



# **Bachelor of Arts in Assyriology and Bachelor of Arts in Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies (Akkadian) Course Handbook**

**Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies**

Academic Year 2025-26

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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 the Senior Academic Administrator, [Edmund Howard](#).

The information in this handbook is accurate as at Michaelmas Term 2025; however, it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at [www.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges](http://www.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges). If such changes are made the Faculty will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.

## This Handbook

The handbook sets out the basic framework for the BA in Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies (with Akkadian as first language) and the BA in Assyriology. You should consult the current edition of the [Examination Regulations](#) for information regarding your course. The information in this handbook should be read in conjunction with:

- the Faculty's general Undergraduate Handbook;
- the Examination Conventions and Rubrics;
- the [Examination Regulations](#);
- the [University Student Handbook](#)
- your college handbook.

**If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination regulations, then you should follow the Examination regulations.**

Comments and criticism of the handbook are always welcome; they should be sent to the [Director of Undergraduate Studies](#) or the Senior Academic Administrator, [Edmund Howard](#).

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## Introduction

This handbook includes information relating to the BA in Assyriology and the BA in Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies (with Akkadian as first language). Where this handbook refers to the BA in Assyriology, this information applies equally to the BA in Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies if Akkadian is the first language.

The information contained in this document also covers the Assyriology and Akkadian provision for students taking the BA in Classics and Asian and Middle Eastern Studies whose main subject is Assyriology.

Information relating to Akkadian as a subsidiary language, or to other subsidiary languages such as Sumerian and Hittite, can be found in the AMES UG Subsidiary Languages Handbook for this year.

## About the Course

The Assyriology undergraduate course focuses on various phases of Akkadian, the principal ancient language of Mesopotamia; emphasis is also placed on knowledge of the literature, cultural and political history, and archaeology of the area. This is supplemented by study of a subsidiary language together with its associated literature, culture, and history or by study of Archaeology and Anthropology.

The skills involved are comparable with those needed for similar humanities courses focused on language, but their application is rather broader. No prior knowledge of any ancient language is expected.

At all stages, the course emphasises detailed familiarity with the primary sources: you study textual sources in the original languages and scripts and non-textual sources in other media. Opportunities are available to work with ancient artefacts in the Ashmolean Museum's collections, as well as to practise reading from original inscribed objects such as cuneiform tablets and stone artefacts.

In addition to the first-language classes and essay writing, there are lecture courses on principal aspects of Ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian cultures and history in the first year and an increased focus on Mesopotamian topics and artefacts in the second and third years. You should become familiar with a wide range of ancient cultural institutions. Your work on texts should be seen in the broader context of understanding Mesopotamian cultures.

## Programme Aims

This course is designed to be both wide-ranging and flexible. It aims to:

- instruct you on principal aspects of the field of Assyriology;
- introduce you to the histories and material cultures of the Ancient Near East and Egypt;
- give you an understanding of the Akkadian language in several phases

- provide you with skills to engage appropriately with primary written sources as a point of departure for studying these ancient cultures, appreciating the texts as archaeological artefacts;
- enable you to deepen your knowledge of particular areas of Assyriology through a chosen Special Option;
- supplement your knowledge through the study either of a subsidiary language or of Archaeology and Anthropology as a subsidiary subject.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this programme, you should:

- Acquire an advanced knowledge of the script, grammar, vocabulary, and syntax of Akkadian in several different phases, from Old Babylonian onwards, in the appropriate cultural contexts;
- Acquire a comparable, if less extensive, knowledge either of a subsidiary language or of Archaeology and Anthropology as a subsidiary subject;
- Acquire advanced knowledge of the field of Assyriology and aspects of the history and material culture of the ancient Near East;
- Acquire a less extensive knowledge of aspects of the history and material culture of ancient Egypt during your first year;
- Be familiar with the use of a range of historiographical, literary-critical, and other methods for understanding primary textual sources in Akkadian (and, if applicable, your subsidiary language);
- Have a good knowledge of the relevant secondary literature, including the various aids to study (reference works bibliographies, dictionaries, sign lists, etc.), and how to make best use of them.

### Range of Subsidiary Languages and Subjects

For Assyriology students, the following languages may be available as subsidiaries:

- Arabic
- Aramaic and Syriac
- Early Iranian
- Egyptian
- Hebrew (Biblical and Rabbinic)
- Hittite
- Sumerian

Classics as a subsidiary language is offered in the joint School of Classics and Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, so permission for a formal change of course will be required for any student not already enrolled in the joint school if they wish to take a subsidiary Classical language.

