.ac.uk/coronavirus/students>. These cover matters such as: what to do if you are unable to complete assessments during the Easter Term assessment period, and the position of students with individual exam arrangements resulting from a disability or medical condition.

We understand that many of you will have further questions about the above. We reiterate that we aim to provide further crucial details as soon as possible, so please be patient. Many common questions are addressed by the FAQs. However, if you do require further help or information at this stage, please do not hesitate to get in contact, and we'll do our best to help.

Amended 7 April 2020