

Humanities Divisional Board

Title of Programme

Preliminary Examination in History

Brief note about nature of change: Curriculum reform in undergraduate History degrees.

Effective date

For students starting from MT 2017

For first examination from 2017-18

Location of change

In *Examination Regulations* on-line, Preliminary Examination in History
[\(http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2015-16/pexaminhist/administratorview/\)](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2015-16/pexaminhist/administratorview/)

Explanatory Notes

These changes bring about undergraduate curriculum reform in History. The theme of the reforms is diversification:

- i) The enlargement of the scope of an Oxford History degree, through the requirement that all undergraduates take one paper in a historical subject outside Europe at some point in the three years of the degree, although this requirement will not apply to the five Joint Schools which include History.
- ii) The introduction of a number of Theme papers to the Outline menus, of a type which is new to the syllabus and which will enable specific themes to be followed over longer periods. There is no requirement that students choose a Theme paper from a given Outline menu.
- iii) The assessment of the History of the British Isles (HBI) in Finals by a take-away examination in week 9 of Trinity Term of the second year.

Changes (i) and (ii) are being introduced for entry in Michaelmas term 2017 (i.e. students starting their FHS in Michaelmas term 2018). Change (iii) will be introduced as soon as possible, so for entry in Michaelmas term 2016 (i.e. for students starting their FHS in

Michaelmas term 2017) – see regulation change HDB(16)78_U, published in the Gazette of 21 July 2016.

The opportunity to undertake significant re-drafting of the relevant regulations has also been taken, partly to make them shorter and less burdened with unnecessary detail, and partly to remove detailed menus of specific papers: such material is more appropriately covered within course handbooks.

Detail of change

Delete all regulations for the Preliminary Examination in History and substitute those appended to the end of this notice.

Preliminary Examination in History

A

1. The Preliminary Examination will introduce students to the History degree, which will offer both wide diversity in terms of chronology, geography and historical themes, and a range of methodologies encompassing breadth, depth and theoretical awareness. The examination shall include:
 - (1) Outline papers in the History of the British Isles;
 - (2) Outline papers in European & World History;
 - (3) Papers in a specialist historical ('Optional') subject, studied with reference to primary sources;
 - (4) Methodological or historiographical subjects, or foreign-language texts.
2. The examination shall be under the supervision of the Board of the Faculty of History, which will specify procedures and rules respecting the examination, and will define the lists of specific papers from which candidates will choose within the various subjects described below. These lists will be published in the fourth week of the Hilary Term prior to candidates beginning their studies for the examination.
3. The Board shall issue annually the Handbook for the Preliminary Examination in History by Monday of first week of Michaelmas Term in the year of the examination.

B

Each candidate shall offer four papers, as specified in 1 to 4 below.

Candidates must offer papers in 1. History of the British Isles and 2. European & World History taken from two of the three different chronological groups: Early, Middle and Late, as defined by the Board. Candidates who proceed to the Honour School of History will be required to take a further Outline paper in one of these subjects from a third period.

1. History of the British Isles: any one from a list of Outline papers defined by the Faculty Board.

The History of the British Isles is taken to include the history of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and of other territories in so far as they are specifically

connected with the History of Britain.

2. European & World History: any one from a list of Outline papers defined by the Faculty Board.
3. Optional Subject: any one from a list of subjects defined by the Faculty Board, to be studied with reference to primary sources.
4. One of the following subjects as defined by the Faculty Board:
 - (a) Approaches to History;
 - (b) Historiography: Tacitus to Weber;
 - (c) Foreign Texts;
 - (d) Quantification in History.

Candidates who fail one or more of papers 1, 2, 3, or 4 may resit that paper or papers at a subsequent examination.