**Archaeology and Anthropology** is available as a subsidiary subject instead of a subsidiary language. Archaeology and Anthropology bring cognate disciplines into the course; this

course is not focused specifically on the Ancient Near East, although it is possible to take Special Options or develop dissertations that bridge the different fields.

**Not all subsidiary languages and subjects are available in all years. Acceptance for the subsidiary language or subject is necessary in all cases.**

### Note on Reading Lists

The reading lists reflect the current state of research and the usual language accessibility of our students. We have tried to be inclusive and to provide a diverse range of views and authors. The field of Assyriology has developed in a colonialist context, and as a result many relevant studies were produced in European and American institutions; similarly, due to the historical gender imbalance in academia, men have often predominated. The course addresses issues of colonialism, gender and sexuality, and some members of staff pursue research in these areas. We welcome suggestions for making the course more diverse and inclusive. In general, you are encouraged to tell us if you see any ways in which the courses or this handbook might be improved.

## Course Outline

### Year 1 (First Preliminary Examination)

The aim of the first year is to lay a foundation in knowledge of language and culture that will provide a solid basis for the more diversified and detailed work of the second and third years; at the same time, you should gain a general knowledge of the history of the both the Ancient Near East and Egypt.

### Examination

You sit the First Preliminary Examination (FPE), at the end of your first year. You take four written examination papers of three hours each:

1. Akkadian texts
2. Akkadian grammar and unprepared translation
3. Civilizations of the Ancient Near East and Egypt
4. History of the Near East and Egypt to 30 BCE

### Overview of teaching and learning

You spend at least half your study time on language and text work. You participate in intensive classes in Akkadian grammar and cuneiform script, followed by text-reading classes for the rest of the year.

Complementing the language classes is a lecture course in the cultures and history of the ancient Near East (focusing on Mesopotamia) and Egypt, accompanied by tutorials for which you write essays.

There are also formative written tests called collections throughout the course. These help you monitor your progress, but they do not contribute to your formal exam marks or your transcript.

### Subsidiary language or subject choice and looking ahead

By Trinity Term, you must discuss with your teachers which subsidiary language you wish to take, or whether you wish to take Archaeology and Anthropology as a subsidiary subject instead of a subsidiary language.

For Hebrew, there may be a few hours of introductory instruction at the end of Trinity Term. These are intended to allow a start to be made on the language during the Long (Summer) Vacation. Those intending to do Arabic or Ancient Greek should consult their teachers about possible summer schools in these languages.

You also need to find out about your second-year Assyriology course.

### Years 2 and 3 (Final Honour School)

In your second and third years you continue studying Akkadian and ancient Mesopotamia, and you select a Special Option. In addition, you study a subsidiary language or the subsidiary subject Archaeology and Anthropology (for the range of subsidiaries see above). You also write a dissertation of no more than 15,000 words.

### Examination

You sit your Final Honour School (FHS) examinations in the final term of your third year. You will take ten papers, as follows:

1. Akkadian translation paper
2. Akkadian prepared texts
3. Akkadian Text Edition Essay
  
4. A Special Option
5. Selected Egyptian and/or Ancient Near Eastern artefacts
6. General paper on Ancient Near Eastern Studies
7. Dissertation
  
8. Subsidiary Paper I
9. Subsidiary Paper II
10. Subsidiary Paper III

For more details on these papers, please see the descriptions below.

### Year 2: Overview of teaching and learning

The second year is intensive in numbers of classes and lectures – an average is usually about 10–15 hours per week.

You prepare set texts for your Akkadian language papers. Second- and third-year students usually share set-text classes within a two-year syllabus.

Specialised Mesopotamian Topics lectures in seminar format are held for 2 hours per week in Year 2 and Year 3. These lectures are also for undergraduates in the second year of Subsidiary Akkadian and graduates taking the MPhil in Cuneiform Studies. The lectures cover a range of aspects of ancient Near Eastern, and specifically Mesopotamian, cultures.

Topics studied can include: writing; religion and mythology; kingship; law and administration; literature; and science, magic and medicine. These lectures feed into a wide range of papers in your final examination.

Students usually take Mesopotamian artefact classes in the Ashmolean Museum in the Michaelmas and Hilary Terms of Year 2.

You also study your chosen subsidiary language or Archaeology and Anthropology as a subsidiary subject.

Essays and seminar presentations continue during the second year, usually at the average rate of 3-4 per term, mostly in the first subject. Tutorials help you explore issues in the interpretation of ancient cultures and develop skills of argument and presentation. If you choose subsidiary Archaeology and Anthropology instead of a subsidiary language, you will do more essay writing.

General reading should be kept up, so that an overall view of the subject is maintained, and you keep abreast with developments. The reading lists given out in Year 1 are quite full and are intended to be useful throughout the course; they will be replaced as necessary by new versions. You may also wish to approach staff for advice on supplementing what is given there, or for materials in areas not covered by the lists.

You may wish to attend lectures in related subjects in which you have an interest, e.g. archaeology, art history, and linguistics, but these may sometimes clash with other classes. You also need to be realistic about the number of commitments you take on. You are expected to attend the Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies research seminars arranged during term time, at which local and visiting speakers present papers for discussion. These are usually followed by tea in the Common Room.

### Special Option and Dissertation Choice

Before the Long Vacation at the end of your second year, you need to decide on an area for your Special Option and an area for your dissertation topic, both in consultation with your tutors. The list of possible Special Options is available in the Special Option section below.

### Year 3: Overview of teaching and learning

In Michaelmas and Hilary Terms, the number of teaching hours remains roughly as in Year 2. In Trinity Term, most of the work in class is unprepared or consists of revision sessions. Because you have your Special Option, which can be essay and/or text focused, and your dissertation work, the number of essays on other topics is reduced in comparison with earlier years, but the overall proportion of writing rises.

Akkadian students take the complementary year of the Akkadian set text syllabus, as described under Year 2. They also take Akkadian unseen classes in Hilary and Trinity Terms.

Mesopotamian Topics lectures in seminar format continue in Year 3. Optional revision sessions for the artefacts paper may be held early in Trinity Term of Year 3.

Much of the third year is devoted to work on your Special Option and dissertation. The pattern of work depends upon the topic chosen, how many students are doing the same

subjects, and how particular topics are best taught. Subjects can be approached through essay writing, through text classes, or through a mixture of both.

Broadly, if the Special Option is in Akkadian, it should fill up to half of the time spent on the Akkadian part of the course for Michaelmas and Hilary Terms. About a quarter of the main subject time should be spent on the dissertation.

### Fieldwork and Internships

For fieldwork, students should note the following:

The course does **not** include a curricular period abroad, but some students undertake appropriate travel during their degree in line with advice from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. Visiting the Middle East depends on current circumstances but there are usually areas where appropriate travel is possible. From 2008 to 2017, a number of undergraduate and graduate students in Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies participated in excavation of the Bronze and Iron Age city of Zincirli in south-east Turkey (run by Tübingen University and the University of Chicago). In 2018, our students joined an archaeological survey project in Konya, Turkey. Any subject-related travel or participation in archaeological projects is non-curricular and undertaken on a personal basis but you are welcome to discuss potential options with your tutors. Colleges often provide financial assistance for appropriate travel.

A small number of undergraduate and graduate students can usually take up summer internships at museums and other organisations with Near Eastern and Egyptian collections, such as the Ashmolean Museum and the British Museum. You are welcome to discuss potential applications with your tutors, who can advise you on appropriate institutions.

### Papers for FPE (Prelims)

There are four 3-hour written papers for FPE (Prelims) in Trinity Term of the first year. All papers are compulsory. The exam regulations for Prelims can be found [here](#).

### Akkadian texts

and

### Akkadian grammar and unprepared translation

**Terms taught:** Michaelmas, Hilary, and Trinity

**Taught by:** Prof. Frances Reynolds and other tutors

Both these papers are supported by Akkadian language classes.

There are 3.5-4 hours of language classes per week in all three terms. During the first six weeks of Michaelmas Term, there are intensive classes in Akkadian grammar and cuneiform script. Akkadian grammar is principally taught through the tutor's own materials and the reference grammar is *A Grammar of Akkadian* by John Huehnergard, available in Oxford library collections. Advice on books and study aids is given at the start of Michaelmas Term and we recommend that students wait until then, rather than taking any steps in advance.

Later in Michaelmas Term students continue their language work by beginning to read selected Laws of Hammurapi, a Babylonian king of the second millennium BCE. This text is read first because of its grammatical clarity and regularity, as well as its social, cultural, and historical significance. Other Akkadian texts are read in classes during the rest of the year: the myth of Ishtar's Descent to the Underworld, selected annals of Assyrian kings, and the Flood story from the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. These text-reading classes require extensive preparation in advance by the student, using the set cuneiform texts, editions, and other study aids. These are all included in Oxford library collections. In Michaelmas Term, students are given a list of all their first-year set texts. In Trinity Term, students also have classes to practise simple unseen translation work and revise points of grammar. Classes usually end in Week 6 or 7 of Trinity Term, leaving about two weeks for revision.

The text-reading classes, like those later in the course, involve reading the ancient texts beforehand, learning the relevant cuneiform signs, and preparing to read and translate passages from them in the classroom with the tutor's support. For many of the texts published translations are available, but these are frequently debatable or inaccurate and can only be an aid to the study of the original. During the classes, the translation of the texts into English, their genre and material form, their meaning and cultural import are reviewed and discussed. This reading of texts in class and discussion of their cultural significance and of the kinds of evidence they supply is at the core of the course and it is essential that you apply yourself to preparing the material beforehand, thinking about it both before and after the classes, and participating actively in class.

Akkadian classes are usually also attended by graduate students beginning Akkadian for the MPhil in Cuneiform Studies and undergraduates beginning Akkadian as their subsidiary language.

### **Examination**

Two 3-hour written papers in Trinity Term of the first year.

### Civilizations of the Ancient Near East and Egypt and

### History of the Near East and Egypt to 30 BCE

**Terms taught:** Michaelmas, Hilary, and Trinity

**Taught by:** Various members of the teaching staff

These papers are supported by a lecture course focusing on Mesopotamian and Egyptian cultures and history, attended by all first-year undergraduates in Assyriology and Egyptology. Four essays on topics related to the culture and history course are written in each of Michaelmas and Hilary Terms, and two in Trinity Term. These essays will alternate in topic between the Ancient Near East (focusing on Mesopotamia) and Egypt.

Throughout the first year, you should be reading general works on ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian cultures and history. Reading lists for these are distributed during the year; you should read something in all the main categories by the end of the year.

Lectures usually end in Week 6 of Trinity Term, leaving about two weeks for revision.

Lectures are usually also attended by first-year Egyptology undergraduates, some MPhil students, and students from other subjects.

### Examination

Two 3-hour written papers in Trinity Term of the first year.

## Papers for FHS

### Akkadian Language and Text Papers

Akkadian language teaching primarily supports the **Akkadian translation** paper, **Akkadian prepared texts** papers and the **Akkadian Text Edition Essay** (take-home paper).

**Years taught:** Year 2 and Year 3

**Terms taught:** Michaelmas, Hilary and Trinity

**Taught by:** Prof. Jacob Dahl, Prof. Frances Reynolds and other tutors

Building on your first-year work, you study a core of important set texts in cuneiform in their ancient cultural contexts. The curriculum usually includes parts of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and the *Babylonian Epic of Creation* and letters from the international Amarna correspondence. Royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon and Nabonidus and Old Babylonian documents on a range of subjects also usually form part of every student's syllabus. In addition, all students usually study the literary prologue and epilogue of the Laws of Hammurapi in Old Babylonian monumental cuneiform in Trinity Term of the second year.

Akkadian set text classes run for 2-4 hours per week throughout Year 2 and the first two terms of Year 3. Most classes are taken by second-year and third-year students together with the syllabus alternating each year.

Akkadian (Standard Babylonian) unseen text classes run for 1.5 hours per week in Hilary and Trinity Terms of Year 3.

### Set texts and overall syllabus

By Friday in 3<sup>rd</sup> Week of Hilary term in Year 2, the division of Akkadian set texts for FHS examination is announced and distributed in the form of a copy of the list of prescribed texts. . This list makes clear which texts should be prepared for the FHS Text Edition Essay (take-home) paper and which texts should be prepared for other FHS (invigilated) papers.

Your overall syllabus usually covers compositions in Old Babylonian, Standard Babylonian, and at least one other dialect of Akkadian (e.g. Amarna dialect). Your syllabus as a whole usually encompasses a range from among the following genres: legal texts; myths and epics; historiographical texts, such as royal annals and inscriptions; letters; religious texts, such as hymns, incantations, and rituals; scholarly works, such as omens, mathematical and medical texts; and economic and/or administrative documents. Your tutors are happy to discuss your syllabus with you.

Other set texts studied in Akkadian language classes may support your chosen Special Option. Any set texts for the Special Option are registered later.

### Preparation for examination

During Hilary and/or Trinity Terms, written practice may be given in timed answers relating to set texts to help develop the relevant skills, in addition to term-based collections. This work is relevant both to the Text Edition Essay papers and to other final examination (FHS) papers.

About a third of the set texts are examined in the Text Edition Essay (take-home) set in 1<sup>st</sup> Week of Trinity Term of Year 3.

There are Akkadian unseen text classes in Hilary and Trinity Terms for students in their final year of Akkadian.

There is little Akkadian class work during Trinity Term of Year 3 so that you can concentrate on preparing for the examination. Trinity Term is mostly left free for independent revision, although revision sessions can be held at the request of students with the agreement of tutors.

Apart from the Text Edition Essay, the final examination is usually in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Weeks, possibly extending into 9<sup>th</sup> Week.

### Examination

Akkadian translation: one 3-hour written paper in Trinity Term of the final year.

Akkadian prepared texts: one 3-hour written paper in Trinity Term of the final year.

Akkadian Text Edition Essay: one text edition essay of 3000 to 3500 words set in the 1<sup>st</sup> Week and submitted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Week of Trinity Term of the final year.

### The Special Option

**Year taught:** Year 3

**Terms taught:** Michaelmas and Hilary

**Taught by:** Various, depending on chosen option

For the Special Option, students may choose from the options given in the list below, but it may also be possible to select an option tailored for a group of two or three students, or sometimes individually; either way, the choice of option is dependent on availability of relevant tuition at the time. Your Special Option topic must be different from your dissertation topic. Your Special Option can be offered in either your main subject, or your subsidiary language or subject, or bridge your main and subsidiary studies.

The format and hours of teaching depend on the Special Option chosen.

**Past Special Options include:**

- Astronomy in context in the first millennium BC in Mesopotamia

- Texts relating to the Chaldeans
- Old Assyrian colony period texts: trade *or* ethnicities
- Babylonian omens and prevention rituals
- Etana in context
- The conquests of Hammurapi
- Ludlul in context
- Old Babylonian documents
- The Mari archives
- Old Babylonian letters
- Akkadian Late Bronze Age texts
- Old Babylonian royal inscriptions and their Late Babylonian reception

### Selected Ancient Near Eastern artefacts

**Year taught:** Year 2 and possibly Year 3

**Terms taught:** Michaelmas, Hilary and possibly Trinity

**Taught by:** Prof. Jacob Dahl and Dr Nancy Highcock

Classes on Mesopotamian artefacts are held in the Ashmolean Museum. Students usually take these classes in either Year 2 or Year 3 for two hours per week in Michaelmas and Hilary Terms.

In one term, classes can be organised around a range of artefacts, materials including clay, stone, metal, glass, and glazes, while in another term the focus can be on cuneiform tablets and other inscribed objects. These classes are often also attended by MPhil students.

Optional revision sessions may also be held early in Trinity Term of Year 3.

If you are taking both Akkadian and Egyptian, in either combination, you may choose to be examined in artefacts from both areas, or just one. For more information about the Egyptian artefact classes, please see the BA Egyptology Handbook.

### General Paper

There is no specific coursework just for the final general paper, which includes questions on the cultures and history of ancient Mesopotamia. Preparation for this paper includes essays, seminar work, and independent reading, which is essential for the final examination. You are free to discuss this work with your teachers and, with your teachers' agreement, you may wish to write practice examination answers for comment by your teachers.

### Dissertation

You write a dissertation of no more than 15,000 words, to be submitted in Hilary Term of your final year.

Your dissertation topic must be different from your Special Option topic. Your dissertation can be offered in either your main subject, or your subsidiary language or subject, or bridge your main and subsidiary studies.

You may focus on textual sources, or aspects of material culture, or both; some students choose to work on the collections of the Ashmolean or Pitt Rivers Museums for their dissertations.

You should approach potential supervisors no later than Trinity Term of Year 2. As a first step, you should discuss potential dissertation topics with your regular tutors who will be able to advise you on this. Initial discussions with your supervisor are a key element in preparing you to start independent work in the Long Vacation at the end of Year 2. In Michaelmas and Hilary Terms of Year 3, students usually have about 3 tutorials per term.

For the dissertation bibliographies are discussed with the supervisor, initially in Trinity Term of Year 2, and an outline is agreed, usually early in Michaelmas Term of Year 3. If the dissertation is to involve museum work, this needs discussing with the museum staff as early as possible and by Trinity Term of Year 2 at the latest. The supervisor can give feedback on at least some chapters of dissertations as they are produced; some students, however, prefer to work more on their own.

### Subsidiary Languages and Subjects

**Students should note that not all subsidiary languages/subjects may be available in a given year.**

You must choose either a subsidiary language or subsidiary Archaeology and Anthropology. You take three core papers in your chosen subsidiary.

If you would like to take Classics as a subsidiary language, you will need first to transfer to the Classics and Asian and Middle Eastern Studies course, subject to approval.

#### Subsidiary Languages:

- Arabic
- Aramaic and Syriac
- Early Iranian
- Egyptian
- Hittite
- Hebrew (Biblical and Rabbinic)
- Sumerian

More information about each of these subsidiary languages is available in the AMES UG Subsidiary Languages Handbook.

#### Archaeology and Anthropology as a Subsidiary Subject

You can take subsidiary Archaeology and Anthropology as an alternative to a subsidiary language.

Those who choose Archaeology and Anthropology as their subsidiary subject will be given access to handbooks from the School of Archaeology. Subsidiary Archaeology and Anthropology is much more strongly focused on essay writing than the Assyriology main subject or the alternative subsidiary languages. You will attend lectures and tutorials in three relevant papers during the second and third years.

You must make contact with the EANES Archaeology and Anthropology Subject Coordinators (Prof. Elizabeth Froom: [elizabeth.froom@ames.ox.ac.uk](mailto:elizabeth.froom@ames.ox.ac.uk); Dr Christoph Bachhuber: [christoph.bachhuber@ames.ox.ac.uk](mailto:christoph.bachhuber@ames.ox.ac.uk)) before the beginning of each term to arrange tutorials.

The papers are:

1. The Nature of Archaeological and Anthropological Enquiry  
and
2. One from the following Archaeology papers:  
    ‘Urbanism and Society’ **or**  
    ‘The late Bronze Age and early Iron Age Aegean’  
and
3. One from the following Anthropology papers:  
    ‘Social Analysis and Interpretation’ **or**  
    ‘Cultural Representations, Beliefs, and Practices’.

For more information, see the handbooks from the Schools of Archaeology.

### Akkadian as a Subsidiary Language

Students taking BA Arabic, BA Egyptology, BA Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies (first language Egyptian), BA Hebrew and BA Classics with Asian and Middle Eastern Studies may take Akkadian as a subsidiary language subject to acceptance.

Please refer to the AMES UG Subsidiary Languages Handbook for more information.

## Recommended Patterns of Teaching (RPT)

Below is an indication of the type and number of teaching hours for Assyriology as a main subject. This does not include the teaching for the chosen subsidiary language or subject in Years 2 and 3 of the course.

### FPE – Year 1

| Subjects and Papers for Examination                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Term | Faculty  |         |           |         | Comments                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------|---------|-----------|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |      | Lectures | Classes | Tutorials | Classes |                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Akkadian Language and Texts</b><br><br>[1] Akkadian texts<br>[2] Akkadian grammar and unprepared translation                                                                                                                      | MT   |          | 32      |           |         | Figures in this table are in hours unless otherwise stated.<br><br>Classes in Akkadian language and texts feed into both Akkadian papers for this examination. |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | HT   |          | 32      |           |         |                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | TT   |          | 21      |           |         |                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Egyptian Culture and History</b><br>Feeds into the exam papers:<br>[3.] Civilizations of the Ancient Near East and Egypt, and<br>[4.] History of the Near East and Egypt to 30 BCE                                                | MT   | 16       |         | 2         |         |                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | HT   | 16       |         | 2         |         |                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | TT   | 12       |         | 1         |         |                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Cultures and History of the Ancient Near East (focusing on Mesopotamia)</b><br><br>Feeds into the exam papers:<br>[3.] Civilizations of the Ancient Near East and Egypt, and<br>[4.] History of the Near East and Egypt to 30 BCE | MT   | 16       |         | 2         |         |                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | HT   | 16       |         | 2         |         |                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | TT   | 12       |         | 1         |         |                                                                                                                                                                |

## FHS – Years 2 and 3

The below is an indication of hours of teaching over Years 2 and 3. This does not include the teaching for the chosen subsidiary language or subject. The precise number of hours will vary according to the options chosen, the individual circumstances of students, and the judgement of tutors. In addition, optional Akkadian revision sessions can be arranged with tutors in Trinity Term of the final year.

| Paper                                                              | Term | Year 2   |         |           |         | Year 3   |         |           |         | Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------|---------|-----------|---------|----------|---------|-----------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                    |      | Faculty  |         | College   |         | Faculty  |         | College   |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                    |      | Lectures | Classes | Tutorials | Classes | Lectures | Classes | Tutorials | Classes |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <i>Figures in this table are in hours unless otherwise stated.</i> |      |          |         |           |         |          |         |           |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| [1.] Akkadian translation paper                                    | MT   |          | 16      | 1         |         |          | 16      | 1         |         | These figures represent the Akkadian language and text classes and associated tutorials. This teaching feeds into all three Akkadian papers [1]-[3], as well as other papers, in the final examination. |
| [2.] Akkadian prepared texts                                       | HT   |          | 32      | 2         |         |          | 28      | 1         |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| [3.] Akkadian Text Edition Essay                                   | TT   |          | 12      | 1         |         |          | 9       |           |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| [4.] Special Option                                                | MT   |          |         |           |         |          | 16      |           |         | Teaching can be in the form of lectures, classes or tutorials depending on the Special Option chosen.                                                                                                   |
|                                                                    | HT   |          |         |           |         |          |         | 3         |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                    | TT   |          |         |           |         |          |         |           |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| [5.] Selected Ancient Near Eastern Artefacts                       | MT   |          | 16      | 1-2       |         |          |         |           |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                    | HT   |          | 16      | 1-2       |         |          |         |           |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                    | TT   |          |         |           |         |          | 2       |           |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| [6.] General Paper on Ancient Near Eastern Studies                 | MT   | 16       |         |           |         | 16       |         |           |         | These figures represent the Mesopotamian Topics lectures in seminar format., These feed into the General paper, as well as other papers, in the final examination.                                      |
|                                                                    | HT   | 16       |         |           |         | 16       |         |           |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                    | TT   | 12       |         |           |         | 12       |         |           |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| [7.] Dissertation                                                  | MT   |          |         |           |         |          |         | 4         |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                    | HT   |          |         |           |         |          |         | 4         |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                    | TT   |          |         |           |         |          |         |           |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

Note: Tutorials are organised by the Faculty.

Students also take 3 papers in their subsidiary language or subject. For subsidiary languages taken within AMES, please see the RPT tables in the AMES UG Subsidiary Languages handbook. For Archaeology and Anthropology as a subsidiary subject, please refer to the handbook distributed by the School of Archaeology.

## Teaching Staff

- Dr [Moudhy Al-Rashid](#), Honorary Fellow, Assyriology (Wolfson College)
- Dr [Christoph Bachhuber](#), Associate Faculty Member, College Lecturer in Archaeology, Middle East and Mediterranean (St John's College)
- Professor [John Baines](#), Emeritus Professor of Egyptology (Queen's College)
- Dr [Michele Bianconi](#), Diebold Researcher in Comparative Philology (Wolfson College)
- Dr [Francisco Bosch-Puche](#), OEB Coordinating Editor, TopBib Editor & Archive Curator, Griffith Institute
- Professor [Jacob Dahl](#), Professor of Assyriology (Wolfson College) [on sabbatical Michaelmas Term 2025]
- Dr [Stephanie Dalley](#), Emerita Fellow in Assyriology, Senior Research Fellow (Somerville College)
- Dr Parsa Daneshmand, JRF in Assyriology (Wolfson College)
- Mr [Vivian Davies](#), Faculty Member, Director of the Oxford Epigraphic Expedition to Elkab, Griffith Institute
- Dr [Lauren Dogaer](#), Lady Wallis Budge Junior Research Fellow in Egyptology (University College)
- Professor [Elizabeth Froom](#), Associate Professor of Egyptology (St Cross College)
- Dr [George Heath-Whyte](#), JRF in Assyriology (Christ Church)
- Dr [Nancy Highcock](#), Assistant Keeper, Jaleh Hearn Curator for the Ancient Middle East, Ashmolean Museum
- Dr [Linda Hulin](#), Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology (Harris Manchester and Magdalen Colleges)
- Dr Marie-Christine Ludwig, Lecturer in Assyriology
- Professor [Liam McNamara](#), Associate Professor and Keeper of Antiquities, Ashmolean Museum
- Professor [Christopher Metcalf](#), Associate Professor and Tutorial Fellow of Classical Languages and Literature (Queen's College)
- Professor [Richard Bruce Parkinson](#), Professor of Egyptology (Queen's College) [on research leave 2024-25]
- Professor [Frances Reynolds](#), Shillito Fellow and Associate Professor of Assyriology (Queen's College)
- Dr [Daniela Rosenow](#), Manager of the Griffith Institute
- Dr [Marina Sartori](#), AMES Teaching Fellow in Egyptology
- Professor [Maren Schentuleit](#), Associate Professor of Egyptology and Coptic Studies; Lady Wallis Budge Fellow (University College)
- Dr [Robert Simpson](#), Lecturer in Egyptian and Griffith Egyptological Fund Research Fellow
- Professor [Mark Smith](#), Emeritus Professor of Egyptology and Coptic (University College)
- Dr [Elizabeth Tucker](#), Emerita Fellow in Indo-Iranian Philology, Supernumerary Fellow (Wolfson College)
- Professor [Yuhan Sohrab-Dinshaw Vevaina](#), Bahari Associate Professor of Sasanian Studies (Wolfson College)

## Examinations and Assessment

In Trinity Term of Year 1, students will sit 4 written examinations. Students must pass all papers to proceed into Year 2 of the course.

Please refer to the conventions for Prelims examinations for the papers to be taken, available on the [Student Hub](#).

In Trinity Term of Year 3, students will take a total of 9 examinations. Students will submit their dissertations in Hilary term.

Please refer to the conventions for FHS examinations for the papers to be taken, available on the [Student Hub](#).

## Examination Regulations

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.

## Deadlines

| Date                                                   | Year of Course | Event                                                                                          | How                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> Week<br>Trinity Term            | 1              | Provisional start date of the First Public Examinations                                        |                                                                          |
| Monday 0 <sup>th</sup> Week<br>Michaelmas Term         | 3              | Deadline for applications for approval by the Subject Group of FHS Special Option choices.     |                                                                          |
| 12 noon<br>Monday 0 <sup>th</sup> Week<br>Hilary Term  | 3              | Deadline for submission of dissertation titles for Faculty Board approval.                     | Online Thesis Title Approval Form available through the Academic Office. |
| Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> Week<br>Michaelmas Term         | 3              | Deadline for exam entry.                                                                       | Via Student Self Service                                                 |
| 12 noon<br>Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> Week<br>Hilary Term | 3              | Deadline for submission of dissertation.                                                       | Via Inspera                                                              |
| 10am<br>Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> Week<br>Trinity Term    | 3              | The paper for Text Edition Essay (take-home paper) in Akkadian released by the Faculty Office. |                                                                          |

|                                                        |   |                                                                                    |             |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 12 noon<br>Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> Week<br>Trinity Term | 3 | Deadline for submission of Text<br>Edition Essay (take-home paper) in<br>Akkadian. | Via Inspira |
| Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> Week<br>Trinity Term            | 3 | Provisional start date of FHS<br>examinations.                                     |             |

## Student Information and Support

### Student Hub

The [Student Hub](#) is an ongoing project to provide a live online version of the handbook, together with more detailed course information and further resources such as forms and exam conventions, as well as archived documents from previous years. You can also access the Student Hub through the top bar of the Faculty Website, through the '**NEW Faculty Intranet**' button. You will need to log in using your SSO.

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

In accordance with our [Statement of Values](#), the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies is committed to creating a teaching, learning, and research environment in which every member of our community – at every academic level from undergraduate to senior academic, and among library and administrative staff – can achieve their full professional potential without discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender, marriage or civil partnership, nationality, pregnancy or parenthood, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

We welcome suggestions for making our courses more diverse and inclusive. In general, you are encouraged to tell us if you see any ways in which the courses or this handbook might be improved. Staff and students are welcome to contact the Equality and Diversity team with any suggestions or concerns:

**EANES Group Equality and Diversity Representative:** [Richard Parkinson](#)

**Faculty Equality and Diversity Officer:** [Dominic Brookshaw](#)

### Welfare and Support

Our community aims to encourage and support all students. The student experience at Oxford offers lots of opportunities for you to thrive, grow, and look after your own wellbeing, but we know that sometimes there can be stresses and challenges too.

We want to give you the agency to navigate welfare support, and to make your own decisions. This includes by:

- Keeping in touch with your College and Department, and letting them know if you need help

- Seeking support when needed
- Supporting your fellow students
- Registering with Disability Advisory Service for structured support if you have a disability

Should you have any concerns, or for guidance and support, please do not hesitate to contact the following people:

**Disability Coordinators:** [Thomas Hall](#) and [Edmund Howard](#)

**Welfare Contact:** [Edmund Howard](#)

**Harassment Officers:** [Laurence Mann](#) and [Leyla Najafzada](#)

Details of the range of sources of support available in the University are available from the **Oxford Students** website, including in relation to mental and physical health and disability.

More information about the support and resources available can be found in the general Undergraduate Handbook and on the Faculty and University websites.